

THE CONCEPTION OF LAICITE OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S  
PARTY BETWEEN 2002 AND 2010

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ABSTRACT  
THE CONCEPTION OF LAICITE OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY  
BETWEEN 2002 AND 2010

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This thesis analyzes the conception of laicite of the Republican People's Party between 2002 and 2010 with reference to Republican People's Party's approach to veiling, *imams/İmam Hatip Liseleri*, Quran Courses, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and Alevis as well as the party programmes and regulations. To give the contours of its notion of laicite, the thesis dwells on the public and private conceptualization of the Republican People's Party. The thesis criticizes the Republican People's Party which reads laicite in terms of this dichotomy. The thesis argues that Republican People's Party's conception of laicite oscillates between etatism and democracy. To contextualize Republican People's Party's laicite in 2002-2010, the thesis presents the historical trajectory of laicite as well as the Islamic movement in Turkey. The study suggests Turkish laicite which was instilled to the Constitution by the Republican People's Party is the synthesis of Western modernity and Turkish state tradition. To demonstrate the extent of Republican People's Party's etatism and notion of democracy in relation to the principle of laicite, the thesis, therefore, focuses on this unique nature of Turkish laicite which is based on control. The thesis posits that Republican People's Party's laicite approaches democracy in cases it opposes religious oppression whereas it swings to etatism when it prioritizes state over individual rights of pious people.

Key Words: Laicite, etatism, democracy, Republican People's Party, Western modernity.

ÖZ

2002 VE 2010 YILLARI ARASINDA  
CUMHURİYET HALK PARTİSİ'NİN LAİKLİK ANLAYIŞI

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Bu tez türban, imamlar/İmam Hatip Okulları, Kuran Kursları, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* ve Aleviler ve parti program ve tüzüğüne referansla 2002 ve 2010 yılları arasında Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin laiklik kavramını analiz etmektedir. Laiklik nosyonunun hatlarını çizebilmek için bu tez Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin kamusal ve özel kavramsallaştırması üzerinde durur. Bu tez, CHP'yi laikliği kamusal ve özel alan ayrımı üzerinden okuduğu için eleştirir. Bu tez, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin laiklik anlayışının devletçilik ve demokrasi arasında salındığını ileri sürer. 2002 ve 2010 arasındaki dönemde Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin laiklik anlayışını bağlama oturtabilmek için bu tez, laikliğin ve İslami hareketin tarihsel yörüngesini sunar. Bu tez, Anayasa'ya Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi tarafından eklenmiş olan laiklik anlayışının Batı modernitesi ve Türk devlet geleneğinin bir sentezi olduğunu öne sürer. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin laiklik anlayışına ilişkin devletçiliği ve demokrasi nosyonunun kapsamını göstermek için bu tez dolayısıyla, Türk laiklik anlayışının emsalsiz doğasına yoğunlaşır. Tez, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin laiklik anlayışının devleti dindar insanlardan öncelikli konumlandığı zaman devletçiliğe kayarken, dini baskıya karşı çıktığı durumlarda demokrasiye yaklaştığını ileri sürer.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Laiklik, devletçilik, demokrasi, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Batı modernitesi.

Arzu-Mendost ve İlder'e,

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PLAGIARISM</b> .....	iii
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	iv
<b>ÖZ</b> .....	v
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	vii
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	viii
<b>CHAPTER</b> .....	1
<b>1.INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
1.1 Setting the Problem.....	1
1.2 Subject of The Dissertation.....	2
1.3 Organization of the Chapters .....	3
<b>2.SECULARIZATION</b> .....	9
2.1. Historical Evolution of Secularization.....	10
2.2.The Secularization Thesis and Its Critics.....	17
2.3 Responses to the Critics of the Secularization Thesis.....	32
2.4. A Post-Secular Age.....	38
2.5 The Relation Between Secularism and Democracy .....	40
2.6 Is Secularism Christian? .....	46
2.7. Concluding Remarks.....	48
<b>3.TURKISH SECULARISM</b> .....	51
3.1 The Continuity Or Rupture? .....	52
3.2 Historical Trajectory .....	61
3.3 Laicism or Laicite or Secularism? .....	68
3.4 The Critique of Turkish Modernization.....	71
3.5 The Rise of Islamic Actors in Turkish Politics .....	86
3.6 Turkish Politics After the 1980s .....	98
3.7 Alternative Modernity.....	102
3.8 Turkish Secularism and Democracy .....	106
3.9. AKP in Power .....	114
3.10. Concluding Remarks.....	120
<b>4.CHP'S CONCEPTION OF LAICITE BETWEEN 2002-2010</b> .....	123
4.1. Normative Foundations of CHP's Conception of Laicite .....	124



4.2. The Relation Between Laicite and Democracy.....	126
4.3. <i>Türban</i> .....	133
4.3.1 CHP’s Attitude About Veiling in Public Sphere.....	134
4.3.2. Reasons for CHP’s Opposition to Veiling in Public Sphere.....	140
4.3.2.1. Religious Oppression .....	140
4.3.2.2.The Drive to Protect the Regime.....	145
4.3.2.3. Spread of the Use of <i>Türban</i> .....	147
4.3.2.4. Basing State Legitimacy on Raison D’etat .....	152
4.3.3.“Çarşaf Opening” .....	155
4.3.4. Opposition to “Çarşaf Opening” Within the CHP.....	167
4.3.5. Concluding Remarks.....	168
4.4. <i>İmams</i> and <i>İmam Hatip Liseleri</i> .....	170
4.4.1. The Reasons for CHP’s Reaction to <i>İmams/İmam Hatips</i> .....	171
4.4.1.1. Discrimination About Filling State Cadres .....	171
4.4.1.2. Ratios for University Entrance Exam .....	173
4.4.1.3. 8 Years Compulsory Education .....	178
4.4.1.4. Desecularization of Education .....	178
4.4.1.5. Gendered Practices of Imams .....	180
4.4.1.6. State’s Support for Religious Activities.....	181
4.4.2. Concluding Remarks.....	182
4.5. Quran Courses.....	182
4.5.1. Reasons for CHP’s Sensitivity About Quran Courses .....	183
4.5.1.1. Illegal Quran Courses.....	183
4.5.1.2. Facilitation of Quran Courses.....	190
4.5.2. Quran Courses Opening.....	192
4.5.3. Concluding Remarks.....	194
4.6. <i>Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı</i> .....	195
4.6.1. Reasons For CHP’s Discontent About <i>Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı</i> .....	196
4.6.1.1. Basing State Administration on Raison D’etat .....	196
4.6.1.2. Politicization of <i>Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı</i> . .....	197
4.6.1.3. Partiality of <i>Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı</i> .....	201
4.6.1.4. Budget of <i>Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı</i> .....	211
4.6.1.4.1. Allocation of the Budget of <i>Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı</i> .....	211

4.6.1.4.2. Proportion of the Budget to Other Parameters.....	217
4.6.1.5. Control of Religious Activities .....	219
4.6.1.6. Social Regulatory Role of Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı .....	223
4.6.1.7. Approach of Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı to Women.....	224
4.6.1.8. Use of Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı as a Leverage for Other State Cadres....	226
4.6.2. Concluding Remarks.....	228
4.7. Alevi.....	229
4.7.1. Reasons for CHP’s Concern With Alevi with Respect to Laicite .....	230
4.7.1.1. Compulsory Religious Courses.....	230
4.7.1.2. Religious Oppression .....	235
4.7.1.2. Recognition of Cem Houses as Official Places of Worship.....	236
4.7.1.3. Madımak Masacre .....	242
4.7.1.4. Religious Oppression .....	244
4.7.1.5. Insult Against Alevi.....	248
4.7.1.6. Discrimination Against Alevi.....	250
4.7.2 Concluding Remarks.....	254
4.8 General Overview .....	255
4.9 Concluding Remarks.....	258
<b>5.CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>271</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>308</b>
<b>A.CURRICULUM VITAE .....</b>	<b>308</b>
<b>B.TURKISH SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>310</b>

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Setting the Problem

Today it seems that religion has again a growing impact in the public spheres of the nation-states.<sup>1</sup> However, these growing demands of religious identities contradict with the secular public spheres which were enhanced by the secularization process. This brings into mind whether the general trend of secularization in the form of decline of religion in social relations<sup>2</sup> can be reversed. In this context, how the Republican People's Party—which will be called CHP thereafter— as a party which actualized secularization process in the Turkish Republic after founding it confronted the demands of religious identities which claim to be included in the public spheres emerges as a question to be solved. To analyze the conception of laicite of the Republican People's Party, I preferred to focus on the period between November 2002 and May 2010. Whereas November 2002 refers to the time which The Justice and Development Party—which will be called AKP henceforward—as a party trying to redefine the conception of laicite came into power. On the other hand, May 2010 refers to the end of CHP's chairmanship of Deniz Baykal who has been the symbol for protection of laicism that refers to control of religious activities by the state. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to highlight how CHP confronts the challenge against its conception of laicite in a conjecture in which AKP attempted to redefine/challenge CHP's conception of laicite—which actually refers to separation of religious and state affairs but turns to laicism with the control of religious activities

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<sup>1</sup> Jürgen Habermas, "A "Post-Secular" Society-What Does That Mean?" text prepared for the annual Nexus lecture at the University of Tilburg, The Netherlands, March 15, 2007, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Berger & Thomas Luckmann, "Secularization and Pluralism. International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion." (1966), 74 in Steve Bruce, *God is Dead*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 2.

by the state—through increasing the visibility of religious identities and symbols in public sphere. In this respect, I analyze CHP's conception of laicite by drawing upon five major subjects namely, veiling, *imams/İmam Hatip Liseleri*, Quran courses, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and focusing on CHP's party programmes and regulations. My research question will be whether CHP's conceptualization of laicite between 2002 and 2010 within the development of secularism in Turkey with reference to secularization debate is democratic or etatist.

## **1.2 Subject of The Dissertation**

In this dissertation, as the title suggests, I focus on CHP's conception of laicite between 2002 and 2010 within the framework of the development of secularism in Turkey with reference to the secularization debate. While doing so, I particularly elaborate on CHP's approach to veiling, *İmams/İmam Hatip Schools*, Quran courses, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and Alevi as well as party programmes and regulations. The reason why I chose to study CHP was that CHP, as the founder of the Turkish Republic and the architect of laicite in the Turkish Republic, provided rich material for testing the reversibility of the general trend of secularization which is declining social importance of religion in the Turkish context. I find the period 2002-2010 interesting as this period is marked by a single party rule of AKP which suggests reinterpretation of laicite. The challenge between CHP and AKP over interpretation of laicite also sheds light on the facts of secularization, desecularization as well as challenge of religious identities to national public sphere in Turkey.

To analyze CHP's conception of laicite between 2002 and 2010, first I focus on the process of secularization as an outcome of modernization and historical trajectory of secularization in which the social significance of religion declined. I examine the

counter-trend, increasing social significance of religion and its challenge to CHP's conception of laicite. Thus, our contemporary age—which I call “post-secular age” with reference to Jürgen Habermas—characterized by the religious identities that claim to be involved in national public spheres among others is another point of this dissertation. Another subject of the thesis is the link between democracy and secularism within the post-secular age in which religious identities challenge the homogenous and universal structure of the public spheres.

The historical trajectory of Turkish secularism which shows the peculiar nature of control account of laicism constitutes another subject of this dissertation. The critics of Turkish modernization and rise of Islamic actors are other milestones for highlighting the rise of AKP who would contest CHP's conception of laicite. CHP's demurral to AKP's actions concerning loosening the control of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* upon Quran courses and imams' activities, discrimination of Alevi's, attempts to lift the ban on veiling in universities will be other points that will be elaborated. The relation between CHP's conception of laicite and democracy will be another subject of this dissertation.

### **1.3 Organization of the Chapters**

In order to analyze the trajectory of Turkish secularism, in the 2.Chapter, I elaborate on the historical evolution of secularization thesis which refers to privatization of religion as a corollary of the developments in the West such as capitalism, individualism, Reformation etc., its critics who criticize the secularization thesis of having a unilinear conception of history, denying religious diversity and homogenization of the age before secularization. The analysis of the secularization

thesis is significant as it would constitute the theoretical framework for studying CHP's conception of laicite which entails exclusion of religious symbols from the public sphere.

On the other hand, proliferation of religious identities who claim to be involved in the public sphere is again a popular phenomenon and the universal discourse of secularism which rests on privatization of religion can not meet the demands of religious identities. In this respect, I defend Habermas' post-secular society formulation. Let me note that secularization thesis posits arguments with respect to the age of secularization with reference to facts and whereas Habermas' post-secular society is a critique of the narrative of Enlightenment which calls for replacement of religion with *raison d'état* in state administration and the public sphere given the fact concerning proliferation of religious identities who claim to be involved in the national public spheres. Therefore, even though I share the premises of secularization thesis for the period it refers to, I call for a post-secular organization of the public sphere for a more democratic state formulation for our epoch. Calling for inclusion of religious identities in the public sphere necessitates the examination of the link between democracy and secularism which constitutes the subject of the next section. Last but not the least; I devote the last section to discussing whether secularism is particularly Christian and whether it has any relevance to Islamic societies. Thus, I question whether secularization has major incompatibility in the Turkish case.

In the 3.Chapter I focus on the experience of Turkish secularism through examining whether Turkish secularism constitutes a rupture or continuity with the Ottoman modernization efforts. Second, I sort out the terms of "laicism" and "secularism" as well as "laicite". Therefore even though CHP calls it "laicite" referring to separation

of politics and religion in its party programme<sup>3</sup>, I will suggest that Turkish case of secularization is not laicite in the Western sense of the term as it is less than a separation of religion and politics but rather, religion is controlled by the state acquiring it the characteristic of laicism rather than laicite. In addition, I will proceed with that Turkish experience of secularism points out to emancipation from the oppression of the sacred with reference to Niyazi Berkes. The control account of religion derives from historical roots of Turkish states and Ottomans in which state tradition prevailed over religion and the latter was only used to legitimize the former. Therefore, I use the term laicism to refer to the control of religious activities by the state whereas I attribute secularism a more sociological connotation and borrowing it from Berkes, use it to refer to emancipation of society from the oppression of the sacred.<sup>4</sup> Third, I focus on the critics of modernization which accuse Turkish modernization with elitism, authoritarianism and adoption of Western modernity. As Islamic actors have been the most prominent actors that have posed a challenge to the homogenous public sphere of laic republic, I examine the rise of Islamic actors in Turkish politics in the next section. This owes to many factors ranging from repression of the state, relative democratization, exclusion of the Islamic periphery from the bureaucratic and military center as well as class relations. In the following section, I discuss Nilüfer Göle's alternative modernity argument which suggests a new modernity which is not the replica of Western modernity and which takes into account local culture such as Islamic elements. I also dwell on the relation between democracy and secularism in a context in which Turkish secularism is challenged with the publicization of Islam.

I devote the 4. Chapter to the analysis of CHP's conception of laicite between 2002 and 2010. This period is significant as 2002 refers to reentrance of CHP to the Assembly after 3 years of time. This period also refers to the Chairmanship of Baykal who is known for his advocacy of rigid laicism in the CHP and single party

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<sup>3</sup> CHP Party Programme, 1994, 19 & CHP Party Programme, 2008, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma*. (İstanbul:Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007), 17-19.

rule of AKP which aims to reinterpret laicite as well as to challenge laicism. Therefore, this period is cut out for analyzing the collision between laicism and re-interpretation of laicite-cum-challenge to laicism. This chapter takes CHP's sensitivity about religious oppression and secularism seriously. On the other side of the fence, re-interpretation of CHP's laicite is fundamental to include religious identities in the public sphere. Therefore, this chapter will also call for adaptation of laicite into the needs of the post-secular age for a more democratic state and society. For interpreting the period between 2002 and 2010 in terms of laicite, I used the records of the speeches of and parliamentary questions submitted by the CHP Members of the Parliament, *Milliyet* daily newspapers as well as the party regulations and programmes. I used the party programme of 1994 which stayed in force until 2008 and of 2008 to examine the period between 2002 and 2010. I analyzed CHP's notion of laicite with respect to five factors namely, veiling, *İmam Hatip Schools*, Alevis, Quran courses and *Diyanet*. I preferred to focus on those factors as they are significant since they highlight CHP's notion of laicite that is based on public-private distinction and reflect CHP's reaction to publicization of religion, sensitivity about religious oppression and desecularization of society and state. First of all, I focus on veiling and analyze the reasons behind CHP's opposition to veiling in the public sphere such as religious oppression on women and Alevis, the impulse to protect the regime, CHP's worry about the further dissemination of veiling in public sphere. Then I examine CHP's softening the tone towards veiled women and opposition to CHP's policies within the party.

Second, I dwell on *imams/İmam Hatip Schools* to analyze CHP's conception of laicite. CHP is against filling state cadres with people having religious background as it regards this as serving to desecularization of the state. CHP is against implementation of equal ratio to *İmam Hatip Schools* with other vocational high schools. CHP is also against change of 8 years of unintermittent education. Desecularization of education and activities of imams constitute other nodal points for CHP.



Third, I examine Quran courses as it constitutes a viable example for CHP's conception of laicite. CHP evaluates religious education as a right provided that it is controlled by the state. CHP is discontented about illegal Quran courses which are under the domination of tarikats and religious communities. CHP also problematizes state's promotion of Quran courses as it defends Law of Unification of Educational Instruction (Tevhid-i Tedrisat) which is based on a secular education. I also dwell on CHP's "Quran courses opening".

Fourth, I focus on *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which exactly reflects CHP's conception of laicite that relies on control. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which was founded by the CHP in 1924 stands as the instrument of the state to control religious activity. However, CHP questions the partial and political nature of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. Deriving from this Sunni-dominant structure of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, CHP criticizes non-allocation of resources to the Alevis. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s negligence to control Quran courses, tarikats and religious communities stands as another problem for the CHP. CHP criticizes *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s facilitation of social regulatory role of religion especially in a way to disrupt the equality between the sexes. Last, CHP problematizes use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as a springboard for transition to other state cadres as CHP is against filling other state cadres with people having religious background.

Last but not the least; I examine CHP's conception of laicite with respect to Alevis. Examination of Alevis—which are minor in number vis-à-vis the Sunni majority—is significant as it mirrors facet of CHP's laicite that is concerned with religious oppression. To elaborate on CHP's conception of laicite with respect to Alevis, I focus on education in which Alevis were almost excluded from books of compulsory religious courses or devalued or misrepresented in those books. Non-recognition of Alevis' worship places—that is, cem houses as official places of worship,

discrimination against Alevis and religious oppression through assimilation policies and state's oblivion towards Madımak Massacre in which 35 intellectuals most of which were Alevis were killed by Islamist fundamentalists constitute other reasons of CHP's discontent with regard to its conception of laicite.

## **CHAPTER 2**

# **SECULARIZATION**

Secularization process had caused a decline in the social significance of religion. However, today we observe proliferation of religious identities which demand to be involved in the national public spheres. In this respect, how those proliferating religious identities could be accommodated in our contemporary age remains a great question of our time. In line with this aim, first of all, I will dwell on the historical evolution of secularization process. While examining the historical trajectory of secularization, I will touch upon the impact of the Old Testament, Christianity as well as the Protestant Revolution upon secularization. Furthermore, as secularization is a component of modernization, I elaborate on the link between modernization and secularization. In this respect, components of modernization such as industrialization, social differentiation, socialization, cultural diversity, individualism, egalitarianism, rationality, technological consciousness, social mobility, privatization of religion are worth to note as they contribute to the reproduction of secularization from multiple channels. Second, I elaborate on the proponents of secularization thesis. While doing so, I emphasize the arguments of Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Peter Berger, and Steve Bruce. On the other hand, the contributions of the opponents of the secularization thesis namely, Charles Taylor, José Casanova, Karel Dobbelaere, David Martin, Robert Bellah, Jonathan Sheehan, Michael Hill, Peter Glasner, Richard Fenn to the literature will be mentioned. Yet, even though those critics question the secularization thesis in terms of its unilinear character, homogenization of pre-modern age and denying religious diversity, those arguments reflect other variations of reification about the arguments of the proponents of the secularization thesis. Therefore, against the critics, I defend the arguments of the secularization thesis which were valid for explaining the process of secularization. On the other hand, with the proliferation of religious identities today, I accept Jürgen Habermas' argument concerning that because we experience a post-secular age in which religion has been influential in public sphere, the narrative of

Enlightenment which aimed to produce a homogenous public sphere has been questioned. On the other hand, in terms of social reality concerning coexistence of religious and the secular, Taylor's warning that there is continuity between the secular age and the contemporary age is significant. Later on, I will discuss the relation between democracy and secularism with special reference to Habermas' post-secular society formulation which suggests a democratic model for inclusion of religious identities in secular states. I argue that a secular and a liberal political culture is sine qua non of a post-secular society. This brings us to the question whether secularism is Euro-centric. Thus, I devote the following section to discussing this argument.

## **2.1. Historical Evolution of Secularization**

The term secularization which can be defined as the “decline of religious thinking, religious practices, and religious institutions, that were once at the very center of life in Western society as indeed in all societies”<sup>5</sup>, was first used in the wake of Wars of Religion to refer to the rescue of a territory or property from the control of ecclesiastical authorities.<sup>6</sup> However, monotheism which upheld rationality can be taken as a milestone in the historical evolution of the secularization process. Even though Reformation and Renaissance are taken as origins of the disenchantment of the world, the process of disenchantment traces back to the Old Testament Protestantism in the Western world.<sup>7</sup> The Old Testament depicted a God who stood outside the cosmos. Even though this cosmos was God's creation, he did not

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<sup>5</sup> Bryan R. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, (London: C.A. Watts Co&LTD., 1966)in Nuray Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey: A Theoretical Approach*. PhD dissertation, Bogazici University, 1992, 9.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy, Elements of A Sociological Theory of Religion*. (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), 106.

<sup>7</sup> Berger, 113,120-121.

permeate it.<sup>8</sup> In other words, this transcendent God created the world and would end it one day but in between the cosmos had its own logic. To put it that way, transcendentalization of God and disenchantment of the world accompanying it paved the way for opening a space for human actions in history. Consequently, history has been an arena of both divine and human actions as a corollary of a conception of a God standing outside the world. Hence, Man rose as an historical actor before the God and Man as a historical actor provided a religious framework for the individual in the modern sense of the term.<sup>9</sup> Besides, an element of ethical rationalization existed in the Old Testament due to the anti-magical idea prevailing in Yahwism.<sup>10</sup> With the evolution of Christianity, remythologization of the cosmos with angels and semi divine saints occurred.<sup>11</sup> However, even though Christianity in its Catholic form reversed or hindered the secularizing elements namely transcendentalization and ethical rationalization in the Old Testament, the motif of historization and institutional specialization of religion in Christianity which enabled the rest of society as a profane realm distinct from the sacred realm carried a secularizing potential.<sup>12</sup> Latin Christianity remained quite historical in its evaluation of the world and “rejected those religious constructions that would despair of this world as the arena of redemption”.<sup>13</sup> Institutionalization of religion in Christianity was later on developed logically in Lutheran doctrine of two kingdoms.<sup>14</sup>

Protestant Revolution went much beyond the Old Testament. Protestantism changed the meanings attributed to religion in people’s daily lives. For instance, it stopped

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 115.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 115-119.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 120.

<sup>11</sup> Bruce, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Berger, 122-123.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 122.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 23.

praying for the dead people.<sup>15</sup> For instance, as is well known, death was one of the subjects that was under the monopoly of the Church in medieval times. Protestantism deprived itself of the most significant concomitants of the sacred namely, mystery, miracle and magic. As a result, the Protestant believer stopped living in a world penetrated by sacred beings and forces. Consequently, the reality was “polarized between a radically transcendent divinity and a radically “fallen” humanity that, ipso facto, is devoid of sacred qualities. Between them lied an altogether “natural” universe, God’s creation to be sure, but in itself bereft of numinosity”.<sup>16</sup> Protestantism also abolished the mediations of the sacred through several channels for the Catholic such as “the sacraments of the church, the intercession of the saints, the recurring eruption of the “supernatural” in miracles. It also ripped away the continuity between heaven and earth. Even though the intention of Protestantism was to open man into the intervention of God’s sovereign grace, it weakened man’s relation to the sacred leaving the only bond between man and the sacred as the God’s word. The latter became the only link to be cut off via secularization. To put it that way, “with nothing remaining “in between” a radically transcendent God and a radically immanent human world except this one channel, the sinking of the latter into implausibility left an empirical reality in which, indeed, “God [wa]s dead””.<sup>17</sup> Protestant Reformation again demythologized the world just as the Old Testament did.<sup>18</sup> The Reformation further galvanized rationality.<sup>19</sup> As Şerif Mardin notes, the belief in the Calvinist form of Protestantism as people are born to actualize the order of the nature instead of their own purposes directed people to develop the rational aspects of society.<sup>20</sup> Weber argues that the notion of calling in Puritanism which was introduced by the Reformation renders the highest form of moral obligation of the individual as fulfilling his duty in worldly affairs.<sup>21</sup> He asserts that the Puritans

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 111.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 111-112.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 112.

<sup>18</sup> Bruce, 6.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji*. (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1969), 24.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony Giddens, “Introduction” in Max Weber, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, (London: Routledge,1930), xii.

resembled “this worldly ascetism” in contrast to the previous religious people who isolated themselves from the world into monasteries and hermitages.<sup>22</sup> Since Protestantism removed the church as an intermediary between man and God, equality of men in front of God paved the way for a notion of equality of men in front of people before the law.<sup>23</sup> As Gellner puts it, equality was indispensable for industrialization.<sup>24</sup> This led to emergence of individualism. Modernization also created cultural pluralism. Individualism, diversity and egalitarianism within a liberal democratic context diminished the authority of religious beliefs.<sup>25</sup> Hence, Protestantism through demythologization, creating equality, individualism and directing believers to actualizing the order of nature, specialized roles together with industrialization had been a prelude to secularization. Rationalization also changed the structure of societies since it meant the pursuit of technically efficient means to secure this-worldly ends. As Weber and Berger argued Judeo-Christian tradition was predisposed to secularization since it paved the way for empirical inquiry, pragmatic and instrumental treatment of this world as well as encouraging rationalization of theology.<sup>26</sup>

Historical evolution of secularization in the West traced the following pattern: Catholicism which coincided with late industrialization at large as a dominant ideology was backed by national élites who were against rising forces of socialism and liberalism. This divided society into clerical and anti-clerical blocs. Afterwards, the dominance of Protestantism made plurality of religious expressions available. In dual societies divided between Catholics and Protestants, pillarization occurred.<sup>27</sup> The “ancient régime form referred to an enchanted world in which there was a sharp

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<sup>22</sup> Bruce, 7.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 10-11.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 10,16,30.

<sup>26</sup> Wallis&Bruce, 14.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 15-16.

contrast between the sacred and the profane. However, with the disenchantment process, especially in the Protestant societies, the presence of God in cosmos was replaced by God's presence in polity with respect to post-Newtonian science. Taylor calls the process in which people are persuaded and drifted into new forms of society, church, association "the Age of Mobilization".<sup>28</sup>

In this context, Enlightenment played its part in imitating religion and attaining it irrelevant.<sup>29</sup> The new forces of the Enlightenment such as the new science, the new sex, reason, the creeping doubts, the social conscience and the radical politics gave way to Church's dissolution in 1789.<sup>30</sup> In the eighteenth century, exclusive humanism appeared as a viable alternative to Christianity which Taylor calls the "nova effect". The elite pluralization affected the whole society in the following two centuries and as a result, the palette of options in the form of religious and irreligious widened as well as the locus of religious or spiritual in social life. The secularity 3 which refers to "a move from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace"<sup>31</sup> in Taylor's terminology, gave way to humanist alternative which in turn led to the rise of actual unbelief that rendered the decline of practice.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 445-447.

<sup>29</sup> Jonathan Sheehan, "Enlightenment, Religion and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay", *The American Historical Review*. (Vol.108, No.4, 1061-1080),1065.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 1065.

<sup>31</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 3.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, 423.



Hence, modernization through triggering a change in the extent of influence of religion in the social context reproduced secularization. To put this other way around, the prominent features of early modern religion have been the collapse of the hierarchical positioning of this and other world and the demolition of the religious organization. As a corollary of the latter, the papal authority was rejected in the West. Besides, the symbolization of man's relation to the ultimate conditions of his existence was taken out of the monopoly of religious groups. In other words, a single world replaced a multiple world rather than a dual world.<sup>33</sup>

Drawing upon the arguments above, it would be fair to say that even though the origin of secularization dates back to the Old Testament, secularization is an integral part of modernization which is a multidimensional process that involves the industrialization of work, the migration from villages to towns and cities, the transformation of small communities into societies, the rise of individualism and egalitarianism and rationalization of thought as well as social organization.<sup>34</sup> To put it differently, modernization reinforced the secularization paradigm through undermining the social significance of religion. To sum it up, modernization required structural and functional differentiation which referred to fragmentation of social life with the creation of specialized roles and institutions. Increased specialization directly secularized many social functions which were previously under the influence of Church or clergy. Structural differentiation was followed by social differentiation. The economic growth in modernization gave way to creation of different occupations and life situations. Emergence of new social classes caused class conflicts. Multiplication of new social roles and increasing social mobility paved the way for fragmentation of the traditional communal conceptions of moral and supernatural order. Social and cultural diversity brought to the fore neutral state leading to separation of church and state. Also, privatization damaged the social role of

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<sup>33</sup> Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*. (New York: Harper&Row Publishers, 1970), 36-44.

<sup>34</sup> Bruce, 2.

religion. Furthermore, science and technology reduced frequency and seriousness of people's attendance to religion. Technological consciousness emerged with modern technology which could not be compromised with the sacred. In short individualism, diversity as well as egalitarianism enervated the authority of religious beliefs. Industrialization through leading to fragmentation of lifeworlds, weakening communal bonds, the rise of bureaucracy and increase in technological consciousness damaged the previous authority of religion.<sup>35</sup>

As Taylor points out the modern states have a specific kind of imaginary as well as imagined social spaces.<sup>36</sup> The modern imaginary involves a "shift from hierarchical, mediated-access societies to horizontal, direct-access societies."<sup>37</sup> This has led to the rise of public sphere in which people participated discussion as well as the development of market economies and the rise of modern citizenship state. Modern imaginary also paid significance to common action in a secular time.<sup>38</sup> "A purely secular-time understanding allows us to imagine society 'horizontally', unrelated to any 'high points', where the ordinary sequence of events touches higher time, and therefore without recognizing any privileged persons or agencies-such as kings or priests-who stand and mediate at such alleged points".<sup>39</sup> The corollary of modernization, the horizontal organization of society, strengthened individualism which in turn rendered religion more as a private matter instead of a communal bond.

Therefore, even though the eruption of secularization cannot clearly be demarcated from the era that precedes it, it is possible to suggest that developments in the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 2-36.

<sup>36</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 38-39.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 39-42

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 42.

economic areas as a corollary of capitalistic and industrialistic processes have been other milestones in the secularization period. This owed much to that a modern industrial society needed large cadres of technological and scientific personnel whose training and social organization are based on a high level of rationalization. Hence, return to traditionalism would shake the rational foundations of the modern society. As a result, the secularizing power of capitalistic-industrial rationalization not only continued the secularization but also reproduced it. Even though religion continued to be influential within families, it lost the function of creating a common world from which the social life derived its ultimate meaning.<sup>40</sup>

## **2.2.The Secularization Thesis and Its Critics**

The secularization thesis argues that there is close linkage between the modernization of society and the secularization of population. Actually, the latter derives from basically three presuppositions: In the first place, progress in science and technology leads to empirical events that can be explained causally. Moreover, scientifically enlightened mentality contradicts with theocentric and metaphysical worldviews. Second, the religion is drifted into the private sphere with the functional differentiation of social subsystems which led to religious organizations to lose control over law, politics, public welfare, education and science.<sup>41</sup>

The secularization process is described differently by different scholars. But before proceeding with the proponents and critics of the secularization thesis, the distinction

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<sup>40</sup> Berger, 132-134.

<sup>41</sup> Habermas, "A Post-Secular Society", 1.

between the functional definition and the substantive definition of religion which is used as a common tool to highlight the attitudes of the proponents of secularization thesis is worth to note. Whereas the former definition defines religion according to what it does, the latter defines it according to what it is. Bruce argues that both kinds of definitions are problematic in several aspects. Functional definitions pose difficulties because in the first place, functional definitions might include things which do not look very religious such as political ideologies or secular therapies etc. as religious things. Second, those functions religion fulfills and in whose mind those functions are defined are not clear-cut. Third, establishing similarities between religious institutions and other patterns of behavior which serve similar purposes carries a disputable theoretical baggage and loses analytical clarity. Fourth, functional definition has the risk of establishing by definition what needs to be argued for and demonstrated that is, the functional equivalent of religion. Last but not the least, functional definition of religion does not allow one to talk about secularization but only about religious change. Substantive definitions have also several difficulties: If we try to unpack the notion of “supernatural”, it is possible to face difficulties in relation to non-western or traditional cultures.<sup>42</sup> We will now observe the reflections of those different definitions of religion into the theories of secularization and critics of it.

As has been mentioned above, secularization thesis, in general, points out to the diminishing social significance of religion as a corollary of three features of modernization namely, social differentiation, societalization and rationalization.<sup>43</sup> According to the analysis of the proponents of the secularization theory, religion withdrew to the private sphere. In other words, it started to “manifest itself as public rhetoric and private virtues”.<sup>44</sup> Being one of the proponents of secularization thesis,

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<sup>42</sup> Wallis&Bruce, 9-10.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>44</sup> Berger, 134.

Durkheim evaluates secularization as the decline of religion.<sup>45</sup> Durkheim maintains that society was the “source of all religion”.<sup>46</sup> Religion countered everything in society and social and religion were synonymous before. However, with the rise of modern society, division of labor and increasing preponderance of organic solidarity, religion withdrew from human relationships.<sup>47</sup> While defining organic solidarity which points out to the type of solidarity in modern societies due to division of labor, Durkheim set forth:

So, the individuality of the whole increases at the same time as the individuality of its parts; the society becomes more capable of collective movement, at the same time as each of its elements has more freedom of movement of its own. This resembles the solidarity that is observed in higher animals. Each organ, in fact, has its special characteristics, its autonomy, and yet, the greater the unity of the organism, the more marked is the individuation of its parts. Using this analogy, we propose to call the solidarity due to the division of labour ‘organic’.<sup>48</sup>

According to Weber, on the other hand, religion lost its impact with the rise of modern society and rationalization.<sup>49</sup> Puritanism had led to developments creating industrial capitalism. Once industrial capitalism was established, specifically the religious elements in the ethic which facilitated the formation of industrial capitalism were eradicated.<sup>50</sup> In this respect, Weber argues:

The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition,

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<sup>45</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 11-12 & Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, translated by Margaret Thompson, (Paris: Alcan), 1893, 31 available at <http://soc100willse.voices.wooster.edu/files/2012/01/Durkheim-Div-of-Labor.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> George Ritzer, *Sociological Theory*. (New York: McGraw-Hill), 93.

<sup>47</sup> Durkheim, 31 & passim.

<sup>48</sup> Durkheim, 31

<sup>49</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 13

<sup>50</sup> Giddens, xvii.

with irresistible force. Perhaps, it will so determine them until the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt....Since asceticism undertook to remodel the world and to work out its ideals in the world, material goods have gained an increasing and finally an inexorable power over the lives of men as at no previous period in history. To-day the spirit of religious asceticism—whether finally, who knows?—has escaped from the cage. But victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs its support no longer. The rosy blush of its laughing heir, the Enlightenment, seems also to be irretrievably fading, and the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives the ghost of dead religious beliefs.<sup>51</sup>

However, Weber accepts the role of nonrationalist elements in social action. The religious answers to the problems of meaning of evil, suffering, death etc. are influential in the motivations of the individuals. With his analysis of charisma which “is primarily a quality of the individual that places him above normal expectations and endows him with the authority to utter new commandments”<sup>52</sup>, Weber also emphasizes the role of irrational factors in social action. In both of those cases, Weber underlines the importance of religion in determining the social action relying on religion's closeness to powerful irrational motivational forces.<sup>53</sup> In this respect, Weber accepts that the function of religion in determining social behavior was replaced by other irrational forces. However, he does not examine the role of religion in modernity in functional terms since he stated that modernization gave way to the decline of religion.

Another proponent of secularization thesis, Berger regards secularization as “the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols”.<sup>54</sup> He explains secularization with secularization of consciousness. In Berger's words, “insofar as religion is common it lacks “reality” and insofar as it is “real” it lacks commonality. This situation represents a severe

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<sup>51</sup> Weber, 123-124.

<sup>52</sup> Bellah, 8.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>54</sup> Berger, 107.

rupture of the traditional task of religion, which was precisely the establishment of an integrated set of definitions of reality that could serve as a common universe of meaning for the members of society. The world-building potency of religion is thus restricted to the construction of sub-worlds, of fragmented universes of meaning, the plausibility structure of which may in some cases be no larger than the nuclear family”.<sup>55</sup> In the formation of the secular consciousness, the individual’s outpouring its physical and mental being into the world contributing to the formation of an objective social reality played an important role. In turn, the individual interacted with the “objective reality” to which he added mental and physical inputs. Finally, he internalized this reality and as a result individual’s subjective consciousness had been secularized through externalization, objectivation and internalization respectively. Consequently, modern West has produced an increasing number of individuals who organized their lives without the benefit of religious references.<sup>56</sup> Hence, secularization has been a process which changed the “social reality”.

Berger argued that the pluralistic condition emerged with secularization had a crucial sociological and social-psychological characteristic: religion should market itself and could no longer be imposed. In other words, as much as the people were secularized, they would prefer religious beliefs that complied with secularized consciousness.<sup>57</sup> The pluralistic condition multiplied the number of rival structures and relativized their religious contents. Particularly, “the religious contents [we]re “de-objectivated” that is, deprived of their status as taken-for-granted, objective reality in consciousness. They bec[a]me “subjectivized” in a double sense: Their “reality” be[came] a “private” affair of individuals, that is, los[t] the quality of self-evident intersubjective plausibility-thus one “cannot really talk” about religion any more. And their “reality” insofar as it [wa]s still maintained by the individual, [wa]s apprehended as being rooted within the consciousness of the individual rather than in

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 134.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 108.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 144-146

any facticities of the external world-religion no longer refer[red] to the cosmos or to history, but to individual *Existenz* or psychology”.<sup>58</sup> Berger suggests that religion lost the function to legitimize the world but rather different religious groups try to seek legitimacy for their particular subworlds in plural subworlds.<sup>59</sup> “[T]his plurality of religious legitimations [wa]s internalized in consciousness as a plurality of possibilities between which one may choose”.<sup>60</sup> As a result, religion lost its certainty and was relativized, obtained through the subjective consciousness of the individual.

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On the other hand, Bruce defines secularization as “a social condition manifest in (a) the declining importance of religion for the operation of non-religious roles and institutions such as those of the state and the economy (b) a decline in the social standing of religious roles and institutions; and (c) a decline in the extent to which people engage in religious practices, display beliefs of a religious kind, and conduct other aspects of their lives in a manner informed by such beliefs”.<sup>62</sup> In other words, with the term secularization, Bruce suggests “a diminishing public role for religion and declining involvement in religious institutions leave untouched the extent of ‘true religion’”.<sup>63</sup> According to Bruce’s secularization paradigm, as Weber argued, the Reformation created unexpectedly a new conception of work which prevented people from temptation in Protestantism. This has been a significant reason under the birth of capitalism under appropriate material conditions according to Weber. Bruce argues that prosperity in countries who first adopted industrial capitalism, contributed to the weakening of religious commitments. Structural and functional differentiation which referred to the fragmentation of social life in terms of specialized roles and institutions entailed by modernization in this economic growth caused by industrial capitalism, led to social and cultural diversity and

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 151-152.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 152.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 152.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 151-153.

<sup>62</sup> Bruce, 3.

<sup>63</sup> Wallis&Bruce, 11.



egalitarianism. As has been mentioned before, Ernst Gellner argued that egalitarianism was indispensable for industrialization since a society that was divided between the lines of high and low cultures could not achieve a modern economy. It was this context that gave way to secular states and liberal democracy which would moderate sects and churches that would pave the way for relativism in the conjuncture of the secular and liberal democrat states. The emergence of secular states and liberal democracy made the compartmentalization and privatization of religion possible. The Protestant Reformation triggered rationality and science which would give birth to technology and a technological consciousness. The Protestant Revolution also reinforced individualism which created a propensity to schism and emergence of schism and sects that would cause literacy and voluntary association.<sup>64</sup>

Secularization thesis, discussed so far, is challenged for being reductionist and having a linear conception of history. One mistake of the proponents of secularization thesis according to the critics is to equate differentiation with secularization. As has been elaborated above, differentiation which stands as the “process by which functions which are originally carried out together crystallize out and fall into separate spheres, with their own norms, rules and institutions” has been an important indicator of secularization. Taylor, criticizes equation of differentiation and secularity 1 which refers to “the retreat of religion in public life”<sup>65</sup> relying on that “the fact that activity in a given sphere follows its own inherent rationality and does not permit of the older kind of faith-based norming doesn’t mean that it cannot still be very much shaped by faith”.<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, Taylor mentions three facets of secularity: Apart from the secularity 1 which resembles the “the retreat of religion in public life” mentioned above; secularity 2 refers to the “decline in belief and practice” and secularity 3 refers to “the change in the conditions of belief”.<sup>67</sup> In

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<sup>64</sup> Bruce, 4-30.

<sup>65</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 423.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 425.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 423.

other words, to repeat, secularity 3 resembles “ a move from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace”.<sup>68</sup> Religiosity is more like a matter of personal belief than a collective ritual or practice.<sup>69</sup> Hence, in Taylor’s account, linking urbanization with secularity 2 is a misleading generalization. Secularization is considered to refer to a sort of decline in religion. Yet, whether religion has really declined in our era is quite controversial. Second, if we accept that it does not occupy all of the space, then it should be questioned whether it ever did.<sup>70</sup> In other words, golden age of faith should not be taken as a monolithic era in which all of the space was occupied by religion.

Taylor sets forth religion and spirituality did not disappear but rather were refigured.<sup>71</sup> The decline of religious practice, the compartmentalization of religion as private and doctrinaire atheism cannot be understood without reference to the historical transformations that occurred in the establishment of the immanent frame<sup>72</sup> which is “the sensed context in which we develop our beliefs”.<sup>73</sup> Hence it is necessary to analyze the present context which shapes beliefs and religious practices.

Taylor argues that the changes identified by the mainstream secularization thesis such as urbanization, industrialization, migration, the fracturing of earlier communities had negatively affected the previous religious forms. However, Taylor

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>69</sup> Michael Warner, Jonathan VanAntwerpen, Craig Calhoun, *Varieties of Secularism in A Secular Age*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 9-10.

<sup>70</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 426-427.

<sup>71</sup> Warner, VanAntwerpen, Calhoun, 13.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 13,15.

<sup>73</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 549.

also suggests that people also reacted by developing new religious forms. In Taylor's account, new forms are again developing. Hence, Taylor does not see the religious decline as a linear process. Plus, he does not take religion as an unchanging phenomenon. He bases the discontinuity approach on the fact that the concerning religious forms and forces which undermined them were different. Moreover, he adds that forms of religion have been changing in time. For Taylor, factors such as urbanization, migration etc. which paved the way for religious decline did not rasp the independent religious motivation. From his point of the transformation perspective, belief has declined and unbelief increased. However, the sacred or the spiritual has been placed again with regard to individual and social life.<sup>74</sup>

Taylor argues that secularization process was not homogenous but he recognizes a historical change by secularization. He uses ideal types to show the transition from the ancient regime to modern age. Yet, he also recognizes the role of religion in the modern age. In order to show the transition, Taylor differentiates between ancien régime(AR) forms and the era of Mobilization(M) forms. The Age of Mobilization refers to the period between 1800-1950(or perhaps 1960) roughly according to Taylor.<sup>75</sup> He posits that whereas AR forms rely on a pre-modern idea of order taking root from the cosmos and/or higher time, M is based on the modern moral idea of order in which people coexist as equals and relying on the principle of mutual benefit. Whereas the status and role of human beings are defined by AR forms, in the M forms human agency plays a vital role. According to Taylor, the latter constitutes the connection between M and mobilization.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, AR forms are organic which means that society is "articulated into constituent "orders" (nobility, clergy, bourgeoisie, peasants), and institutions (assembly of clergy, Parliaments, estates), and smaller societies (religious communities, communes, provinces), such that one only belongs to the whole through belonging to one of these constituent parts

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 436-437.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 471.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 459-460.

whereas M societies are “direct-access”; the individual is a citizen “immediately”, without reference to these different groupings, which can be made and unmade at will”.<sup>77</sup> AR forms usually belong to enchanted world whereas the world of M is related to disenchantment. Taylor uses those ideal types namely AR and M forms to clarify transitions. Yet, he is well aware they fit into paths to modernity and secularity in France and Anglo-Saxon countries. Besides, even though AR model can be applied to English and French societies, their paths from the mediaeval starting point to present betray huge differences. Taylor suggests that even though both English and French monarchies had similar notions of sacrality of kinship in the form of King’s Two Bodies and both see themselves in terms of Age of Mobilization, “the ancien régime monarchy in the 18<sup>th</sup> century had lost most of the sacralizing properties of its mediaeval in England. Drawing upon the differences between the English and the French model, Taylor opposes a unilinear secularization thesis which evaluates the decline of faith as a function of modernizing tendencies like class differentiation of society or movement from the countryside to the cities.<sup>78</sup> Against this uniform and unilinear effect of modernity on religious faith and practice, Taylor suggests an alternative model in which “changes frequently destabilize older forms, but where what follows depends heavily on what alternatives are available or can be invented out of the repertory of the populations concerned”.<sup>79</sup> As Taylor puts it, “[t]he pattern of modern religious life under “secularization” is one of destabilization and recomposition, a process which can be repeated many times”.<sup>80</sup>

Religion also exhibits varying influences in time. Taylor argues that religious faith might reproduce itself within the Mobilization model after the break with the ancien régime by two ways: The first recognizes the presence of God as the author of a Design which determines the political identity of the whole society. The second

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 460.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 460-461.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 461.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 461.

involves “free” churches which stand as instruments of mutual help and bring individuals in line with the word of God.<sup>81</sup> Hence, religion and secular society do not belong to parcellized time zones in history. But rather, religion and secular society are intermingled.

Drawing upon Taylor’s arguments, it can be asserted that neither the “golden age” of Christianity, nor the secularization process is homogenous. To put it bluntly, just as the “secular age” includes religious elements, the medieval era in which Christianity played a significant role in determining social and political life included secular elements. In line with this argument, Taylor suggests that secularization was borne out of the efforts to reform Christianity within. In other words, according to Taylor, secularization did not erupt with the Protestant Reformation but rather secularity in its Western sense is the outcome of medieval reform movements within Western Christianity. It gave way to efforts to cleanse Christianity of folk beliefs and practices to reach a purer religion. Another consequence of reform efforts was the rise of a new morality based on self-discipline. The reform movements also led to the rise of an understanding of an impersonal natural order which required less intervention by God and which has been the object of natural science. In addition, transformation of the self to individual subjects can be seen as another consequence of reform movements. The reformers made a distinction between the spiritual and the physical. Hence, instead of tracing the beginning of secularization to Protestant Reformation, he takes medieval reform movements which try to reform Christianity within as the starting point. Drawing upon his argument regarding the beginning of modernity and secularization, he sets forth religious and antireligious people in modernity have more common premises than they suppose to have. Throughout those similarities in history, he criticizes the sharp opposition between the religious

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 453.

and the secular.<sup>82</sup> Even Christianity carries a secularizing potential in itself. As Marcel Gauchet suggests “Christianity has played a unique role as “the religion of the end of religion”<sup>83</sup>.

Secularization process is also not a monolithic and homogeneously diffused process among different strata of society. Taylor correctly points out to the different effects of secularization process upon different classes in society. He argues that the same religious rituals were experienced and conceived differently by different classes such as elites, clerics and popular majority. In the ancient regime, there was a close connection between church membership and belonging to a national and a local community. However, Reformation period disrupted the local community forms. However, the popular religion led local community forms to be reconstituted, often on a different basis. The modern period detached social elites from popular culture making them even hostile to this popular culture. Social elites suppressed “magic” as well as unofficial religion and also imposed disenchantment. Consequently, the non-elites filled this vacuum by developing a new outlook and a set of practices composed of partly the old and partly new faiths. The following centuries witnessed the re-destruction of “magic” and unofficial religion by elites and popular reaction accompanying it again and again. The cultural gap between elites and the mass as well as the class conflict caused divergence of people from a church which was for everyone in society.<sup>84</sup> Secularization started as elite unbelief in the eighteenth century and it was only in the twenty first century when it turned to mass secularization.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Warner, VanAntwerpen, Calhoun, 15-17.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>84</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 440-443.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 437.

Similar to Taylor's account of secularization, Casanova also rejects the identification of differentiation and privatization. In other words, according to Casanova, separation and emancipation of secular spheres such as the state, economy, and science does not necessarily lead to privatization and marginalization of religion in the modern world. In contrast, Casanova posits that we observe deprivatization of religion today. What's more, identifying secularization with disenchantment is misleading. Taylor had suggested that secularization involved some kind of decline or recession of Christian faith. However, as scholars such as Weber, Gauchet, and Berger set forth both Judaism and Christianity have exhibited various kinds of disenchantment too.<sup>86</sup>

Another opponent of secularization thesis who challenges the general trend explaining secularization with the decline of religion in modernity is Dobbelaere. Just as the others criticizing secularization thesis, Dobbelaere questions the unilinear, universal, and irreversible character of secularization. He criticizes the equation of religious decline with the decline in church attendance as well as other expressions of religion. Dobbelaere strives for a wider definition of religion in which religion is seen as a more complex process in which human agents and various social factors take place.<sup>87</sup>

Martin, as another critic of secularization thesis, argues that the classical thesis of secularization rests on three suppositions namely secular universalism, the role of key class as well as historical baseline. He opens the incompatibility of religion with "industrial society and technological development" into question. Also, an intelligentsia alienated from churches and a similar alienation from the masses

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 425-426.

<sup>87</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 15.

should not necessarily be linked. Finally, he criticizes that “secularist history” presupposes an “age of faith” in which men were truly religious.<sup>88</sup> It is not possible to identify “religion” and the twelfth century Catholicism and regard every attempt away from this as decline.<sup>89</sup> Actually, it is hard to assume a homogenous age of faith since reform movements erupted during the medieval times which is taken as the golden age of Christianity. Martin attracts attention to religious revivalisms in industrial societies to refute the basic claims of the classical theories on secularization. Finally, he asserts that religion and industrial society can coexist and rejects the unilinear trend of secularization.<sup>90</sup>

On the other hand, Bellah argues that early modern religion subverted the hierarchical positioning of this and other world. Modern religious situation, symbolizes the replacement of an infinitely multiplex world with the simple duplex structure. In modernity, life has not become again “one possibility thing”, but rather an infinite possibility thing, according to Bellah. Bellah finds the analysis of modern man as secular, materialistic, dehumanized quite misguided since this does not reflect the modern temper. Bellah sets forth religious action in the modern world is like the continuation of the tendencies of the early modern period: In the modern world, man’s search for meaning is confined to the church less than ever. Yet, religious action is demanding more than ever. The modern quest for salvation involves search for adequate standards of action which means at the same time a search for personal maturity and social relevance. The present need is tried to be met by liturgical revival, pastoral psychology, and renewed emphasis on social action.<sup>91</sup> With his definition of “civil religion” he broadens the definition of religion and includes

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 14-17

<sup>89</sup> David Martin, *Religious and Secular*, 67 in Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 427.

<sup>90</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 17-18.

<sup>91</sup> Bellah, 36-45.



elements that fulfill the function of religion.<sup>92</sup>As we can see, Bellah presumes a functional definition of religion since he includes all the motives that direct religious action and meet the salvational need.

Another critic who challenged the homogeneity in secularization process is Sheehan. In his point of view, “Europe was ‘programmed’ to secularization”.<sup>93</sup> However, the codification of this program appeared alike in religious and secular institutions.<sup>94</sup> “[The] energies, dispositions, and paradigms of the religious and ecclesiastical system” was vital for the emergence of a modern state independent of ecclesiastical-religious forces.<sup>95</sup> It is also possible to observe counterexamples such as corporeal practices (practices of prayer, eighteenth-century religious camp meetings etc.) within the modernization frame.<sup>96</sup> Hence, Sheehan challenges the unilinear historical periodization through pointing out to the interconnectedness of modernization and religion.

Similarly, Hill questions the “golden age myth” of Christianity and proposes that modern society does not necessarily lead to the decline of religion. Glasner defines classical theories of secularization and religion as a “social myth”. He questions the taken for granted baseline society in which men were truly religious, the religious homogeneity and equation of religion with its institutional aspect. Glasner points out

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<sup>92</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 29-30.

<sup>93</sup> Heinz Schelling, “Confessionalization: Historical and Scholarly Perspectives of a Comparative and Interdisciplinary Program”, in *Confessionalization in Europe, 1555-1700: Essays in Honor and Memory of Bodo Nischan*, John M. Headley et al.(ed.)(Burlington, Vt: Asgate, 2004), 28 quoted in Jonathan Sheehan, “When Was Disenchantment? History and the Secular Age” in Warner, VanAntwerpen, Calhoun(ed.s), 222.

<sup>94</sup> Sheehan, 222.

<sup>95</sup> Schelling,28& Sheehan,223.

<sup>96</sup> Sheehan, 223.

that decreasing influence of religious institutions does not mean the decline of religion in interpersonal relations. Fenn draws attention to the blurred boundaries between the sacred and the secular. He proposes that the separation of life spheres facilitate religion's survival in modern society in a different way.<sup>97</sup> Reification of the golden age leads to a conception of a reified secular age.

### **2.3 Responses to the Critics of the Secularization Thesis**

Critics seem to reify some premises of the secularization thesis. Even though they accuse classical thesis of denying religious diversity and reject the coherence of religion in practice before modernity, proponents do not speak of any coherence but rather as Bryan Wilson suggests, of an age of religiously prescribed social order in medieval times. This, by no means, means to deny diversity of belief.<sup>98</sup> For Wilson, secularization refers to the “process by which religious institutions, actions and consciousness lose their social significance”.<sup>99</sup> Wilson replies the critics of the classical secularization thesis by arguing that such a definition by no means asserts that all men have acquired a secular consciousness or most of the people lost their interest in religion. It goes without saying that Wilson emphasizes the decreasing influence of religion in the social relations and the social system.<sup>100</sup> In addition, he does not refer to a monolithic society composed of religious men during the “age of faith” and recognizes the context-bound nature of secularization. Moreover, Wilson

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<sup>97</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 18-24.

<sup>98</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 28.

<sup>99</sup> Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, 149.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, 150.

asserts that “[r]eligion in modern society will remain peripheral, relatively weak, providing comfort for men in the interstices of a soulless social system of which men are the half-witting, half-restless prisoners”.<sup>101</sup>

What Wilson puts forward is actually the change of religion’s function in determining social relations. With the transition from *Gemeinschaft* which refers to a local and face-to face community to *Gesellschaft* which refers to impersonal association, religion started to function only in the flaws of the system. In other words, all the things that were once determined by religion have been organized, practically, empirically and rationally. Rationality dominates the economic, political and the cultural domains.<sup>102</sup> Wilson asserts that even though religion’s role in determining the social order as the source of social knowledge has been diminished in modern society, religion still plays a role in domains not reached by rationality such as human birth, ageing, death etc.<sup>103</sup> In this respect, Wilson adopts a functionalist approach to religion. In modern society, personal interests constitute the core of modern life. Wilson points out to the fact that community has been weakened and even intimate relations are determined by our dependence on technical devices and by the confines of rationally ordered society in the contemporary social world.<sup>104</sup> Wilson, as a response to the definition of “civil religion” of Bellah mentions that “[c]ivil religion’, so-called, is the feeble remnant of what remains of the latent functions of religion in providing social cohesion”.<sup>105</sup> Wilson argues that making the latent functions of religion and maintaining institutions to fulfill it is a component of

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<sup>101</sup> Bryan Wilson, “Aspects of Secularization in the West”, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 3, 1976, 276 in Bruce, 38.

<sup>102</sup> Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, 153-157.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 155,157.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 159,163.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 169.

rationalization.<sup>106</sup> Hence, such a functional replacement does not refute the change in the role of religion in determining social relations during secularization process.

Wilson proposes the existence of religious movement and alternatives in the modern age paradoxically refers to the decline of religion.<sup>107</sup> He accepts the emergence of the revivalist religious groups and new religious movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, he argues that in the context of a changing structure of society, socially speaking, the impacts of revivalism have been less important. What's more, the institutions and organizations of society, and the relationships among individuals get constantly more isolated from the impacts of those religious spirits.<sup>108</sup>

In contrast to the premises of critics of secularization thesis who attribute a uniform character to the secularization thesis, Berger suggests that the phenomenon of secularization is not uniformly distributed within modern societies. He attracts attention to the fact that men, middle-aged people, modern industrial cities, Protestants and Jews are more influenced by the process of secularization than women, young and old people, traditional cities, Christians respectively.<sup>109</sup> Berger also concedes that the polarization of religion due to secularization also gave way to pluralistic conditions since it facilitated the demonopolization of religious traditions.<sup>110</sup> This betrays the fact that Berger, as one of the proponent of secularization does not handle the process of secularization as a uniform and monolithic process but rather recognizes the plural conditions within the process of

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 170.

<sup>107</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 35.

<sup>108</sup> Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, 153.

<sup>109</sup> Berger, 108.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 135.

secularization. Hence, mentioning observations about the era of secularization as the demolition of the monopoly of ecclesiastical authority by no means refers to a “homogenous era of secularization” conception.

On the other hand, as Bruce and Wallis suggest, secularization does not refer to the decline of religion but rather refers to a diminishing public role for religion.<sup>111</sup> Accordingly, “declining involvement in religious institutions leave untouched the extent of ‘true religion’”.<sup>112</sup> Hence, public rituals such as nominal adherence, social performance of religious rites, acceptance of dominant ideas, fusion of religious roles and institutions with secular matters were lost without diminishing (even increasing) religiosity of the people.<sup>113</sup> Bruce rejects that secularization paradigm is progressive and secularist. He does not defend that secularization must have an even trajectory whose endpoint is atheism. On the contrary, Bruce suggests that the secularization paradigm should not be considered as a universal scheme and concedes that all major cultural defense cases share in common that religion continues to play a role in the formation of collective identities. As a response to critics, Bruce maintains that secularization paradigm does not see the changes it elaborates as inevitable. However, he adds that some social changes are accumulated in a “value-added process” and thus, after they emerge it is hard to see how their effects can be inverted in similar conditions.<sup>114</sup> To exemplify, “it is difficult to see how a religiously diverse liberal democracy can again become religiously homogenous while religion retains much substance”.<sup>115</sup> Unevenness of religious change does not refute the secularization paradigm. What is at stake must be the general trends and direction of social change as well as its long-term stability.<sup>116</sup> Bruce also argues that “the history

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<sup>111</sup> Wallis&Bruce, 11

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>114</sup> Bruce, 38-41.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, 41.

shows that things could have been very different is not the refutation of the secularization paradigm; it is merely the normal relationship between history and sociology”.<sup>117</sup>

All of the critical theses on secularization had questioned the evolutionary-historicist aspects of secularization theses which regard secularization as an inevitable process, the reduction of the definition of religion into institutional definitions which excludes religiousness prevailing in interpersonal relations, the “equation of secularization with the decline of religious institutions”, “homogeneity, coherence and incompatibility of religious beliefs with modernity” which rejects pluralistic social factors.<sup>118</sup> For critics of secularization theses, social reality and human nature are parcellized because they presume that with the rise of social differentiation in modernity, nature of human and social life were disintegrated. Nevertheless, those presumptions reflect a modern view and serve the “secularization of the social theory on secularization”.<sup>119</sup> Nuray Mert suggests religion was not excluded in the analysis of Weber and Durkheim and they took the individual, society and a religion as a coherent whole. She argues that critical theses on secularization see human nature in functional terms.<sup>120</sup>

As Mert argues, the basic assumption behind critical theories of classical theories on secularization is “the possibility of the separation of social and individual lives into different spheres and the assumption that religion can survive by addressing itself to

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 40.

<sup>118</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 25.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, 26-27.

one of these spheres”.<sup>121</sup> However, such an assumption neglects the fact that monotheistic religions which try to define all spheres of human life. Moreover, definition of human life as parcellization and social life in a functional manner so as to see the separation of human life as the result of social differentiation in modern society also constitutes a reflection of modern views on social theory. As Mert points out, analysis of religious phenomena necessitates to get rid of modernist bias and a different vocabulary other than a modern one.<sup>122</sup> To put it that way, “[t]he criticism of the idea of the decline of religion with reference to a religious past starts off as a criticism of historicism. However, it reveals more the tendency to secularize the past through projecting into it the modern view which does not necessarily assume an interrelation between world-views and social structures nor does it take rate of the significance of a world-view in ensuring the meaningfulness of human conduct”.<sup>123</sup>

Therefore, while trying to avoid from reification of a “religious past”, criticals of secularization theory fall into the trap of another reification—that is, seeing the theory of secularization as portraying a homogenous history of secularization. Such a viewpoint neglects the fact that Berger points out to the fact that Christianity included elements of disenchantment. Or does it ignore that Weber claims that Judeo-Christian tradition carried a secularizing potential.

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, 28-29.

## 2.4. A Post-Secular Age

The argument concerning whether we have transited to a post-secular age from a secular age is highly vocal recently. The secular consciousness of the individuals which was influenced by the material conditions of modernity had contributed to the formation of a secular society. In other words, a secular society had been borne out of the mutual interaction between the consciousness of the individuals and the emergence of a new reality under modernity. Yet, this new objective reality while transforming the institutional roles of religion also created its opponents. As was suggested by Wilson before, men faced with demoralization required a bond to define their existence in social relations. That stands as one of the main motives behind the proliferation of religious identities.

Hence, we observe ramification of religious identities who demand to be involved in public debate in the contemporary era. As Wilson puts it, so many new religions try to re-create the aura of community life. In other words, “[t]hey seek a new synthesis between the universalism that became a powerful intellectual and rational orientation in the modernizing world, and the strength of localism, even if that localism merely re-creates the benefit of smallness of size without usually, either the reinforcement of natural proximity of living or the totality of involvements that were shared in the local communities of the past”.<sup>124</sup>

In this era, the plural religious identities can not be confined to the private sphere since dichotomy between private and public incarnated as religion and reason

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<sup>124</sup> Wilson, 179.



dichotomy leads to insulating religion and science from each other.<sup>125</sup> As Habermas suggests “[t]he universalist guardians of Enlightenment think that “religion must withdraw from the political public sphere into the private domain because, religion has been overcome historically as a past “intellectual formation”. In the light of a liberal constitution, religion must be tolerated, but it cannot lay claim to provide a cultural resource for the self-understanding of any truly modern mind”.<sup>126</sup> This new era, according to Habermas, is marked with the emergence of “a post-secular society” in which religion is influential in public sphere and with the questioning of the classical secularization theory which asserts that religion loses ground with modernization.<sup>127</sup>

On the other hand, Taylor reminds that secular societies cannot be simply taken mankind minus the religion. Instead, they are the outcomes of long histories. Hence, secular does not refer to the absence of religion or its privatization or its extinguishment in Taylor’s account. The set of conditions in which modern ideas of religion are constructed have long and complex genealogies in Christianity.<sup>128</sup> In this respect, resurgence of religion is not the proof of a new post-secular exception.<sup>129</sup> In contrast, the religious and the secular (or secularist) coexist rather than compete. Foreseeing a shift from secular to post-secular neglects this fact.<sup>130</sup>

Therefore, Taylor rather uses the term “post-secular” to refer to the fact that the master narrative of secularization will be more and more challenged not to the

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<sup>125</sup> Roger Trigg, *Religion in Public Life: Must Faith Be Privatized?*(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 205.

<sup>126</sup> Habermas, “A Post-Secular Society”, 9.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>128</sup> Warner, VanAntwerpen, Calhoun, 24-25.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 22-23.

reversal of the general trend of the decline in belief and practice of the last century. He argues that the challenge of the master narrative of secularization would open new possibilities since this hegemony helped the decline in the last century.<sup>131</sup> Similarly, Habermas uses the term “post-secular” to refer to the challenge of the narrative of Enlightenment with regard to the proliferation of religious identities. Hence, the grand narrative of secularization and the secularization of society need to be differentiated in Taylor’s and Habermas’ analysis. The grand narrative of Enlightenment aimed to create a homogenous secular public sphere in modernity. Yet, religion, more or less, existed in the public sphere in different forms. On the other hand, Habermas does not talk about social reality. In other words, he does not mean that secularization completely cleansed the public sphere from religious impulses. Terming our contemporary era as “post-secular” does not automatically attain “the secular age” before it homogenous and purified of religion. Nor does this neglect the existence of religion in the secular era. According to Taylor, in the secular age, religion existed concomitantly with “the secular” in the public sphere and thus was not privatized. That’s why; Taylor determines continuity with the secular age and the contemporary age in contrast to Habermas who handles the Enlightenment ideal rather than the social reality in the “secular age”.

## **2.5 The Relation Between Secularism and Democracy**

The relation between democracy and secularism is hard to sustain as we observe different allocation of the roles of the religious and the secular in our contemporary age. How the ramification of those religious identities in this era should be accommodated in a modern democracy betrays the dilemma of secularism and democracy. Actually, the balance between secularism and democracy is hard to sustain. Because on the one hand, both religious and non-religious people should be

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<sup>131</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 534-535.

involved in the public debate, but on the other, the possibility of the outcome of a religious speech would threaten the very basis of democracy itself because of oppression of believers upon the non-believers. Modern democracies involve a sovereign citizen body which is composed of equal and autonomous people and which is supposed to be bonded together with other people through common self-rule. Taylor warns against that decision out of deliberation would belong to the influential people rather than the whole people. In this respect, the religious minority can actualize that their viewpoint differs from that of majority and is not recognized by the majority. As a corollary, the majority might not prefer to change the terms of debate to meet the demands of this difference and the voices of minority will be unheard as a result. Consequently, they will be excluded from the public debate. The legitimacy of this kind of political society will be questionable from the minority's point of view. It is the very reason why secularism is indispensable for religiously diverse societies. In other words, secularism is vital for maintaining democratic legitimacy.<sup>132</sup> To sustain democracy the point must be the right complementarity of equal citizenship and cultural difference.<sup>133</sup>

In line with this need, Habermas suggests a democratic model for including religious identities in secular states. He states that secularists demand for “color-blind inclusion of all citizens”.<sup>134</sup> However, he proposes that an epistemological status should be recognized to religious opinions just as to secular knowledge and religious convictions should not be marked as “irrational” vis-à-vis “rational” secular knowledge. Just as the misuse of reason does not defame reason altogether, the same is true for religion. The point for reason and religion is to mutually recognize the limits.<sup>135</sup> The same ethical freedom will be guaranteed to every citizen by the

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid, 45-46.

<sup>133</sup> Habermas, “A Post-Secular Society”, 6.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>135</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger “That Which Holds the World Together” in “Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State” in., *Dialectics of Secularization, On Reason and Religion*, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger&Jürgen Habermas(ed.s ). (San Fransisco:Ignatius Press, 2006), 66

neutrality of the state which does not comply with the political universalization of a secularist world-view.<sup>136</sup> Habermas sets forth “a liberal political culture can expect that the secularized citizens play their part in the endeavors to translate relevant contributions from the religious language into a language that is accessible to the public as a whole”.<sup>137</sup> In short, Habermas argues that believing citizens can equally contribute to public debate.

The liberal rule of law recognizes and secures religious freedom as a human right.<sup>138</sup> Besides, the secularization guaranteed further rights for religious minorities, free practice of minorities’ religions as well as free expression of religion in the public domain.<sup>139</sup> However, as Bruce warns “[t]he secularizing impact of diversity depends to a very great extent on an egalitarian culture and a democratic polity. In their absence, diversity may heighten racial and ethnic conflict and deepen commitment to a communal religious identity”.<sup>140</sup> In this respect, Habermas argues that various religious identities could and should make their voices be heard in the public sphere provided that formal state institutions are kept from religious voices.

In a constitutional state, all norms that can be legally pushed through must be formulated and publicly justified in a language that all citizens understand. Yet, the state’s neutrality does not preclude the permissibility of religious utterances within the political public sphere as long as the institutionalized decision-making process at the parliamentary, court, governmental and administrative levels remains clearly separated from the informal flows of political communication and opinion formation among the broader public of citizens. The separation of “church and state” calls for a filter between those two

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<sup>136</sup> Habermas, “Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State”, 50-51.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, 51-52.

<sup>138</sup> Habermas, “A Post-Secular Society”, 5.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 4-5.

<sup>140</sup> Bruce, 36.

spheres- a filter through which only “translated”, i.e., secular contributions may pass from the confused din of voices in the public sphere onto the formal agendas of state institutions.<sup>141</sup>

This derives from two points: First, even if religious language is used, people with moral convictions should be allowed to take part in political will formation. Second, the democratic state should not reduce the diversity of voices into a monophony.<sup>142</sup> As Habermas puts forward, “[t]he equal inclusion of all citizens in civil society requires not only a political culture that preserves liberal attitudes from being confused with indifference. Inclusion can only be achieved if certain material conditions are met, among others, full integration and compensatory education in kindergartens, schools and universities, and equal opportunities in access to the labor market”.<sup>143</sup>

Therefore, “[r]eligious citizens and communities must not only superficially adjust to the constitutional order. They are expected to appropriate the secular legitimation of constitutional principles under the very premises of their own faith”.<sup>144</sup> Habermas questions whether “the free, secularized state exist[s] on the basis of normative presuppositions that it itself cannot guarantee”<sup>145</sup> Accordingly, the democratic constitutional state has normative foundations.<sup>146</sup> As Habermas sets forth political liberalism justifies the normative bases of the democratic constitutional state in a nonreligious and postmetaphysical sense. However, he suggests that taking into

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<sup>141</sup> Habermas, “A Post-Secular Society”, 10.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>145</sup> Habermas, “Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State” in. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger&Jürgen Habermas(ed.s ), *Dialectics of Secularization, On Reason and Religion*, (San Francisco:Ignatius Press, 2006), 21.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid, 24.

account all “the cultural sources that nourish its citizens’ consciousness of norms and their solidarity” benefits the constitutional state.<sup>147</sup> Such an awareness refers to “a post-secular society” according to Habermas.<sup>148</sup>

Drawing the line between the positive freedom of religion and the negative freedom is controversial.<sup>149</sup> Habermas refers to a post-secular society in which religion and reason learn from each-other as well as limit each other.<sup>150</sup> He argues that “[i]n the postsecular society, there is an increasing consensus that certain phases of the “modernization of the public consciousness” involve the assimilation and the reflexive transformation of both religious and secular mentalities. If both sides agree to understand the secularization of society as a complementary learning process, then they will also have cognitive reasons to take seriously each other’s contributions to controversial subjects in the public debate”.<sup>151</sup> Nevertheless, what if those parties do not agree that secularization of society is a complementary learning process? Here, it seems that Habermas takes this consensus and Western subjects who are enmeshed with liberal and secular values in their society for granted. Hence, it goes without saying that he has presuppositions about secular state and thus bases the state upon normative foundations as he also accepts.

To put it that way, like any other social scientist, Habermas is not neutral and is embedded in the political culture of his country in his interpretation regarding that religious people can also make contributions to public debate. True, from a liberal

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>149</sup> Habermas, “A Post-Secular Society”, 6.

<sup>150</sup> Habermas, “Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State” ,77

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, 47.

point of view every citizen is equal and has equal rights in determining the public debate. However, since Habermas is born and lives in a liberal political culture in the seabed of Reformation which guarantees the rights of unbelievers, believers cannot exploit this freedom and threaten the freedom of unbelievers. Moreover, in Europe there is a differentiation in roles of the Church and the state. Nevertheless, we cannot claim such a differentiation of spheres in Islamic countries. It is understandable that this duality of religious authority and state authority which finalized in the favor of the temporal authority in modernization process leads Habermas to conclude that believers and unbelievers can contribute equally to public debate but what if a religious speech comes out so as to bind the unbelievers? In this case, will it be possible to keep the formal state institutions from the oppression of the religious groups? True, Habermas argues that even if people use religious language they should not be preempted from contributing to public debate. But, he also mentions that it will not be a problem as soon as the parties involved adopt a secular culture in the public speech which defines the limits of those religious identities. What if those identities do not recognize this limit? Habermas does not have an answer for this in his “post-secular” society formulation. What if this commonly produced speech becomes oppressive for “some” unbelievers or other religious groups? Habermas’ analysis sounds Euro-centric and carries the effects of his own peculiar Western political culture.

At the last resort, it must be admitted that, as Habermas concedes, “a post-secular society” can emerge more or less in a secular state. Such a term is viable for affluent European countries and for countries like Canada, Australia and New Zealand in which people’s religious bonds have steadily expired.<sup>152</sup> Therefore, “a post-secular society” should not be confused with suggesting a kind of relativism which abolishes the privileged status of reason over religion, modernity over traditional epoch. As Gianni Vattimo suggests, “if we accept the nihilistic destiny of our epoch and face

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<sup>152</sup> Habermas, “A “Post-Secular” Society” 1.

the fact that we cannot rely upon any ultimate foundation, then any possible legitimation of the violent abuse of others vanishes”.<sup>153</sup> In addition, science seems to have a privileged position over the religion. There are several reasons for this: In the first place, as Richard Rorty posits science allows public discussion whereas religion does not. Since religion is a “conversation stopper”, religion needs to be privatized according to Rorty.<sup>154</sup> It is not possible for a society to survive if religion is invoked.<sup>155</sup> Hence, for a post-secular formulation, a secular and liberal political culture is indispensable. This brings us to the question of incompatibility of secularism with a non-European context.

## 2.6 Is Secularism Christian?

The relationship between secularism and non-Western contexts is still a questionable issue that needs elaboration. In societies outside the European cultural zone, it is often argued that secularism is an invention of European civilization.<sup>156</sup> As Berger asserts, Western religious tradition carried the roots of secularization within itself.<sup>157</sup> What’s more, the existence of oppositions namely the Church and the world in Christendom led to the distance as well as non-coincidence between the Church and the world and also emergence of the state as “the secular arm”.<sup>158</sup> It was Protestantism which constituted those roots. The link between Protestantism and secularization shown by Berger is also significant to question whether secularization is a Western originated term. In Christianity, the social formation of the Christian

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<sup>153</sup> Trigg, 194-195.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid, 196.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>156</sup> Charles Taylor, “Modes of Secularism”, in Rajeev Bhargava, *Secularism and Its Critics*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998),31

<sup>157</sup> Berger, 110.

<sup>158</sup> Taylor, “Modes of Secularism”, 32.



Church also enabled secularization to develop. This owed much to that the Church resembled the institutional specialization of religion and concentration of religious activities and symbols in one sphere leaving the rest of the world free from the jurisdiction of the sacred that would pave the way for secularization. This was later legitimized by the Lutheran doctrine of the two kingdoms in which the autonomy of the secular is recognized.<sup>159</sup> However, this has not prevented Protestantism to enhance the secularization process in the West. To put it differently, one should focus on the interaction between cultures including religious elements and the social reality rather than the origin of secularization. In other words, whether secularization is alien to Turkish culture/Ottoman cultural heritage is not a meaningful question since it excludes the interactions between cultures as well as the “West” and the “East” even if this is taken as a reference point. Furthermore, the existence of those roots within the Western tradition does not give any idea about the intentions of those who shaped and carried the tradition of secularization. Moreover, it should be avoided from depicting an idealist explanation of secularization to leave open the ongoing dialectical relation between the practical infrastructure of social life and the religious factor.<sup>160</sup> Hence, whereas it is acceptable that secularism was imported from Christian societies and has Christian roots, claiming that this restricts the implementation of this formula in post-Christian societies seems wrong.<sup>161</sup>

Joseph Ratzinger also concedes that self-subsistent and inviolable values which cannot be transgressed by other people in Western societies are not acknowledged in other cultures and suggests that Islam has different conception of human rights.<sup>162</sup> I think that (his) observations do not necessarily carry prejudices about “the East” and is not necessarily Orientalist. While explaining his observations, Ratzinger also points out to the tension between secular culture dominated by strict rationality and

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<sup>159</sup> Berger, 105-125.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 110.

<sup>161</sup> Taylor, “Modes of Secularism”, 31.

<sup>162</sup> Ratzinger 61.

Christian understanding of reality and suggests that a similar tension also exists in the Islamic cultural sphere.<sup>163</sup> While Ratzinger's remark on this tension is vital to leave the possibility of founding a secular state in a non-European country, it is important not to neglect the factor of social change while differentiating between Islamic societies and European societies. In other words, if a non-Western society evolves towards adopting a secular and liberal culture, then it is possible to observe "a post-secular society" in which religious identities are included in the public debate.

## **2.7. Concluding Remarks**

Although the Old Testament includes a secularizing impact through leaving the cosmos to its logic as was put forward by Berger.<sup>164</sup> I argue that secularization is the outcome of modernization process to a great extent. As has been argued above, the major components of modernization namely, socialization, industrialization, social mobility, rise of individualism and egalitarianism and rationalization reproduced secularization process. The secularization thesis which foresees a decline in the social significance of religion was explanatory for the modern age. However, in our post-secular age, the grand narratives of Enlightenment were questioned with the publicization of religious identities. This does not refute the secularization thesis but rather points out to the start of a new epoch. In this respect, it is suggestive to refer to a "post-secular age" which points out to proliferation of religious identities in the public sphere. As has been elaborated above, in a post-secular society, according to Habermas, religious and non-religious people could equally contribute to the public debate as far as the former adopt secular legitimation of constitutional principles as

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid, 74-76.

<sup>164</sup> Berger, 113,120-121.

soon as religious contributions do not pass over to state institutions from the public sphere.<sup>165</sup> No need to say that public sphere does not refer to state but rather to a sphere between state and civil society for Habermas.

Thus, in normative terms, Habermas' post-secular model which enables participation of religious identities in the public debate is promising to accommodate secularism with the demands of religious identities. However, this model is viable in societies in which the liberal secular political culture dominates. Whereas separation of church and state functions as valves that prevent spillover of religious inputs to state institutions in Western societies<sup>166</sup>, other societies might lack such a guarantee to keep survival of a secular state and prevent religious oppression. In this respect, countries which do not have a separation account of laicite might tend to formulate other control mechanisms to keep secular state and safeguard religious sects and other groups against the oppression of the religious majority. With its control account, Turkish case of laicism, which will be handled in the following chapter, is no exception. Therefore, Habermas' warning also contributes to highlighting the rationale behind CHP's notion of laicism based on control.

As has been elaborated above, secularization involves an elitist element as it is guided by a vanguard class.<sup>167</sup> However, I think, when it is compared with the Middle Ages in which ecclesiastical authority prevailed secularization is less elitist given that it gradually paved the way for rule of people. In this respect, secularization has been a progressive step in history. This will help us to come to the conclusion

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<sup>165</sup> Habermas, "A Post-Secular Society", 9-10.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>167</sup> Taylor, 437.

that secularization driven by the CHP after foundation of the Republic carries a democratizing potential in the following chapters.

Secularization thesis which refers to declining social significance of religion in the public sphere above as it provides a theoretical tool for analyzing CHP's conception of laicite which rests on private and public dichotomy and entails exclusion of religion from the public sphere. By the way, it would not be erroneous to state that public sphere refers to the state and state-related institutions by the CHP. Post-secular age formulation of Habermas, on the other hand, enables one to analyze how CHP surrounds and should surround the challenges of religious identities to the laicite in the Turkish Republic. This would constitute another theoretical tool used to measure the extent of CHP's democrat attitude with respect to religious demands.

## CHAPTER 3

### TURKISH SECULARISM

Continuity or rupture is a fruitful starting point for analyzing Turkish secularism. In this respect, I suggest there is both continuity and rupture between the Ottoman era and the Republican era in terms of secularism. Stated in other words, there is continuity in terms of prevalence of state affairs over religious affairs. On the other hand, there was a crystal clear rupture in terms of the use of religion to legitimize the state in the sense that the Turkish republic used merely state reason to legitimize state affairs. Therefore, to elaborate on Turkish secularism, first of all, I will discuss whether it resembles a rupture with the Ottoman modernization efforts or continuity with them. Turkish Republic accommodated Islam in a different way so as to keep religion under surveillance. That's why; *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* was established to control religion. Thus, I will discuss that Turkish conception of laicite grounds on a control account of laicism which renders it different from its European counterparts by drawing upon the historical trajectory. In this respect, whereas laicism refers to control of religion by the state, secularism, as Berkes remarks, resembles emancipation of society from the oppression of the sacred. I will then analyze the critics directed at Turkish modernization within the framework of laicism and secularism. In the aftermath of examining the relation between Western modernity and Turkish modernization, I will focus on the rise of Islamic actors. Given Turkish laicism and its relation with democracy, rise of Islam in Turkish politics is worth to note as Islamic identities constitute the greatest challenge to Turkish laicism which rests on the dichotomy between private and the public that excludes Islamic identities with their religious symbols. In this sense, I focus on the reasons giving way to the rise of Islam in Turkish politics. As alternative modernity thesis constitutes the critique of Western modernity which leads Turkish modernity to create a homogenous public sphere, I will also elaborate on the alternative modernity thesis. Last but not the least; I will discuss whether Turkish laicism is democratic given the exclusion of Islamic identities from the public sphere.

### 3.1 The Continuity Or Rupture?

The evolution of Turkish secularism can be traced back to the modernization efforts during the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, it is possible to mention a continuity of the tradition of ‘raison d’état’ which usually facilitated state hegemony over religion between the Turkish Republic and the Ottoman Empire. In the Ottoman Empire, Islamic establishment was attached to the administrative apparatus of the Empire which gave way to political supremacy over religion. Similarly, in modern Turkey, religious establishment was firmly controlled by the republican regime through monopolization of Islamic functions as well as attaching the religious officers to state bureaucracy. Halil İnalcık asserts that the two roots namely, Central Asian and Persian roots of Ottoman state tradition had a significant impact upon the development of the Ottoman tradition of absolutism based on the orders of the Sultan which exceeded what Islamic laws enabled. The Central Asian roots involved the belief that the state survived through a code of laws namely, *törü* or *yasa* made by the ruler. The Persian roots, on the other hand, evaluated the state with the absolute authority of the Sultan and his justice.<sup>168</sup>

From another angle, religion in the centralized political and economic context of the Ottoman Empire helped to legitimize state power. Ottoman rulers maintained a form of direct surveillance over religion given the fact of Shii communities, unruly nomadic tribes and even the ulema as guardians of Islamic Law who could use the mobilizing power of religion.<sup>169</sup> Using different methods namely, “coopting in the ruling elite individuals largely recruited at an early age from religious minorities, by socializing them into the official class, by tightly controlling, though not necessarily

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<sup>168</sup> Ömer Taşpınar, *Kurdish Nationalism and Political Islam in Turkey*. (New York: Routledge, 2005), 7.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, 8-9.

centralizing, the system of taxation and land administration, and by dominating the religious establishment, the center acquired a stranglehold in the domains of justice and education as well as the “dissemination of the symbols of legitimacy”.<sup>170</sup> Yet, as Mardin argues, there was a “tacit social contract” between the Sultan and the ulema which was inspired by the Islamic concept of hisba which refers to the interest for a good and just order. Şeyhülislam would work for fitting Kanun into the appropriate Islamic framework. In short, in the Ottoman Empire Islam and state was fused into one polity namely *din-ii devlet*. Whereas the state was perceived as the embodiment of Islam, Islam constituted the essence of the state.<sup>171</sup> State had priority over religion as it was necessary for development of religion.<sup>172</sup>

However, with the modernization efforts, the cultural infiltration of Western positivism led to latent conceptualization of Islam as a regressive force in the Ottoman society. There is continuity between Tanzimat reformers and The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) as well as the era of 1923-1946. In both the Ottoman modernization era and the era of the Turkish Republic, the state was the primary agent of modernization. The Republic’s state-centered progress was greatly inspired by the Ottoman bureaucratic tradition. The Kemalists adopted the tradition of “modernization from above” and social engineering.<sup>173</sup> “Kemalist secularization was the culmination of a Westernist intellectual wave that originated almost a hundred years ago with the *Tanzimat* reforms and continued with Young Ottoman and Young Turks”.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Şerif Mardin, “Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?”, *Daedalus*.(Vol:102,No:1,1973),169.

<sup>171</sup> Taşpınar, 10-12.

<sup>172</sup> Şerif Mardin, Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey in Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey” in *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics, and Literature in a Secular State* Richard Tapper (ed), 31-55. (London: I.B. Tauris, 1991), 41.

<sup>173</sup> Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey”, 14-21.

<sup>174</sup> M.Hakan Yavuz, “The Return of Islam? New Dynamics in State-Society Relations and the Role of Islam in Turkish Politics” in *Turkey: The Pendulum Swings Back* (London: Islamic World Report, 1996), 79 in Taşpınar, 21.

Nevertheless, in spite of the continuity of state tradition in controlling religion, the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 changed the relationship between religion and the state by all means. Even though the Republic took over the tradition of state-based reforms and a central rational-legal tradition from the Ottoman Empire, it differed completely from the Ottoman Empire in terms of the institutionalization of the interaction between state and Islam.<sup>175</sup> Kemalist secularism differed from Ottoman style of governing in its determination to base its legitimacy on secular Turkish nationalism. The abolition of the Sultanate and the Caliphate can be read in these lines.<sup>176</sup> Republican Revolution had to deny the Ottoman historical heritage. As a modern/secular nation-state, the Turkish Republic produced a historical narrative with reference to pre-Islamic Central Asia and Anatolian civilizations before Ottoman-Islamic era to base its nationalism and secularism.<sup>177</sup>

Therefore, secularism burdened an important function that of being the cement for unifying people under one state in the Turkish Republic. It went beyond a constitutional principle since it was an indispensable component of Turkish nation and an instrument which was used to repress the Ottoman-Islamic past.<sup>178</sup> Therefore, the story of secularism is integral to the history of nation-state building in Turkey.<sup>179</sup> Cizre Sakallıođlu argues that the Kemalist project of Western style-Enlightenment tried to make individuals feel that they are the part of an imagined community, as the part of a nation. This has been maintained through breaking away with older cultural meanings and encouraging people to cut their all links with Islam. Hence, nation arose as the source of the common identity. That's why, Islam has been perceived as

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<sup>175</sup> Berna Turam. *Türkiye'de İslam ve Devlet: Demokrasi, Etkileşim, Dönüşüm*. (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011), 49.

<sup>176</sup> Taşpınar, 29.

<sup>177</sup> Nuray Mert, "Cumhuriyet Tarihini Yeniden Okumak", *Dođu-Batı, Cumhuriyetçilik*.(No:47,2008-2009), 124-125.

<sup>178</sup> Taşpınar,31.

<sup>179</sup> Nilüfer Göle, "Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide: Self, State, and the Public Sphere" in in Linell E. Cady&Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *Comparative Secularisms in A Global Age*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2010), 44.



a threat by the architects of the Turkish modernization project. However, early republican strategy towards Islam exhibited two characteristics: One repressive and the other combining the ideals of secular nationalism with Islamic symbols. Hence, Islam was not excluded from the public sphere but rather it stood central to politics making secularism a politically charged concept<sup>180</sup> in line with the Ottoman tradition stated above.

Hence, the boundary between religion and the state was integral to nation-state building in Turkey. “Since the pious Anatolian masses were likely to react against Ankara’s secularist reforms, an instrumentalist-cooptive approach towards religion, reminiscent of Ottoman patterns, had considerable appeal to pragmatic Kemalists. In practice, this meant placing a reformed, civic type of official Islam at the service of citizenship building. Not surprisingly, such a plan rendered an effective separation of state and religion all the more difficult.”<sup>181</sup> Inspired by the Durkheimian corporatist understanding of society Ziya Gökalp’s nationalism constituted the basis of the Kemalist ideology which aimed to blend Turkish nationalism with science and technology and to create a homogenous society which lacked class conflicts as well as ethnic and religious differences.<sup>182</sup> In other words, “[i]n the process of Turkish nation-state building, secularism became a vector for the homogenization of a national culture”.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Ümit Cizre Sakallıoğlu, “Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Vol.28, No:2. (1996), 234-236.

<sup>181</sup> Taşpınar, 29.

<sup>182</sup> Taha Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp, 1876-1924*. (Leiden: Brill, 1985)& Rıfat Bali, *Cumhuriyet Yıllarında Türkiye Yahudileri: Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni, 1923-1945*. (İstanbul: İletişim, 2000)& Ahmet Yıldız, “Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene:” *Türk Ulusal Kimliğinin Etno-Seküler Sınırları (1919-1938)*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001) in Esra Özyürek, *Nostalgia For The Modern, State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey*. (London: Duke University Press, 2006), 14.

<sup>183</sup> Göle, “Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide: Self, State, and the Public Sphere”, 45.

Even though the authoritarian policies of the Republic in its early years divided society and the state due to suppression, alienation and marginalization of the dissidents, Atatürk avoided a hierarchy between the governed and the state. One of the most enduring achievements of the Republic had been the skillfully blending people's national sentiments and laicite.<sup>184</sup> It is noteworthy to state that the Republic did not attack Islam but rather underlined the idea of the inconsistency of the nation-state and *ümme*.<sup>185</sup> In this respect, any premise that locates the religion of Islam against the Republic neglects the conditional and contextual relationship between the two.<sup>186</sup>

However, Kemalism betrayed a paradox in building Turkishness as the new source of legitimacy of the new state.<sup>187</sup> As has been mentioned above, the idea of unity of religion (*auctoritas*) and state (*potestas*) in the Ottoman Empire was kept in the Turkish Republic in the form of the unity of the nation and the state.<sup>188</sup> This formula of legitimacy was followed by positivist science which replaced transcendental Islamic monocratic formula. Levent Köker suggests that the rejection of the religious component of national roots is vague in contrast to the common understanding about Kemalism regarding the exclusion of religion in construction of Turkish national identity. Rather, Kemalist nationalism tried to explain religion with new *raison d'état*.<sup>189</sup> The Turkish state adopted a double discourse in its relation with Islam: Whereas it established separation between Islam and public political realm, it

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<sup>184</sup> Turam, 49-50.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, 51.

<sup>186</sup> Hakan Yavuz, "Cleansing Islam from the Public Sphere", *Journal of International Affairs*, 2000, 54 in Turam, 51.

<sup>187</sup> Levent Köker, "Ulusal Kimlik ve Devlet Meşruiyeti: Türkiye'nin Demokratik Deneyiminin Çelişkileri" in Elisabeth Özdalga&Sune Persson(ed.s), *Sivil Toplum, Demokrasi ve İslam Dünyası*. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları 76, 1998), 84.

<sup>188</sup> Ernst Gellner, "Kemalism" in Ernst Gellner, *Encounters With Nationalism*.(Oxford:Blackwell, 1994), 86 in Elisabeth Özdalga&Sune Persson(ed.s), *Sivil Toplum, Demokrasi ve İslam Dünyası*. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları 76, 1998),90.

<sup>189</sup> Köker, 89-93.

accommodated and incorporated Islamic politics into the system in several ways.<sup>190</sup> In line with this politics to accommodate religion in different ways, “the abolition of the Caliphate by the Republic was followed by the establishment of other religious institutions that were thought to be more compatible with the Turkish national project”.<sup>191</sup>

Islam constituted the “other” of the Republic facilitating the reproduction of the nation-state. Religion had been perceived as a mobilizing force for the social discontent which rendered perception of Islam as the ideological banner and common denominator of all anti-republican opposition movements by the Kemalist CHP. This has been the motive behind keeping Islam under state supervision.<sup>192</sup> Kemalist reforms were in congruence with the bureaucratic tradition of state-centered modernization.<sup>193</sup> In line with this, “a centralist elite, for whom religion became synonymous with counter-revolutionary segments of society, upheld anti-clerical laicism as state policy”.<sup>194</sup> “As in the Ottoman case, what emerged in republican Turkey was a dichotomized religion: an official, purist state-Islam versus the traditional Sufi sects in the Anatolian periphery, which despite their suppression by the Kemalist regime continued to operate clandestinely.<sup>195</sup> Hence, the threat of Islam has been a motive to consolidate the Turkish nation state rendering laicite integral to nation-state building in Turkey.

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<sup>190</sup> Cizre Sakallıoğlu, 232.

<sup>191</sup> Andrew Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey, A Hermeneutic Reconsideration*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 139

<sup>192</sup> Taşpınar, 118-119.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 120.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>195</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*. (London: verso, 1987), 77 in Taşpınar, 119.

Turkish secularism is different than many of its European counterparts since it stayed behind laicite, namely institutional separation of state and religion through control of religion by the state. “Turkish laicism acquired characteristics of an ideologically and politically charged concept that went beyond the parameters of Anglo-Saxon secularism”.<sup>196</sup> To put it differently, “[w]ith no independent Ottoman-Islamic religious institution to speak of, therefore, the Republican nationalists who assumed control of the state could hardly be said to have secularized Turkey’s state structures like the “church and state” separation in the West”.<sup>197</sup>

Actually, Turkish secularization exhibits typical characteristics of polity-expansion which refers to state’s performance of regulatory functions in the social and economic domains which used to be controlled by religious structures before; polity-transvaluation which involves state’s support for the creation of a secular political culture; polity-dominance secularization which involves governments’ attempts to secularize society and political culture rapidly through coercion rather than polity-separation secularization which refers to “the mutual detachment of the state and ecclesiastical structures”.<sup>198</sup>

As Dankwart Rustow puts it, “religious establishment has never been separated from the state”.<sup>199</sup> The militant secularism of the state reached to strict state control over religion as well as strict laicism in public affairs, rather than the institutional separation of Church and State.<sup>200</sup> In other words, “Islam was “put under control and

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<sup>196</sup> Taşpınar,31.

<sup>197</sup> Andrew Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey, A Hermeneutic Reconsideration*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press,1998), 141.

<sup>198</sup> Taşpınar, 27-28.

<sup>199</sup> Davison, 137.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid, 135.

made subservient to state authority”.<sup>201</sup> In this respect, “the existence of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is counterevidence to any claim that Islam was disestablished through laiklik.”<sup>202</sup> Keyder suggests that state has controlled all aspects of religious life from above. Actually, laiklik in Turkey was more than disestablishment and less than institutional separation.<sup>203</sup> Throughout Kemalist reforms the state has been emancipated from religion even though the reverse was not actualized.<sup>204</sup> İlter Turan argues that the Kemalist cadres tried to replace Islam with civil religion which had new rules and rituals.<sup>205</sup> He suggests that Kemalism paid significance to substitution of Islamic-Ottoman cultural symbols with European ones. However, it went beyond secularization of state apparatus and the promotion of Western cultural symbols by trying to de-Islamize social life.<sup>206</sup> In fact, the instrumentalization of religion was related with the “social engineering” aspect of Kemalism<sup>207</sup> and use of religion in a such a way for legitimizing the state has been inherited from the Ottoman state tradition.

In line with the secularism of the Turkish state based on control, the closure of medreses and unification of education under national education was followed by the ban on private religious education. The need for this religious education was compensated with obligatory religious instruction in public schools and opening of

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid, 135.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid, 139.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid, 139-140.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid,135.

<sup>205</sup> İlter Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey”,31-55&Richard Tapper,Nancy Tapper, “Religion, Education, and Continuity in a Provincial Town” in R.Tapper (ed) *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in A Secular State*, , 56-83. (London:I.B. tauris, 1991)&Hakan Yavuz, “The assassination of Collective Memory: the Case of Turkey”,*Muslim World* 89(3-4):193-213&Haldun Gülalp, “Enlightenment by Fiat: Secularization and Democracy in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies* 41(3): 351-373 in Özyürek, 14.

<sup>206</sup> Taşpınar,23.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid, 30.

Qur'an courses, Imam-Hatip schools and departments of theology.<sup>208</sup> Turkish state has provided religious education in public schools and controlled public Islamic schools. Moreover, it has paid the salaries of imams. Ahmet Kuru suggests that those policies do not reflect state's positive attitude towards Islam because 1) the rationale behind those policies is taking Islam under state control. 2) the state tries to create an "individualized version of Islam, which stays within one's own conscience or behind the walls of private homes and mosques with almost no impact on the public sphere" 3) the state controls the financial resources of Islamic foundations 4) the state tries to limit the activities of Qur'an courses, *İmam Hatip Schools* and *Diyanet*.<sup>209</sup>

Ömer Taşpınar argues that control of religion was not limited to institutional level. The influence of religion in society was also controlled by the Kemalists. All religious brotherhoods were prohibited across the country by the [Republican] regime. Secularization attempts continued with the foundation of People's Houses and Village Institutions. Atatürk's positivism had initiated a cultural war against the social power of Islam. Yet, the values targeted by Kemalism were deeply rooted in the everyday life of many individuals. That's why, prohibition on religious orders was as significant as the secularization of the state apparatus which started with the addition of "laicite" into the Turkish Constitution in 1937. Taşpınar evaluates this as an obvious rupture between the Republican tradition and the Ottoman social tradition in which religious tolerance was deeply rooted.<sup>210</sup> However, the attempt to project Ottoman past as an "era of tolerance" is based on a semantic shift. Mert argues that Islamists as well as some liberals and democrats present Ottoman millet system as a model for coexistence of differences. Yet, such an attempt neglects the rooted difference between the dynamics of coexistence of differences in a traditional society and of coexistence of differences in a modern society. Historical reading which

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<sup>208</sup> Ahmet Kuru, *Secularism and State Policies Toward Religion: The United States, France and Turkey*.(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009),165.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid, 167.

<sup>210</sup> Taşpınar, 25-27.

ignores the complexity of the era of the late-Ottoman Empire frames Committee of Union and Progress and the authoritarianism, petty mindedness and personal desires of the founding cadres of the Republic for the responsibility of modern history. Nevertheless, this can not go beyond mere reactionism and serves to another “formal” historical narrative in which “whites” have replaced the “blacks”.<sup>211</sup>

### **3.2 Historical Trajectory**

CHP is a significant political actor as the motor of secularization and architect of laicite in the Turkish Republic. It has launched many reforms concerning laicite as well as secularization of society. Turkish secularism which was enforced by the CHP between 1923 and 1950 can be defined as assertive mode of secularism in which “the state excludes religion from the public sphere and plays an assertive role as the agent of a social engineering project that confines religion to the private domain”.<sup>212</sup> The attempts for secularization to control religion started first with the confrontation of the Islamic institutions within the state apparatus by the Ankara government. Abrogation of the Caliphate in 1924 followed the abolition of the Sultanate in 1922 and the foundation of the Republic in 1923. Since Kemalists —as the proponents of CHP in the meantime— feared any kind of religious opposition which was actually the sole opposition form that could be mobilized in the meantime, the Caliphate resembled a potential rallying point that could prompt a counter-revolution in the form of an Islamic backlash.<sup>213</sup> In traditional institutions of religious education were shut down and replaced by an education system which would be supervised by the Ministry of National Education. Plus, mystical orders were prohibited. Also, a new

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<sup>211</sup> Mert, “Cumhuriyet Tarihini Yeniden Okumak”, 135.

<sup>212</sup> Ahmet Kuru, “Passive and Assertive Secularisms”, *World Politics*. 59 (2007), 571 in Fuat Keyman, “Assertive Secularism in Crisis: Modernity, Democracy, and Islam in Turkey” in Linell E. Cady & Elizabeth Shakman Hurd (eds) *Comparative Secularisms in a Global Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 144.

<sup>213</sup> Taşpınar, 22.

civil code was adopted [in 1926].<sup>214</sup> Secularist reforms continued with the abolition of the function of Seyhulislam and the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Foundations which would be replaced by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. The incorporation of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to the state maintained political control over the religious realm which would already exceed the separation of state and religious affairs. The eradication of the clause concerning Islam as the state's religion was actualized in 1928.<sup>215</sup> Arabic alphabet was replaced with Latin alphabet in 1928. What's more, traditional and religious costumes were outlawed. The metric system of measurement and the Gregorian calendar was adopted.<sup>216</sup> What's more Islamic education was eliminated from primary schools between 1933 and 1940.<sup>217</sup> In 1937, laicite was enshrined in the Constitution.<sup>218</sup>

In the maintenance of national unity, secularization played a vital role since it contributed to the establishment of a new affiliation namely, citizenship instead of religion.<sup>219</sup> Correspondingly, Quran was translated into Turkish from Arabic with the aim to facilitate its comprehension by the masses<sup>220</sup> which would contribute to the breaking the oppression of the sacred and thus development of secularism. Flourishing a secular national identity, practices such as singing of national anthem and flag saluting [which any other nation-state has] were put into force.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Metin Heper, *Islam, Polity and Society*, 351 & Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, *Türkiye'de Modernleşme, Din ve Parti Politikası: MSP Örnek Olayı*, Istanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1985), passim, 75 & Smith, *Religion and Political Development*, 268 & Toprak, *Islam and Political Development*, 40, in Turan, *Religion and Political Culture in Turkey*, 34.

<sup>215</sup> Taşpınar, 22-23.

<sup>216</sup> Donald Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk*, (New York: AMS Press, 1973), 126-133 in Sencer Ayata, "Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey", *Middle East Journal*, (Vol.50, 1996), 41.

<sup>217</sup> Metin Heper, "Islam and Democracy in Turkey: Toward a Reconciliation?" *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.51 (Winter 1997), 34 in Tank, 6.

<sup>218</sup> Pınar Tank, "Political ıslam in Turkey: A State of Controlled Secularity", *Turkish Studies*, (Vol.6, No.1, 2005), 5.

<sup>219</sup> İter Turan, "Stages of Turkish Political Developments", *Prepared for the Third International Congress on the Economic and Social History of Turkey*; Princeton University; August 24-26, 1983, 7.

<sup>220</sup> Tank, 6.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid*, 6.



Moreover, introduction of the male suffrage accompanied by its extension to females in 1934, granted people voting rights which would enable them to demand and add inputs to Turkish political system. It was, in other words, the incarnation of the principle in the constitution that “the sovereignty belonged to the nation”.<sup>222</sup> The foundation of the People’s Houses in 1932 and Village Houses in 1940 were other developments through which CHP actually aimed to spread national consciousness and give political and ideological education to people who would become the representatives and cadres of the new regime respectively. Thus, rather than imposing decisions as is the case in authoritarian regimes, CHP paid attention to mobilization of the masses and their integration to the regime. To put it that way, reproduction of the nation-state involved the recruitment of the urban based educated segments of the population and the members of the state bureaucracy as well as the integration of the citizens to national political life throughout “campaigns to promote literacy; the opening of People’s Houses and Rooms intended to provide opportunities for cultural activities at the community level in a modern framework; the opening of village institutes to train primary school teachers who were expected to serve as agents of the center in transforming the countryside according to the modernist-nationalist principles of the republic”.<sup>223</sup>

Simply put, the cultural reforms of Atatürk targeted reducing the societal role of religion.<sup>224</sup> The secular leadership criminalized and punished basing politics on religion.<sup>225</sup> Consequently, it was aimed to diminish the influence of Muslim culture and the power of tradition.<sup>226</sup> Incorporation of the *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* into the state apparatus gave way to the control of the religious establishment by the

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<sup>222</sup> Turan, “Stages of Turkish Political Developments”, 8.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid, 4-5.

<sup>224</sup> Toprak, *Islam and Political Development*, 24 in Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey”, 35.

<sup>225</sup> Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey”, 44.

<sup>226</sup> Webster, 126-133 in Sencer Ayata, “Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey”, 41.

centralized nation-state.<sup>227</sup> Atatürk's conception of laicite went beyond the separation of religion and the state through targeting a wider social and cultural rationalization movement. In rationalization of the public sphere, Atatürk cleansed the public sphere from religious symbols and imprisoned it into the private sphere. Hence, Turkish history witnessed the articulation of Islam to the laic institutional framework rather than abrogation of religion or separation of it from the state. In this sense, religious freedom had been abolished and Islamic social forces had been suppressed until the 1950s. As state became more intolerant about the visibility of Islamic symbols in the public sphere, the boundaries of the Islamic activities had been enlarged so as to include the secret Islamic organizations. However, as the private sphere enlarged to include a common Islamic activity, it became illegitimate. As has been mentioned before, the definition and reinforcement of the boundaries between the religion and the state was a central and a deliberate element in nation-building. However, it should be noted that the strength of the formal institutions maintained the opposition to stay within the framework of democracy even though the involvement of the state in everywhere hindered the development of a liberal democracy.<sup>228</sup> In this respect, Turkish state was not totalitarian and has sown the seeds of democratic demands.

Opposition to CHP's secularization by imams, sheiks and religious orders remained underground between 1923 and mid-1940s.<sup>229</sup> However, transition to multi-party politics constituted a break away with this policy.<sup>230</sup> CHP's strict policies concerning religion were grinded with the transition to multi-party politics. As Frank Tachau proposes that the first two decades of the Republic witnessed integration of the CHP

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<sup>227</sup> Taşpınar, 29.

<sup>228</sup> Turam, 51-53.

<sup>229</sup> Nilufer Narlı, "The Rise of the Islamist Movement in Turkey," *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA)*, Vol.3, No.3 (Sept. 1999), 1 in Tank, 7.

<sup>230</sup> Turan, "Religion and Political Culture in Turkey", 44.

and the state.<sup>231</sup> However, as Kemal Karpat argues that with the transition to multi-party politics in 1946, CHP candidates felt obliged to appeal to their constituencies for gaining votes.<sup>232</sup> In 1949, while CHP was in power, a notable liberalization in government policies concerning religion, among others, took place during Şemsettin Günaltay's Prime Ministry.<sup>233</sup>

After 1946, the CHP tried to appeal to public opinion about “normalization” of religious affairs through introduction of elective religion courses in the primary and secondary school curricula, preparation of textbooks by the Ministry of Education and the *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, decision to reintroduce Preacher Training Schools the so-called *Imam Hatip Schools* for training preachers and religious functionaries<sup>234</sup>, allowance to University of Ankara to open a Faculty of Divinity (İlahiyat Fakültesi), reopening tombs and shrines, making foreign exchange available for pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>235</sup> Nevertheless, prohibition for the abuse of religion for political purposes was guaranteed by the tightening of Article 163.<sup>236</sup> The softening of the “anti-clerical” tendencies of the CHP can be associated with the correlation between democratization and the emergence of religious populism.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Frank Tachau, “The Republican People’s Party, 1945-1980” in Metin Heper&Jacob M. Landau.(ed.s) *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey*, (New York: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd. Publishers, 1991),102.

<sup>232</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, *Turkey’s Politics: the Transition to a Multi-Party System* .(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 162 in Tachau, “The Republican People’s Party, 1945-1980”, 103.

<sup>233</sup> Tachau, “The Republican People’s Party, 1945-1980”, 104.

<sup>234</sup> Gabriel Baer, “The Administrative, Economic and Social Functions of the Turkish Guilds”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, January 1970, 49 in Taşpınar, 122.

<sup>235</sup> Taşpınar,122.

<sup>236</sup> Binnaz, Toprak, *Islam and Political Development*.(Leiden:E.J.Brill,1981) in Taşpınar, 122.

<sup>237</sup> Taşpınar,122.

However, those reforms could not change CHP's image in the eyes of the rural population and were far from reaching the rural villagers yet. Peasants and townsmen could not receive material benefit from the CHP regime. In addition, they were also discontent about regime's policies of secularism as well as cultural Westernization.<sup>238</sup> This has been a significant factor in Democrat Party's (DP) victory in the 1950 elections. This reflected the fact that CHP's adherence to secularism and reform no longer attracted the less educated peasants which were mobilized by the DP.<sup>239</sup>

DP portrayed the CHP as an oppressor through bureaucratic enforcement of secularism. This appealed to peasant voters for whom religion was an agent for showing social discontent.<sup>240</sup> Even though the Democrat Party (DP) did not have a political ideology which originated from religion, it had a more tolerant attitude towards religion.<sup>241</sup> In this regard, the party programme of the DP actually did not differ from the programme of the CHP very much. It adopted six principles of Kemalism namely, republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, laicite and revolutionism even though it differed from the CHP in the interpretation of those principles.<sup>242</sup> The DP, in contrast to the CHP which tried to make Islam compatible with a secular modern nation-state, used religion as a means to achieve political and social control. It also viewed secularism "an ideology that undermined family and community ties, and led to moral degeneration of youth, the weakening of spiritual values, and the spread of communism among alienated intellectuals –social ills that could only be cured by religion".<sup>243</sup> Islamic groups found the opportunity to establish alliances with the Democrat Party which argued that "religion had its place within

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<sup>238</sup> Tachau, "The Republican People's Party, 1945-1980", 104.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, 105.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid,, 106.

<sup>241</sup> Turan, "Religion and Political Culture in Turkey", 45.

<sup>242</sup> Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye (1945-1980)*. (İstanbul: Hil Yayın, 1996), 27.

<sup>243</sup> Sencer Ayata, "Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey", 44.

the framework of the Kemalist state”<sup>244</sup> DP did not hesitate to use religion as an instrument to compensate for the dissidence against the DP rule in society.<sup>245</sup>

After DP was ousted from power by a military coup in 1960, CHP formed an alliance with the Justice Party (AP) which was founded in 1961 following the 1961 elections. The AP was alike the DP in terms of its approach to religion: “its conciliatory, and concessionary attitude toward religion, and populist sentimentality, the JP essentially followed in the footsteps of the DP”<sup>246</sup> Whereas the DP did not form alliances with Islamic groups very often, during the JP rule between 1961-1981 “direct and lasting relationships with various Islamic groups, communities, and leaders” was established through “a process of exchanging votes and political support for access to public resources and protection against threats from the state and secular forces”<sup>247</sup>.

It was towards the end of the 1960s when religiously-based political ideologies proliferated in Turkish politics. Being one of the actors having a political ideology which has religious basis The National Order Party(MNP) was established in 1969 and was closed down by the Constitutional Court on the basis of using religion for political purposes.<sup>248</sup> In the meantime, CHP underwent a great change both in ideology and programme as well as organizational structure and leadership.<sup>249</sup> In

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<sup>244</sup> Tank, 7.

<sup>245</sup> İter Turan, “Stages of Turkish Political Developments”, *Prepared for the Third International Congress on the Economic and Social History of Turkey*; Princeton University; August 24-26, 1983, 27.

<sup>246</sup> İlkay Sunar&Sabri Sayari, “Democracy in Turkey; Problems and Prospects”, Guillemo O’donnell&Philippe C. Schmitter/Laurence Whitehead, (ed.s) *Transition from Authoritarian Rule Prospect for Democracy*,. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 175.

<sup>247</sup> Sencer Ayata, “Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey”, 44.

<sup>248</sup> Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey”, 45.

<sup>249</sup> Tachau, “The Republican People’s Party, 1945-1980”, 107.

1964, CHP Party Congress adopted a declaration namely, “Our Ideal of a Progressive Turkey” which paid emphasis on secularism among other issues like social justice, “democratic etatism” etc.<sup>250</sup> The CHP’s position was shifted to “left of centre” before the 1965 election. Leftward shift of the CHP in the 1970s gave it an “anti-statist stance”.<sup>251</sup> Even though CHP could not win the 1965 election, in 1973 election it reaped the fruits of its “left of centre” position. In 1972, the leadership of CHP changed hands to Bülent Ecevit from İsmet İnönü who led the party since the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.<sup>252</sup> CHP’s coalition with National Salvation Party (MSP) which invoked Islamic values<sup>253</sup>, contributed to anti-etatist image of CHP who had distanced itself from etatism with adoption of “left of centre” position. After the military intervened in 1980, CHP was closed like all the other political parties. CHP would be reopened again in 1993.

### **3.3 Laicism or Laicite or Secularism?**

Whether Turkish modernization can be called secularism or laicism or laicite has become a theoretically debated issue. For instance, Berkes argues that laicism is used to make a distinction between people and the clergy.<sup>254</sup> He suggests that *laicism* and duality of state and religion are external to Islam, Ottoman and Turkish religious and political tradition. For Berkes, Turkish case can be explained with the term secularism since it refers to emancipation from the oppression of the sacred tradition

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<sup>250</sup> Feroz Ahmad, *Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975*. (London: C.Hurst, 1977), 177-185 in Tachau, “The Republican People’s Party, 1945-1980”, 107.

<sup>251</sup> Tachau, “The Republican People’s Party, 1945-1980, 112

<sup>252</sup> Ibid, 108-109.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 111.

<sup>254</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. (Montreal: McGill University, 1964), 3-4 in Umut Azak, *Islam and Secularism in Turkey*. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 8.

rather than separation of religion and state or state and the Church in the narrow sense.<sup>255</sup>

On the other hand, Andrew Davison suggests that Turkish experience deserves to be called “laicism” since religion is controlled by the state in Turkey. Hence, according to Davison, Turkish experience can not be called “secularism” since the latter connotes a non-religious and religion-free state. Conversely, *laiklik* relied on a religious policy in which a specific interpretation of Islam was adopted in Turkey. Davison interprets Turkey’s situation as laiklik but not secularism. Given the connotation of secularism as a “political sphere that is not influenced by religion, laiklik did not necessarily end state interest in religion in Turkey according to Davison. State’s attempts to cultivate a new clerical class support his claim according to him.<sup>256</sup> In Davison’s words, “although laicism in the Turkish context expresses an anticlerical purpose to some extent (some state clerics remained), it was not necessarily antireligious. In one dimension, *laiklik* entails giving priority to those who believe in the Kemalist version of religion over religious matters. The Kemalist supporters in this case included clerics as well as lay persons who accepted the Kemalist interpretation of the place of Islam in politics”.<sup>257</sup> Fuat Keyman also prefers to use the term “laicism” for Turkish modernization. Accordingly, the Turkish secularism not only involved the separation of religion and politics but also a strict institutional and constitutional control of religion by the state.<sup>258</sup> In this respect, Turkish secularism turned to “laicism” referring to the assertive character of Turkish secularisms and “constitutional control of religious affairs” by the state which goes beyond the “official disestablishment of religion” from the state. In this respect, [laicite] which was introduced into the Constitution in 1937 by the Republican People’s Party (CHP), constituted the constitutional basis for religious life in Turkey

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<sup>255</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma*. (İstanbul:Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007), 17-19.

<sup>256</sup> Davison, 153.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid, 154.

<sup>258</sup> Keyman, , “Assertive Secularism in Crisis: Modernity, Democracy, and Islam in Turkey”, 145.

as well as the constitutional principle of the party. Laicism became the main instrument which established a link between the objective process of secularization which refers to institutional separation of state and religious affairs and subjective process of secularization which refers to the demise in the role of religion in culture. This link operated from above, from the state to the society.<sup>259</sup>

Even though Berkes and Davison, Keyman attribute different meanings to laicism and secularism, they converge in one point that the Turkish case of secularization can not be simply taken as separation of state and religion in the Western sense of the term. I agree with Davison&Keyman on the control account since religion was controlled by the state in Turkish modernization. Therefore, I use the term “laicism” to refer to control of religious affairs by the state. Yet, I also prefer to adopt Berkes’ definition of secularism for Turkish modernization since I evaluate the history of Turkish modernization as an attempt to emancipate from the oppression of the sacred traditions and thus as also a sociological reform rather than simply a political one. On the other hand, I use laicite—as was called in CHP Party Programme—to refer to separation of religious and political affairs.

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<sup>259</sup> Ibid, 145-146.



### 3.4 The Critique of Turkish Modernization

Whether Turkish secularism was suitable for Turkish society is a highly disputed issue. For instance, Mardin points out to the psychological factors that constituted drawbacks of Turkish modernization project. He argues that Kemalism could not burden the role of ideology since it could not develop a new meaning on the level of personality-construction and play a new function. Moreover, Kemalism did not allow rival ideologies to sprout. In contrast, the bourgeois ideology competed with religion. However, Turkish Republic paradoxically caused “ümmeť” structure to continue. Patriotism, solidarity and struggling against others backed ümmeť to exist. The opposition of republican elites against class struggles was another factor that perpetuated ümmeť. Whereas villages compensated this gap deriving from deficiencies of the Republic through “volk Islam”, in urban life this created characteristic culture crisis of Republic among urban people and elites.<sup>260</sup>

Moreover, state remained insufficient in controlling religion. As Mardin suggests, structures which have burdened the function of secondary structures such as political parties, and Republican laws would exclude Islam from ümmeť structure. In other words, Turkish Republic had created legitimacy to its legal entity and an alternative to it. Religion, as soon as it benefits from those structures, attains a structure different than ümmeť. In other words, religion has gained the chance to develop out of the control of the state.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji*. (Ankara:Sevinç Matbaası, 1969), 120-121.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid, 125.

The handicaps of Turkish modernization owe much to the place of religion in Turkish society. Mardin argues that religion appears as a mediator of action in Turkish culture. Due to the lack of values in modern Turkey, religion burdened an important function in fulfilling this vacuum in lower classes.<sup>262</sup> Mardin explains the need for religion with psychological reasons. In this respect, Mardin refers to Freud who suggests that the first stage in the evolution of child's personality corresponds to child's feeling of weakness in a world which he could not understand. In this context, parents appear as "absolute authority" which meets the wishes of the child. When the child grows up, he is ready and willing to discover this "absolute authority" under a new form. In this respect, religion appears as a construct which compensates for this willingness.<sup>263</sup>

Besides, according to Mardin, Islam is not only a religion but it also functions as a medium for constructing a social identity.<sup>264</sup> Religion plays an important function in the formation of personalities in Islamic societies to the extent that it functions as a mediator for social norms. In this sense, it assumes additional ideological functions in comparison to the West.<sup>265</sup> As Binnaz Toprak suggests "[b]ecause Islam is something more than a religious belief system, the problem of secularization also becomes something more than formal separation [between the state and religion]."<sup>266</sup> In this context, as Mardin suggests, tarikats fulfill the role of Islamic characteristics namely, definition of the outlines of society, direction (normative), appropriation of ideological and cultural meanings into society, protection of the individuals, maintenance of social fluidity in case of the lack of secondary structures.<sup>267</sup> Hence, Mardin continues that given Durkheim's equation of respect to religion with respect

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid, 70.

<sup>266</sup> Davison, 151.

<sup>267</sup> Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji*. 72.

to authority <sup>268</sup> and the role of religion in the construction of social identity, substitution of the social role of Islam in Turkey with national identity no doubt did not come up without problems. To this, the leading role of religion should be added. Mardin proposes that the guiding role of religion is much more developed in Muslim societies than in Western societies. Still, in the West, the social guiding role of religion ultimately contradicts with religious ideas as was seen in Enlightenment philosophy. However, as Mardin suggests, in Muslim societies there are almost no rival ideologies if the ideology for the protection of the state which functions as an independent ideological element to a certain extent and if Sufism is not taken into account.<sup>269</sup>

In a similar vein, to emphasize the difference between Europe and Turkey, Berkes proposes that a complete separation of state and religion is impossible in a Muslim society given the political nature of Islam.<sup>270</sup> Çetin Özek similarly evaluates Islam as being more than religion—that is, as a political ideology. That’s why; assertive secularists tried to confine Islam to individual conscience giving way to the exclusion of Islam from the public sphere.<sup>271</sup>

Even though the guiding role of religion in Turkish society makes a difference in Turkey, secularization process was not even homogenously diffused among different strata in Europe in which religion did not have such a guiding role. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, after the Reformation damaged local community forms, popular religion enabled reconstitution of local community forms on a

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<sup>268</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid, 59-60.

<sup>270</sup> Niyazi Berkes, “Historical Background of Turkish Secularism” in. By Richard N. Frye (ed.s), *Islam and the West*, (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1955), 1998 in Kuru, 175.

<sup>271</sup> Kuru, 176.

different basis as a reaction to imposition of disenchantment by the elites in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was only three centuries later secularization has become a mass phenomenon in Europe.<sup>272</sup> Given the example of Europe in secularization, it might be too early to decide on the fate of Turkish modernization. In other words, this might not be necessarily the failure of Turkish secularization but the course of secularization process. Even though Christian and Islamic contexts differ from each other, such a cultural gap between elites and nonelites was experienced even in the European context in which religion did not have a regulatory role as much as in the Islamic contexts. Therefore, it might be experienced in Turkey fair enough.

Hakan Yavuz suggests that Turkish modernization created an ethical and a social vacuum by destroying Islamic institutions and symbols through positivist engineering of society.<sup>273</sup> Göle, also argues that the Kemalist Revolution of 1923 dismantled the traditional public networks which was organized around religion and adopted a secular attitude in the national public sphere.<sup>274</sup> Neglect of people and authoritarianism constitute other points of criticism. Mete Tunçay, among other Marxists, criticizes the implementation of secularism so as to alienate the masses rather than the principle of secularism since he sees secularism as a progressive and a positive step. Tunçay focuses on the politico-institutional aspect of secularism<sup>275</sup> and questions the authoritarian character of Republican Revolution and the foundational era.<sup>276</sup> However, Turkish secularism involves state-individual alienation in contrast to the West in which the secular state cooperated with the individual in its challenge of the authority of the Church. In the West societal dynamics, the rise of capitalism and bourgeoisie as well as the evolution of natural sciences led to empowerment of

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<sup>272</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 437.

<sup>273</sup> Nilüfer Göle, "Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere" in Nilüfer Göle&Ludwig Ammann (ed.s), *Islam in Public Turkey, Iran, and Europe*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press, 2006), 21-22.

<sup>274</sup> Göle, "Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere",36.

<sup>275</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey* 57.

<sup>276</sup> Mert, "Cumhuriyet Tarihini Yeniden Okumak",130.

the individual and emancipation of mind respectively. The challenge from below to religious morality gave way to emancipation of state from political theology. However, the Ottoman state lacked the support of the individual in its attempt to emancipate from religious enclosure.<sup>277</sup> Also, unlike the Western counterparts, the Ottoman rulers stayed alone in their challenge of the religious authority as the individuals lived in a religiously defined world. Furthermore, the Ottoman order was not fragmented by capitalism, science and ideological relativism that could lead undermining of Islamism from within in contrast to the Western states. Hence, the Ottoman society was confined to stay stable as it could only be challenged from above by state officers and for the sake of the state.<sup>278</sup>

However, as Taylor argues, elites in Europe also suppressed unofficial religion as well as magic rendering unelites to reproduce their popular belief system. This went on in a dialectical way until secularization's transformation into a mass process in the 21. century. Hence, the elitism of secularization is not unique to Turkey, but rather is the very nature of the secularization process in Europe too.

Another critic, Islamist Ali Bulaç finds secularism in the world of Islam not realistic and superstructural. He proposes that Islam is incompatible with secularity through basing his argument upon the idea that Islam involves explicit measures regarding socio-political life which does not exist in Christianity and upon the historical experience of Christianity.<sup>279</sup> This stands as the main motive behind Turkish account of laicism which relies on supervision of religious activities by the state.

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<sup>277</sup>Halil M. Karaveli, "An Unfulfilled Promise of Enlightenment: Kemalism and Its Liberal Critics", *Turkish Studies*, (Vol.11.No:1, 2010), 91.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid, 92.

<sup>279</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 59.

In this respect, Bernard Lewis suggests that the aim of the principle of laiklik was to disestablish Islam and confine it into the private sphere. Mustafa Kemal and his cadres tried to break the controlling influence of Islam in public and private spheres.<sup>280</sup> The main tension between Kemalists and conservatives lies in the public visibility of religion. Whereas the former envisions a religion only in the conscience of the individuals, the latter want to replace this assertive secularism with a passive secularism which enables public visibility of religion.<sup>281</sup> Displacement of religion from the public sphere stands as another shortcoming of Turkish modernization given the exclusion of religious symbols from the public sphere. However, in actual fact, it is the guiding role of religion which constitutes the main motive behind the construction of Turkish conception of laiklik (laicite) through creating a dichotomy of public and private upon religion.

The historical fact that the decentralization of political power in Europe led to the struggles between the state and the church also reminds the uniqueness of Christianity in the implementation of a secular model and incompatibility of the secular model with Turkish society. In this respect, there are differences between Christian and Islamic contexts in terms of the relation between religion and state. In the Turkish case, religion and state authority were intermingled and political power was centralized. On the other hand, in Christian contexts, powers were politically separated. This led to the idea of incompatibility of Islam and secularization. Besides, in intellectual terms Islam was seen incapable of leading to secularization. According to Weber, the two aspects of Islamic ethics namely, warrior ethic and the mystic could not produce a set of motives that would meet the needs of rational capitalism and thus modernity. On the other hand, Donald Smith categorizes traditional religio-political systems under two headings namely, “the organic model” which is resembled by the fusion of religious and political functions and the “Church

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<sup>280</sup> Davison, 138.

<sup>281</sup> Kuru, 164.

model” which is based on the separation of religious and political power. For Smith, whereas Christianity exemplifies the church model, Islam is a precedent for the organic model.<sup>282</sup>

However, it should be noted that the difference of Western experience of secularism and the Turkish one owes much to the form of this secularism. As Mert argues “[t]he idea of the compatibility of Christianity with secularity as a result of its tradition derives on the one hand, from the above stated confusion of form and content, and on the other, it projects modernity onto the history of Christianity”.<sup>283</sup> This distinction between form and content is significant since, as Mert argues, there is not so much difference between the secularization of Christianity and Islam in terms of content. However, a traditional separation of religious life and socio-political life cannot be taken as the distinctive feature of Christianity when secularization experiences of Christianity and Islam are compared.<sup>284</sup> Rather, as Mert proposes secularization in the Western world occurred as a result of the encounter of the Christian world-view with a new world view just as in the Turkish context. In this respect, Mert establishes similarities between the secularization experiences of the West and Turkey. However, according to Mert, the distinctive property of the secularization experience of Christianity lies in the form of its meeting with modernity. The specific historical form of Christianity was different than Islam in that the former took the advantage of a relative autonomy in the decentralized structure of Medieval Europe whereas the latter was always fused with central authority. The secularization of Christianity occurred much more spontaneously than secularization of Islam which occurred much later and as a result of deliberate policies which is called secularism.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 46-47.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid, 48.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid, 48.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid, 49-50.

Mert suggests that confusion between form and content of secularization process causes analysts to focus on the institutional and political aspects of the secularization process as well as the idea of difference between Christianity and Islam regarding the compatibility with secularity.<sup>286</sup> As Mert argues “Christianity, in terms of its dogma, is an over all world-view which combines all aspects of life rather than separates them as in the case of modernity. The existence of decentralized political authority in the history of Christianity does not violate this fact, as argued by Berger. Although the Christian church existed as a separate political power, both church and empire behaved in the name of Christianity”.<sup>287</sup> Hence Mert differentiates between the elementary form of religion and the specific historical modes of religion. Accordingly, historical mode of Christianity survived within the conditions of a decentralized political authority which gave way to secularization in the West and in this respect, it was different from its Islamic counterpart. However, in terms of content, Islam as a worldview(just like Christianity) faced a similar challenge of modernity. The confusion between the form and content of religion owes to functional and institutional definition of religion which is completely a modern/secular definition.<sup>288</sup> The fact that ideas are not as much subject to analyses as the radical form of the implementation of secularism proves that it is less visible to change ideas than the Islamic way of dressing by the pressure of a secularist state and changing ideas provokes less resistance than the latter. The most significant outcome of evaluating radical secularism in political terms in Turkey stands as the common viewpoint that radical secularism could only achieve superficially since it is superimposed. However, such analyses neglect to observe the quality of that transformation by overfocusing on the formal aspects of secularization.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid, 50-51.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid, 62.



Furthermore, the tension between religion and the state can be traced back to an era long before the foundation of the Turkish Republic. In contrast to the separation of the Church and the state in medieval Christianity, Islam had been a central element of the Ottoman state. Ottoman state differed from other Muslim world with its state tradition which came to the fore long before the foundation of the Turkish Republic. With the emergence of the supremacy of law and new ideas concerning legislation during the Tanzimat period, the idea of a central legal rational tradition was planted. Tanzimat Charter had constituted the first divide between the religious and non-religious elements. As religion became the bureaucratic arm of the state, state reforms created a dual system in spheres of law, education, and governance through religion. As a corollary of reforms from above and Westernization, the Ottoman society witnessed a divide between Islamic traditionalists and Western laicists instead of a separation between religion and state. In the late times of the Ottoman Empire, the components of modernization such as bureaucracy, communication and a secular legal system excluding family law were established.<sup>290</sup> Berkes argues that the fact that Islam constituted the basis for political legitimacy in Ottoman Empire does not conflict with the secular aspects of public law and life. This constituted a basis for modern categorization of separate spheres of life for Niyazi Berkes.<sup>291</sup> Berkes argues that secularism in Turkey can not be reduced to elite politics because there are historical proofs which lead to the development of secularization in Turkey. According to Berkes, Islam has been the cement of society in the Ottoman Empire but the public life relied on a legal framework which was not essentially Islamic. In this respect, Berkes tries to “secularize the past”.<sup>292</sup> Even though it is not possible to assert a completely secular era in the Ottoman Empire, it might be suggested that Ottoman heritage facilitated the development of secularism in Turkey. It is true, to a certain extent, Ottoman bureaucratic tradition allowed secularism to flourish. In this respect, Mardin underlines the “relative secularity” of the Ottoman bureaucratic tradition: “First: there was the constant presence of Islam as an ideal of and for society. Second, Islam was a “discourse” which enabled persons of high and low

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<sup>290</sup> Turam, 47-48.

<sup>291</sup> Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 54.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid*, 53.

standing to have recourse to the same fund of concepts in organizing their life strategies. Finally, there existed a latent element of permeation of social relations by role models that gave direction to the social action of Muslim Ottomans as it filtered through a standard imaginary reproduced among the elite as well as in the folk culture”.<sup>293</sup>

Another critique to the Turkish secularism concerns the status of women. Gender equality has been an instrument in building a nation-state and legitimizing the modernity of this nation-state. According to the modernization project of Atatürk, women’s acquirement of freedom and power has been the outcome of participation of women to the public sphere. However, there was no place for women’s uniqueness and women’s movement in this gender reform initiated by men. The project of increasing the visibility of women in the public sphere has been integral to the determination in nation-building as well as in Westernization and secularization.<sup>294</sup> Furthermore, the gender equality of Turkish secularism involved women mostly teachers or authors. Besides, laic women excluded Islamic women and their interests in their interaction with the state.<sup>295</sup> Yet, even though Turkish enlightenment was class-biased it included some women into the public sphere/social life.

Another critique concerning Turkish modernization is its adoption of Western modernity. Turkish modernization is often criticized for implementing a Western model to a non-Western context regardless of the specificity of Turkish society. Göle draws attention to melting of the non-Western particular in the basket of universal modernity. Traditions are ignored, destroyed or disappears per se as they

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<sup>293</sup> Şerif Mardin. “The Just and the Unjust”, *Daedalus*, Summer 1991, p.118 in Mert, *Early Republican Secularism in Turkey*, 54.

<sup>294</sup>Turam, 136-137.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid, 138-139.

are seen as obstacles to modernity. In non-Western societies, there is a discontinuity between tradition and modernity. What's more, tradition and modernity seem as discordant fragments which do not overlap. The history of non-Western societies are determined by a paradoxical seeking between identity and modernity as the dissonance between the self-definition of non-Western and definition of modernity continuously create a tension. Whereas modernity works against the local particularisms, nationalist, culturalist or religious identities try to create difference vis-à-vis Western modernity. Non-Western modernities are shaped by modernizations which are implemented without the formation of modern individual. That's why, centralist Jacoben republicanism model constitutes a historical reference for non-Western societies.<sup>296</sup>

In this respect, it is commonly echoed that Islam has been a repressed local culture vis-à-vis the universalist Kemalist republic. According to this perspective, Turkish Republic has been founded upon the principles of equality and secularism like other modern states and adopted "Western civilization" and thus holding the claim for universality; it suppressed and homogenized local cultures relying on secularism. According to Göle, the modernization project in Turkey has imposed a political will to "Westernize" cultural codes, lifestyles, and gender identities".<sup>297</sup> In this respect, Turkish modernism, according to Nilüfer Göle is "a project of civilization by which local patterns and traditional values are dismissed and devalorized. As a consequence, within the framework of this civilization project, local Islam, which is considered as alien to rationalist and positivist values, is expelled, put outside the realm of history".<sup>298</sup> Therefore, according to this line of thinking, civilization is not value-free since it privileges the "*alla franca*" (European) cultural practices and lives over the "*alla turca*" (Turkish) ones.<sup>299</sup> In a similar vein, civilization "designates the

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<sup>296</sup> Göle, "Batı-Dışı Modernlik Üzerine Bir İlk Desen", *Doğu-Batı*.(No:2,1998),70-72.

<sup>297</sup> Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern, Civilization and Veiling*. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996),11.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid, 132.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid, 15.

historical superiority of the West as the holder of modernity” rather than signals the “historical relativism of each culture”.<sup>300</sup> To put it that way, “the concept of civilization is not a neutral, value-free concept; to the contrary, it specifies the superiority of the West and attributes universality to a specifically Western cultural model”.<sup>301</sup> It underestimates the national differences and privileges Western cultural codes superior to non-Western ones. This helps to privilege the Western “civilized” subject over the non-Western “barbarian”/ “uncivilized” or “backward” or “irrational”.<sup>302</sup> Göle puts it, “[t]he master narrative of Western secularity has imposed a sociological gaze that has evaluated non-European experiences with an established set of criteria and measured the inconsistencies or deficiencies in respect to a model that is supposed to be universal”.<sup>303</sup> In this respect, according to Göle, Turkey had adopted Western cultural norms during modernization which rendered perception of religion as the cause of backwardness by the Kemalist center.<sup>304</sup>

Similar to Göle’s argument, Norbert Elias maintains that civilization refers to Western consciousness of superiority and imposes Western upper class life style as the standard of civilized and modernized.<sup>305</sup> Hence, civilization is not value-free and neutral but rather, refers to the power relationships between the Western and non-Western. In this respect, Turkish modernization can be interpreted as a change of civilization from Islamic Ottoman to Western Turk which is influential at the level of habitus that refers to levels of privileges such as tastes, body language, forms of settlement, eating habits, style of attires. In non-Western societies, the dissonance

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<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 12-13.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid, 11-13.

<sup>303</sup> Göle, “Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide” ,42.

<sup>304</sup> Taşpınar, 27.

<sup>305</sup> Norbert Elias, *The History of Manners, The Civilizing Process*, Vol.1, (New York:Pantheon Books,1978) in Göle, “Batı-Dışı Modernlik Üzerine Bir İlk Desen”,72.

between the subject and modernity causes the fragmentation of both causing detachment of modernity from its Western character.<sup>306</sup> Göle posits:

the secular self means a set of bodily practices to be learned, rehearsed, and performed, ranging from ways of dressing (and undressing), talking and socializing with men to acting in public. The habitations of the secular are not transmitted “naturally” and “implicitly”, but on the contrary become part of a project of modernity and politics of self that require assimilation and “acculturation” to a Western culture.<sup>307</sup>

In this sense, [secularism] has always been considered as a prelude to Westernization.<sup>308</sup> As Göle suggests, “[I]n non-Western contexts, secularism is closely interrelated with the project of the “civilizing mission” of the West and transmits a set of norms that define rationality as well as ethical and aesthetic forms”.<sup>309</sup> However, Western master narrative of secularism faces a radical change due to its confrontation with Islam. There is also a shift in terms of the acknowledgement of plurality of secularisms and nonwestern forms of secularity.<sup>310</sup> Political Islam has posed a challenge to the authoritarian and exclusionary politics of secular nationalism in Turkey.<sup>311</sup>

However, the partial continuity of the modernization efforts of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic discussed so far exposes that Western modernity was not simply patched upon the Turkish Republic. Rather, Turkish modernization was the outcome of the interaction between the Ottoman Empire/the Turkish Republic and

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<sup>306</sup> Göle, “Batı-Dışı Modernlik Üzerine Bir İlk Desen”, 72-73.

<sup>307</sup> Göle, “Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide: Self, State, and the Public Sphere” ,48.

<sup>308</sup> Taşpınar, 35.

<sup>309</sup> Göle, “Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide: Self, State, and the Public Sphere” ,48.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid, 42.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid, 45.

the Western modernity. As Berkes argues that Republican Revolution was prepared by the conditions preceding it in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>312</sup>

In other words, West and the Eastern contexts are not closed blocks devoid of political interaction. In the formation of a nation, As Homi Bhabha argues:

the difference of space returns as the Sameness of time, turning Territory into Tradition, turning the People into One. The liminal point of this ideological displacement is the turning of the differentiated spatial boundary, the ‘outside’, into the unified temporal territory of Tradition.<sup>313</sup>

The same is true for “the East” and “the West”. Bhabha also points out to the hybridity between “inside” and “outside”: “[t]he boundary is Janus-faced and the problem of outside/inside must always itself be a process of hybridity, incorporating new ‘people’ in relation to the body politic”.<sup>314</sup> Bhabha reminds that “[t]he ‘other’ is never outside or beyond us; it emerges forcefully, within cultural discourse, when we *think* we speak most intimately and indigenously ‘between ourselves’”.<sup>315</sup>

Drawing upon Bhabha’s argument above, it could be suggested that the boundaries between the East and the West are not clear-cut but ambivalent. I argue that analysis which attains Turkish Republic as a passive modernity-importer renders the East and the West as ahistorical entities. Put another way, such an analysis rests on essentialism which leads to ahistorical interpretations. As has been argued above, as

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<sup>312</sup> Berkes, *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma*, passim.

<sup>313</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, “DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation,” in Homi K. Bhabha (ed), *Nation and Narration*, (London:Routledge, 1990), 300.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>315</sup> *Ibid*, 4, emphasis in original.

İnalçık suggests, it was Central Asian and Persian roots which enabled state tradition so as to control religion for the absolute authority of the Sultan in the Ottoman Empire<sup>316</sup> This no doubt constituted a background for the state tradition in Turkish Republic in which religion was taken under the control of the state. In spite of the fact that Turkish Republic resembled also a rupture with the Ottoman Empire in terms of legitimization of politics through state reason instead of Sharia, the continuity of state tradition in terms of prevalence of state affairs over the religious affairs persisted in the Turkish Republic. Henceforth, I suggest that in political terms laicism has not been something *simply* imported from the West. In this respect, with its roots of state tradition in history as well as modernization efforts, Turkish laicism represents a hybridity between the East and the West. In this respect, given the difference of Turkish context and existence of religious oppression in society, Turkey has followed a different path than its European counterparts in adopting laicite.

Also, it seems to me that the elitism of Turkish secularism is exaggerated given the era before modernization in the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, before modernization and thus secularization, the gap between the masses which were not citizens but subjects and the ruling elites were much unbridgeable. In this respect, Ottoman modernization efforts and Turkish secularization has been a step forward to bridge the gap by providing the citizens the right to determine the national will. In other words, Turkish secularization has more or less contributed to tackle with elitism of the rulers. Therefore, analyses which overemphasize the elitism of Turkish secularization fall into the trap of ahistoricism. This is one of the points which makes secularism an indispensable component of democracy, especially in the Turkish context.

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<sup>316</sup> Taşpınar, 7.

### 3.5 The Rise of Islamic Actors in Turkish Politics

As has been mentioned in one of the previous sections, restrictions on the religion were softened with the transition to multiparty politics. DP was more tolerant towards religion in spite of the fact that its political ideology was not based on religion.<sup>317</sup> Actually, from the 1950s onwards, as Sencer Ayata posits, center-right parties diminished state's control over religion.<sup>318</sup> By the liberal 1961 Constitution, Islamist groups found opportunities to for maneuver, even though they were dependent on center-right parties for political representation.<sup>319</sup> This owed much to that 1961 Constitution extended the list of basic rights and liberties by bringing social and economic rights such as consociational rights. 1961 Constitution also guaranteed those rights against any violation.<sup>320</sup> AP maintained direct and long-lasting relationships with Islamic groups, communities as well as leaders.<sup>321</sup> However, political Islam was on the scene with the foundation of the National Order Party (MNP) in 1970. Owing to MNP, religious groups found direct political representation until it was closed in 1971 for violating the rules of secularity. However, Islamic movement from 1970s onwards found political representation throughout the National Salvation Party (MSP) (1972-81).<sup>322</sup>

The military regime used Islam as a shield for counterbalancing leftist ideologies to reinforce the unity of national identity.<sup>323</sup> In this respect, a Turkish-Islamic synthesis

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<sup>317</sup> Turan, "Religion and Political Culture in Turkey", 45.

<sup>318</sup> Sencer Ayata, "Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey", 44

<sup>319</sup> Tank, 7.

<sup>320</sup> "1961 Anayasası", available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa61.htm> & Kemal Gözler, "Anyasa Değişikliğinin Temel Hak ve Hürriyetlerin Sınırlandırılması Bakımından Getirdikleri ve Götürdükleri", available at <http://www.anayasa.gen.tr/madde13.htm>

<sup>321</sup> Sencer Ayata, "Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey", 44.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>323</sup> Interview with Dr. Dogan Akyaz, instructor at Kuleli Military High School, Istanbul, November 2001, in Tank, 10.



which was composed of the blend of religion with nationalist values was put into force. As a corollary of this controlled Islamization, Quran classes were opened and new imams were employed by the state. In order to contain anti-systemic ideologies, state also promoted religious and moral education. This was reflected in the Article 24 of the 1982 Constitution which made religious courses compulsory.<sup>324</sup>

Such an atmosphere of Turk-Islam synthesis influenced the political arena as well. Center-right parties, used religious symbols to reinforce their position in politics. The state ideology in the form of Turkish-Islamic synthesis in the post-1980 period stood in sharp contrast to the original Kemalist designation concerning the basis of the state.<sup>325</sup> On the other hand, in military schools religious education was limited to a one within the framework of Atatürk's notion of secularism and teaching of Kemalist ideology remained as a priority.<sup>326</sup> In short, the state was vague in its message about religion in the aftermath of the 1980 military intervention. On the one hand, the state was secular in the Constitution but on the other hand, religion was utilized to consolidate Turkish nationalism. The state's new orientation towards Islam opened new facilities for the Islamist movement. The future support base of the Islamist movement was educated via using this Islamic current in the educational system.<sup>327</sup>

As Sencer Ayata posits, "[t]he center right approach toward religion has emerged and evolved since the 1950s as a peculiar combination of viewpoints, involving both a general broadening of political freedoms and an expanded role for Islam in public

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<sup>324</sup> 1982 Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupe/ec/eca/anayasa.pdf>, in Tank, 11 & Tank, 10-11.

<sup>325</sup> Hugh Poulton, *Top Hat, Grey Wolf, and Crescent: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 178, in Tank, 11.

<sup>326</sup> Gareth Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics*, Adelphi Paper 337 (London: Oxford University Press, 2001), 31 & Interview with Dr. Dogan Akyaz, instructor at Kuleli Military High School, Istanbul, November 2001 in Tank, 11.

<sup>327</sup> Tank, 11.

life”.<sup>328</sup> In this context, the rise of new urban business elites whose Islamic identity determined their political and social affiliations, found the opportunity to be represented in the Motherland Party(ANAP) since they took advantage of Özal’s economic liberalization policies. ANAP enabled Islamic elements to enter into and survive in Turkish politics until 1991 when Islamic wing of the party namely Holy Alliance was defeated by the liberal wing. When ANAP was in power, the Naksibendis emerged as the most important Islamic lobbying group at least until 1989 when Özal became president. The leader of the MP had affinities with Naksibendis and did not hesitate to use the Naksibendi networks for political purposes such as increase in export to Gulf countries by using Naksibendis’ links with those countries. The True Path Party also played its part in serving the revival of Islam in Turkish politics. Tansu Çiller, the leader of the TPP, formed “alliances with organized religious groups”.<sup>329</sup> Arrangement of a publicly announced meeting with Fethullah Gülen who is the leader of the most efficient Islamic group in Turkey, Gülen Movement was the betrayal of that alliance.<sup>330</sup>

Center-right also gave way to a firm ground to Islamic revival in education. The religious schools namely, theology faculties, Quranic schools, and *İmam Hatip Schools* which have mushroomed after 1950 as a result of center-right parties’ policies. Basically, those schools were under state surveillance that held them in line with secularist education. Yet, especially the *İmam Hatip Schools* constituted a ground for religious groups’ organization. Moreover, Sufi groups’ penetration into *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* besides the *İmam Hatip Schools* caused reduction of the state autonomy.<sup>331</sup> In addition, Islamic movement was nourished by tarikats and other Islamic organizations. The alienation of individuals and the ejection of traditional communities following market economy and urbanization have been

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<sup>328</sup> Sencer Ayata, “Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey”, 44.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid, 43-46.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid,47-55.

utilized by tarikats.<sup>332</sup> What's more, tarikats' answering to social needs through helping needy students, maintaining students free accommodation and financial aid for food and other expenses, organizing medical aid and treatment increased their popularity.<sup>333</sup>

The political context was exploited by the Islamist parties which also reproduced Islamic revival.<sup>334</sup> MSP was opened under a new name the Welfare Party (RP) [in 1983].<sup>335</sup> In the 1995 elections the secular parties could not present satisfactory policy packages to the electorate.<sup>336</sup> Hence, the success of the Welfare Party and thus the rise of Islam in Turkish politics could be based on the insufficiency of the secularist parties which enabled the rise of the Islamic Welfare Party. Fuller makes the point that the Welfare Party used the economic and social situation by acting as “a social welfare agency for the needy” through which it tried to legitimize the rhetoric of Just Order (Adil Düzen) to address to the urban migrants.<sup>337</sup> Under the victory of the Justice and Development Party in 2002 elections, mismanagement of the economy, corruption and the establishment's longstanding acceptance of them played a significant role.<sup>338</sup> The Welfare Party also achieved the mobilization, organization and support of holdings, trade unions, chambers of commerce and industry and media which constituted another factor in the rise of the Islamic movement.<sup>339</sup> While in power, Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the RP, determined its priorities according to the party's Islamic orientation discontenting its coalition

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<sup>332</sup> Ibid,49.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid,49-50.

<sup>334</sup> Heper, “Islam and Democracy in Turkey: Toward a Reconciliation”, 36.

<sup>335</sup> Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey”,45.

<sup>336</sup> Heper, “Islam and Democracy in Turkey: Toward a Reconciliation”, 36.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid,36, Tank, 8.

<sup>338</sup> Tank,7- 8.

<sup>339</sup> Heper, “Islam and Democracy in Turkey: Toward a Reconciliation “36-38.

partner True Path Party (DYP).<sup>340</sup> Whereas in foreign policy, this was incarnated in arrangement of Erbakan's first visits to Islamic countries including rouge states namely, Libya and Iran, establishment relations with militant Islamist groups such as Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and Palestinian Hamas,<sup>341</sup> in domestic politics this was reflected by imposition of Islamic regulations such as bans on alcohol consumption, regulations on women's clothing and construction of mosques in Konya in which Erbakan had a considerable vote (41%) in the municipal elections.<sup>342</sup>

However, the military did not keep quite. Two days after the Iranian ambassador argued for imposition of Sharia, the military responded by mobilizing tanks in the city of Sincan which would be followed by the arrest of mayor of Sincan, expulsion of the Iranian ambassador, launch of a campaign against Erbakan by the military.<sup>343</sup> In its meeting on 28 February in 1997, National Security Council (MGK) decided on the downfall of the government relying on that the coalition government could not meet criteria concerning secularism. One month after the MGK meeting, Erbakan government collapsed. This was followed by Constitutional Court's decision concerning the outlawing of the RP in 1998. After Erbakan government was ousted from power, Western Working Groups was founded in order to monitor the ideological activities of civil society groups, governors and members of the media particularly Islamist ones. As a corollary of perception of threat from Islam, a revised National Security Concept was announced on 29 April 1997 in which Islamic activism was codified as a threat to national security besides Kurdish

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<sup>340</sup> Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirisci (eds.), *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multi-Regional Power* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 103 in Tank, 9.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid, in Tank, 9.

<sup>342</sup> Ben Lombardi, "Turkey—Return of the Reluctant Generals?" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol.112 (Summer 1997), 14 in Tank, 9-10.

<sup>343</sup> William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774–2000* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000), 318 in Tank, 10.

separatism.<sup>344</sup> After the closure of the Welfare Party in 1998, Islamist movement in Turkey continued to launch other parties entitled Virtue Party (1997–2001), as well as the Felicity Party (2001–) and Justice and Development Party (AKP) (2001). Islamist parties challenged the secular establishment of the state through an Islamic identity deriving its roots from the repressed Islamic past of the Turks.<sup>345</sup>

The ascent of Islamic actors in Turkish politics, no doubt, has several reasons. Yet, the gap between the elite culture and the culture of the masses has been one of the reasons behind Islamic revival. The gap between the low culture and high culture in the Ottoman era persisted during the Republic era. The latter caused elites to delegitimize people's Islam.<sup>346</sup> Actually, this gap is assumed to be narrowed due to developments caused by modernization such as centralized education, mass communication and popular participation in politics. Yet, in 1920s and 1930s Turkey lacked those factors to bridge the gap between the elites and the masses.<sup>347</sup> In this respect, as Toprak asserts, "any attempt to win the hearts and minds of the Anatolian masses in the countryside required the use of traditional and religious symbols that were anathema to the secularist republican elite".<sup>348</sup> However, the founders of the Turkish Republic could not establish appropriate channels of communication with the Anatolian peasantry. With the eruption ethnic-religious based rebellions, Kemalist center appealed to authoritarian model of "modernization from above" which targeted implementation of secularism and Westernization on reluctant masses.<sup>349</sup> In this respect, Mardin's center-periphery paradigm which points out to the continuity of the Ottoman history and the history of the Turkish Republic relying on the gap between the center and the periphery is explanatory for the gap between elites and the masses in Turkey. Whereas the center referred to the civil, military and

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<sup>344</sup> Tank, 10.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>346</sup> Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji*, 118-119.

<sup>347</sup> Taşpınar, 116.

<sup>348</sup> Binnaz, Toprak, *Islam and Political Development*. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981), 37 in Taşpınar, 116.

<sup>349</sup> Taşpınar, 116.

religious bureaucracy which resembled state apparatus whose top was the Sultan, the periphery involved the local notables, Sufi Islam and the peasantry in Mardin's center-periphery analysis.<sup>350</sup>

The periphery created its counter culture vis-à-vis the center—the rulers knowing Persian and Arabic in the Ottoman Empire during the traditional era.<sup>351</sup> In the nineteenth century integrating non-Muslim population as well as Muslim population in the periphery and participation of those elements to political system stood as problems. However, through cooptation of notables into politics, integration would be launched after 1908.<sup>352</sup> After the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, clientalism between the local notables and the state took a new form with bringing the state into the periphery through imposing new obligations such as taxing, military service etc. and offering new benefits. The local notables constituted the link between the state officials and the peasants.<sup>353</sup>

According to the center-periphery paradigm, Mardin suggests, Turkish modernization was imposed on or against Islam of the periphery by a secular elite at the center. Atatürk's cultural Westernization program blended with Comtean positivism and Mustafa Kemal's attitude against stranglehold of folk culture led to Islamic “mythopoetic forms” of Turkish folk culture which had been a central component of Turkish identity in the Ottoman period. Displacement of this version of Islam from the foundation of Turkish national identity created an ethical vacuum

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<sup>350</sup> Ibid, 117.

<sup>351</sup> Mardin, “Center-Periphery”, 173.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid, 175.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid, ”, 177-178.

and the inability of Kemalism to create a social ethos to fill this vacuum.<sup>354</sup> Similar to Mardin's analysis which prioritizes the political over the economic in analyzing the rise of Islam, Ümit Cizre Sakallıoğlu puts forward that the Turkish state, but not the grassroots Islam, has been the most significant determinant of the political role of Islam in Turkish politics since the foundation of the Republic.<sup>355</sup> State oppression and intolerance played a vital role in development of Islamism in Turkey as a political ideology.<sup>356</sup>

However, as has been discussed in the previous section, elites' challenge with folk religion is not unique to Turkish secularization given the European case of secularization and rise of the periphery might very well point out to the dialectic between elites' imposition of disenchantment and people's reaction via producing new types of faith. What's more, rise of periphery against center elites can not be analyzed without taking class relations into account. That is to say that just like the other post-modern identity politics, Islamism contains cross-class as well as cross-national claims<sup>357</sup>. Actually, Mardin's center-periphery paradigm does not deny class relations altogether as he takes into account the cross-cutting cleavages of owners against non-owners of the means of production which might change the picture and as he recognizes the new cleavages and differentiation within the periphery as well as differentiation within bureaucracy.<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Davison, 154-155.

<sup>355</sup> Sakallıoğlu, 232.

<sup>356</sup> Turam, 55.

<sup>357</sup> Haldun Güralp. "Globalization and Political Islam: The Social Bess of Turkey's Welfare Party", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (33, 2001),443.

<sup>358</sup> Mardin, "Center-Periphery",187.

As has been mentioned before, in Mardin's center-periphery paradigm, Islamic actors constituted one of the components of the periphery vis-à-vis the secular military and bureaucratic elite. However, center-periphery analysis remains insufficient to explain the rise of political Islam in a complete picture because of overfocusing on cultural and political elements. Yet, center-periphery perspective is not complete given its ignorance of the historical specificity of the current conjuncture and focus of "counter-elite" thesis on the professional middle class and university students.<sup>359</sup>

As Ayşe and Sencer Ayata put it, center-periphery can be criticized for first of all seeing center and periphery as monolithic entities. Second, the role and relation of the CHP to the state and elites have varied throughout the Republican history. Third, the periphery has always been fragmented in social and cultural terms.<sup>360</sup> Furthermore, center-periphery approach neglects the narrowed gap between the elites and the masses as a corollary of proliferation of the links between the center and the periphery through extension of the market economy, democracy and modern popular culture. Furthermore, rapid socioeconomic development and political change Turkey witnessed diversification of elites. Therefore, it is not realistic to talk about an ideologically and politically monolithic elite in Turkey. In addition, the number of civil servants in bureaucracy who are members of CHP has decreased considerably since CHP has been out of power. What's more, the attitude of the CHP towards state establishment has been subject to change concerning major political issues. Also, the periphery as well as the center is divided across culture, political ideology and social class. Last but not the least, the electoral support of the CHP comes neither from the dominant groups resembled by the rich and the center nor from the underprivileged

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<sup>359</sup> Güllalp, "Globalization and Political Islam: The Social Bess of Turkey's Welfare Party", 434.

<sup>360</sup> Sencer Ayata & Ayşe-Güneş Ayata, "The Center-Left Parties in Turkey" in *Turkish Studies*, (Vol.8 No:2,2007), 213.



resembled by the poor and periphery rendering the positioning of the CHP ambiguous.<sup>361</sup>

In addition, center-periphery paradigm could also be criticized with a cultural criticism within. In contrast to Gellner, İlkay Sunar points out to the diversity of Islam. Accordingly, the Ottoman Empire compromised “High Islam” and “Low Islam”. Actually, “High Islam” whose loose variant dominated in the center and “Low Islam” which dominated in the periphery was in a symbiotic relationship rather than being in a continuous tension. The imperial paradigm of Islam (which was the rule of Islam before modernity) incarnated in the Ottoman Empire is not hostile to the separation of religion and the state. The Ottoman Empire was a temporal state model which coexisted with the “semi independent” religious unions and communities rather than a caliphate state model which combined politics and religion and the link between belief, society and power was kept. In the imperial model of the Ottoman Empire, the link between belief and power was torn apart whereas the link between society and belief was kept. However, the modern Turkey denied both models in that it ruptured the link between society, belief and power.<sup>362</sup> Sunar’s critique to monolithic understanding of Islam in the Ottoman Empire, is valid for Islam in modern Turkey. Yet, it should be added that Mardin had also accepted differentiation in the periphery although underestimated it to a great extent.

Mardin’s analysis based on center-periphery dichotomy minimizes the rupture between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic while stressing the continuity of the center-periphery duality. Furthermore, as he overfocused on culture and ideology and defines the main fault line between the periphery and the center as

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<sup>361</sup> Ibid, 213.

<sup>362</sup> İlkay Sunar, “Sivil Toplum ve İslamiyet” in Özdalga&Persson,19-21.

cultural, he underestimated the clash of economic divisions between the center and the periphery. To put it that way, Mardin privileged superstructure over infrastructure in analyzing Turkish politics. However, it is not possible to explain the rise of peripheral Islam with prioritizing politics. In other words, economic reasons have also been very influential in Turkish politics as well as in the rise of Islam. For instance, Necmettin Erbakan's discourse of "just order" which addressed the disadvantaged poor people earned the party popularity in the "periphery" which became one of the factors behind the rise of political Islam in Turkish politics.

On the other side of the fence, Gülalp explains the rise of Islam with the postmodern condition, not with the mobilization of peripheral forces excluded politically and culturally from the centre.<sup>363</sup> Political Islam in Turkey is related with a cultural project and tries to mobilize people through addressing their class interests.<sup>364</sup> To explain the rise of Islam, in counter argument to the secularization thesis, he suggests that the rise of political Islam vis-à-vis Kemalism is related with globalization and post-modernization/the process of transition to the condition of postmodernity,<sup>365</sup> State oppression and intolerance played a vital role in development of Islamism in Turkey as a political ideology.<sup>366</sup>

Relatively democratic context also paved the way to the rise of Islamic actors. The increasing visibility of Islam in Turkish society since 1950s can also be evaluated within the framework of passage from bureaucratic authoritarianism to populist democracy. DP's power paved the way for shifting of the political basis of the CHP

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<sup>363</sup> Gülalp, 435.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid, 433.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid, 435.

<sup>366</sup> Turam, 55.

from bureaucratic state to the political elite.<sup>367</sup> Islamism which targets an Islamic state which can be seen as radical against rigid state laicism appeared in 1969 in Turkish politics with Necmettin Erbakan.<sup>368</sup> However, religion-oriented political cadres were increasingly integrated to the laic and democratic system since 1969 owing to the political institutions.<sup>369</sup> Growing number of Islamic actors adapted to the laic institutional milieu since 1980s and 1990s.<sup>370</sup> The voluntary secularization of Islamic life contributed to the transformation of authoritarian laic Republic to a more tolerant laic democracy.<sup>371</sup>

After 1980 with the loosening of the control of the state over the Islamic actors, Islamic actors reorganized their lives more easily. This space of maneuver enabled Islamic actors to shape the state's attitudes and behaviors towards Islam. Actually, Islamic actors as social actors playing a role in the encountering Republican project have always been in interaction with the state.<sup>372</sup> Yet, after the 1980s, the relation between the state and society changed to a great extent in spite of the anti-democratic oppressions of the 1980 coup. Turgut Özal loosened the rigid laicist attitude through reconciling the tolerance for Islam and neoliberalism. Islamism developed consistently and together with the free-market. The military also supported tolerance for Islam.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>367</sup> Taşpınar, 122-126.

<sup>368</sup> Turam, 58.

<sup>369</sup> Metin Heper&Şule Toktaş. "Islam, Modernity and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey: The Case of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan",*Muslim World*, 2003, 93 (2), 159 in Turam, 59.

<sup>370</sup> Turam,81.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid, 81.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid, 60.

In short, the reasons for the rise of Islam in Turkish politics are multifold. Center-periphery paradigm, among others, highlights the cultural and ideological reasons behind the rise of Islamic actors. On the other hand, the postmodern age which recognizes room for different identities to express their demands is another reason in addition to the oppression of the state paradoxically. By all means, economic reasons played its part and maintained the mobilization of the masses to the unjust class relations. Hence, the rise of Islam can not be reduced to a single cause but rather it has political, cultural, economic and social dimensions.

### **3.6 Turkish Politics After the 1980s**

1980 military coup was declared to be actualized in order to keep the integrity of the country and the nation, protect law and basic liberties, security and reestablish state authority. National Security Council which governed the country until 1983, suspended the Constitution, abolished the parliament, closed political parties, arrested party leaders and suspended the activities of unions. All dissident leftist powers were tried to be contained. All academicians who have leftist tendencies were erased from universities for the sake of ideological homogeneity. Bülent Ecevit, The Leader of the CHP was imprisoned after trials which increased political tension within the country. Freedom of thought and speech was abolished. The President, Kenan Evren was equipped with emergency powers such as abrogation of the parliament, governing through decrees, and appointment of the members of the Constitutional Court, vetoing laws and applying to plebiscite for constitutional changes. 1982 Constitution was taken to plebiscite which also included the approval of Evren as President. People voted for the plebiscite since otherwise would extend the period for transition to democracy. The first election in 1983 after the military coup witnessed the victory of The Motherland Party (ANAP) even though it could not suffice Özal-as its leader- to guarantee its legitimacy. Özal government was conservative (just like AP), traditionalist (just like MSP), nationalist (just like MHP)

and believed in social justice( like social democrats). Özal was not concerned with transition to democracy. Protection of laws and order was left to martial law. In 1987, political rights were restored.<sup>374</sup>

Ahmad argues that even though Özal gained the majority of votes in 1987 elections, he lost his legitimacy as he manipulated the Election Law for his purposes. Also, he made no efforts for changing anti-democratic laws of the military regime as economy was his first priority. Nevertheless, he could not tackle with inflation, and improve the economic conditions which in turn decreased his popular support. As a result, he tended towards the candidacy of Presidency and was elected as President in 1989 by a parliament who got 20% support of its constituents. In the meantime, ANAP was still in power but another political impasse emerged as a result of political assassinations, Islamic fundamentalism, high inflation, economic problems and growing Kurdish uprisings in the Southeast.<sup>375</sup>

As a result of 1991 elections, a coalition government between the victor of the election True Path Party (DYP) and Social Democrat Peoples' Party (SHP) which came out to be the third party in the election was formed.<sup>376</sup> While DYP-SHP coalition was in power the CHP was re-opened in 1993 after the 1980 military coup.<sup>377</sup> CHP paid attention to democratic rights but actually, it had launched democratization process since the 1960s. In line with the ideal of democratization, it adopted tolerance for the different and thus cultural pluralism. Moreover, rights for the minorities and the oppressed groups constituted an important component of

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<sup>374</sup> Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*. (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2008), 214-231.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid, 231-234.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid, 237-238.

<sup>377</sup> Ayşe Ayata, "The Republican People's Party" in *Political Parties in Turkey*, in Barry Rubin&Metin Heper. (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 109.

CHP's policies. Being a part of Anatolian Left, the CHP initiated a new approach which would draw parallels between Alevis and Sunnis as well as the non-Muslims in 2000. Baykal who became the leader of the CHP in 1993, launched a new form of social democracy that would blend Turkish culture, humanism, love, tolerance, solidarity. This aimed to bridge the gap between leftist elite and populism. This new strategy of the CHP privileged society over the state. It is noteworthy to state that Baykal targeted étatist tradition of the CHP which was accused of "imposing modernization to the society and being anti-democratic".<sup>378</sup> This is significant since the CHP tried to bridge the gap between elite and masses which proved that the CHP did not aim to be the party of the state-elites but it also addressed the masses. In addition, it adopted a "human-centered analysis" rather than a class analysis which was designed to appeal to the masses.<sup>379</sup> It attracted some urban-class Kurdish votes with its identity politics (not ethnic separatism) as well as it attracted the votes of Alevis and secular women with its policies regarding secularism. In short, it is possible to say that the balance has been shifted from the state to the society in rhetoric and program. On the other hand, leaving socio-economic inequalities untouched, adoption of some of the discourses of the center as a political maneuver constituted interruptions in this new strategy.<sup>380</sup>

1990s witnessed increasing polarization also between proponents of Kemalist project and rising Islamists. Burn of 37 intellectuals among which were Alevi poets, intellectuals, and musicians to death in July 1993 by Islamic fundamentalists reunderlined this polarity. The rise of the Welfare Party (RP) which was founded in 1983 coincided with this polarization. The RP won a victory in 1991 local elections and 1995 general elections. The RP formed a coalition government with DYP. However, during their power Islamic codes in public space increased which paved the way for 28 February process. In the 28 February 1997 meeting of the National

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<sup>378</sup> Ibid, 112.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid, 112.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid, 112-115.

Security Council meeting, the military demanded extension of compulsory education from 5 to 8 years, closing down Quran courses, the implementation of the dress code. Erbakan signed the proposal of the military. By 28 February process, military's conception of internal threat (Islamists and PKK) became prior than external threats. President Demirel gave the duty to form the government to Mesut Yılmaz, the leader of ANAP by taking into consideration the tension in society. Yılmaz formed a government with DSP and DTP. The Constitutional Court closed the RP for being a center against secularism and banned Erbakan from politics for 5 years. After the 1999 elections, a government between DSP, ANAP, and MHP was formed. On the other hand, the Virtue Party which was founded after the closure of the RP, was witnessing the clash between reformists led by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül and traditionalists. It was also closed for being the centre of anti-secular activities in 2001.<sup>381</sup>

When the Virtue Party was closed the National Opinion (*Milli Görüş*) had been divided between the traditionalists and reformists. The Reformists did not join the SP which was founded in 2001 and was composed of the proponents of the National Opinion. Instead, Reformists founded the AKP in 2001. Therefore, even though AKP emerged out of the National Vision tradition of Erbakan, it distanced itself from the National Vision in terms of establishing close ties with the West including the EU and adopting neo-liberal economy. As İlhan Uzgel stated, AKP represented continuity between the DP and ANAP in terms of positioning itself against the state, including Islamic tenets, and close ties with the West.<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Meliha Benli Altunışık&Özlem Tür, *Turkey, Challenges of Continuity and Change*. (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005),54-65.

<sup>382</sup> İlhan Uzgel, "AKP: Neoliberal Dönüşümün Yeni Aktörü", *Mülkiye*. (Vol:30,No:252, 2006), 17.

### 3.7 Alternative Modernity

Turkish modernization was driven by a bureaucratic elite who was influenced by Enlightenment and Westernization. Yet, with the challenges against modernism and the universal myths of Western civilization, the Kemalist modernization project started to lose ground. The crisis of modernization gave way to Islamism in Turkey. In other words, the post-modern condition opened the unquestionable myths of Turkish Westernization project into question.<sup>383</sup> In this context, Western modernity has been questioned.

Nilüfer Göle argues the public claims of Islam have been confronted by secular authoritarianism in Turkey.<sup>384</sup> Notwithstanding secularism which tries to keep religion under control, Islam has always been a significant agent which shaped social and political life in Turkey. Since 1980s and especially 1990s, Islam has become an influential political, economic and cultural force which determined the changing nature of Turkish modernity.<sup>385</sup> Actually, “the resurgence of Islam has been one of the defining and constitutive elements of the changing nature and formation of Turkish modernity since the 1980s, and has had a significant effect on Turkish secularism by causing its recent crisis”.<sup>386</sup> It is possible to say that an alternative modernity to the one defined on the basis of Western modernity in Turkey emerged after the 1980s.

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<sup>383</sup> Güllalp, 442-443.

<sup>384</sup> Göle, “Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere”,6.

<sup>385</sup> Keyman, “Assertive Secularism in Crisis”,149.

<sup>386</sup> E. Fuat Keyman, “On the Relationship between Global Modernity and Nationalism”, *New Perspectives on Turkey* 13 (1995), 93-120& Andrew Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey: A Hermeneutic Reconsideration*(New Haven, CT: Yale University Press,1998) in Keyman, “Assertive Secularism in Crisis”, 149.



With the entrance of Islam into national public spheres, the homogenous structure of national public spheres is questioned.<sup>387</sup> Islamic public spheres are borne out of the civil societal and market forces which seek for visibility and legitimacy in the national public sphere.<sup>388</sup> As Göle puts it:

[T]oday Muslim identity is in the process of “banalization”; actors of Islam blend into modern urban spaces, use global communication networks, engage in public debates, follow consumption patterns, learn market rules, enter into secular time, get acquainted with values of individuation, professionalism, and consumerism, and reflect critically upon their own practices.<sup>389</sup>

By doing so, Islamic identities create an “alternative” modernity to the one defined with reference to Western modernity.

As Göle puts it, non-Western societies should not be analyzed with reference to the mirror of modernity. On the contrary, modernity needs to be analyzed with respect to non-Western societies. As modernity is saved from the monopoly of Western societies, transition to plural modernities from monist conception of modernity can become possible. This brings into mind the possibility of alternative modernity.<sup>390</sup> However, Göle adds that the term alternative modernity is problematical in the sense that it attains Western modernity as unchanging and standard and locates other modernities as its alternative.<sup>391</sup> Non-Western countries position themselves vis-à-vis Western modernity which constitutes a reference point for them.<sup>392</sup> However, Göle points out to asymmetry between the Western and non-Western societies. The

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<sup>387</sup> Göle, “Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere”, 6.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid,6.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>390</sup> Nilüfer Göle, “Batı-Dışı Modernlik Üzerine Bir İlk Desen”,66.

<sup>391</sup> Esra Özyürek, *Nostalgia For The Modern, State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey*. (London: Duke University Press, 2006). 19.

<sup>392</sup> Göle, “Batı-Dışı Modernlik Üzerine Bir İlk Desen”, 67.

historical, political and intellectual orientations of non-Western societies are determined by their dependency on Western modernity. In this sense, there is not a reciprocity between Western and non-Western societies. Göle suggests that weak capacity of non-Western societies in producing modernity and their dependency on Western societies as “a standard setter” refer to weak historicity.<sup>393</sup> To her, non-Western modernity is fragmented, discordant and discontinuous.<sup>394</sup>

According to Taşpınar, Turkish citizens had to be secular in order to become enlightened, nationalist, republican, modern and civilized.<sup>395</sup> On the other hand, “[t]he Islamic subject is formed both through liberation from traditional definitions and roles of Muslim identity and through a resistance to a cultural program of modernity and liberalism”.<sup>396</sup> “Islamic criticism thereby reveals a cultural realm of power relations between Western model of modernity and Muslims, a realm inscribed in bodies, memories and language throughout a long historical process. In other words, the roots of the stigmatization of Muslim identity lie in this realm of incorporation of normative values, namely in the Muslim habitus.”<sup>397</sup>

On the other hand, Touraine differentiates between modernity and modernization. According to Touraine, modernization refers to modernity in action whereas modernity refers to victory of reason, emancipation and revolution.<sup>398</sup> Given the Turkish experience of laicism, it can be asserted that Turkish Republic has created its own modernization path through articulating *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to control

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<sup>393</sup> Ibid, 66.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>395</sup> Taşpınar,32.

<sup>396</sup> Göle, “Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere, 23.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid,22.

<sup>398</sup> Alain Touraine, *Modernliğin Eleştirisi*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2012), 48.

religious activity in political terms if not in cultural terms. In other words, Turkish Republic has synthesized Western secularism with the Central Asian, Persian and Ottoman state tradition and created a control account of laicism. Actually, Göle makes a similar differentiation where she defines modernity as universality whereas she refers to the path different countries figure out with respect to history and cultures when she uses the word modernization.<sup>399</sup> Notwithstanding this differentiation, she reads Turkish modernization project by projecting Western modernity on it. As she mentions repressed Islamic elements by the Western model of modernity, it can also be valid for Turkish secularism. As has been mentioned above, Turkish experience of secularism is one of hybridity between Western modernity and Eastern historical roots. To put it differently, Turkish secularism has been affected by the historical interaction between “the West” and “the East” besides having partial inheritance from the Ottoman state tradition.

Although Nilüfer Göle’s emphasis on alternative modernity to the hegemonic Western modernity is significant to include Islamic identities in the public sphere, it does not highlight the historical specificity of the Turkish context even though underlining the uniqueness of Eastern contexts. To put it that way, the unique nature of Turkish laicism so as to challenge religious oppression remains intact in Nilüfer Göle’s analysis. In other words, by underestimating the roots of Turkish state in Central Asia and Persia as well as the Ottoman Empire in the primacy of the state over religion which has led to the control of religious activities by the state and exclusion of religious symbols from the public sphere consequently, it lacks historicity. This is to say that critics who accuse CHP’s laicism of being a Western imposition upon authentic Turkish culture, especially Islam neglect the Turkish state tradition deriving from Central Asia and Persia as well as Ottoman Empire in the form of prioritizing state over religion. However, a historical analysis is needed to evaluate the peculiar nature of CHP’s conception of laicism which is based on

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<sup>399</sup> İbrahim Yücedağ, “Nilüfer Göle’de Batı-Dışı Modernliği Anlamak”, *Şarkiyat İlmî Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 70, available at [http://www.e-sarkiyat.com/makaleler/3\\_sayi/ibrahimyucedag.pdf](http://www.e-sarkiyat.com/makaleler/3_sayi/ibrahimyucedag.pdf)

control and evaluate the extent of CHP's etatism with respect to its principle of laicite.

### 3.8 Turkish Secularism and Democracy

The compatibility of secularization thesis with the Turkish case of secularism has been questioned as a corollary of the proliferation of Islamic identities especially after the 1990s. This owed much to that the end of twentieth century witnessed a new kind of politics or a new kind of governmentality<sup>400</sup> which enabled new imaginations of public, the state and the state-citizen relationship.<sup>401</sup> The symbolic center of politics has shifted from public institutions to things like civil society.<sup>402</sup> Consequently, the state-centric Turkish secularism has been subject to challenges and criticisms since 1980s and 1990s due to democratic demands. Hence, in contrast to the secularization thesis which foresaw the decline of religion with modernization, religious identities emerged with new demands in the public sphere.

Turkish secularism is in crisis and needs to be reconstructed on the basis of a democratic and multicultural foundation which would constitute the basis for common public morality and a civic coexistence among various religious and nonreligious groups.<sup>403</sup> Keyman sets forth Turkish secularism could not achieve

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<sup>400</sup> Michel Foucault, "Governmentality" in ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (ed.s), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, (Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1991), in Özyürek, 5.

<sup>401</sup> Özyürek, 5.

<sup>402</sup> Jean Cohen & Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*. (Cambridge:MIT Press, 1992) and Chris Hann & Elizabeth Dunn, *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*, (London:Routledge, 1996) in Özyürek, 5.

<sup>403</sup> Keyman, "Assertive Secularism in Crisis", 143-144.

creating a social ethos. But rather, it was the construction of assertive Turkish secularism and the laicist national identity that was aimed although they have faced a severe legitimacy crisis given the demands of Islamic identities for recognition as well as cultural group rights. In line with the demands of Islamic identities, Turkish society has witnessed “deprivatization of religion” which made Islam influential in different spheres of social life. Deprivatization of Islam operated through politicization of Islam, economic Islam which articulated between free market and local communities and cultural Islam which constituted a symbolic force for identity-formation and is intricate with postmodern, highly globalized and consumptionist cultural patterns.<sup>404</sup> With the publicization of the religion, secular state ideology became more private.<sup>405</sup>

Göle argues that two premises concerning secularism have come to be questioned recently. The first is about the concomitant nature of secularism and democracy whereas the second is that secularism involves the impartiality of the state and thus is a guarantee for religious pluralism.<sup>406</sup> “Secularism underpinned the ideal of a national community “free of religion”, yet simultaneously it implicitly defined this community in terms of a Muslim and Sunnite majority, in counter distinction with non-Muslim minorities of the cosmopolitan empire as well as the Alevites and Kurds”.<sup>407</sup> “Turkish secularism is not only too secular but also too Sunni that it is neither impartial [n]or neutral”.<sup>408</sup> As Casanova points out, “the project of constructing a strong and state-centric mode of secularism is likely to be vulnerable to criticism and challenge, “because it is too secular for the Islamists, too Sunni for the Alevites, (too Muslim for the non-Muslim minorities) and too Turkish for the

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<sup>404</sup> E. Fuat Keyman&Berrin Koyuncu, “Globalization, Alternative Modernities and the Political Economy of Turkey”, *Review of International Political Economy* 12, No:1 (2005) in Keyman, “Assertive Secularism in Crisis”,147.

<sup>405</sup> Özyürek, 3.

<sup>406</sup> Göle, “Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide: Self, State, and the Public Sphere”, 44.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid,45.

<sup>408</sup> Keyman, ,“Assertive Secularism in Crisis”,149.

Kurds”.<sup>409</sup> Turkey faces a crisis concerning assertive secularism<sup>410</sup> as *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and constitutional [laicite] aimed to control and privatize religion rather than acquiring state impartiality towards Muslim and non-Muslim groups. Those contributed to the deprivatization of Islam in Turkey.<sup>411</sup>

The attitude of political Islam to state affairs has been another obstacle in front of consolidation of democracy. “The state-friendly posture of many forms of political Islam is related to the existence of a political culture that puts a higher priority on the preservation of the state than on the consolidation of democracy. It is also a legacy of the past political configuration when the ulema were part of the state elite. The pro-state orientation of the Sufi tarikats provides further rationale for a synthesis between Islam and the nationalist principle of the state’s territorial integrity”.<sup>412</sup> Hence, Islamic identities appeared for the state rather than as components of civil society or a democratic public sphere which might challenge the authoritarian state policies in Turkish politics.

Furthermore, Western conception of secularism is problematic in the sense that it causes exclusion of the people with religious symbols from the public sphere and thus stands as an obstacle for democracy. Göle brings to the fore a non-Western framework to open the taken for granted Western framework into question. “[T]he universalistic claims of the West “normalize” and thereby silence a domain of

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<sup>409</sup> Ibid, 143.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid, 155.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid, 148.

<sup>412</sup> Cizre Sakallıoğlu,248.

cultural stigmatization that can only be revealed from the vantage point of non-Western criticisms of postcolonial or Islamic subjects”.<sup>413</sup>

Turkey confronts a tension between representative democracy and secularism since the latter seems to work against the former.<sup>414</sup> “[A] Turkish state in which the collective identities and interests of these groups cannot find public representation cannot be a truly representative democratic state, even if it is founded on modern secular constitutional principles”.<sup>415</sup> In this respect, Keyman calls for a democratic secular modernity based on a redefinition of secularism. He suggests that “objective secularization” which refers to the institutional separation of the political and religious domains should constitute the foundation for Turkish democracy and its consolidation.<sup>416</sup>

Keyman suggests that the crisis of secularism can be mastered through a

democratic secular imaginary” (as William Connolly puts it), that is, by democratizing the secular state in such a way that while religious worldviews and convictions accept and promote the secular state as a sufficient and indispensable condition for the public visibility of their values and cultural identities, the secular state not only becomes neutral and impartial to each and every religious identity, but also attempts to take seriously and accommodate religious claims and demands by allowing cross-cultural dialogue and democratic deliberation in the public sphere.<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Göle, “Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere,38.

<sup>414</sup> Keyman, “Assertive Secularism in Crisis”,149.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid, 143.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid, 144-145.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid, 155-156.

No matter how Turkish secularism in the practical sense of the term has hindered the development of democracy, secularism is an indispensable component of democracy which recognizes citizens' equality regardless of their religious beliefs. In addition, we should bear in mind that emergence of every religious identity does not necessarily mean the development of civil society and democracy. In this respect, Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay reminds us that modernization is a state-based process and precedes the emergence of civil society since the formation of civil society is dependent upon the establishment of the state. In other words, civil society can not emerge without the modernizing role of the state. However, Turkey and Turkish society could not be modernized due to its hesitation in abolishing the Ancien Regime. In contrast to the West in which the state emerged during the construction of itself and society, state always tried to construct society which gave way to postmodernization rather than modernization in Turkey. In a society which could not be modernized, the entities under the guise of postmodernity in fact point out to archaism. In other words, parochial reactions such as ethnic and religious oppositions to modernity are not the corollary of modern processes but rather are the eruption of the old privilege demands in history. Hence, the main problem in Turkey stands as the need to break the archaism of society rather than archaism of the state.<sup>418</sup>

In this respect, the question of the compatibility of Islam with democracy came to the fore. In this sense, Gellner evaluates Islam as a rival to civil society which necessitates privatization of religious belief since Islam resists secularization. Whereas High variation of Islam which is proponent of the Holy Book is industrialization friendly, it is not freedom or civil society friendly in contrast to Christianity which is friendly to the both. Whereas in Europe the opposition between community and society is an opposition between the past and the present, in

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<sup>418</sup> Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay, "Türk Modernleş(eme)mesi, Türk Post-Modernleşmesi", *Doğu-Batı, Türk Toplumunu Ve Gelişme Teorisi*(No:8,1999), 97-98.



traditional Islam community and society were always synchronic in which society prevailed in the center whereas community prevailed in the periphery.<sup>419</sup>

What's more, assuming the rise of Islamic actors to contribute to the development of civil society and democracy is too reductionist and one-sided because the gender dimension in Islamic project is, at least, as problematical as in the Republican modernization. For example, Having been in the Gülen Movement as an observer, Berna Turam argues that male followers of the Gülen movement as one of the Islamic actors in Turkey<sup>420</sup> support the participation of women and pay significance to the visibility of women in the public sphere just as the male elites of the early-Republic. This attribution of significance to the participation of women in the public sphere complements the civilized image of women like in the efforts to activate women during the nation-building process. In line with this, on the display, there was no suppression to women in terms of life styles, outfits or political views in the Gülen Movement.<sup>421</sup> However, visibility in the public sphere is one thing, giving share from power is quite the other. Service Movement of Gülen is actually a gendered movement since women are excluded from the networks of power even though they participate in the public sphere. In this respect, even though Gülen Movement pays attention to visibility of women in the public sphere, it prioritizes the traditional role of women in the private sphere since they relate women with the interests of the society. A small proportion of women elites has benefited from the activities of the Movement just as the small proportion of women elites has during

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<sup>419</sup> Özdalga&Persson, 12-17.

<sup>420</sup> For the relation between Gülen movement and Islam, please see Sencer Ayata, "Patronage, Party and State: Politicization of Islam in Turkey", 46. Sencer Ayata defines Fethullah Gülen-the leader of Gülen Movement- as "the spiritual head of Turkey's most influential Islamic community, Fethullahcıs". Please also see Yasin Ceylan, "İslam, Nurculuk ve Fethullah Gülen Hareketi", 19.04.2009, available at [http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/islam\\_nurculuk\\_ve\\_fethullah\\_gulen\\_hareketi-932027](http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/islam_nurculuk_ve_fethullah_gulen_hareketi-932027). In this article, Ceylan takes *Nurculuk* as an Islamic movement which maintains reinterpretation of Islam and living as a Muslim in a context in which an alien civilization influenced all domains of life. Even though, Ceylan argues that serving to Turkish nationalism is contrary to the spirit of this movement and Islam, he defines Fethullah Gülen-the leader of Gülen Movement- as the leader of *Nurculuk*.

<sup>421</sup> Turam, 140-141.

nation-building era. Those exceptional cases by no means reflect the general situation of women in Turkey.<sup>422</sup> Therefore, attributing Islamic actors a potential for democratization through integrating them into the public might be hyperbolic. In other words, whereas exclusion of Islamic actors relying on laicism is antidemocratic, inclusion of Islamic actors in the public sphere might not necessarily lead to democracy in terms of its outcomes.

True, gendered society is the product of neither the only Islamic male actors nor only the laic male actors but rather the result of the interpenetration of them.<sup>423</sup> As Ghada Karmi suggests, there is no direct relation between Islam and patriarchy. Instead, patriarchy is observable in the general social and political conditions. In this context, the laic and Islamic roots of patriarchal practices are intermingled.<sup>424</sup> In other words, the common views about gender bring together laic and Islamist male actors together.<sup>425</sup> As Alev Çınar suggests laic and Islamic males reproduce patriarchal practices through their efforts to keep “civilized image” in a similar way. Males gain uniqueness and legitimize their transformative efforts through “saving women’s bodies”. Even though they seem capable of emancipating women’s bodies, they gain power through patronage of women’s bodies.<sup>426</sup> In this respect, Turkish modernization and Islamic modernity share in common that they were pursued by male actors who determine the fates of women and decide on behalf of the women’s bodies.

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<sup>422</sup> Ibid, 150-151.

<sup>423</sup> Ibid, 135.

<sup>424</sup> Ghada Karmi, “Woman, Islam and Patriarchalism” in Mai Yamani (ed.), *Feminism and Islam*. (London: Ithaca Press, 1996), 81 in Turam, 135.

<sup>425</sup> Turam, 160.

<sup>426</sup> Alev Çınar, *Modernity, Secularism, and Islam in Turkey: Bodies, Places and Time*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 54 in Turam, 156 and Turam, 156.

Generally, the civilizing projects of Islamic groups like their secular counterparts prioritize increasing the visibility of women in the public sphere. Just as the founders of the state nationalized the secular life styles, contemporary Islamic actors nationalize belief-based life styles. Second, both actors have succeeded the integration of women into the private sphere.<sup>427</sup> Third, male actors determine women's interests on their behalf sacrificing their subjectivity for the sake of greater projects. Actually, this common attitude of Islamist and secular men established a common link between those actors. This link constitutes the basis of another level of the interaction between Islam and the state. Both Islamist and secular men compromise on the gendered exclusion of women, particularly religious and veiled women.<sup>428</sup> However, it seems that whereas Islamists exclude women from the public sphere, the secular men are relatively inclusive provided that women are "normalized" and turned into unveiled women. Hence, although speaking on behalf of women and their bodies is patriarchal by all means, the secular men are more interested with normalization and competency of women with secular norms and secular outfits whereas the Islamist male actors exclude women even if the latter adopt religious norms and are normalized on the basis of these norms. On the other hand, drawing upon the above discussed, it would not be pointless to posit that Islamist men are even more exclusionary than the secular men. Hence, formulating laicite so as to integrate Islamic identities into the public sphere is democratic in terms of deconstructing the power relations between secular and Islamic actors but might not help to deconstruct the power relations between men and women. For a secular democracy, patriarchal relations between men and women should also be questioned.

Last but not the least, the challenge of Islamism which claims a monopoly of truth through a single universal religion is paradoxical to Enlightened positivism of

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<sup>427</sup> Turam, 134.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid, 133-134.

Turkish modernization project. As Göle suggests, “[i]n distinction from progressist and pluralistic social movements, the fundamentalist movement refers to transcendental sources of truth and authority, takes a past-oriented societal model as an ideal, and has a holistic claim to change, encompassing all areas of life, ranging from state power, science, and faith, to life-styles.”<sup>429</sup> Hence, relativizing Enlightenment philosophy is not possible by another universalism but conversely it could be made possible by a viewpoint which recognizes a plurality of beliefs/non-beliefs. Yet, if all the identities (religious or not) can meet at the common denominator of the consciousness of democracy which is ready to break away with universal dogmas, then there is hope for a secular democracy which recognizes freedom and equality to all people from all religious beliefs.

### **3.9. AKP in Power**

In the 2002 elections, AKP rose as the victor with 34.43% of the votes whereas CHP got 19.41% of the votes respectively.<sup>430</sup> AKP’s ascendance to power is the consequence of many factors. In the first place, as Ümit Cizre argues that AKP’s rise to power is the result of “the structural disintegration of dominant power relations and paradigms in Turkey”.<sup>431</sup> Electoral victory of the AKP in 2002 election was the indicator of rejection of the existing political framework and political inertia by the vast sectors of population.<sup>432</sup> In this sense, “the 2001-born [AKP]’s focus on the accession to the EU has helped to transform the negative inertia of the 1990s into a

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<sup>429</sup> Göle, “Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere, 13.

<sup>430</sup> “Türkiye Genel Seçim Sonuçları”, available at [http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkish/specials/1419\\_turk\\_elections/page2.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkish/specials/1419_turk_elections/page2.shtml)

<sup>431</sup> Ümit Cizre, “The Justice and Development Party: making choices, revisions and reversals interactively” in Ümit Cizre, *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey, the making of the Justice and Development Party*, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 3.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid, 3.

positive discourse relevant effective governance”.<sup>433</sup> Second, in 2001 Turkey has went through a fierce economic crisis. The previous government’s (DSP-ANAP-MHP) success was overshadowed by the crises as well as the illness of the Prime Minister Ecevit.<sup>434</sup> Therefore, the electorate looked for an alternative for economic betterment. As Cizre argues, it was this conjecture which also gave way to AKP’s policies of reform.<sup>435</sup> AKP’s rise to power could also be related with international factors. In a conjecture in which the USA was trying to settle in the Middle East, nationalist left or right was not preferable by the USA because of strategic reasons. AKP’s march to power also needs to be considered within the framework of Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative which rested on moderation of political Islam in power. According to the Initiative, Islamic movement in Turkey would constitute a very suitable model for its implementation in the Middle East. It was crystal clear that Turkey would not play such a role with a Kemalist regime. Hence, international dynamics required that Turkey should be ruled with a moderate Islamic government.<sup>436</sup> In addition, articulation of Islamic capital to the global system had made efforts Last but not the least, 28<sup>th</sup> February process which led to oust of elected government comprising Islamist RP together with DYP from power had caused a reaction in Islamic and liberal circles. Therefore, AKP’s electoral victory could also be associated with social reaction to design of politics by the military.

In the 2007 elections, AKP and CHP increased their votes to 46.47% and 20.84% respectively. MHP which could not enter the parliament in 2002 elections was elected to the parliament in 2007 with 14,26%.<sup>437</sup> Electoral victory of AKP in 2007 owed to many factors. To the reasons for 2002 elections which kept its viability

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<sup>433</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>434</sup> Altunışık&Tür, 64.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>436</sup> Uzgel, 13-15.

<sup>437</sup> “Türkiye Geneli Seçim Sonuçları”, available at <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/secimsonuc/default.html>

except economic crisis, AKP's handling of the economy between 2002 and 2007 should be added. Actually, AKP had reaped the fruits of the economy package of Kemal Derviş who was the Minister of Economy in the coalition government of DSP, ANAP and MHP. Also, after Constitutional Court cancelled the first round of presidential elections in which Abdullah Gül was candidate upon CHP's application, AKP took the decision for early elections. The Court's decision created the perception that "national will" was being prevented by the secular establishment. Hence, the reactionary votes have been another factor in AKP's electoral victory in 2007. Last but not the least, the steps taken for accession to the EU until 2005 had gained the support of liberal circles even though AKP lost momentum after 2005 for accession to the EU.

AKP is located in the center-right of the political spectrum even though it is the offspring of the National Outlook Movement (*Milli Görüş*).<sup>438</sup> "A critical lesson of the JDP drew from the failed decade of the 1990s was a discursive denial of its Islamist pedigree and adoption of a moderate and non-religious discourse in its place".<sup>439</sup> That's why, AKP rejected the use of the name "Muslim democrat" but rather preferred to use the term "conservative democrat" to define itself.<sup>440</sup> As Güneş Ayata and Fatma Tütüncü argue, "[i]nstead of emphasizing their Muslim identity, they preferred to ground their moral and religious values within the confines of 'conservatism'".<sup>441</sup> The leading members of the party declared that they have changed with respect to the issues of secularism, democracy and the Islamic state.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> Ahmet Yıldız, "Problematizing the intellectual and political vestiges: from 'welfare' to 'justice and development'", in Ümit Cizre, *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey, the making of the Justice and Development Party*, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 43.

<sup>439</sup> Cizre, "The Justice and Development Party: making choices, revisions and reversals interactively", 4.

<sup>440</sup> Ayşe Güneş Ayata&Fatma Tütüncü, "Party Politics of the AKP (2002-2007) and the Predicaments of Women at the Intersection of the Westernist, Islamist and Feminist Discourses in Turkey", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. (35:3, 2008), 367.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid, 367.

<sup>442</sup> Cizre, "The Justice and Development Party: making choices, revisions and reversals interactively", 31.

AKP party program evaluates [laicite] as indispensable for democratic governance and as a guarantee for religious liberties and freedom of conscience.<sup>443</sup> Nonetheless, AKP has been a party which commonly appealed to using Islamic motives in discourse.<sup>444</sup>

Actually, between 2002 and 2005, AKP spent considerable energy for being a full member of the EU. In line with the democracy packages to bring Turkey in compliance with the EU criteria, AKP curtailed the power of the National Security Council (MGK) which had a prevailing role in politics in Turkey.<sup>445</sup> Also, freedom of expression, education and broadcasting in the Kurdish language, abolishment of anti-terrorism provisions, and establishment of retrial rights for citizens were actualized between 2002 and 2003.<sup>446</sup> Yet, after 2005, AKP government's reform momentum was reversed.<sup>447</sup>

However, since AKP came to power, the secular establishment has been suspicious about AKP's hidden Islamic intentions.<sup>448</sup> Since it came to power, AKP made efforts to make religion visible in the public sphere by different means. One of them was the bill concerning The Basic Law on Public Administration which forbid non-discrimination and regulation and implementation against individual rights and

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<sup>443</sup> Yıldız, 53.

<sup>444</sup> Ayşe Güneş Ayata&Fatma Tütüncü, "Party Politics of the AKP (2002-2007) and the Predicaments of Women at the Intersection of the Westernist, Islamist and Feminist Discourses in Turkey", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. (35:3, 2008), 382.

<sup>445</sup> H.W. Lowry, "Turkey's Political Structure on the Cusp of the Twenty-First Century", in M. Abromowitz, *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy*, (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2000), 48 in Ümit Cizre, "The Justice and Development Party and the military, Recreating the Past after reforming it?" in Cizre, *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey*, 133.

<sup>446</sup> Cizre, "The Justice and Development Party and the military, Recreating the Past after reforming it?", 138.

<sup>447</sup> Ibid, 144.

<sup>448</sup> Cizre, "The Justice and Development Party: making choices, revisions and reversals interactively", 8.

freedoms on receiving public services prepared by AKP in 2004.<sup>449</sup> The bill was criticized by secularist circles as it might lead to allowance of veiling in public sphere. In 2004, AKP put forward a legislative draft suggesting implementation of equal ratio to vocational high schools including religious schools (*İmam Hatip Schools*) with other high schools.<sup>450</sup> Introduction of criminalization of adultery—which would not pass from the parliament with the government’s approval—in the new Turkish Penal Code in 2004, transfer of the authority to grant licenses to sell alcoholic beverages as well as to determine public places for drinking alcohol to the municipal and city-county councils have been other evidences for AKP’s Islamist intentions for secularist circles.<sup>451</sup> After the decision of the European Courts of Human Rights (AİHM) concerning that there was not a violation of human rights about the ban on veiling in universities with respect to Leyla Şahin case in 2005, Erdoğan stated that it was not the Court but the *ulema*, the religious class in the Ottoman Empire which would decide on veiling.<sup>452</sup> In 2005, AKP set forth a proposal for amnesty for the students discarded from universities for several reasons which also involved wearing veil in universities.<sup>453</sup>

The presidential elections became a turning point for emergence of religious symbols in the public sphere. Gül’s candidacy, who would be elected as the 11. President of the Turkish Republic in the elections, deepened suspicions in secularist circles owing to his wife wearing a veil. This would be the first time when a veiled woman appeared in the public sphere if the veiled MP of FP, Merve Kavakçı who was led

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<sup>449</sup> TBMM record, 19.02.2004, 414, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c041/tbmm22041055.pdf>

<sup>450</sup> “İmam hatip rövanşı”, *Milliyet*, 5.5.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/imam-hatip-rovanisi/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/05.05.2004/265963/default.htm>

<sup>451</sup> Ibid, 9. Please also see Ahmet Yıldız, “Problematising the intellectual and political vestiges: from ‘welfare’ to ‘justice and development’”, 53.

<sup>452</sup> “Ulema Tartışması Büyüyor”, *Hürriyet*, 16.11.2005, available at <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=3528884&tarix=2005-11-16>

<sup>453</sup> “Öğrenci affi teklifine CHP’den olumsuz yanıt”, *Milliyet*, 08.02.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/ogrenci-affi-teklifine-chpden-olumsuz-yanit/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/08.02.2005/251252/default.htm>



out of the parliament because of the protests of the DSP MPs. In 2008, AKP and MHP moved a motion regarding non-discrimination for the right to education as follows: “no one shall be deprived of her/his right to education against the law”<sup>454</sup> In 2009, Higher Education Council (YÖK) equalized ratios for vocational high schools and standard high schools<sup>455</sup> raising questions about unintermittent education in secular establishment.

Also, AKP’s some policies were in character to raise doubts about desecularization of society and the state through increasing the power of religion in society and the state in secularist circles. In 2003, AKP opened 15.000 imam cadres.<sup>456</sup> Also, AKP’s some policies facilitated room for maneuver for tarikats and religious communities. Quran courses have increasingly gone under the influence of tarikats during AKP rule. In 2005, AKP took a step to legitimize them and offered a change in Turkish Penalty Code which would lift the prison sentence for illegal Quran courses.<sup>457</sup> Also, the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* was enlarged enormously. The budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* rose from 553 million TL in 2002 to <sup>458</sup> 2 billion 650 million 530 thousand TL in 2010.<sup>459</sup> By 2010, the budget of the DRA was more than the sum of the budgets of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Energy and

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<sup>454</sup> TBMM record, 6.2.2008, passim, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>455</sup> “CHP’den Kuran Kursları’nda yaş indirimine tepki”, *Milliyet*, 6.10.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-kuran-kurslari-nda-yas-indirimine-tepki/siyaset/siyasetdetay/06.10.2009/1147065/default.htm>

<sup>456</sup> “İmam ordusu’nun gerekçesi irtica!”, *Milliyet*, 26.6.2003, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-imam-ordusu-nun-gerekcesi-irtica-/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/26.06.2003/14392/default.htm>

<sup>457</sup> “Kaçak kurslar hepten cezasız”, *Radikal*, 31.5.2005, available at <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=154357>

<sup>458</sup> Can Dündar, “Sayıyla kendine gelmek”, *Milliyet*, 21.06.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/06/21/yazar/dundar.html>

<sup>459</sup> “2010 bütçesi TBMM Plan ve Bütçe Komisyonu’nda”, 3.11.2009, available at <http://www.ihha.com.tr/gundem/2010-butcesi-tbmm-plan-ve-butce-komisyonu-nda/94815>

Ministry of Industry.<sup>460</sup> AKP also let transfer of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel to other state cadres which erupted suspicions about desecularization of the state.

Even though, the problems of Alevis do not start with the era of AKP rule, Alevis were insulted and continued to be excluded from the DRA during AKP rule. Their places of worship namely cem houses were not recognized by the state. Actually, AKP showed overt resistance to it. Compulsory religious courses were kept intact with their exclusionary and misinforming structure. Besides, AKP pursued discriminatory policies against the Alevis. What's more, the lawyers of the murderers of Madımak Massacre—in which 35 intellectuals most of which were Alevis were killed—were given offices in AKP. Some have even become AKP MPs, and one, the Minister of State. This symbolically implied that AKP claimed the Madımak Massacre and created discontent among Alevis as well as the secularist circles.

### **3.10. Concluding Remarks**

With the foundation of the Turkish Republic, CHP has launched reforms for secularization that would lead to decrease in the social significance of religion. In this respect, CHP's secularization program is compatible with the secularization thesis even though Turkish case of secularization is not laicite in the Western sense of the term. Turkish secularism can be considered both to symbolize continuity and a rupture with the Ottoman Empire. In attaining religion in the service of the state, it

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<sup>460</sup> “Diyanetin bütçesi üç bakanlığın bütçesinden fazla”, *Milliyet*, 10.11.2010, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/Siyaset/SonDakika.aspx?aType=SonDakika&ArticleID=1312719&Date=10.11.2010&CategoryName=siyaset&b=Diyanetin%20butcesi%203%20bakanligin%20butcesinden%20fazla>

has derived its roots from the Ottoman Empire as well as Central Asia and Persia as was set forth by İnalçık. On the other hand, it seems to me that there is continuity between the Ottoman modernization efforts and the Turkish modernization. However, Turkish Republic has signaled a prominent rupture in breaking away with legitimization of the state with religion. Turkish state tradition inherited from the past required controlling religion given the religious oppression in society. In this respect, Turkish account of laicism has not rested on a separation account of religion and political affairs but rather on a control account. I argue that those historical facts render Turkish case of laicism as unique leaving the critics that reduce Turkish laicism to adoption of Western modernity facile. It seems to me that Turkish laicism is the alloy of Western modernity and Turkish state tradition.

Turkish modernization is also criticized for being elitist and as an imposition from above. In this respect, it is accused of being alien to masses. The critics that attain Turkish modernization as elitist in that it has not been actualized by the masses can be vested given the fact of alienation of people from the state. On the other hand, if it is taken into consideration that even in Europe disenchantment spilled over to masses from the elites three centuries later, it might be suggested that elitism belongs to the course of secularization. In addition, if gap between masses and the governing elites are compared with the Ottoman era and the Turkish, the latter can not be taken as elitist as the former given the fact that the Turkish Republic is based on the rule of the people. Therefore, even though secularization has been a process from above, it has aimed to integrate the masses into the decision making process by democratic mechanisms. In this respect, it would be erroneous to underestimate the democratizing potential of CHP and its trajectory of secularization. Hence, I argue that even though Turkish experience of secularization and thus its motor CHP in the Turkish Republic are accused of being elitist by some critics, CHP and its experience of secularization are democratic if one does not fall into the trap of anachronism.

On the other side of the coin, in our post-secular age, the rise of Islam poses a great challenge to Turkish conception of laicism which formulates a public sphere which excludes religious symbols. Therefore, it would be also anachronistic to insist on the original formulation of Turkish laicism which excludes religious identities from the public sphere. In this respect, Habermas' post-secular society formulation which compromises secularism with religious identities would help as a theoretical tool for a more democratic society formulation. Nonetheless, this is, by no means, to present Islamic actors as the main element to democratize Turkish conception of laicism given the religious oppression on religious sects and women. In other words, the relationship between Islamic identities and democracy is not taken for granted but only can be constructed in history. Therefore, the challenge of AKP to CHP's notion of laicite, can not be the default signifier of democracy but rather, its policies with respect to laicite determines whether it can create a democratizing potential for Turkish laicism. On the other hand, how CHP accommodates AKP's challenge to its conception of laicite and secular establishment gives clues about its notion of democracy with respect to laicite. This will constitute the backbone of the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CHP'S CONCEPTION OF LAICITE**

#### **BETWEEN 2002-2010**

Being a modern democratic left political institution which derives its power from people, CHP is a political party that relies on pluralist and participatory democracy values as well supremacy of law and human rights.<sup>461</sup> Article 2 in CHP party regulations of 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2010 states that CHP is committed to principles of republicanism, nationalism, populism, etatism, laicite and revolutionism.<sup>462</sup> The aim of CHP, among others, is defined as contributing to rooting of modern, participatory and pluralist democracy based on human rights and supremacy of law.<sup>463</sup> CHP party program which was adopted in 1994 and has been in force until 2008 also sets forth CHP has entered the modern era with revolutions concerning secular society, educational reforms and village institutions.<sup>464</sup> Hence laicite is emphasized as standing at the core of modernization project of CHP according to its programme and party regulations. Besides, emphasis on educational reforms and village institutions which transform society imply that CHP is also the proponent of secularism which has a sociological connotation.

Therefore, I will argue that CHP's secularism much beyond the administration of state but rather it addresses emancipation of people from religious oppression in society. Whereas "laicite" can be used to define the former, the term "secularism" can be used for the latter. CHP's laicite is not like *laicite* in the Western sense of the

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<sup>461</sup> CHP Regulations published in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007, 5&CHP Regulation 2010, 2.

<sup>462</sup> CHP Regulations published in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007, 4& CHP Regulation 2010, 1.

<sup>463</sup> CHP Regulations published in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007, 5& CHP Regulation 2010, 2.

<sup>464</sup>CHP Party Programme, 1994, 16.

term which relies on separation of religion and politics but rather it involves control of religious activity by the state. It has a sociological concern and can be called as *secularism* thereto. CHP's conception of laicite rests on a public/private dichotomy in which the former resembles the state and state institutions whereas the latter refers to the rest.

In this chapter, I also elaborate on the question whether CHP is authoritarian with respect to its conception of laicite and secularism. In contrast to the critics who define CHP authoritarian, I propose that it is not possible to totalize CHP as "etatist" given the components regarding democracy and human rights in the party programme as well as its policies against religious oppression. On the other hand, CHP policies and some elements in party programme such as control account of laicism drift CHP to etatism by sponsoring the state over the individual. Therefore, instead of simply marking CHP as etatist, I suggest that CHP who targets leaving religious activities to the initiative of civil society oscillates between statism and democracy. I examined CHP's conception of laicite with respect to *türban*, *İmam Hatip Schools*, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, Alevi and Quran courses all of which expose CHP's sensitivity about religious oppression and CHP's exclusion of religious symbols and religious people from public sphere.

#### **4.1. Normative Foundations of CHP's Conception of Laicite**

CHP programme of 2010 states that Atatürk Revolutions and six arrows constitute the source of CHP's determination concerning the triumvirate of republic-laicite-

democracy.<sup>465</sup> Laicite means separation of religious and state affairs and is a prerequisite for peaceful coexistence of different believers of different religions as well as the backbone of freedom of beliefs and conscience.<sup>466</sup> The main target of the principle of laicite is emancipation of reason.<sup>467</sup> In this respect, laicite refers to Enlightenment philosophy with emancipation of reason. CHP defines laicite as the milestone of national integrity, internal peace, modernity, and being scientific. In this sense, CHP is against the abuse of religion. Neither politicization of religion nor desecularization is acceptable for CHP. State stands equidistant to all religions and beliefs. State has no religion. Religion is not a matter of public sphere but rather belongs to the private sphere. Laicite is the guarantee of equality of women and men, modernization and modernity. That's why, laicite constitutes the indispensable and unchangeable element of the Constitution.<sup>468</sup> Without laicite it is not possible to maintain democracy, enlarge freedoms, and protect internal peace. Laicite is the foundation stone of republic and democracy.<sup>469</sup> Laicite is the main principle which can not be sacrificed by any means. Laicite is not an ideology against religion and beliefs. Conversely, it is the guarantee of religious freedoms and the method and principle for coexistence of different beliefs in peace and mutual tolerance. CHP envisages prevention of instrumentalization of religion for oppression, religious oppression, and penetration of politics into places of worship. Also, CHP evaluates the use of religious symbols incompatible with democracy and unchangeable decrees of the Constitution. CHP is determined to struggle with the ones who try to entrap laic democratic republic, try to redefine laicite with this purpose, can not accept laicite by the rules of democracy, norms of rule of law and within the structure of civil society.<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> CHP Party Programme, 2008, 13.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid, 16& CHP Party Programme, 1994, 19.

<sup>467</sup> CHP Party Programme, 2008, 16.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid, 31. Please also see page 49-50.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid, 50-51.

## 4.2. The Relation Between Laicite and Democracy

The relation between CHP's conception of laicite and democracy is protean. Laicite constitutes the prior responsibility of CHP which has founded laicite.<sup>471</sup> CHP's conception of laicite is an integral part of democracy in the sense that it allows all groups to practice their religious creeds as well as atheists or deists to live freely in Turkey. CHP Party Programme stipulates that no one shall be condemned because of his/her religious belief and thought and no one can be oppressed. Everyone has the right to worship, practice, learn and develop religious requirements freely.<sup>472</sup> CHP puts forward laicite will be actualized as a common guarantee of different beliefs, different ideas and all religious beliefs will be free within their own worlds.<sup>473</sup> In this respect, laicite in CHP party programme maintains that all religious beliefs are equal before the law. CHP is against state intervention to religious beliefs. Conversely, freedom of belief and worship is seen as an inviolable and a sacred private right. CHP is against religious oppression as well as use of religion as a tool for oppression. It takes laicism as separation of religion and state affairs and laicite stands as a milestone for Republic and democracy, national integrity and internal peace. In other words, laicite provides the framework for peaceful coexistence of different religious beliefs. It is the common guarantee of people having different religious beliefs and different ideas. Laic state is not a party among those different actors but instead it is the regulator of this common guarantee. Democracy cannot survive without the protection of laicite.<sup>474</sup> Seen from this light, laicite is a prerequisite for democracy not in the sense of the governance of the majority but in the sense of pluralism and coexistence of differences for CHP.

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<sup>471</sup> CHP party Programme, 1994, 20.

<sup>472</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>473</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid, 19-20.



In its party programme, CHP defines democracy as a system in which people, beliefs, thoughts, politics and understandings freely differentiate and coexist in peace and integrity. In a parallel vein, civil society should be supported and developed.<sup>475</sup> CHP party programme recognizes equality as a principle of social democracy. Yet, this points out to neither standardization nor monotony. Rather, this means equality of opportunity. Equality should be maintained first and foremost in the sphere of education. Furthermore, equality between men and women constructed.<sup>476</sup> CHP pays significance to emancipation of individual as a requirement of democracy.<sup>477</sup> CHP, as a founding party of modern Turkish Republic, interprets emancipation first and foremost in terms of liberation from the oppression of the sacred. Hence, secularism occupies a central place in CHP's conception of democracy.

In this respect, CHP pays special attention to education. CHP's conception of laicite is not limited to the administration of the state. But rather, it involves modernization of society through emancipating people from religious oppression. Therefore, CHP is the proponent of secularism as well as laicite. In this respect, CHP party programme draws attention to education as an instrument to secularize society. Accordingly, it is emphasized that without secularization of education, a modern society and state open to change and innovation cannot be maintained.<sup>478</sup> In line with its secular stance, CHP is determined to preventing the abuse of religion. Protecting the world of beliefs, education and politics from international attacks is the primary mission of CHP.<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> Ibid, 26-27.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid, 23-24.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>478</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>479</sup> Ibid, 20. Please also see page 40.

Furthermore, basic rights and freedoms are also guaranteed by CHP programme. In line with the aim of a functioning pluralist and libertarian democracy, CHP is committed to Universal Declaration of Human Rights, European Convention of Human Rights, Helsinki Final Act and Charter of Paris.<sup>480</sup> Article 9 of European Convention of Human Rights states:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, and to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance. 2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.<sup>481</sup>

Similarly, Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets forth:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.<sup>482</sup>

VII. Chapter of Helsinki Final Act guarantees “respect for human rights and fundamental problems, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”<sup>483</sup> Charter of Paris maintains that “without discrimination, every individual has the right to

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<sup>480</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>481</sup> European Convention on Human Rights as amended by Protocol Nos.11 and 14, supplemented by Protocol Nos 1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, Council of Europe, 10-11, available at [http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/rdonlyres/D5CC24A7-DC13-4318-B457-5C9014916D7A/0/Convention\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/rdonlyres/D5CC24A7-DC13-4318-B457-5C9014916D7A/0/Convention_ENG.pdf)

<sup>482</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, 1948, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Language.aspx?LangID=eng>

<sup>483</sup> Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Final Act, Helsinki 1975, 6 available at <http://www.osce.org/mc/39501?download=true>

freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, freedom of movement”.<sup>484</sup> Hence, in normative terms, CHP approves freedom of religion and conscience no matter it is publicly or privately practiced unless it contradicts with any requirement for public safety and public order.

On the other hand, CHP has from place to place been the proponent of state laicism. Baykal’s speech in his group meeting in 2006 is a case in point:

Unfortunately today we have come to a point where secularism and the Republic have to be protected by the people against the state...We therefore call on those who have respect to the constitutional order of Turkey and want to make the secular, democratic Republic of Atatürk live, to assume responsibility before this development and be against it.  
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Here, Baykal implied that it was the state which protected the Republic and laicite before they have come to that point at which vice versa would take place. In his speech, Baykal seems like the proponent of state laicism and underlines the distinction between people and state while implicitly defending state laicism. Even though CHP has been sensitive about religious oppression of women and Alevis, the relation between CHP’s conception of laicite and human rights is problematic in some respects. For instance, a debate concerning CHP’s conception of laicite burst out with Bülent Arınç’s speech claiming that laicite meant freedom of religion and conscience not oppression of this freedom on 23 April 2006.<sup>486</sup> In his speech, Arınç had called for reinterpretation of laicite: “The rigid laicism is harmful in terms of

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<sup>484</sup> Charter of Paris For a New Europe, Paris 1990, 3, available at <http://www.osce.org/mc/39516>

<sup>485</sup> Baykal, “Baykal’ın Grup Konuşması”, April 25, 2006, available at <http://www.chp.org.tr> in Bağdonas, 110.

<sup>486</sup> Bülent Arınç, Resmi Web Sitesi, available at <http://bulentarinc.com.tr/haber/hedefimiz-var-o-hedefe-kosa-kosa-gidiyoruz/420>

turning people's social life into a prison as much as recognizing laicite as peace, and freedom and freedom of conscience and non-intervention into people's religious beliefs would serve to social peace".<sup>487</sup> However, Baykal reacted by comparing Arınç with Iran's President Ahmedinejad. Baykal argued: "We can not unfortunately evaluate the speech of the Speaker of the Parliament as a speech reflecting a neutral and supra-party approach."<sup>488</sup> Even though Baykal's reaction derived from Arınç's lack of neutrality as the President of Parliament too and Arınç's critique of Document of National Security Politics which determined the first threat as "religious reaction"(*irtica*),<sup>489</sup> it was obvious that Arınç's and Baykal's definition of laicite were different. Baykal proposed that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan does not take necessary measures about Arınç who reacted to Document of National Security Politics which determined the first threat as "religious reaction"(*irtica*) and called this as "hypocrisy"(*takiye*)<sup>490</sup> Baykal's notion of laicite has been the one that tried to protect the state vis-à-vis individuals.

Therefore, even though laicite is the guarantee for coexistence of different beliefs and thus democracy, the problem lies in CHP's interpretation of laicite. As has been discussed so far, sometimes CHP's laicite acquires a statist tone by neglecting people's demands. Different ratio implementation to *İmam Hatip Schools* is a case in point. Even though CHP's laicite is the one that generally keeps eye on equality, CHP opposed equal ratio implementation to *İmam Hatip Schools* in higher education exam which was abolished by AKP. Actually, Baykal evaluated the matter political

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<sup>487</sup> "ARINÇ: Laiklik yeniden tanımlanmalı", *Milliyet*, 26.04.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/arinc--laiklik-yeniden-tanimlanmali/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/26.04.2006/154816/default.htm>

<sup>488</sup> "Baykal'dan Arınç'a sert tepki", *Milliyet*, 25.03.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2006/04/25/son/sonsiy20.asp>

<sup>489</sup> Fikret Bila, "Baykal'da Arınç'a Ahmedinejad benzetmesi", *Milliyet*, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/baykal-dan-arinc-a--ahmedinecad--benzetmesi/fikret-bila/siyaset/yazardetayarsiv/25.04.2006/154730/default.htm>

<sup>490</sup> "Baykal: Takiye yapıyorlar", *Milliyet*, 26.04.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/baykal--takiye-yapiyorlar/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/26.04.2006/154814/default.htm>

and defined *İmam Hatip Schools* as the backyard of AKP.<sup>491</sup> CHP paid lip service to equality principle and did not regard the problem as a matter of human rights when it was laicite that needed to be protected. However, CHP's conception of laicite is not the one that is always in compliance with human rights, democracy and equality. Actually, in cases where laicite serves to survival of the state, CHP acquires a more statist tone.

However, in its programme CHP proposes a laicite that is the guarantee of religious freedom in tandem with a controlling laicism as have been mentioned above. It is this latter element which leads CHP to etatism in its approach to different identities. Drawing upon CHP's approach to Alevis concerning religious oppression, CHP's understanding of secularism is based on democracy which protects the rights of all religious sects vis-à-vis the dominant groups. In this respect, CHP is democratic rather than etatist as it protects Alevis through respecting different religious beliefs and practices vis-à-vis the state to which men and Sunni version of Islam dominate. As Chantal Mouffe argues, democracy does not only mean unity and homogeneity. As she reminds democracy always includes heterogeneity and thus a pluralist dimension.<sup>492</sup> CHP opposes intervention to religious beliefs and its practices. Rather than interpreting laicite from the perspective of the state and state interests, CHP's party programme emphasizes the importance of individual rights concerning religious beliefs and worship. Hence, in this respect, CHP's conception of laicite can not be accounted as simply statist. Conversely, it is democratic. In short, it is misleading to call CHP simply etatist. Actually, by opposing religious oppression of Sunni version of Islam upon minority groups such as Alevis and other religious groups, CHP adopts a democratic approach by defending the rights of religious sects and individual rights. In this respect, CHP's position is democratic rather than etatist as it challenges Sunni-prevailing state establishment incarnated in education

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<sup>491</sup> "İmam hatip rövanşı", *Milliyet*, 05.05.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/imam-hatip-rovansi/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/05.05.2004/265963/default.htm>

<sup>492</sup> Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*, (London: Verso, 2000),passim.

curriculum as well as *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. Therefore, it would be fairer to suggest that CHP oscillates between statism and democracy with respect to its conception of laicite.

For analyzing CHP's conception of laicite I took the starting point as 3 November 2002 elections as it referred to CHP's reentering into the parliament after remaining out of the parliament for 3 years after the 1999 elections. I end my analysis at May 2010 where the Party Leader Baykal was replaced by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. The period between 2002 and 2010 mirrors CHP's conception of laicite as this period refers to government of AKP which calls for redefinition of laicite. After it was elected AKP "consistently test[ed] the limits of secularity" in Pinar Tank's words.<sup>493</sup> From another angle, this period is fruitful for grasping etatist reflexes of the CHP with respect to laicite as well as its call for democracy against religious oppression. I focused on five topics namely, *türban*, *imams and İmam Hatip Schools*, Quran courses, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and Alevis in order to analyze CHP's conception of laicite between 2002 and 2010 through examining the CHP MPs' records of speech at Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM), written and oral parliamentary questions, motions, *Milliyet* daily newspaper as well as party programmes and regulations.

Veiling issue is significant to expose CHP's conception of laicite as it shows CHP's opposition for religious tenets/symbols in the public sphere which resembles the state or state-related institutions according to CHP. Imams and *İmam Hatip Schools* constitute another significant factor as imams were seen as the servants of the state who were appointed to explain religion within the framework of the republican regime. However, AKP's efforts to transfer them to other positions in the state as well as imams' uncontrolled activities against laicite challenged CHP's conception of

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<sup>493</sup> Tank, 15.

laicite. Religious education was regarded as a right by the CHP. However, organization of illegal orders to exploit religion in Quran courses was seen unacceptable by the CHP. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which is responsible to supervise religious activity on behalf of the state is another nodal point as it betrays CHP's laicism based on control. CHP has a concern about religious oppression. That's why, CHP's approach to oppression of Alevis vis-a-vis the majority of Sunnis is another point that betrays CHP's conception of laicite. In short, whereas veiling, imams/*İmam Hatip Schools*, Quran courses and *Diyanet* give a hint about control account of CHP's laicism, veiling and Alevis denote CHP's pertinency about religious oppression.

### **4.3. *Türban***

Issue of *türban* which is a form of veiling is like a litmus test indicating CHP's conception of laicite. CHP evaluates veiling through the prism of private and public dichotomy. Whereas CHP's conception of laicite respects veiling in the private sphere, CHP opposes veiling like any other religious symbol in the public sphere. This derives from several reasons. At first hand, veiling symbolizes religious oppression for CHP. Seen from the critical lenses of religious oppression, veiling resembles a patriarchal tool to control women's sexuality. Stated in other words, CHP opposes veiling as it relates veiling with patriarchy and veiling has been considered as an imposition upon women and a violation of human rights in general, equality of men and women in particular. Religious oppression is not limited to unveiled women but also to Alevis for CHP. In short, CHP opposes veiling since, according to its conception of laicite, it would serve to desecularization of society and the state. Another reason for CHP's opposition to veiling in public sphere is the drive to protect the regime. What's more, CHP is annoyed with the possibility of spread of veiling to other state institutions. Finally, CHP is against veiling in public sphere as it opposes to basing state's legitimacy upon religious tenets. Even though

CHP opposes *türban* in the public sphere consistently between 2002 and 2010, it has softened its discourse through “*çarşaf* opening” as was called by the media. CHP adopted a more inclusive tone towards veiled women after 2007 elections.

Actually, veiling issue has been intense since the late 1980s when veiled students challenged the ban on veiling in universities. Prime Minister Özal’s Motherland Party(ANAP) legalized wearing headscarves in public buildings such as universities. In 1989, the ban on veiling was lifted and from then on, university rectors acquired the right to deciding on the issue on an individual basis.<sup>494</sup> Nevertheless, the ban was reinstated by the Higher Board of Education in 1998.<sup>495</sup> The debate was inflamed after the election of Merve Kavakçı as an MP to FP. When she came to swearing-in ceremony in the parliament with veil, Kavakçı was not allowed to oath and lost her membership of parliament whereas veiled MP who took her veil off before oath-taking ceremony was applauded. Kavakçı’s attempt to swear in veil was seen as a threat to national security.<sup>496</sup> During AKP’s power, similar confrontations over the issue of headscarf were experienced. For instance, veiled spouses of AKP were not invited to the ceremony taking place in the presidential palace.<sup>497</sup>

#### **4.3.1 CHP’s Attitude About Veiling in Public Sphere**

There are many examples showing CHP’s attitude about veiling in public sphere between 2002 and 2010. For instance, while negotiations on The Basic Law on Public Administration which foresaw non-discrimination on receiving public

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<sup>494</sup> Poulton,195, in Tank, 13.

<sup>495</sup> Marvine Howe, *Turkey Today: A Nation Divided over Islam’s Revival* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000),109, in Tank, 13.

<sup>496</sup> Tank, 13.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid, 13.



services were being pursued, Mehmet Kesimoğlu on behalf of CHP Group disapproved of wearing *türban* in public sphere as a corollary of individual right and argued in 2004:

Individual rights and freedoms could be protected as long as they did not contradict with the rights and freedoms of other people and the public. For these reasons, it may also be limited in our country like in every other country. You say that discrimination is unacceptable about benefitting from public services; however, non-discrimination may not be fair in some situations, when providing benefits to people in public services. You can't deem same the rich and the poor, when you distribute any relief supplies; you have to make a distinction between those two. It isn't intended to promote human rights in public services with this clause. There is a hidden aim; and this hidden aim is *türban*, to ensure allowance of *türban* in the public sphere. The Constitutional Court stated in its relevant decree: "prohibition on wearing *türban* in public sphere doesn't mean restriction of fundamental rights and freedoms..."<sup>498</sup>

Again in 2004, a group of students who were permitted to watch the meeting of commission of external affairs in parliament attended the meeting. One of the students attended wearing *türban*. With the notice of CHP MP Hasan Ören and head of commission she was taken out as her dress code did not comply with the parliamentary dress code.<sup>499</sup>

A striking example showing CHP's opposition to the use of religious symbols in the public sphere was presidential elections in 2007. The extensive debates concerning presidential elections were closely interlinked with CHP's approach to laicite which did not allow visibility of religious symbols in public sphere. While explaining the reason for not supporting the candidacy of Abdullah Gül, Baykal mentioned that Gül's verdict that religion could not be imprisoned in mosques meant denying laicite

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<sup>498</sup> Mehmet Kesimoğlu's speech at TBMM, 19.02.2004, 415, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c041/tbmm22041055.pdf>

<sup>499</sup> Hasan Ören's written parliamentary question, 26.09.2004, 434, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c060/tbmm22060124.pdf>

as Baykal was completely against publicization of religion. Baykal also pointed out to increasing Islamization of culture, economy, media and lifestyles.<sup>500</sup> The CHP as a founding party took a firm action in denying presidential candidacy of Gül as Gül did not conform to conception of laiklik and nation-state.<sup>501</sup> Concerning the visibility of religious symbols in public upon the presidential elections a massive demonstration took place in Ankara on April 14, 2007 and thousands of people walked to the Atatürk's mausoleum with Turkish flags and Atatürk posters. The slogan was "We are Turks, We are Turkists, We are Atatürkists" as well as "'O, Atatürk, we are following your path!" Demonstrations in cities carrying the same message which underlined Kemalist principles and Republican values followed suit. The reason lying behind those demonstrations was the candidate proposed by the AKP who was believed to have a secret Islamist agenda.<sup>502</sup> Republican demonstrations which took place in Istanbul, Ankara, Manisa, Çanakkale emphasized significance of laicite as well as national integrity.<sup>503</sup> Baykal supported and attended Republican demonstrations.<sup>504</sup>

Another occasion happened in Holy Birth Week event in Denizli organized by Denizli Office of Mufti and Denizli Municipality. In this event, primary school students wearing *türban* were chanting. Also, assistant governor used religious

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<sup>500</sup> "MHP olmasaydı, Gül dayatılmazdı", *Milliyet*, 16.08.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-mhp-olmasaydi-gul-dayatilmazdi-siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/16.08.2007/210733/default.htm>

<sup>501</sup> "Baykal:Kurucu parti tepkisi veriyoruz", *Milliyet*, 16.08.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/baykal--kurucu-parti-tepkisi-veriyoruz/fikret-bila/siyaset/yazardetayarsiv/16.08.2007/210790/default.htm>

<sup>502</sup> Özlem Demirtaş Bagdonas. "The Clash of Kemalism? Reflections on the Past and Present Politics of Kemalism in Turkish Political Discourse", *Turkish Studies*. (Vol.9;No:1,2008), 99.

<sup>503</sup> "Mitinglerin anlamı", *Milliyet*, 06.05.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/mitinglerin-anlami/fikret-bila/siyaset/yazardetayarsiv/06.05.2007/198505/default.htm>

<sup>504</sup> "Meydanda el ele", *Milliyet*, 20.05.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/meydanda-el-ele/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/20.05.2007/200143/default.htm> and "Biz birleştik, sıra halkta", *Milliyet*, 21.05.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/biz-birlestik--sira-halkta-siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/21.05.2007/200260/default.htm>

references such as Mohammed in his speech. In 2007, Kesimoğlu brought these into agenda by criticizing use of religious symbols in public sphere as well as religious references by state officials.<sup>505</sup> CHP's opposition to *türban* as a religious symbol in public sphere can be exemplified with also participation of some elementary and high school students to the farewell ceremony to Çanakkale with *türban* along with the Minister of National Education. With a written parliamentary question in 2007, Ahmet Ersin problematized and expressed increasing anxiety concerning that AKP's attempts would not be limited with universities but involve elementary and high schools. Actually, Ersin worried about loosening secularism.<sup>506</sup> Hikmet Erenkaya also questioned debates concerning *türban* in primary schools since 2002 besides existence of questions reminiscent of Sharia, religious oppression in student pensions and dorms with a written parliamentary question.<sup>507</sup> In line with CHP's attitude to oppose religious attires in the public sphere, Kamer Genç insisted on the ban on wearing *türban* in universities and assessed it as violation of the Constitution during the same negotiations at the TBMM.<sup>508</sup> In addition, a student from Şefkat College wearing a black *türban* attended TÜBİTAK Olympics of National Science. Some other students in the same college and some teachers attended classes with *türban*. Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of National Education gave a prize to the student with *türban*. Also, in the same college there was an exercise of separation of places between male and female students and collective performance of namaz during classes. With a written parliamentary question CHP MP Ersin problematized the existence of religious symbols as well as exercise of religious creeds in public sphere in 2008.<sup>509</sup> Ministry of Culture and Tourism attended a tourism fair in Madrid. In the area reserved for the Ministry, Istanbul Municipality promoted Istanbul. Tayfun

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<sup>505</sup> Mehmet S. Kesimoğlu's written parliamentary question, 28.05.2007, 524, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c159/tbmm22159115.pdf>

<sup>506</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 20.11.2007, 198-199, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c005/tbmm23005022.pdf>

<sup>507</sup> Hikmet Erenkaya's written parliamentary question, 24.01.2008, 113, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013054.pdf>

<sup>508</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 29.01.2008,199, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013055.pdf>

<sup>509</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 05.02.2008, 608, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013058.pdf>

Süner problematized employment of personnel who wore *türban* in 2008.<sup>510</sup> Abdullah Özer problematized use of *türban* by a school teacher in Elmasbahçeler Primary School on duty.<sup>511</sup> Canan Aritman problematized employment of some women wearing *türban* in TBMM social houses as well as lack of alcohol service in some restaurants connected to TBMM.<sup>512</sup> In 2008, Ersin questioned use of a woman wearing *türban* in the advertisement of reading festival by the Ministry of National Education.<sup>513</sup> Hulusi Güvel problematized use of women wearing *türban* in some of the pictures in the campaign, “Mother-Daughter at School” of Ministry of National Education.<sup>514</sup> In a similar vein, Çetin Soysal problematized attendance of Head of School Family Union to a meeting in Çapa Primary School with her *türban* and warning punishment to a teacher who warned her as well as transfer of her to a different school in 2008.<sup>515</sup> In 2008, Abdurrezzak Erten problematized demonstrations calling for Sharia as a reaction to Constitutional Court’s decision cancelling the parliamentary decision to allow *türban* in universities.<sup>516</sup>

Anxiety of CHP MP Ali Topuz about change in internal regulations of TBMM concerning allowing female MPs to wear trousers in 2009 as this could pave the way

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<sup>510</sup> Tayfur Süner’s written parliamentary question, 11.03.2008, 323, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c016/tbmm23016075.pdf>

<sup>511</sup> Abdullah Özers’s written parliamentary question, 29.05.2008, 411, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

<sup>512</sup> Canan Aritman’s written parliamentary question, 16.06.2008, 615, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024128.pdf>

<sup>513</sup> Ahmet Ersin’s written parliamentary question, 29.07.2008, 242, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c026/tbmm23026136.pdf>

<sup>514</sup> Hulusi Güvel’s written parliamentary question, 29.07.2008, 245, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c026/tbmm23026136.pdf>

<sup>515</sup> Çetin Soysal’s written parliamentary question, 2.10.2008, 466-467, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c037/tbmm23037040.pdf>

<sup>516</sup> Abdurrezzak Erten’s written parliamentary question, 2.10.2008, 466-467, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c027/tbmm23027001.pdf>

for wearing *türban* in TBMM is another case in point.<sup>517</sup> Similarly, in 2009 CHP Municipal Council members in Seyhan-Adana took legal action about two AKP members for wearing *türban* and violating laws concerning form of attires in public sphere and Mayor for breaching his duty.<sup>518</sup> In 2009, Ali Rıza Öztürk's written parliamentary question brought forward recruitment of a reporter wearing *türban*.<sup>519</sup> Muharrem İnce asked how a cameraman assistant wearing *türban* could work in TRT in a written parliamentary question.<sup>520</sup> Another occasion occurred in 2009 when the relatives of students in oath-taking ceremony in Zonguldak Karaelmas University were warned by the security to change the fixation of their *türban* into their chins so as to make it seem like a headscarf.<sup>521</sup> As can be seen clearly, CHP opposed “*türban*” in public sphere which refers to state or institutions under the influence/authority of the state.

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<sup>517</sup> “Kadın vekillere pantolon müjdesi”, *Milliyet*, 13.2.2009, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/kadin-vekillere--font-color--red--pantolon--font--mujdesi/guncel/gundemdetay/13.02.2009/1059177/default.htm>

<sup>518</sup> “Belediye meclisindeki türban yargıya taşındı”, *Milliyet*, 4.5.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/belediye-meclisindeki-turban--yargiya-tasindi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/04.05.2009/1090803/default.htm>

<sup>519</sup> Ali Rıza Öztürk's written parliamentary question, 29.07.2009, available at <http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d23/7/7-9332s.pdf>

<sup>520</sup> Muharrem İnce's written parliamentary question, 14.9.2009, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c051/b012/tbmm230510121061.pdf>

<sup>521</sup> “Üniversitedeki yemin töreninde türban ayarı”, *Milliyet*, 18.9.2009, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/universitedeki-yemin-torende-turban-ayari/gundem/gundemdetay/18.06.2009/1108072/default.htm>

## 4.3.2. Reasons for CHP's Opposition to Veiling in Public Sphere

### 4.3.2.1. Religious Oppression

One of the reasons of CHP's opposition to *türban* in public sphere stands as religious oppression on women and Alevis. For instance, CHP denied AKP's proposal about students' amnesty which were discarded from university for various reasons including wearing *türban* in 2005 because, in my opinion, it evaluated the use of religious symbols in public sphere as causing religious oppression and desecularization of society.<sup>522</sup> There are several examples exposing CHP's attitude about *türban* in public sphere which evaluated it as men's tool for oppressing women. For instance, in 2005 CHP member of Central Executive Council and MP Güldal Okuducu criticized use of women's bodies for political purposes.<sup>523</sup> In a similar vein, concerning the case of Leyla Şahin who applied to European Court of Human Rights about the ban on *türban* in Turkish universities, Okuducu defined the issue as "doing politics over women, abusing woman identity, female body for the politics and giving message to its own base through it and as a new sign for marginalization."<sup>524</sup> Similarly, in 2006, CHP MP Oya Araslı stated:

The RPP is against the use of the veil in the public sphere. Veiled women wear the veil to comply with the expectations of their fathers, brothers or their husbands. Because they don't have economic independence, they

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<sup>522</sup> "Öğrenci affi teklifine CHP'den olumsuz yanıt", *Milliyet*, 08.02.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/ogrenci-affi-teklifine-chpden-olumsuz-yanit/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/08.02.2005/251252/default.htm>

<sup>523</sup> Derya Sazak, "Türban ve muhalefet", *Milliyet*, 11.02.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/turban-ve--muhalefet/derya-sazak/siyaset/yazardetayarsiv/11.02.2005/104705/default.htm>

<sup>524</sup> Güldal Okuducu's speech at TBMM, 23.11.2005, 224, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c099/tbmm22099022.pdf>

cannot oppose such an imposition. We want women to be educated and financially independent.<sup>525</sup>

Another case exposing CHP's attitude about veiling with respect to religious oppression was about veiled girls in a folkloric dance ceremony in Tunceli to which Speaker of the Parliament, Arınç attended in 2006. CHP Tunceli MP Sinan Yerlikaya and Tunceli Mayor Songül Erol Abdil reacted as they regarded it as a suggestion to veil.<sup>526</sup> In 2008, with an oral parliamentary question to Minister of Education Hüseyin Çelik, Süner problematized religious oppression imposed on female students. Accordingly, primary school students were induced to wear *türban* besides being forced to watch religious CDs.<sup>527</sup> As can be seen, CHP's reaction stems from the probability of any suggestion to women for wearing *türban*.

Another opposition to *türban* due to women's oppression by men arose from Necla Arat in 2008. After MHP and AKP presented a motion concerning non-discrimination for the right to education as follows: "no one shall be deprived of her/his right to education against the law"<sup>528</sup>, Arat stated:

We regard the new proposal on *türban* prepared by AKP with the support of MHP, during just at the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of laicite's adoption as an attempt which questions and contravenes with the fundamental values of the Republic and above all, which threatens our secular social values, in short, which directly aims at laicite. AKP carries out religious politics through women while equality, fundamental rights and freedoms are used as a mask for this religious regulation. However, this mask is no more. Everyone throughout Turkey is up and against this as its citizens, especially women, know that laicite and secular law order abolishes polygamy, child marriages and unwilling marriages; guarantees that women are equal to men in before the law or when inheritance occurs;

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<sup>525</sup> 'Türban Özgürlük Sorunu Değil', *Radikal* newspaper, 28 March 2006 in Sinan Ciddi, *Kemalism in Turkish Politics. The Republican People's Party, Secularism and Nationalism*. (London: Routledge, 2009), 106.

<sup>526</sup> "Türbanlı folklor tartışması", *Milliyet*, 10.07.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/turbanli-folklor-tartismasi/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/10.07.2006/257141/default.htm>

<sup>527</sup> Tayfur Süner's written parliamentary question, 05.02.2008, 571-572, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013058.pdf>

<sup>528</sup> TBMM record, 6.2.2008, passim, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

provides equal chances of receiving proper education; enables the entry of women to any kind of work or science branches; saves them of *çarşaf* and veils and ensures that they exist in the social and public life as much as men do. Therefore, very significantly, they say “no” to *türban* and its possible results. These women know by heart that the 6 year incubation period of AKP's plans is over, the incubated eggs are shattered one by one and revealed AKP's secret agenda, that indirect additions about religion is being pushed into the constitution and that Islamic government approach always aims at the secularism based on Atatürk's principles and reformations. In an environment where no social and institutional consensus exists, we see that these regulations introduced for so called fundamental rights and freedoms actually serve as a manifestation of patriarchal ideology and male selfishness, which perceive the female sex as inferior and force females to take this situation for granted through education and conditioning during childhood.<sup>529</sup>

The following day of the negotiations above, Arat underlined again the religious oppression. She also defined *türban* as a problem of women in addition to problem of laicite.<sup>530</sup> Arat clearly saw the motion which would constitute a basis for allowance of *türban* in universities as against equality of men and women. Therefore, when Arat opposed veiling in universities, she expressed her dismay about the possibility of religious oppression which could be led by allowing veiling in universities.

During the negotiations on the same motion, Fatma Nur Serter also regarded *türban* as a political symbol which was problematic in terms of subjugation of women to men:

It is a constitutional amendment executed in order to let *türban* free in the universities. By letting *türban* which is a uniform religious and political in character free, the laic state is explicitly targeted and doors for implementations which could not be avoided in the short-run are opened. *Türban* is not only a dressing style. It is a tool for expressing an identity and this identity is the one which represents politicized religious belief. What *türban* represents is revealed by the decisions of the Constitutional Court, Court of Appeals, Council of State and the decisions taken by the European Court of Human Rights also contributes to requalification of this identity. You can not evaluate entrance to universities with *türban* within the framework of the fundamental rights and freedoms because *türban* is a dressing style which degrades women to the level of a second

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<sup>529</sup> Necla Arat's speech at TBMM, 05.02.2008, 534-536, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013058.pdf>

<sup>530</sup> Necla Arat's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 763, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>



class individual, and removes equality of women and men and which can not be qualified as a freedom of a dressing style.<sup>531</sup>

Hakkı Süha Okay also saw MHP's and AKP's motion as a step which would encourage proponents of counter-revolution. He stated that trying to change the unchangeable codes of Constitution through other codes means fraud and is against the Constitution.<sup>532</sup> He evaluated *türban* as a political symbol and was worried about religious oppression:

Since it doesn't include a provision about not violating others' freedom, it will create an inevitable ground in which our unveiled children will suffer from oppression. Moreover, who will give us the guarantee that our girls who don't wear headscarves won't suffer from oppression? As the ones who don't fast in Ramadan are stabbed and an Alevi primary education student is oppressed, can the governors of Turkey really guarantee it? From this point of view, the proposal provides inequality under the camouflage of freedom.<sup>533</sup>

Okay drew attention to religious oppression on girls as well as Alevis.

On the other hand, Atilla Kart's explanation of the rationale behind their objection to the motion being discussed was as follows:

As we explained in detail in our opposition cause and negotiations in the commission, when the decisions of the Council of the State since 1984, the decisions of the Constitutional Court in 1989 and 1991, and finally 7 AIHM decisions from 1993 to 2004 are evaluated together, *türban* and similar symbols create discrimination, division, and then polarization in

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<sup>531</sup> Fatma Nur Serter's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 6.2.2008, 737-738, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>532</sup> Hakkı Süha Okay's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 686, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>533</sup> Ibid, 687-688.

public administration and functional places step by step since it is a religious and political symbol. It has been stated that *türban* is a strong external symbol and dramatically and unfortunately in the AİHM decisions it has been mentioned, fixed and decided several times that *türban* has been used as a tool for exploitation in Turkish politic history . It has been stated that *türban* has always been taken as a reference in Turkish political life, and these references have been efficient in using public authority. *Türban* is not an innocent habit anymore, it has become a symbol of a world view which is against women's freedom and the basic principles of the republic. In public spheres, or rather in functional places, the government has to be neutral about religion. I am talking about domains in which public service is continuously produced, you can not differentiate producer of public service from receiver of it. It is inevitable that this turns into a process of domination where symbols which mean manifestation of beliefs are started to be used. In such a situation, we can not talk about freedom of conscience and religion. It is only when the government continues its neutral attitude, belief conflicts and power struggle will not exist. Preventing religions from oppressing each other is the most important duty of laic and democratic state. Processes like that have occurred in all periods in history. If public administration doesn't preserve its laic attitude, the aforementioned conflicts and power struggles will emerge sociologically.<sup>534</sup>

Concerning the same motion, Aritman also opposed it among others with the thought that this would give way freedom to wear *türban* in universities. She stressed:

*Türban* is no longer a religious subject; it is a political symbol and a uniform which has become the flag of religious orders and imperialism in today's Turkey. The government and its supporters are trying to impose this political symbol which they have used under the guise of religion in opposition to laic and democratic regime to the society: *türban* is a tool which they use for their aims. Unfortunately, in this system women are like both figurants and victims. The laic Turkish Republic was founded by appreciating and promoting women but today, in contradistinction, they want to demolish women by taking them backwards. *Türban* is not simply a matter of individual freedom and equality. The legal change based on discrimination, of and domination upon women and reaction are tried to be palmed off under the name of "freedom and equality". This hype is realized against the republic and by exploiting the advantages of the republic.<sup>535</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> Atilla Kart's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 6.2.2008, 769, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>535</sup> Canan Aritman's speech at TBMM, 09.02.2008, 240, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c014/tbmm23014062.pdf>

Aritman also clearly related *türban* with subjugation of women upon men. In a similar vein, İsa Gök mentioned:

*Türban* is the captivity of reason and women. *Türban*, which is a symbol of counter revolution supported by imperialism, can not be evaluated as freedom. If you evaluate it like that it becomes a complete irony. *Türban* is not a freedom symbol, quite the contrary; it is a pattern, a product of dogma which prevents to raise independent and autonomous people. Your aim is not equality; your aim is to remove equality in the the laic structure.<sup>536</sup>

CHP perceived *türban* in primary schools as abuse of religion. Genç emphasized the danger concerning that Alevis would have to take away their children from school as they would be subject to oppression for veiling vis-à-vis veiled students.<sup>537</sup> Therefore, CHP's opposition to the motion concerning veiling in universities derived from its sensitivity against religious oppression on women as well as Alevis and desecularization of society and the state. In other words, allowance to veiling in public sphere might reproduce the domination of a version of Sunni interpretation of Islam, according to CHP.

#### **4.3.2.2. The Drive to Protect the Regime**

Another reason for CHP's opposition to veiling besides religious oppression is the drive to protect the regime. CHP evaluates use of religious symbols in the public sphere as threats to the regime as it regards them as symbols for political demands or politicization of Islam. Article 13 of 1982 Constitution which was changed in 2001 sets forth limitations of basic rights and freedoms can not be against the spirit of the Constitution, requirements of democratic social order and laic Republic and

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<sup>536</sup> İsa Gök's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 810-811, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>537</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 673, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

rationality. In a similar vein, Article 14 puts forward basic rights and freedoms can not be used in activities which aim to abolish state and national integrity and throw out democratic and laic Republic based on human rights.<sup>538</sup> With respect to 1982 Constitution, religious oppression and religious symbols in the public sphere were coded as “threats” to secularism which is a component of national identity and thus national interests. For instance, in 2004 Haluk Koç (as *Grup Başkan Vekili*) suggested that Turkey went through a transitional period in which it tried to compromise Islamic identity with a society based on supremacy of law. He referred to ‘Islamic threat and found AKP insincere as it used religion as a tool for other motives. He defined CHP’s attitude as ‘innate reflexes’ which aimed to protect democracy.<sup>539</sup> Another example concerning CHP’s codification of “*türban*” as a threat to the regime was CHP member of Central Executive Council and MP Okuducu’s views. In 2005, Okuducu argued that *türban* was a form of veil that resembled demands against the regime. She also exposed a firm attitude about dividing people pious and faithless.<sup>540</sup> In 2008, Genç implied that CHP saw laicite as a founding element of national integrity and problematized veiling of students in a *İmam Hatip Lisesi* in Samsun in Security lesson in which they were attending unveiled previously: “So your job is not to govern the country. It is to think the ways to divide the country.”<sup>541</sup> Genç implied that veiled students constituted a threat to the regime. CHP deputies’ opposition to veiled women in public sphere actually exposes its perception of laicite. CHP’s laicite does not allow visibility of religious symbols in public sphere. CHP has codified veiled women in the public sphere as the “regime enemies”. Likewise, Bihlun Tamaylıgil regarded MHP and AKP’s motion which would allow *türban* in universities as a threat to national integrity: “You are equating the *türban*, which you use for political and symbolic reason, with the traditional headscarf our mothers wear and you have deceived the society, you have tried to

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<sup>538</sup> Kemal Gözler, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası*, available at <http://www.anayasa.gen.tr/1982ay.htm>

<sup>539</sup> Haluk Koç (leader of the CHP parliamentary group), interview with *Nokta* magazine, 13 February 2004 in Ciddi, 100.

<sup>540</sup> Derya Sazak, “Türban ve muhalefet”, *Milliyet*, 11.02.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/turban-ve--muhalefet/derya-sazak/siyaset/yazardetayarsiv/11.02.2005/104705/default.htm>

<sup>541</sup> Kamber Genç’s speech at TBMM, 30.01.2008, 327, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013056.pdf>

divide the society, make people stand against each other.”<sup>542</sup> Arat also underlined that allowance of veiling in universities would disrupt the public order and give way to abuse of religion:

Dear Members of the Parliament, the reason why we are opposed to this article is that *türban* is a symbol against our Constitution. Since this situation is determined by a court decision, the limitation of usage of *türban* in universities is a self protection reflex of the laic, democratic republic and is fair and natural. In our point of view, a religious belief shouldn't be effective and dominant in state affairs. This approach constitutes the essence of laicite. The limitations posed to *türban* is in order to protect the public order and not to misuse religion. The laic understanding of the Constitution of the Turkish Republic requires that the changes shouldn't earn the government a religious identity. But the articles which are desired to be included in the Constitution for the freedom of *türban* might purport as the violation of the Constitution since it will render the principle of laicite as unusable. Furthermore, this freedom which is tried to be recognized despite the decision of the AİHM also means to object a norm of European Union... Strict rules and limited lives are in question for women in all the environments where religious domination exists.<sup>543</sup>

#### 4.3.2.3. Spread of the Use of *Türban*

Allowance of *türban* in universities is incompatible with CHP's conception of laicite because CHP's opposition to freedom to wear *türban* in universities and inclusion of universities in the category of public sphere derives from its consideration that this would constitute a leverage for publicization of *türban* further. For instance, Genç expressed his concern about further politicization of *türban* by allowing *türban* in universities in 2008:

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<sup>542</sup> Bihlun Tamaylıgil's speech at TBMM, 9.02.2008, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c014/tbmm23014062.pdf>

<sup>543</sup> Necla Arat's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 763, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

At the end, public officer will say:“I went to school with *türban* because of my religious beliefs, so why can not I work as a judge or a prosecutor, again because of my religious beliefs?” The ones at the universities will wear it, but why will the ones at the high schools and vocational high schools not?<sup>544</sup>

Regarding the concerning motion of AKP and MHP stated above, in 2008 Kemal Anadol stated that this would not be limited with higher education but rather would be followed by another bill of law allowing wearing *türban* in public offices. He continued:

You mentioned that there will not be any problem concerning *türban* in the public sphere and those changes will be exclusively valid for higher education. Interms at faculties of medicine, police schools, teacher schools, intern nurses etc... What are you going to do with them? All day long, medical professors say “Such a thing can not happen... it is a profession both provides and receives service.” Let’s leave that aside, your daughter received education of law for four years. Then assume that we changed the constitution and she will wear the *türban*. Why? For her religious beliefs, okay. Then, she will graduate from the law school, she will be a lawyer, prosecutor or a judge intern. What will you do when she says “I will wear it because of my religious beliefs”? Then you will make another Constitutional amendment, right? The second phase, you have to go step by step, step by step.<sup>545</sup>

Önder Sav, also has the same worry about spread of *türban* to public offices. In 2008, he stated:

Unfortunately I want to say that, *türban* discussions won’t be limited to the universities, it will spread to the whole society, acquisition and knowledge of the republic shall be tried to be corroded with *türban* discussions. Our opposition against the change regarding *türban* doesn’t prevent us from being respectful to those who wear it just for their belief. It is wrong to consider the traditional headscarf which is used by Anatolian women for centuries equal to this one. If *türban* is considered as a symbol and is considered as the “identity of Muslim women”, people

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<sup>544</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 30.01.2008, 326-327, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013056.pdf>

<sup>545</sup> Kemal Anadol’s speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 665, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

can think that a university student or a woman who don't wear *türban* isn't a Muslim. As was stated in the AIHM decisions, it should not be forgotten that Islamic *türban* can create oppression on those who don't wear it. In the same decision, the drawbacks of the regulation were emphasized by saying; "When secular universities provide rules for the clothing of the students, it must be guaranteed that fundamentalist movements do not violate the public order in the higher education or infringe others' beliefs."<sup>546</sup>

Sav underlined the risk of spread of freedom to wear *türban* to public offices as well as of oppression of the majority upon minorities concerning the issue of *türban*. In the same speech, Okay emphasized that he thought the attempt to allow *türban* would not be limited with universities but would be valid for public offices.

Who will be the responsible when the doctors, judges, district governors say "I was wearing *türban* when I was at school, so I want to wear it when I work. This is my right according to article 49 and 70 of the constitution."? Then, do you think "how will we solve this problem with the discourse of liberties?"<sup>547</sup>

On the same day, Nesrin Baytok mentioned social anxiety concerning that allowance to wear *türban* would spread to primary schools.<sup>548</sup> As can be seen clearly in Genç's speech, CHP has a concern about veiling of women in public offices rather than students. Defending the ban on *türban* stems mainly from the will to prevent veiled women's appointment to public offices after graduation from university as well as spread of veiling to high schools.

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<sup>546</sup> Önder Sav's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 667-668, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>547</sup> Hakkı Süha Okay's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 687, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>548</sup> Nesrin Baytok's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 732, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

Ersin also implied that allowing *türban* in universities would pave the way for allowance of wearing *türban* in public offices in 2008.<sup>549</sup> Yaşar Ağyüz criticized use of *türban* for political purposes by AKP.<sup>550</sup> In 2008, Enis Tütüncü argued that allowing *türban* without allowing it in high schools and public offices implying that allowing *türban* would not be restricted to universities.<sup>551</sup>

Concerning the motion which would pave the way for allowance of *türban* in universities due to non-discrimination principle in the right to education in the motion, Atila Emek emphasized freedom to wear *türban* in primary and secondary schools at a young age:

We, as the CHP, are respectful to the women who veil because of their traditions and beliefs. There is nothing to discuss about veiling of Anatolian women due to their beliefs or traditions. We condemn the ones who utilize women and young girls for their political aims. We are against that the *türban* is being made official through the Constitution. Dear Members of the Parliament, the amendments in the proposal are against the essence of the Constitution, introduction part, and inalterable articles and articles which can not be proposed to be amended. It is especially an incompatible amendment with the principle of laicite which is incarnated in the Article 2 of the Constitution. When this amendment is put into force and correspondingly, amendments in YÖK Act render laicite unoperational, this amendment will create new potential problems in society. Dear Members of Parliament, polarization has started among academics and professors at universities before the proposal has become a law. This polarization will later spread to students and classrooms, and it will result in the oppression on students' future. This is the first step. When you let *türban* as a political symbol free in universities, new demands will arise in the middle and primary school in an unstoppable way.<sup>552</sup>

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<sup>549</sup> Ahmet Ersin's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 756, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>550</sup> Yaşar Ağyüz's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 757, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>551</sup> Enis Tütüncü's speech at TBMM, 6.2.2008, 757, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>552</sup> Atila Emek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 6.2.2008, 801, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>



Emek implied that such an attempt aims to transfer Turkey into a theocratic state.<sup>553</sup> Again, CHP exposed a fear about spread of *türban* to primary school education.

In short, CHP was against freedom to wear *türban* in universities as it constituted a threshold for spreading veiling to primary and secondary school education besides giving way to religious oppression. That's why, CHP opposed to the motion concerning non-discrimination of attires with the following justification:

Laicite is a system of values which prevents oppression and domination of beliefs and sects upon each other, aims coexistence of all beliefs and guarantees it. During the republican history, there hasn't been a structuring or institutional process which prevented the freedom of religion and conscience. No one can say anything about the dressing style of women (unveiled, with headscarf or *türban*) in daily life, private relationships and common social spaces. This is their preferences and respectable. *Türban* has turned into a symbol of a world view which is against the freedom of women and basic principles of our republic from an innocent habit and choice of outfit. If the proposal is accepted, another inevitable process is that as a result of an education had in faculties of law, medicine and others with *türban*; these people naturally will have demands like that: "I had this education in order to be a judge, prosecutor, lawyer, doctor, district governor, governor. If I won't be able to perform these jobs, then what's the reason in having this education and directing my life in line with this? So I demand to take part in public service according to articles 49 and 70." It is inevitable that *türban* and symbols having similar connotations will create oppression and polarization following discrimination and division. Public safety will be violated irreparably. When this happens, *türban* and similar religious and political symbols will be in public administration and it will be really difficult to control the social division and discrimination. As we explained in detail in our opposition cause and commission negotiations, it has been determined that *türban* and similar connotations create discrimination, separation and later on polarization in public administration and functional spaces because of being religious and political symbols.<sup>554</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> Ibid, 803.

<sup>554</sup> CHP's justification for opposition to Tayyip Erdoğan's and Devlet Bahçeli's notice of motion, signed by Atila Emek, Turgut Dibek, Mehmet Ali Özpolat, Atilla Kart, Şahin Mengü, 14-18, 6.2.2008, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

As can be seen, CHP imagines a public sphere cleansed from all religious symbols to avoid religious oppression. In this respect, allowance of wearing *türban* in universities had a strategic importance for CHP in that veiled graduates might demand to be public officers in addition to that veiling would diffuse to other levels of education.

#### 4.3.2.4. Basing State Legitimacy on Raison D'etat

Another reason why CHP opposed *türban* in public sphere is basing state legitimacy on *raison d'etat*. CHP opposes *türban* in public sphere as it challenges reliance on Shari'a in administration of state and organization of public sphere according to religious creeds. For example, in 2003, Mustafa Özyürek criticized reference to a religious symbol, *türban* in government programme and evaluated allowance to wear *türban* as an obstacle for social consensus and peace. He protested the use of religious symbols in universities as well as public offices on his notes on government programme:

Of course all the obstacles in front of education must be removed, there should be dormitories for poor students, scholarships should be given, our schools should be supported in terms of equipments and teachers but as we understand from this program, rather a reference to the *türban* problem which is perceived as the main problem in front of the education is made. With "removing the obstacles in front of education", it is intended to legitimize *türban* somewhat; in short, there is an understanding that people might enter the universities or government agencies and work in these agencies with *türban*. This is not correct. It is an approach which dynamites peace and point of reconciliation, I suggest to avoid this earnestly.<sup>555</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> Mustafa Özyürek's speech at TBMM, 21.3.2003, 363, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c008/tbmm22008052.pdf>

It is clear that CHP is not ready to adapt into identity-based politics. Emphasis on economic problems while defining the obstacles in front of education certifies this attitude.

Concerning the clash between CHP and AKP on state rationality, Prime Minister Erdoğan's declaration concerning AİHM's decision confirming the ban on wearing veil in universities in 2005 was a case in point. After the decision of a crisis came up the AİHM, Erdoğan stated that the Court did not have the right to say the last word about veiling. The right to say the last word belonged to *ulema*, the religious class in the Ottoman Empire. In response, CHP Group Vice Chairman Koç declared that Turkey would never become a state of *Ayetullahs*. He also added that Turkey's modern acquisitions should not be emptied of its content in such an easy and apathetic manner. In 2005, CHP MP Berhan Şimşek, on the other hand, asked whether ulema class had an authority to tell a word about Turkey's legal order and administrative structure. He also brought in a bill asking the composition of the so called ulema class, whether this class had a right to say a word about Turkey's legal and administrative, if so, where this class took this right from.<sup>556</sup> Similarly, in a written parliamentary question Yakup Kepenek questioned whether resorting to ulema contradicted with the basic principles of laicite and modern law. He also asked whether asking ulema's opinion about wearing *türban* meant accepting that *türban* was a religious symbol.<sup>557</sup> Also, Okuducu problematized basing state administration and organization of social life upon Shari'a concerning Leyla Şahin case:

The decision taken by the AİHM upon application of Leyla Şahin and the decision taken upon the application for reappealing, rose on top of the

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<sup>556</sup> "Ulema Tartışması Büyüyor", *Hürriyet*, 16.11.2005, available at <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=3528884&tarih=2005-11-16>

<sup>557</sup> Yakup Kepenek's written parliamentary question, 16.11.2005, 77, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c110/tbmm22110057.pdf>

agenda of society as a new sign of doing politics over women, instrumentalization of woman identity and female body for politics and giving message to its own constituents through it and marginalization. Under these circumstances, the Prime Minister, who has to govern the women of his country in accordance with contemporary laws, said: “the AİHM, the court has no right to have a say on this issue; the authority to be consulted on this issue is the religious ulema.”<sup>558</sup>

With respect to the Prime Minister’s explanation concerning requirement to ask to the religious ulema and that a man can marry a woman if she is disabled, elderly, or ill, and on the condition that consent of the woman is taken, she said:

Turkey is being governed by a Prime Minister who gives fatwa for having a new wife and do not ever attempt to trust in law, decisions of the law, judicial decisions because the Prime Minister of the country longs for and has a desire to govern the law, the contemporary and modern Republic of Turkey not according to the decisions envisaged by a secular, democratic country, but with religious values, ulama, the provisions of shari’a through which they are trying to besiege the society today.<sup>559</sup>

Onur Öymen also did not relate *türban* with individual freedoms and supported AİHM’s decision about Leyla Şahin: “Don’t say “There is not freedom in Turkey, referring to *türban* issue. Turkey is a country of freedoms. Our judicial decisions have been approved by international judicial organs and these can not be delegated to ulema and such; these are final judicial decisions.”<sup>560</sup> Besides, in 2006 Mustafa Gazalcı questioned whether Erdoğan’s words contradicted with the Article 2 of the Constitution defining Turkish Republic as a social, laic, democratic state based on the rule of law; Article 4 which sets forth the Article 2 can, by no means, be changed or proposed to be changed as well as Article 24 which prohibits abuse of religion for basing social, economic, political and legal order of the state on religion or for

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<sup>558</sup> Güldal Okuducu’su speech at TBMM,23.11.2005, 224-225, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c099/tbmm22099022.pdf>

<sup>559</sup> Ibid, 225.

<sup>560</sup> Onur Öymen’s speech at TBMM, 21.12.2005, 251, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c105/tbmm22105038.pdf>

private purposes.<sup>561</sup> In 2008, addressing the AKP MPs Kılıçdaroğlu stated that “We have never been against our sisters who wear a headscarf. They are your victims and we protect them, and you don’t. The constitution can not be changed by taking religion as a reference in any democratic country in the world.”<sup>562</sup> Therefore, CHP opposed basing state administration according to Sharia as this constituted sharp contrast with CHP’s notion of laicite.

### 4.3.3. “Çarşaf Opening”

Drawing upon CHP’s sensitivity about religious oppression on women and minorities as well as desecularization of society and the state discussed above, CHP coded *türban* in public sphere as a threat to the regime. Actually, as Taha Akyol posited CHP regarded debates concerning *türban* among others like Constitution and Presidential elections as the fortress of laicite before 2007 elections. However, in 2009 CHP tried to soften its laicist tone. CHP shifted its emphasis to economic policies, corruption, unemployment from laicite and reactionism.<sup>563</sup>

Baykal stated that CHP’s attitude towards *türban* did not change in that they would not allow *türban* in public sphere. On the other hand, he argued that women wearing

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<sup>561</sup> Mustafa Gazalçı’s written parliamentary question, 09.02.2006,727, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c110/tbmm22110061.pdf>

<sup>562</sup> Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu’s speech at TBMM,6.2.2008, 799, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>563</sup> Taha Akyol, “CHP’de post-Kemalizm dönemi”, *Milliyet*, 17.3.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/taha-akyol/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/17.03.2009/1071971/default.htm>

*türban* and *çarşafs* who became members of CHP recently did not have any intention to impose their attires to the whole country.<sup>564</sup> He softened his mind about categorization of veiled and unveiled women.

We all know the real purpose of the ones who want to change laicite. We as people who believe in and protect laicite we have started seeing that our reaction in the form of readiness to categorize some sections of society as “they are against laicite” visually and in form according to our assumptions and prejudgetments might have been otherwise, they might not have problem with laicite, our reaction to them might be unfair and we should not judge people on the basis of their attires as they do not threaten laicite. It is natural that people who evaluate it otherwise yet at this point might contradict with these people even though the definition of laicite according to those people has no difference. This is what we experience now.<sup>565</sup>

Baykal mentioned that it is mentality rather than attires which means to him. If attires do not carry a political purpose, this would not constitute a problem for him: “It is my ethic duty to be respectful to those people who say I love Atatürk, the life style of my family, village, environment is like that so I am dressing up like that.”<sup>566</sup> Referring to the attachment of party badges to women wearing *türban* and *çarşafs* he continued:

I recognize this as an ethic, principal attitude beyond a political event. If someone comes and says I adopt your party’s principles and asks you if her dressing style becomes a problem, I can not tell her to go and change it. This is not appropriate for social democracy and for CHP’s respect for people, and for laicite.<sup>567</sup>

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<sup>564</sup> “Katılımlar CHP çizgisinde kırılma anlamına gelmez”, *Milliyet*, 20.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/baykal---katilimler-chp-cizgisinde-kirilma-anlamina-gelmez-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/20.11.2008/1018483/default.htm>

<sup>565</sup> “Baykal’ın Humeynili çarşaf çıkışı”, *Milliyet*, 21.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/baykal-in--humeynili--carsaf-cikisi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/21.11.2008/1019071/default.htm>

<sup>566</sup> “Baykal’ın Humeynili çarşaf çıkışı”, *Milliyet*, 21.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/baykal-in--humeynili--carsaf-cikisi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/21.11.2008/1019071/default.htm>

<sup>567</sup> Ibid.

Yet, in spite of CHP's softening attitude towards *türban* and *çarşaf*, Baykal did not say that they would approve use of those religious attires in universities.<sup>568</sup>

Baykal also emphasized the significance of mentality in 2008 again: "The one who says I don't love Atatürk, I love Humeyni, hasn't got a place in CHP even if she is not veiled."<sup>569</sup> In 2008, Ersin defended Baykal's *çarşaf* opening:

Participation of a few women with *çarşaf* and *türban* to CHP does not constitute a problem for our principles. These people have believed in CHP. There are people who wear *çarşaf* or *türban* according to the traditions of their different districts of Anatolia. Against the circles who try to develop an attitude against the CHP, we say that everyone has a place in CHP as long as they don't use it as a political tool.<sup>570</sup>

Özyürek also stood for CHP's "*çarşaf* opening" denying use of religion for political purposes in 2008:

Did CHP administrarion use religion or God in their participation ceremony? Did they use the Prophet? What did we do? Did we organize a ceremony with the Quran? We don't use religion. What we did is behaving according to the aims of expansion of the party, opening into conservative segments and prevention of those conservative segments from imprisonment completely in AKP.....CHP is a party which has taken place in Turkish political life by defending Atatürk's principles and laic democratic Turkish Republic. Its attitude towards the laic democratic republican values is very clear.<sup>571</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> Baykal: Maskeli balo yapmıyoruz", *Milliyet*, 22.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-kriterimiz-ataurk-sevgisi-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/22.11.2008/1019311/default.htm>

<sup>569</sup> "Baykal: Maskeli balo yapmıyoruz", *Milliyet*, 22.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-kriterimiz-ataurk-sevgisi-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/22.11.2008/1019311/default.htm>

<sup>570</sup> "CHP'ye İzmir'de de türbanlı,başörtülü katılım", *Milliyet*, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/yeni-haber/siyaset/siyasetdetay/23.11.2008/1019842/default.htm>

<sup>571</sup> "CHP'li Özyürek: Kuranla şov yapmadık", *Milliyet*, 23.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-li-ozyurek--kuran-la-sov-yapmadik/siyaset/siyasetdetay/23.11.2008/1019700/default.htm>

While not pronouncing the mentality of veiled women before, Özyürek shifted his emphasis from attires to mentality about attendance of conservative people to CHP:

During our election tours in both Istanbul and Anatolia, at our party meetings, in village and coffeshop meetings there were always veiled women, women with headscaves and *çarşafs*. So it is not true to reflect these participations as an election maneuver or an ideological change. These people who were brought to the agenda because of their attires, have been quite sensitive to maintain republican values in spite of coming from conservative segments of society just as every CHP member. Questioning the adherence of these people to republican values is deeply injuring and it is an approach which exposes the political perception of monistic mentalities. Such an approach is the approach of right politics which sees conservative people as a storage of votes and a backyard and which desires to imprison Turkey into an image of clear-cut divisions between people with secular and modern attires and conservative people with *türbans*, *çarşafs* and veils.<sup>572</sup>

CHP also shifted its emphasis from protection of state to economic factors. Gürsel Tekin's speech in 2008 is a case in point for CHP's shift of emphasis to economic factors behind wearing black *çarşafs*:

“Who forces these women to wear *çarşafs* is the one to shame. Who did this? The ones who deem proper poverty for this society did this. A woman from Maltepe said: I cover my poverty with this *çarşaf*, my son. I don't have anything to wear under it. It is very bothersome. Is it this the woman who you are excluding now?<sup>573</sup>

Therefore, Tekin evaluated *çarşaf* as a sign of backwardness in economic status. Tekin also criticized Arat who opposed to “*çarşaf* opening” of CHP for segregation of unveiled women and women with *türban* and *çarşaf* and argued that she and AKP have parallel lines in terms of this segregation and “we/they” dichotomies and argued

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<sup>572</sup> Ibid.

<sup>573</sup> “Baykal rozeti takti, CHP Aaanadolu'da rahatladı”, *Milliyet*, 24.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-ye-turbani-o-getirdi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/24.11.2008/1019929/default.htm>



that women wearing *türban* and *çarşaf* have been together with unveiled women in party courses.<sup>574</sup> Tekin's speech also carried the signs of a more inclusive discourse towards veiled women.

CHP Central Executive Committee member Savcı Sayan also emphasized the importance of mentality vis-a-vis attires:

As long as the ones who want to participate in CHP haven't got the thought to split the country. No one has the right to humiliate each other. I am one of those who govern CHP. No one has excluded me just because I have a barb. The important thing for us is the thoughts of the people. Religion and belief is something between the person and God. We are not the party of races and colors. We refuse to abuse religion by using it for politics.<sup>575</sup>

Sayan also implied politicization of religion which means use of religious symbols/attires in public sphere. Concerning the ban on veiling in universities Sayan argued:

Now you will ask me how the *türban* problem will be solved at the universities. Very simple. When we convince each other and say "I am wearing it because of my belief", "Yes you are wearing it because of your belief" then it will be solved. But they don't do it like that, they get organized when they enter the university. We, as CHP differentiated the Anatolian headscarf from the political one. AKP is afraid of it, that's why they slander us. They are afraid of you. The day is the day to collaborate.<sup>576</sup>

Therefore, Sayan had a reserve for use of *türban* as a political purpose in universities so as to symbolize a religious state.

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<sup>574</sup> Ibid.

<sup>575</sup> "CHP'ye İzmir'de türbanlı katılım", *Milliyet*, 24.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-ye-izmir-de-de-turbanli-katilim/siyaset/siyasetdetay/24.11.2008/1019979/default.htm>

<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

CHP Province Women's Committee also supported “*çarşaf* opening”:

During our area studies, district meeting and home visits for 1.5 years we have met so many women who were veiled or wore *çarşafs* just because of their traditions, living conditions, oppression by their fathers or husbands, but their minds were not black like their *çarşafs*.” We know that our veiled women desire for democracy and human rights and love Atatürk. CHP is not a party which intervenes into private life. It is respectful to values of private life unless the democratic and laic structure of the state is damaged. CHP who strives for a democratic Turkey is for recognition of equal freedoms to different sorts of lives, beliefs and worships.<sup>577</sup>

Whereas the Committee pointed out to religious oppression of women by their fathers and husbands for veiling, it underlined respect for religious values and worship in private lives.

In 2008, Baykal made a distinction between *çarşaf* and *türban* probably because avoiding the pressure to lift the ban on wearing *türban* in universities. Accordingly, he mentioned that whereas *çarşaf* did not usually symbolize a political meaning, *türban* did.<sup>578</sup> However, Baykal still regarded *türban* or *çarşaf* involving patriarchal power relations:

Laicism is under threat. But this threat is not in the head of the one who wears a *çarşaf* as family tradition because of innocent tradition, born in

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<sup>577</sup> “CHP’li kadın kollarında *çarşaf* yorumu”, *Milliyet*, 24.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-li-kadin-kollarindan-carsaf-yorumu/siyaset/siyasetdetay/24.11.2008/1020088/default.htm>

<sup>578</sup> “Baykal’ın savunması: Türban simge, *çarşaf* değil”, *Milliyet*, 26.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/baykal-in-savunmasi--turban-simge--carsaf-degil-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/26.11.2008/1020957/default.htm>

Erzurum, Horasan and then came to Istanbul. This threat is in the head of the one who wears a tie. Turkey learns that we should not say “come by taking off your *türban* and *çarşaf*.”<sup>579</sup>

However, Baykal’s view concerning *türban/çarşaf* has not actually changed in that veiling harbors power relations between men and women and are tools for reproduction of patriarchal system.<sup>580</sup> Baykal argued that the number of women using *çarşafs* as political symbols was minor and women wore it because of tradition at most. “What is our problem about with veiling or understanding? What CHP does is humanistic, ethic, complies with social democracy, and is by no means against laicite.”<sup>581</sup> In this respect, in 2008 Baykal argued that laicite can not be reduced to forms of attire and there is no obstacle for veiled women to watch CHP meetings with their veils. He mentioned that they were not hostile to scarves. The point was that who used it for what. The problem of laicism emerged as a result of men’s efforts to use women and their oppression on women.<sup>582</sup> Here Baykal touched upon CHP’s sensitivity about religious oppression upon women.

In line with this softening attitude with the “*çarşaf* opening”, the so-called by the media, people including women wearing *türban* were affiliated to membership in Adıyaman in 2008.<sup>583</sup> This was followed by affiliation of many women wearing *türban* to membership in 2008.<sup>584</sup> In İzmir, women wearing *türban* and headscarves were also registered as members.<sup>585</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> “Baykal’ın savunması: Türban simge, çarşaf değil”, *Milliyet*, 26.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/baykal-in-savunmasi--turban-simge--carsaf-degil-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/26.11.2008/1020957/default.htm>

<sup>580</sup> Ibid.

<sup>581</sup> Derya Sazak, “Modern Mahrem”, *Milliyet*, 27.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/derya-sazak/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/27.11.2008/1021371/default.htm>

<sup>582</sup> Çarşaftan sonra ‘türban’ açılımı”, *Milliyet*, 30.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/carsaftan-sonra--turban--acilimi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/30.11.2008/1022550/default.htm>

<sup>583</sup> “Adıyaman’da çarşafılı ve türbanlı kadınlar CHP’ye katıldı”, *Milliyet*, 25.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/adiyaman-da-carsafili-ve-turbanli-kadinlar-chp-ye-katildi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/25.11.2008/1020718/default.htm>

Ersin also emphasized the significance of mentality:

It is not important what people wear for us. The important thing is their love to their country. It is important that they say “we are ready for tasks to maintain the future of our country”. No one can separate our women according to their dressing style. We are against it. Now CHP exists. We invite everyone whether veiled or not, in order to fight for the future of the country.<sup>586</sup>

In response to critics of affiliation of women including the ones who wear *türban* to membership, Baykal put forward by denying the term “*çarşaf* opening”:

Have you ever heard the word “opening” from me? I have never said opening. Opening is something you do by planning and aims to reach a segment. There is not such a thing. I did something ethic and humanistic. To the people who asked “We want to be a member of your party. Will our attires cause any problem?”, I said “you are venerated”. This is a requirement for being democratic and is a humanitarian and an ethic attitude. It is no way possible to sacrifice our party principles and basic policies. Shall we say to the people who want to attend our party, “your appearance is not appropriate?” Or shall we say “change your dress and then attend?” Is this possible? Shall we determine a dress code? Shall we publish a dress code? Our attitude prevents veiling and *türban* to become a political symbol. Now you can not call every veiled woman as a member of AKP. It was seen that also a veiled woman is or can be from CHP. This is the breakdown of a political symbol. No one can make a prejudgement as such. How can I reject a veiled woman coming to our party? Shall we return to the single party mentality? You know, in the single-party period, villagers weren’t allowed to enter Kızılay or Atatürk Boulevard just because of their jodhpurs or shalwars. Is it the extension of this mentality which is expected from CHP? Do they want us to behave to those people like they behaved to Aşık Veysel? In the Single-Party Era, there is Aşık Veysel among people who could not get into Kızılay because of shalwars and jodhpurs. Aşık Veysel went to see Atatürk. He came to Ankara mostly on foot staying wherever he found on the road. When he came to Kızılay, gendarmerie didn’t let him enter. They said, “Your clothes are not appropriate.” Aşık Veysel turned away from the boulevard desperately and he couldn’t see Atatürk. Now is the same behavior in that period expected from us for our people? “You wear headscarf, you wear jodhpur, you wear shalwar, you can’t come into the

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<sup>584</sup> “CHP’ye İzmir’den türbanlı katılım”, *Milliyet*, 30.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-ye-izmir-de-yeni-turbanli-katilim/siyaset/siyasetdetay/30.11.2008/1022752/default.htm>

<sup>585</sup> Ibid.

<sup>586</sup> “Türbanlı katılım devam ediyor”, *Milliyet*, 2.12.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/turbanli-katilim-devam-ediyor/eg/haberdetay/02.12.2008/1023239/default.htm>

party center.” Can we really do that? These people are ours. We are the CHP. It is as the name goes, we are here for people. Is it possible to make politics over attires?<sup>587</sup>

In this respect, CHP distanced itself from totalisation as well as Single Party Era and ceased from marking veiled women as enemies to the regime. However, in the public sphere, it defended the ban on veiling as it evaluates *türban* as a political symbol and is against politicization of Islam. Therefore, Baykal made a distinction between private sphere and public sphere concerning veiling. Whereas he was not against use of religious symbols or attires in the private sphere, he opposed use of them in the public sphere which resembled the state:

Our citizens can dress up as they want. No one can intervene into that. But Turkey is a state of law. We can not let the state wear *türban* and *çarşaf*. This is another subject. Our attitude about *türban* in universities won't change. The decisions of the Constitutional Court are clear. The decisions of the Council of State and AİHM are clear. The veiled members of our party and the newcomers do not have such a demand. They are coming to us by knowing CHP and our policies.<sup>588</sup>

Baykal also argued:

No one has the right to intervene in dressing style of someone in her private life. Law also does not give you this right. Everyone can dress up as she wants according to her family or tradition. We have to respect this. What's wrong is to bring this dressing style to the state, to the public sphere. A normal citizen can dress up like she wants in her private life. Why will we oppose to this person's making politics as she pleases? Respect this a little bit. I neither have the power to legitimize nor delegitimize *çarşaf*. There can not be anything as such. If this is a

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<sup>587</sup> “Baykal: tek parti zihniyetine mi dönelim?”, *Milliyet*, 2.12.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/fikret-bila/siyaset/siyasyezardetay/02.12.2008/1023410/default.htm>

<sup>588</sup> Ibid.

decreasingly a part of Turkish social life and will decrease more, everyone should regard it normal.<sup>589</sup>

However, he added that in the public sphere it is CHP who struggle the most with reactionism like *türban* and *çarşaf* in the public sphere.<sup>590</sup>

In the same year, Baykal stated: “Do not be hostile. Please be insightful and behave with love. People who wear it take affront when you behave like this. They think that the society excludes them.”<sup>591</sup> He also argued against a citizen who set forth Atatürk’s revolutions were frayed:

Is it so unfair to be in tolerance to others dressing unlike you on that way? Let’s not divide Turkey please....“Where are we going to unite? No respect is shown to them. They say that her dressing style is wrong. It’s your point of view. It might also be wrong for me. It’s her judgement. Why do you deal with her? The rest is dressing as they like. Nobody deals with them. Let’s say “no” if they try to impose this dressing to another one, namely to state. Let’s not change the Constitution.”<sup>592</sup>

Also, Baykal related *çarşaf* and *türban* with tradition in response to a teacher who criticized party’s black *çarşaf* opening and reacted against *türban* and *çarşaf* reminding Atatürk’s attire revolution.<sup>593</sup>

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<sup>589</sup> “Çarşafa düşmanlık yapmayacağım kardeşim”, *Milliyet*, 13.12.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/baykal---carsafa-dusmanlik-yapmayacagim-kardesim-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/13.12.2008/1027599/default.htm>

<sup>590</sup> Ibid.

<sup>591</sup> “Deniz Baykal’a çarşaf sorgusu”, *Milliyet*, 14.12.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/carsaf-sorgusu/siyaset/siyasetdetay/14.12.2008/1027790/default.htm>

<sup>592</sup> Ibid.

<sup>593</sup> Ibid.

In 2009, CHP Group Vice Chairman Anadolu made a distinction between *türban* and *çarşaf*:

*Türban* and *çarşaf* are different things. *Çarşaf* is not a politic symbol, it is a symbol of underdevelopment. The woman who prefers *çarşaf* does not exceed 2,5 or 3. It is a different kind of dressing style prevalent in the underdeveloped regions. It is not used as a political symbol. It is regulated as far as economic conditions ameliorate.<sup>594</sup>

Therefore, Anadolu emphasized that *çarşaf* resembled underdevelopment and had an economic connotation in contrast to *türban* which carried a political message. Kılıçdaroğlu was another figure who has been more moderate about *türban*. He related *türban* with tradition just as Baykal did in 2009: “Headscarf is traditional. Each person can use it as she wants, some like a *türban*, some like a headscarf and some like a neckerchief”.<sup>595</sup>

Therefore, CHP has changed discourse about veiling, namely headscarf, *türban* and black *çarşaf*. As have been mentioned above, before “the opening” *türban* was coded as a threat to national integrity and laic republic in the speeches of the CHP MPs. The rhetoric was used in a totalizing fashion. However, with the “*çarşaf* opening”, CHP adopted a more inclusive discourse towards veiled women. Even though it did not call for allowance of religious symbols in public sphere, it started to emphasize respect for veiling and religious symbols in private lives more. In this respect, CHP’s attitude concerning dichotomies like black and white has softened and intermingled. In other words, CHP found grey areas. CHP’s clear-cut categories namely women wearing *türban* which referred to political Islam signifying demands against the

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<sup>594</sup> “CHP’den çarşaf yorumu”, *Milliyet*, 5.2.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-carsaf-yorumu/siyaset/siyasetdetay/05.02.2009/1056010/default.htm>

<sup>595</sup> “CHP’den 8 Mart hediyesi”, *Milliyet*, 9.3.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den---mart--hediyesi--basortu/siyaset/siyasetdetay/09.03.2009/1068595/default.htm>

regime and unveiled women who symbolized laic republic has undergone a process of hybridization.

Therefore, CHP's "*çarşaf* opening" could be evaluated as a break away with CHP's totalization of Islamic symbols used in private lives. Even though CHP never intervened into private lives of religious people or exercise of religious creeds in private lives; before the "*çarşaf* opening" CHP was evaluating those symbols as symbols of "backwardness" to be excluded. In spite of the fact that CHP still saw for instance *çarşaf* as a sign of backwardness, it shifted its policies to include those people rather than marginalization and exclusion of them. Therefore, CHP members started pronouncing respect to these people, even though the way of looking to these people might not have changed so much in terms of approving their attires. It seems that CHP still continued the mission to transform people's culture into its culture but this time CHP tried to do it by understanding, including and avoiding from marginalization in rhetoric. In other words, CHP seems to have changed methods not mentality.

It can be suggested that Baykal's softening tone about *çarşaf* seems to derive at least partially from decreasing social significance of *çarşaf* in Turkish society. In other words, as *çarşaf* does not seem to cause a spillover effect in terms of religious oppression, Baykal has more embracing to *çarşaf* as CHP's main concern is about religious oppression and thus secularism.

As has been stated elsewhere, CHP is liberal in the sense that it does not interfere in private lives as well as it defines public in terms of state and state-related institutions.



In line with this attitude, even though Baykal emphasized respect for veiled women in their private lives, CHP kept its clear-cut distinction between public and private concerning *türban* in the public sphere. Therefore, although CHP's attitude towards *türban* and *çarşaf* softened in discourse, CHP's sensitivity about veiling in public sphere persisted.

#### 4.3.4. Opposition to “Çarşaf Opening” Within the CHP

CHP's “çarşaf opening” did not come without opposition. For instance, Arat criticized affiliation of women with *türban* and *çarşaf* to CHP membership.<sup>596</sup> Arat also argued that we should not sacrifice from laic republic regardless of any electoral concerns.<sup>597</sup> Koç also opposed-the so called *çarşaf* opening of CHP:

The latest attempts that are presented as opening to people by some CHP party administrators is the project of legitimization of some demands that could not be actualized by the AKP through opening a door in CHP. CHP administrators' attempts to redefine and reinterpret laicite to save religious and belief exploitation from the monopoly of the AKP is a very dangerous approach. It should not be forgotten that politicians against laicite might appear saying that “Let's redefine laicite.” as on the 23rd of April 2006 when they find a suitable ground. It is not possible for any party to neglect, soften and disregard the articles of the Constitution which could not even be proposed to be changed. No political party and politician can promise people having such expectations and give hope through the CHP. There is no reason for CHP to change its conception of laicite which it defended so far, redefine and reinterpret laicite for this purpose. There is no need to have a complex as such.<sup>598</sup>

As can be seen, Koç strongly resists a change in CHP's definition of laicite. However, as has been mentioned above, Baykal did not go by allowance of *türban* or

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<sup>596</sup> “Baykal: Maskeli balo yapmıyoruz”, *Milliyet*, 22.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-kriterimiz-ataurk-sevgisi-siyaset/siyasetdetay/22.11.2008/1019311/default.htm>

<sup>597</sup> “Orada dur!”, *Milliyet*, 21.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-taha-akyol/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/21.11.2008/1018849/default.htm>

<sup>598</sup> “Koç'tan Baykal'a çarşaf tepkisi”, *Milliyet*, 26.11.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/default.aspx?aType=SonDakika&ArticleID=1021070>

*çarşaf* in universities. He underlined that party's attitude towards veiled women in private sphere needed to be more inclusive. Yet, MPs such as Koç and Arat found this slight change in the conception of laicite as a sacrifice from laicite.

#### 4.3.5. Concluding Remarks

Actually, the contextual change especially since the 1990s in Turkey was not countered by CHP leaving the party in an impasse for veiled women. In other words, although oppression of religion on women concerning veiling was valid for pre-Republican era; there are many urban women who veil by their own will in the 1990s. In this respect, the meanings attributed to emancipation and oppression has changed due to contexts involved and CHP's role has shifted from emancipating to oppressing concerning veiled women. However, after the 2007 elections CHP tried to understand and include veiled women as long as they did not demand to be a part of the public sphere.

As has been elaborated above, CHP has pursued a consistent policy between 2002 and 2010 in that it denied allowance of *türban* in universities and other public places due to relating *türban* with religious oppression of women and minorities and coding it as a threat to national integrity. CHP's application to the Constitutional Court for cancelling the constitutional change concerning allowance to wear *türban* in universities in 2008 in the same year with *çarşaf* opening can be considered in this light.<sup>599</sup> CHP paid special attention to the ban on *türban* in universities as it could pave the way for freedom to wear *türban* in public offices as well as primary and

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<sup>599</sup> "Türban Yüksek Mahkeme'de", *Milliyet*, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/turban-yuksekmahkeme-de/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/28.02.2008/242734/default.htm>

secondary school education. However, CHP's "çarşaf opening" as was called by the media, signaled a change in party policies if not a rupture. Even though "the çarşaf opening" was opposed by some MPs such as Koç and Arat, CHP administrators discovered the "different" and defended the human rights of the "other" in terms of its conception of laicite. That's why, CHP's approach has been more inclusive and understanding even though it still supported the ban on veiling in the public sphere. But at least, in the private sphere including the party buildings, CHP has become more tolerant about veiled women. Also, CHP started paying attention to mentality rather than attires.

Concerning the veiling in public sphere, CHP's attitude has been still totalizing in that it categorized veiling as a threat to the regime as well as a tool for religious oppression of women and religious sects between 2002 and 2010. Actually, opposing religious oppression of majority is a democratic guarantee for minorities and thus as a sign of democratic attitude. However, putting all demands under the basket of religious threat and responding it with national reflexes is vice versa. What's more, having demands against the regime is no excuse for violation of basic human rights or discrimination. Even though European Court of Human Rights (AİHM) did not regard the ban as a violation of human rights due to prioritizing state's neutrality over human rights,<sup>600</sup> I think that using religious symbols in the public sphere does not necessarily create religious oppression on others. Stated differently, it is not veiling which threatens the human rights of other people but rather the intentions and actions of the Islamist agents which has the potential to do so. In other words, the connection between wearing veil as a corollary of religious belief and political Islam can not be taken granted. To put it differently, the relation between allowance of veiling in the public sphere and religious oppression is contingent and is not deterministic in terms of the former causing the latter. CHP's approach to veiled

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<sup>600</sup> Rıza Türmen, "Giyim, kuşam ve din özgürlüğü", *Milliyet*, 26.2.2010, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/giyim-kusam-ve-din-ozgurlugu/riza-turmen/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/26.02.2010/1204157/default.htm>

women so as to mark them potential threats to the regime in both discourse and practice before the “*çarşaf* opening” and in practice after the “opening” remained both superficial and exclusionary at the same time. This reflected an anti-democratic attitude as well. Furthermore, by excluding veiled women from public sphere as in the case of universities, CHP has paradoxically served to the very opposite of its aim that is emancipation of women through prevention of their education and creating obstacles for them to develop professions. Veiling issue has also been problematical for equality principle of CHP as it served to discrimination of religious women vis-à-vis religious men. In this respect, CHP’s attitude concerning veiling carries the risk of reproducing the patriarchal relations between men and women. CHP remained etatist as it prioritized the survival of the state over individual rights with regard to veiling. For softening the tone about ban on veiling in universities, we would have to wait until 2010. However, if this threshold could be surmounted so in the party, this is at least partially because the change in CHP’s discourse concerning the veiled women in the private sphere after 2007 elections.

#### **4.4. *İmams and İmam Hatip Liseleri***

Another sensitive issue for CHP concerning laicite is *imams* and *İmam Hatip Schools*. CHP’s reaction about *imams* and *İmam Hatip Schools* derives from several factors: In the first place, CHP objects to AKP’s discrimination against others by filling state cadres with *İmam Hatip* graduates and imams beyond need as it would serve to desecularization of the state which stands as sharp contrast with CHP’s ideology that is based on prevalence of reason over religion. Second, CHP is against implementation of equal ratio to *İmam Hatip* graduates together with other vocational high schools with standard high school graduates. Behind this objection lies CHP’s fear that people having religious educational background would continue their education in other fields and be appointed to state cadres in the future. In this respect, CHP’s reserve for equal ratio derives from administration of state with *raison d’état* instead of religion as well as desecularization of education. Another

sensitivity of CHP concerning *İmam Hatip Schools* is about unintermittent education of 8 years so that students can acquire basic tenets of scientific education before they are donated with religious education. However, AKP's dilution of basic education so as to increase the duration of education by the *İmam Hatip Schools* constitutes another problem for CHP. Fourth, CHP is sensitive about *İmam Hatip Schools* because of desecularization of education. Fifth, CHP problematized imams' activities or speeches targeting equality of sexes. In this respect, CHP regards that imams should be donated with a secular worldview. In addition, CHP is against state's partial attitude towards religious education through supporting *İmam Hatip Schools* vis-à-vis standard high schools.

#### **4.4.1. The Reasons for CHP's Reaction to *İmams/İmam Hatips***

##### **4.4.1.1. Discrimination About Filling State Cadres**

First and foremost, CHP is against filling state cadres with *İmam Hatip School* graduates and other people having religious background beyond need as it would serve to desecularization of the state. For example, for the newly opened 15000 imam cadres, CHP MP Oğuz Oyan stated in 2003: "This is a militant set up on the governmental offices. In each assignment what is really questioned is loyalty to the sect and benefits."<sup>601</sup> Similarly, CHP Group Vice President Özyürek evaluated recruitment of 15.000 imams as follows: "This anti-laic, religious set up of cadres is a first in the history of Turkish Republic."<sup>602</sup> CHP MP Topuz was another figure who was annoyed about filling state cadres with *İmam Hatip School* graduates. He argued that state was submitted to religious cadres: "*İmam Hatip School* graduates were

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<sup>601</sup> "İmam ordusu'nun gerekçesi irtica!", *Milliyet*, 26.6.2003, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-imam-ordusu-nun-gerekcesi-irtica-/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/26.06.2003/14392/default.htm>

<sup>602</sup> Ibid.

placed to all state cadres except Turkish Armed Forces "<sup>603</sup> Kart criticized AKP's filling public offices with its adherents by problematizing breaving the cadre of a laic imam.<sup>604</sup> Mustafa Gazalcı also questioned whether a retired imam was teaching in some primary schools in Denizli and teachers graduated from Faculties of Theology had been appointed as directors and asked the proportion of Religious Culture and Ethical Knowledge teachers to other teachers.<sup>605</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek submitted a parliamentary question criticizing the appointment of *İmam Hatip School* graduates to senior bureaucratic positions.<sup>606</sup> Sami Tandođdu also problematized appointment of preachers and graduates of *İmam Hatip Schools* instead of psychologists, teachers and social services specialists to intuitions connected to Social Services and Child Protection Agency, (SHÇEK) in 2005.<sup>607</sup> Vedat Yücesan also problematized appointment of an imam who graduated from *İmam Hatip Schools* working in Yunus Emre State Hospital to the officer cadre and deputy manager respectively.<sup>608</sup> In addition, Tandođdu put forward a written parliamentary question to Minister of Health Recep Akdağ for problematizing filling the cadres with graduates of *İmam Hatip Schools* and Faculties of Theology.<sup>609</sup> Concerning resignation of Serim by protesting YÖK for acting in parallel to the government, Arat stated: "It was evident that Board of Higher Education would let these formations happen with assignment of Dear Yusuf Ziya Özcan as a head. It is understood that Özcan would take actions to pave the way for the İmam Hatip Schools".<sup>610</sup> Arat accused YÖK of politicization

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<sup>603</sup> Ibid.

<sup>604</sup> Atilla Kart's written parliamentary question, 08.07.2004,357, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c086/tbmm22086108.pdf>

<sup>605</sup> Mustafa Gazalcı's written parliamentary question, 17.05.2005,346, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c088/tbmm22088114.pdf>

<sup>606</sup> Ali Rıza GÜLÇİÇEK's written parliamentary question, 24.05.2005,748, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c086/tbmm22086108.pdf>

<sup>607</sup> İ.Sami Tandođdu's written parliamentary question, 13.06.2005,808 , available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

<sup>608</sup> Mehmet Vedat Yücesan's written parliamentary question, 17.06.2005,1403 , available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

<sup>609</sup> İ.Sami Tandođdu's written parliamentary question, 27.06.2005,872 , available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

<sup>610</sup> "CHP'den Serim'e destek, YÖK'e tepki", *Milliyet*, 17.7.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-serim-e-destek-yok-e-tepki/siyaset/siyasetdetay/17.07.2009/1118619/default.htm>

and acting in line with the government's political agenda in terms of abolishing the obstacles in front of *İmam Hatip Schools*. Arat problematized desecularization of education and filling state cadres with religious people even in cases where those people's proficiency does not correspond with the cadres. As can be seen, CHP MPs have a concern in filling state cadres with imams or other people having religious background through politicization as they see this against laicite. In other words, CHP finds privileging religion over science or reason in state administration unacceptable.

#### 4.4.1.2. Ratios for University Entrance Exam

The second issue concerning imams or *İmam Hatip Schools* which annoyed CHP was equalization of university entrance ratios. In this respect, CHP was against equalization of university entrance ratios of vocational high schools including *İmam Hatip Schools* and standard high schools since this would eventually abolish the restrictions upon *İmam Hatip School* graduates for being appointed to state cadres other than *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and finally serve to desecularization of the state. For example, stating that the draft was against the Articles 130 and 131 of the Constitution, CHP Group Vice President Topuz called for government's withdrawal of legislative draft which abolished Inter-university Board's application concerning implementation of different ratio to graduates of *imam hatips* in entrance to universities.<sup>611</sup> CHP MPs Şimşek, Hüseyin Ekmekçiöglu, Zekeriya Akıncı, Mehmet

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<sup>611</sup> "Hocalara Türkiye'de hükümet bizim mesajı", *Milliyet*, 11.10.2003, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/hocalara-turkiyede-hukumet-biziz-mesaji/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/11.10.2003/20801/default.htm>

Tomanbay, Mustafa Özyurt, İnce reacted to the legislative draft which facilitated the entrance of the graduates of *İmam Hatip Schools*.<sup>612</sup> In a similar vein, Kemal Sağ argued:

*İmam Hatip Schools* were established to meet the needs of imams and preachers of the country. But now these schools have other aims. Other meanings were attributed to these schools. They are no longer felt as standard vocational schools. I think abolition of the ratio system for paving the way for *imam hatip* schools is wrong. In today's Turkey, everyone is conscious of making decisions for his/her own future. A student aiming to enter a university should attend a regular high school. A part of *İmam Hatip Schools* should be transformed into regular high schools. We need more modern religious functionary that has knowledge about religion, more than lawyers and is able to enlighten society. We need enlightened functionaries.<sup>613</sup>

On abolition of implementation of different ratios to *İmam Hatip* graduates in entrance to universities, CHP Chairman Baykal: “Vocational schools should be directed to higher vocational schools. No one should attempt to pursue a battle of their backyards.”<sup>614</sup> CHP also tried to prevent *İmam Hatip School* graduates’ entrance to faculties other than theology through suggestion of quota. CHP MP İnce initiated a legislative draft which set forth:

A quota of 10% should be allocated for all vocational high schools, including *İmam Hatips*. If *İmam Hatip* Schools are closed, an elective religious course should be added to the schedule of regular high schools.<sup>615</sup>

CHP regards the regulation as targeting *İmam Hatip Schools*. It submitted a written parliamentary question to Minister of National Education Çelik questioning

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<sup>612</sup> “İmam hatip tasarısı şimdilik donduruldu”, *Milliyet*, 17.10.2003, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/imam-hatip-tasarisi--simdilik-donduruldu/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/17.10.2003/21321/default.htm>

<sup>613</sup> “Kadın öğretmenler tedirgin geliyor”, *Milliyet*, 4.5.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/kadin-ogretmenler-tedirgin-geliyor---guncel/haberdetayarsiv/04.05.2004/265959/default.htm>

<sup>614</sup> “İmam hatip rövanşı”, *Milliyet*, 5.5.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/imam-hatip-rovansi/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/05.05.2004/265963/default.htm>

<sup>615</sup> “Mesleki ve normal liselere ayrı sınav önerisi”, *Milliyet*, 19.5.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/mesleki-ve-normal-liselere-ayri-sinav-onerisi/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/19.05.2004/266076/default.htm>



facilitation of *İmam Hatip School* graduates' entrance to university with equal ratio with standard high school graduates. CHP implied that regulation was against Tevhid-i Tedrisat Law of 1924 which was accepted among revolution codes in Article 174 of the Constitution. CHP called for vocational high school graduates' entrance into the relevant fields in universities.<sup>616</sup> Gazalçı has been another MP who was against implementation of equal ratio to *İmam Hatip School* graduates with standard high school graduates. He stated that National Education Council should not be instrumentalized for damaging the secular education system and reduced to religionization of education:

Suggestions to the council such as proliferation of *İmam Hatips* and enabling their graduates to apply to any branch of universities just like regular high school graduates and change in unintermittent education of 8 years are worrying very much. I hope the 17<sup>th</sup> National Education Council disregards such suggestions.<sup>617</sup>

An advisory decision for granting *İmam Hatip Schools* the status of standard high schools was taken by the 17. National Education Council. Criticizing the decision, Baykal argued: "The Minister of National Education, Çelik attempts to form groups with political motives in the Council. He is not a problem solving, but is a problem producing Minister."<sup>618</sup> Criticizing the 17. National Education Council Baykal argued: "The Council serves to the political engagements of AKP. While the current education system requires a strong revision and the education is hindered due to lack of teacher cadres, AKP tries to consturct an education system in accordance with its

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<sup>616</sup> Abbas Güçlü, "İmam hatipler, OKS ve YÖK", *Milliyet*, 17.12.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/imam-hatipler--oks-ve-yok/abbas-guclu/turkiye/yazardetayarsiv/17.12.2005/138756/default.htm>

<sup>617</sup> "Eğitim şurasının dikkatine", *Milliyet*, 13.11.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/egitim-s-rasi-nin-dikkatine-/yasam/haberdetayarsiv/13.11.2006/177709/default.htm>

<sup>618</sup> "Şûra: İmam hatip, genel lise statüsüne geçirilsin", *Milliyet*, 16.11.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/s-ra--imam-hatip--genel-lise-statusune-gecirilsin/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/16.11.2006/178069/default.htm>

own worldly perspective".<sup>619</sup> Şimşek also proposed that *İmam Hatip School* graduates should be registered into faculties of theology instead of other faculties.<sup>620</sup>

The quota for vocational high school seems like an attempt to hinder the *İmam Hatip School* graduates to enter into faculties except faculties of theology. In this respect, Şimşek proposed that *İmam Hatip School* graduates should be registered into faculties of theology instead of other faculties:

If we directly send the graduates of İmam Hatip schools to society, thus mosques without teaching them theology we can never put an end to tarikats, people who use religion for money and superstitions. Instead of encouraging them to become imam doctors, imam lawyers etc., we should explain our religion, religious knowledge to people against priests with doctorate degrees. We should also be able to express the high values of Islam to the people from Judaism who have knowledge of theology. Because of this, we have to make a reformation in education and organize the quota of faculties of theology in accordance with the needs of religious functionary in our country, better the working conditions of our imams, *müezzins* and preachers and s increase their salaries.<sup>621</sup>

Şimşek pointed out to the need to rescue imams from the oppression of tarikats and to train them in line with the requirmenets of modern education that is in faculties of theology. He also underlined the need to register *İmam Hatip School* graduates to faculties of theology and opposed to registration of *İmam Hatip School* graduates into other faculties through equalization of ratio.

Gazalcı also reacted to YÖK's decision equalizing the ratios of *İmam Hatip Schools* and standard high schools:

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<sup>619</sup> “Şûra 108.000 öğrenciye kilitlendi”, *Milliyet*, 18.11.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/s-ra-----bin-ogrenciye-kilitlendi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/18.11.2006/178350/default.htm>

<sup>620</sup> Berhan Şimşek 's speech at TBMM, 30.05.2007,152-156, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c160/tbmm22160117.pdf>

<sup>621</sup> Berhan Şimşek 's speech at TBMM, 30.05.2007,152-156, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c160/tbmm22160117.pdf>

On 22 July 2009 the Board of Higher Education took the first step through equalizing the ratios of the university entrance exam and enabled *İmam Hatip* graduates to enter into all departments in universities. With the new proposal, it tries to make elementary school students and children who do not go to school get through religious education. Protection of scientific education and unity of education are impossible without AKP's leave. The proposal must be opposed despite everything and already interrupted 8 year unintermittent compulsory education system should not be spoiled more.<sup>622</sup>

Gazalcı also evaluated the issue as desecularization of education. On the other hand, Arat argued:

Dear Özcan states: "Should we also hinder the development of regular vocational high schools for the sake of two or three İmam Hatip Schools?" You know, we need intermediary staff in Turkey. Universities are establishments which make academic researches and only a minor number of people are registered in them. The problem of intermediary staff is very important in industrializing countries like we are. *İmam Hatip* schools are such vocational schools. However, when we have a look, there are graduates of these schools working at *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. The Ministry of National Education takes them and appoints them as teachers and principals.<sup>623</sup>

Therefore Arat objected to equalization of university entrance ratios as well as recruitment of imams in other fields such as profession of teaching or managerial positions. Actually, CHP's reaction to equalization of ratios emanated from the suspicion concerning AKP's will to desecularize the state through employment of people having religious education in state offices. As CHP evaluated *İmam Hatip Schools* as the backyard of AKP, it privileged the principle laicite over principle of equality.

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<sup>622</sup> "CHP'den Kuran Kursları'nda yaş indirimine tepki", *Milliyet*, 6.10.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-kuran-kurslari-nda-yas-indirimine-tepki/siyaset/siyasetdetay/06.10.2009/1147065/default.htm>

<sup>623</sup> "CHP'den Serim'e destek, YÖK'e tepki", *Milliyet*, 17.7.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-serim-e-destek-yok-e-tepki/siyaset/siyasetdetay/17.07.2009/1118619/default.htm>

#### 4.4.1.3. 8 Years Compulsory Education

CHP's sensitivity about *İmam Hatip Schools* also comes from interruption of 8 years uninterrupted education. For instance, Gazalcı put forward: "AKP shows its real intentions with the recent statements of Dear İrfan Gündüz, the Group Deputy Chairma. After his statement: "Religious orders should be legal.", now he posits: "8 year compulsory education is an imposition. The law passed to hinder the development of İmam Hatip Schools also hinders the development of Turkey."<sup>624</sup> Gazalcı held for 8 years unintermittent education which would acquire students a scientific approach rather than a religious approach. For the regulation for reducing the penalty of imprisonment from 3 years to 1 year for the ones who open illegal educational institutions, CHP Deputy Groups Chairperson Topuz stated: "AKP tries to abolish the 8 year compulsory education and changes the fundamentals of the system".<sup>625</sup> Unintermittent education for 8 years is vital for CHP as it would acquire students the basic tenets of modern scientific education. Actually, CHP evaluates education as a significant component of secularism as people having secular educational background would not constitute a threat to desecularize the state.

#### 4.4.1.4. Desecularization of Education

CHP is against desecularization of education through imams or *İmam Hatip Schools* which constitutes the fourth nodal point for CHP. For instance, Hakkı Ülkü submitted a written parliamentary question concerning the claims about rape and harassment of children in state dormitories which was tried to be compensated by

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<sup>624</sup> Abbas Güçlü, "8 yıllık temel eğitim, AKP ve CHP", *Milliyet*, 12.1.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/--yillik-temel-egitim--akp-ve-chp/abbas-guclu/turkiye/yazardetayarsiv/12.01.2005/101940/default.htm>

<sup>625</sup> "CHP: Örgütlerin işine yarayacak", *Milliyet*, 28.5.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/chp--orgutlerin-isine-yarayacak/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/28.05.2005/117702/default.htm>

assignment of preachers from Provincial House of Mufti by Directorate for Provincial Social Services. In his written parliamentary question Ülkü argued:

These developments which may cause the education of our children and young population with unscientific outdated methods are of a nature which will increase the efficiency of religious orders with the help of the state as is in exact opposition to the fundamental values of our Republic. It should also be borne in mind that our children already receive religious education in the schools they are registered. While the state needs to take care of the children under its protection by all means, to support them with positive discrimination and to educate them with modern and scientific methods, it is impossible to define state's exposing of children to a "different kind of abuse" as a development which is positive or harmless.<sup>626</sup>

He also problematized religious education given by imams and preachers as a corollary of cooperation between Directorate of Social Services and local muftis with a parliamentary question to Minister of State Nimet Çubukçu. He argued:

While the crucial problem the children under the protection of the government experience today is sexual harassment, the religious education given to these children by the Society for the Protection of Children Protect with the help of imams and preachers, even though such an education is not one of its specified duties, is not compatible with the principle of laicite, which is an essential principle of our Republic specified in our Constitution as is also against the 14<sup>th</sup> article of Convention on the Rights of the Child which is binding for our state and creates obligation for our state to respect the freedom of thought, belief and conscience of the children.<sup>627</sup>

Ülkü accused government of violating Convention on the Rights of the Child by not respecting Children's freedom of thought, religion and conscience and found it against laicite.

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<sup>626</sup> Hakkı Ülkü's written parliamentary question, 27.06.2005,728-729, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

<sup>627</sup> Hakkı Ülkü's written parliamentary question, 04.07.2005,1741-1742, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

In a similar vein, Baykal stated:

We respect to people's need to receive a proper religious education. We are open to suggestions as long as they do not lead to desecularization of education. We also do not consider the closure of İmam Hatip Schools appropriate. We consider that protection of İmam Hatip Schools is important for vocational education.<sup>628</sup>

Therefore, Baykal underlined that CHP was not against training clerics. Actually, as CHP is for controlling religious activity, training of clerics is vital. On the other hand, CHP wants those clerics to have a scientific education before they have religious education to maintain supremacy of reason over religion in state administration. Another issue concerning the desecularization of education was compensation of deficiency of Teachers for Religious Culture and Ethics with imams in some schools in Izmir which was brought into the agenda by a parliamentary question by CHP MP Ersin.<sup>629</sup> Ülkü has also opposed replacement of modern education by religious education and evaluated this as religious oppression.<sup>630</sup> Therefore, even though CHP is not against religious education which has been under the control of the state, it is against desecularization of education. That's why, replacement of teachers with imams was strongly resisted by the CHP.

#### **4.4.1.5. Gendered Practices of Imams**

CHP has also been against gendered rhetoric or activities of imams. In this respect, CHP pursued its policy of state's controlling of religious activity in imams' sermons.

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<sup>628</sup> "Baykal'dan din eğitimi açılımı", *Milliyet*, 24.6.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/baykal-dan-din-egitimi-acilimi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/24.06.2007/203428/default.htm>

<sup>629</sup> "İmam-öğretmen uygulamasında geri adım", *Milliyet*, 28.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/imam-ogretmen-uygulamasinda-geri-adim/siyaset/siyasetdetay/28.11.2008/1021993/default.htm>

<sup>630</sup> Abbas Güçlü, "Eğitimde çok şey değişecek", *Milliyet*, 25.9.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/egitimde-cok-sey-degisecek/abbas-guclu/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/25.09.2009/1142845/default.htm>

Nevin Gaye Erbatur submitted a parliamentary question concerning the control of Friday sermons because of an imam's sermon which devaluated women.<sup>631</sup> As can be seen clearly, Erbatur supported state's control of religious activities as well as equality between sexes.

#### 4.4.1.6. State's Support for Religious Activities

CHP also rose against state's sponsoring of religious activities in the body of *İmam Hatip Schools*. Tütüncü submitted a parliamentary question to PM Erdoğan which problematized distribution of questionnaires to primary school students in Ankara by the Ministry of National Education. The questionnaire included the following questions among others: "Did you receive religious education outside of schools? If yes, in which establishment? (Quran course, religious establishments, religious orders, family...)." <sup>632</sup> Here CHP opposed the application due to its concern about religious oppression and laicite which required non-discrimination for all believers or non-believers. In other words, CHP resisted state's favoring of religious education vis-à-vis secular education rather than state's training of imams for the needs of practicing religious beliefs. Şimşek and Gazalcı submitted parliamentary questions criticizing leaving quotas of *İmam Hatip Schools* empty. They argued that The Minister of National Education Çelik aimed to fill the quotas of *İmam Hatip Schools* besides private schools.<sup>633</sup> Gazalcı criticized manipulation of students by placing students to *İmam Hatip Schools* without entering to DPY (State Boarding School and Scholarship Free of Charge) examination.<sup>634</sup> CHP MPs are against state's instilling of religion and acting like a part which would contrast with laicite. Form a different

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<sup>631</sup> Gaye Erbatur's written parliamentary question, 25.01.2008,843, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>632</sup> Enis Tütüncü's written parliamentary question, 14.06.2005,416-417, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

<sup>633</sup> Abbas Güçlü, "Kontenjan' krizi", *Milliyet*, 2.9.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-kontenjan--krizi/abbas-guclu/turkiye/yazardetayarsiv/02.09.2006/170087/default.htm>

<sup>634</sup> "Çelik'in imam hatip itirafı", *Milliyet*, 21.11.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/celik-in-imam-hatip-itirafi-/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/21.11.2006/178707/default.htm>

angle, CHP problematized use of *İmam Hatip* Schools for discrimination among students by the state as it found it inconsistent with laicite.

#### **4.4.2. Concluding Remarks**

In short, as CHP's conception of laicite rests on control rather than separation of politics and religion, CHP is not against training of imams or existence of *İmam Hatip* Schools. This can be regarded as respect to religious beliefs and needs in society. However, due its control account of laicism, CHP maintains that just as other religious elements, imams or *İmam Hatip Schools* should be monitored by the state. What's more, CHP supports *İmam Hatip Schools* for training clerics. However, it strongly opposes to appointment or employment of imams or *İmam Hatip School* graduates— that is, people having religious educational background to or by the state. In a parallel fashion, ramification of *İmam Hatip School* graduates into other fields of education is unacceptable by the CHP. In short, whereas religious needs of society are respected, diffusion of those religious elements into state administration is tried to be prevented by the CHP.

#### **4.5. Quran Courses**

CHP evaluates Quran courses within the framework of control account of laicism. In other words, CHP sees Quran courses as courses that needed to be controlled by the state through *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. This is because CHP does not desire to leave religious education to the domination of tarikats and religious communities. In this respect, CHP problematizes illegal Quran courses. This constitutes the first aspect of CHP's apprehension about Quran courses. Second, CHP is annoyed about facilitation of Quran courses through lowering the age of attendance, the number of students to open the course, lowering the penalties for the ones who open illegal Quran courses.



Therefore, CHP opposes state's sponsoring of Quran courses. For CHP, state should not sponsor or encourage but rather control religious activities. Likewise, CHP sees religious education only within the framework of freedom of religion and conscience and thus as a right for believers. However, it challenges shifting the balance towards religious education from secular education as a corollary of its conception of laicite. What CHP opposes is not actually religious education but lack of supervision on Quran courses. In this respect, CHP's "Quran courses opening" will also be elaborated.

#### **4.5.1. Reasons for CHP's Sensitivity About Quran Courses**

##### **4.5.1.1. Illegal Quran Courses**

In conformity with CHP's conception of laicite which requires control of religion by the state, CHP is against domination of tarikats and religious communities in religious affairs. In this respect, Okuducu drew attention to exploitation of Quran courses by tarikats:

Now, understanding of spillover of Quran courses into society is dominant and the government has made an interesting preparation to do this for the children who graduated from primary school or those who are at that age. Our *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* actualized a series of changes in Regulations for Quran Courses and Student Dormitory and GuestHouses. It is quite apparent that these changes have features which exceed the borders of Quran education and enable the exploitation of tarikats and organizations. In case we fail to terminate the attempts and courses which are against the Constitution, Law of Unification of Education and which close minds to free thinking in apartments' basements and in unknown places, counter revolutionary focuses, units which have been homes for reaction; it would be mandatory to discuss what kind of a measure keeping the dormitories and lodging houses open for a year would be. It needs to be seen how and for what a regulation concerning a course per 10 people would be as an investment.<sup>635</sup>

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<sup>635</sup> Güldal Okuducu's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 19.12.2003, 18-19, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c035/tbmm22035031.pdf>

Therefore, Okuducu's concern is about not teaching Quran but instilling religious dogmas to children which closes the minds to free and critical thought. Ahmet Yılmazkaya also pointed out to arbitrary practices of some muftis and underlined the need to supervise Quran courses.<sup>636</sup> Orhan Eraslan underlined illegal organization of Quran courses: "We facilitate all kinds of illegal activity including rape on children by taking the courses out of the state's supervision. Leaving the education of the children to tarikats and unknown organizations. The law aims this in the final analysis."<sup>637</sup>

Another CHP MP, Altay questioned the pedagogic and academic qualification of *İmam Hatip School* graduates who would teach in Quran courses. He pointed out to difficulties in audition of the courses in rural areas.<sup>638</sup> Here we observe that CHP looks for scientific qualifications in religious men. In addition, Gazalcı posited that AKP overlooked illegal Quran courses. Children except the ones who could go the secondary schools (55% of the children) were directed to Quran courses. He evaluated this as revenge from 8 year education.<sup>639</sup> He problematized illegal Quran courses and lack of control.<sup>640</sup>

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<sup>636</sup> Ahmet Yılmazkaya's written parliamentary question, 04.04.2005,532, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa\\_getir?sayfa=532&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=4&v\\_cilt=115&v\\_birlesim=83](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa_getir?sayfa=532&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=4&v_cilt=115&v_birlesim=83)

<sup>637</sup> Melih Aşık, "Promosyonlu kurs", *Milliyet*, 24.06.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/promosyonlu-kurs/melih-asik/guncel/yazardetayarsiv/24.06.2005/121374/default.htm>

<sup>638</sup> Engin Altay's written parliamentary question, 06.01.2004,211, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa\\_getir?sayfa=223&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=2&v\\_cilt=37&v\\_birlesim=38](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa_getir?sayfa=223&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=2&v_cilt=37&v_birlesim=38)

<sup>639</sup> "Diploma hediyeli Kuran kursu", *Milliyet*, 25.08.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/diploma-hediyeli-kuran-kursu/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/25.08.2004/245395/default.htm>

<sup>640</sup> Mustafa Gazalcı's written parliamentary question, 28.06.2005, 623, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa\\_getir?sayfa=623-624&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=3&v\\_cilt=89&v\\_birlesim=120](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa_getir?sayfa=623-624&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=3&v_cilt=89&v_birlesim=120) & [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.goruntule?sayfa\\_no\\_ilk=707&sayfa\\_no\\_son=712&sayfa\\_no=707&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=5&v\\_cilt=132&v\\_birlesim=11](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.goruntule?sayfa_no_ilk=707&sayfa_no_son=712&sayfa_no=707&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=5&v_cilt=132&v_birlesim=11)

CHP is not against teaching religious doctrines unless it turned to manipulation of social and political life according to religious dogmas and superstitions. As Baykal set forth:

Every Muslim has a right to learn the truth and benefit from the educational institutions related with this. The state's duty is to maintain this. There is no discussion about this issue. Our hesitation has nothing to do with it. The problem is about what will be done to the officers of illegal educational institutions. Quran education is not an illegal job. Nevertheless; if education of a different thing is given with the excuse of Quran and religion, this constitutes an illegal situation.<sup>641</sup>

In this sense, CHP sustains Law of Unification of Educational Instruction (Tevhid-i Tedrisat).

On the other hand, Erdal Karademir criticized taking Quran courses and foundation dormitories out of control of Ministry of National Education with an amendment in regulation. He argued: "Nevertheless, supervision of Quran courses and dormitories by the state is a constitutional obligation. This supervision can not be carried out on behalf of the state by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* or another unit, institution or organizations, which are not included within the scope of the defendant ministry. Their enforcement, supervision and audit are the liabilities of the Ministry of National Education on behalf of the state." Also, Karademir suspected that the amendment owed to the oppression from tarikats and religious communities. He questioned lack of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s control over those courses.<sup>642</sup>

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<sup>641</sup> "Karşılıklı sertleştiler", *Milliyet*, 29.05.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/karsilikli-sertlestiler/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/29.05.2005/117860/default.htm>

<sup>642</sup> Erdal Karademir's written parliamentary question, 22.11.2005,146-147, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.goruntule?sayfa\\_no\\_ilk=146&sayfa\\_no\\_son=147&sayfa\\_no=147&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=4&v\\_cilt=99&v\\_birlesim=21](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.goruntule?sayfa_no_ilk=146&sayfa_no_son=147&sayfa_no=147&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=4&v_cilt=99&v_birlesim=21)

Gazalcı pointed out to the link between tarikats and Quran courses:

The course, belonging to *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, is called 'İsmailağa'. They say "it has nothing to do with a tarikat" How come? Going beyond these aims, these courses have been started to be used as a tool of adapting girls to wear *türban* and making people open to suggestions of religious communities. Unification of education is attempted to be terminated via religious education. Some courses, dormitories started to function like madrasahs.<sup>643</sup>

Gazalcı as a member of TBMM National Education Commission also stated:

Unfortunately, some implementations have been carried out to abolish unification of education during the AKP's rule. While punishments had been stipulated for those who opened illegal Quran courses, this government abolished this punishment. The audit of Quran courses was under the responsibility of primary school inspectors. Ministry of National Education abolished this while Council of State cancelled this implementation. Then, "Let them supervise the summer Quran courses" was uttered. The others were left aside.<sup>644</sup>

Eraslan also argued:

There is an illegal domain in which the state can not interfere. You can not intervene in religious communities, tarikats as if they were in a private compartment, and laws are not binding for them. Why did AKP stand for illegal Quran courses? These were the organizations which were carried out to terminate the Republic, and they still do. We had foreseen these issues even that day and warned the people.<sup>645</sup>

Kılıç emphasized creation of a headquarter for tarikats with illegal Quran courses:

"That was a deliberate preference of AKP. They wanted to create the headquarters

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<sup>643</sup> "Kurslar medreseye dönüyor' eleştirisi", *Milliyet*, 13.09.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-kurslar-medreseye-donuyor--elestirisi/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/13.09.2006/257792/default.htm>

<sup>644</sup> "Bu okul ve kurslar kapatılsın", *Milliyet*, 18.09.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-bu-okul-ve-kurslar-kapatilsin-/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/18.09.2006/171801/default.htm>

<sup>645</sup> "İşte kaçak kurslar", *Milliyet*, 19.09.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/iste-kacak-kurslar/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/19.09.2006/257820/default.htm>

of tarikats in additional outbuildings of official mosques and Quran courses."<sup>646</sup> Özyurt also attracted attention to illegal Quran courses. He argued that children at primary school education level were taught religious dogmas in those courses. Besides, dresses against the dress code were worn.<sup>647</sup> He underlined the religious oppression on students in Quran courses which were not audited.

Ersin also problematized Quran courses opened without the permission of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as well as the ones who collected aids in mosques without the permission of Office of Mufti or *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>648</sup> After the illegal Quran course tragedy which finalized with the death of course students in Konya as a result of the collapse of the course building, Ersin brought the issue into the agenda and promotion of people who opened illegal Quran courses through alleviation of penalties.<sup>649</sup> Baykal also mentioned that they would monitor the issue for calling responsible people into account for those illegal courses. He also declared that a CHP commission under the chairmanship of Kart would make examinations and meet with entitled people concerning the issue. Ersin also questioned the occasion as well as illegal courses.<sup>650</sup> After the illegal Quran course tragedy which finalized with the death of 18 people, CHP İstanbul Gaziosmanpaşa District Organization determined 22 illegal Quran courses within the district and made a criminal complaint. In the

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<sup>646</sup> Ibid.

<sup>647</sup> Mustafa Özyurt's written parliamentary question, 05.12.2006,149, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa\\_getir?sayfa=149&v\\_meclis=TBM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_vasama\\_yili=5&v\\_cilt=138&v\\_birlesim=27](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa_getir?sayfa=149&v_meclis=TBM&v_donem=22&v_vasama_yili=5&v_cilt=138&v_birlesim=27)

<sup>648</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 10.01.2008,106, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c012/tbmm23012048.pdf>

<sup>649</sup> "CHP çöken kız yurdunun hangi vakfa ait olduğunu sordu", *Milliyet*, 01.08.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-coken-kiz-yurdunun-hangi-vakfa-ait-oldugunu-sordu/siyaset/siyasetdetay/01.08.2008/973584/default.htm>

<sup>650</sup> "Baykal: Konya'daki olayın takipçisi olacağız", *Milliyet*, 01.08.2008, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/baykal--konya-daki-olayin-takipcisi-olacagiz/gundem/gundemdetay/01.08.2008/973592/default.htm>

criminal complaint, CHP touched upon primitive education conditions as well as brain washing of students. He also emphasized lack of control in those courses.<sup>651</sup>

Aritman also drew attention to lack of control in Quran courses:

The recent news about illegal Quran courses and foundation of illegal Quran courses stand as the clearest evidences of lack of audition in this field. The parents who send their children to these courses to acquire them religious education suffer from many damnifications ranging from rape to the death of their children due to lack of inspection in this field. Unfortunately our government can not protect their human rights such as sexual immunity and right to life attending these courses.<sup>652</sup>

In a later parliamentary meeting in 2008, Erenkaya brought forward again the lack of control on illegal Quran courses.<sup>653</sup> On the other hand, Gök touched upon desecularization of education through uncontrolled Quran courses:

No barriers and control are available against these contra-laic republic organizations, which are established to desecularize and dogmatize the education with the changes that are implemented. Their aim on paper in establishing places under "Association For Aid For Course and School Students" sign is to provide education opportunity to poor children who are in elementary school age. The main aim is to grow our children with anti-secular knowledge and inspirations in our country which are attempted to be subdivided by religious communities. Arabic alphabet pronunciation is taught under a "Quran Course" plate with a mentality against worship in Turkish Language, the children are tried to be put under the domination of a power by a language that they don't understand. The children's ability to think, question, reason is undermined while memorizing and fanaticism are indoctrinated in these courses. It is intended to raise a vassal community which does what it is told without questioning and which is not aware of free thought. While the number of Quran Courses opened by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* in 2004 was 4332 in Turkey, this number rose up to 7036 in 2008.<sup>817</sup> As far as we could detect, 1817 Quran courses were opened without permission. Our country has

<sup>651</sup> "22 kaçak Kuran kursu faaliyette", *Milliyet*, 23.08.2008, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/---kacak-kuran-kursu-faaliyette/guncel/gundemdetay/23.08.2008/981789/default.htm>

<sup>652</sup> Canan Aritman's written parliamentary question, 28.10.2008,115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c034/tbmm23034028.pdf>

<sup>653</sup> Hikmet Erenkaya's written parliamentary question, 27.11.2008,189-190, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c033/tbmm23033023.pdf>

67.000 schools, 1220 hospitals, 6300 primary health care centers while 7036 registered Quran courses are available. When illegal Quran courses are added to these, the numbers reach up to considerable amounts.<sup>654</sup>

Gök also problematized lack of control over illegal Quran courses. Gök's anxiety derived from desecularization of education and use of these courses as a tool to challenge laic, modern Turkish Republic and Atatürk revolutions.<sup>655</sup> Ersin problematized lowering the penalties for illegal Quran courses because of the deaths as a consequence of the blast in a illegal Quran course in Konya.<sup>656</sup> Aritman argued:

The recent news about illegal Quran courses and foundation of illegal Quran courses are the clearest evidences on lack of inspection on this field. The parents who send their children to these courses to get religious education suffer many damnifications from rape on children to the death of their children due to lack of inspection in this field. Unfortunately; our government can not protect the human rights such as sexual privilege and right to live of our children attending these courses.<sup>657</sup>

Aritman also questioned the qualification of imams and hodjas in those courses and lack of control.<sup>658</sup> Gök drew attention to the claim concerning privileging of Quran courses vis-a-vis schools in terms of financial aid by the state: "While water bills are collected in schools by the Konya and Ankara Metropolitan Municipalities and water is not supplied to the schools which do not make any pre-paymen, it has been heard that money is not collected from places such as mosques, smalle mosques and Quran courses."<sup>659</sup>

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<sup>654</sup> İsa Gök's written parliamentary question, 27.11.2008,176, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c033/tbmm23033023.pdf>

<sup>655</sup> Ibid,176.

<sup>656</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 02.12.2008,309, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c033/tbmm23033024.pdf>

<sup>657</sup> Canan Aritman's written parliamentary question, 16.12.2008,115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c034/tbmm23034028.pdf>

<sup>658</sup> Ibid, 115.

<sup>659</sup> İsa Gök's written parliamentary question, 27.01.2009,737-738, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c038/tbmm23038049.pdf>

#### 4.5.1.2. Facilitation of Quran Courses

Another sensitivity of CHP with respect to Quran courses is facilitation of those courses so as to contain social life and serve to descularization of education. Concerning the change in the regulation regarding Quran courses and Student Dormitories and Pensions, Birgen Keleş put forward:

It is stipulated to open evening courses for those who want to learn how to read Quran. Furthermore; it is envisaged that students who complete the fifth grade education can attend to summer courses while the relation between the courses and the Ministry of National Education is eliminated and the qualifications sought in teachers are diminished, the course periods are extended and it is foreseen that both night and summer

courses will be opened with the application of less people. In other words; a mobilization has been launched for teaching how to read Quran face to face.<sup>660</sup>

Keleş found this against 8 years of basic education<sup>661</sup>Altay criticized the implementation concerning opening of a Quran course for 10 students even though primary schools whose number of students remained under 11 were closed.<sup>662</sup> Gazalcı also stated that poor children were directed to those courses with attractive promises such as free food and accommodation, completion of open high schools.<sup>663</sup>

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<sup>660</sup> Birgen Keleş's written parliamentary question, 06.01.2004,211, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa\\_getir?sayfa=211-212&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=2&v\\_cilt=37&v\\_birlesim=38](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa_getir?sayfa=211-212&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=2&v_cilt=37&v_birlesim=38)

<sup>661</sup> Ibid,211.

<sup>662</sup> Engin Altay's written parliamentary question, 06.01.2004,211, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa\\_getir?sayfa=223&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=2&v\\_cilt=37&v\\_birlesim=38](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa_getir?sayfa=223&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=2&v_cilt=37&v_birlesim=38)

<sup>663</sup> "Diploma hediyeli Kuran kursu", *Milliyet*, 25.08.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/diploma-hediyeli-kuran-kursu/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/25.08.2004/245395/default.htm>



CHP opposed reduction of age criterion in attending Quran courses. In this respect, Gazalcı argued:

The fact is that the children, who complete their elementary school, can attend to summer Quran courses only if they want to do so. In the Constitution, there are Article 2 stating that the state is laic, Article 42, stipulating that the education should be regulated on the basis of contemporary science and education principles and Article 174 which obliges the unification of education in revolution laws. There is also National Education Basic Law dated 1973 and numbered 1739, stipulating that the education should be secular and scientific. Furthermore, there is 8-year unintermittent elementary education law numbered 4306 which was obtained in 1997 as a result of reactions and fights which lasted for many years. This draft is against all these drafts. This deteriorates the union of education a bit more. It desecularizes the education. Republican education which rests on scientific basis, is countered a bit more.<sup>664</sup>

In a similar vein, Baykal criticized the regulation that brought reduction of penalties for the ones who opened illegal Quran courses.<sup>665</sup> By drawing attention to reduction of penalties to illegal Quran courses owners and to parents who did not send their children to primary school from prison sentence to fine, Gazalcı proposed that this would constitute an obstacle in front of actualization of primary school education.<sup>666</sup> Another critique to state's sponsoring of Quran courses came from Tacidar Seyhan. Accordingly, he problematized a state imam launching a promotion campaign to attract students to Quran courses in Samsun as he saw this as incompatible with laic structure of the state.<sup>667</sup>

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<sup>664</sup> "Mülkiye, ODTÜ, İTÜ'de teröristler yetiştirdi", *Milliyet*, 31.05.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-mulkiye--odtu--itu-de-teroristler-yetisti-/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/31.05.2005/118117/default.htm>

<sup>665</sup> "Mülkiye, ODTÜ, İTÜ'de teröristler yetiştirdi", *Milliyet*, 31.05.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-mulkiye--odtu--itu-de-teroristler-yetisti-/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/31.05.2005/118117/default.htm>

<sup>666</sup> Mustafa Gazalcı's written parliamentary question, 28.06.2005, 623, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa\\_getir?sayfa=623-624&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=3&v\\_cilt=89&v\\_birlesim=120](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.sayfa_getir?sayfa=623-624&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=3&v_cilt=89&v_birlesim=120)

<sup>667</sup> Tacidar Seyhan's written parliamentary question, 04.07.2005, 1767-1768, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c024/tbmm23024127.pdf>

Therefore, CHP was anxious about desecularization of education. In this context, Gazalıcı criticized state's sponsoring of Quran courses. In this sense, he asked whether the regulation which required completion of 5th year in primary school education for attending Quran courses was implemented. He also brought facilitation of attendance in Quran courses by lowering the number of necessary students to 10 from 15 and abolishing the parental permission for attendance to these courses.<sup>668</sup> Gök also problematized lowering the age for attendance to Quran courses<sup>669</sup> Gazalıcı also problematized reduction of penalties to illegal Quran courses, abolition of prison sentence and increase of courses to 5 days from 3 days a week. He mentioned that children at every age attended Quran courses in summer vacations. He also argued that whereas courses such as painting and music were one hour, compulsory religious courses were two hours per week.<sup>670</sup>

#### 4.5.2. Quran Courses Opening

Despite the fact that CHP problematized use of Quran courses as a host for tarikats and religious communities, and replacement of state's control with their domination in Quran courses in illegal courses as well as state's sponsoring of Quran courses, CHP regarded religious education as a right. In this respect, Kart suggested: "It is unthinkable that we, as the CHP, are against the Quran and religion education of our people under legal guarantees and responsibilities. This is what laicite means.

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<sup>668</sup> Mustafa Gazalıcı's written parliamentary question, 26.10.2006,707, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.goruntule?sayfa\\_no\\_ilk=707&sayfa\\_no\\_son=712&sayfa\\_no=707&v\\_meclis=TBMM&v\\_donem=22&v\\_yasama\\_yili=5&v\\_cilt=132&v\\_birlesim=11](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/TutanakBilgiBankasi.goruntule?sayfa_no_ilk=707&sayfa_no_son=712&sayfa_no=707&v_meclis=TBMM&v_donem=22&v_yasama_yili=5&v_cilt=132&v_birlesim=11)

<sup>669</sup> İsa Gök's written parliamentary question, 27.11.2008,176, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c033/tbmm23033023.pdf>

<sup>670</sup> "CHP'den Kuran Kursları'nda yaş indirimine tepki", *Milliyet*, 6.10.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-kuran-kurslari-nda-yas-indirimine-tepki/siyaset/siyasetdetay/06.10.2009/1147065/default.htm>

Everyone has a right to receive education in line with his/her belief."<sup>671</sup> To highlight the right of people for religious education, Baykal actualized a “Quran courses opening” as was called by the media. CHP Izmit Mayor candidate Sefa Sirmen declared that they would give Quran courses service among other activities in neighborhood houses if there was demand. Baykal mentioned that Quran courses would serve with the contributions of Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı. He said that Quran courses under the control of tarikats stood as a serious problem as children were conditioned against the Republic, Atatürk and laicite:

Everybody knows that Quran courses are places where anti-republican people are grown by tarikats. The minds of the children are filled with superstitions. Both Quran and our religion are taught in a wrong manner, they are deflected and the children are raised as anti-republican. We want to save the children from the domination of tarikats. We defend that Quran and our religion should be taught in a correct way by eliminating superstitions. We place value on provision of this service in neighborhood houses which we will open for this aim, in case it is demanded. Therefore, we want to contribute to the issue of growing intellectual young people who embrace the Republic, principles of Atatürk and laicite rather than who become a part of anti-republican pursuits. This issue is the one which is exploited and used for political purposes the most in Turkey. We aim to prevent this.<sup>672</sup>

Baykal underlined that they were against religious oppression but not religion. Reminding the decisions of the Council of State and the Constitutional Court, Anadol also argued that municipalities could not give religious education. CHP rather aimed to abolish awry structurings.<sup>673</sup> With respect to “Quran courses opening” Anadol also argued:

Religious education can only be carried out by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. The municipality can solely provide place when it is needed. The municipality will not provide religious education. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* carries out religious education in Turkey. All Quran courses

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<sup>671</sup> “CHP:Hükümet kaçak yurtlara göz yumuyor”, *Milliyet*, 8.08.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/Siyaset/SonDakika.aspx?aType=SonDakika&ArticleID=976121>

<sup>672</sup> Fikret Bila, “‘Baykal’ dan Kuran kursu açılımı ‘”, *Milliyet*, 05.02.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/carsafa-sigmadı--yeni-umudu--font-color-red-kuran-kursu---font-/fikret-bila/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/05.02.2009/1055733/default.htm>

<sup>673</sup> “CHP’ den çarşaf yorumu”, *Milliyet*, 5.2.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-carsaf-yorumu/siyaset/siyasetdetay/05.02.2009/1056010/default.htm>

are under the supervision of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. The others are tarikats, religious communities and illegal. Thus, they are outlawed. We don't say anything beyond standard regulations. In case it is demanded, our Candidate for Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality Mayorship, can provide places by informing *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, that's all.<sup>674</sup>

As Anadol argued, what was suggested with the “Quran courses opening” was not a new approach with respect to its conception of laicite as CHP still defended control of Quran courses by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. However, Kocaeli Mayor Candidate Sirmen's promise to open Quran courses within the texture of the municipality under the supervision of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is a step to respond to demands of people. Thus, CHP paid special attention to bridge the gap between the party and the people at the level of perception. Therefore, even though CHP's concern about Quran courses and its conception of laicite has not changed, in 2009 CHP endeavored to address religious people to show that it was not hostile to religion but to religious oppression and exploitation.

#### **4.5.3. Concluding Remarks**

All in all, CHP opposed any power vacuum of the state on Quran courses which would be filled by tarikats and religious communities. CHP saw this against laicite as domination of tarikats and religious communities in society would serve to desecularization of education and thus society through injection of religious dogmas and superstitions to children at an age at which their skills for critical thinking had not developed. Furthermore, state's facilitation of Quran courses via lowering the age for attendance, lowering the penalties for illegal courses and parents who do not send their children to primary schools was seen incompatible with a laic state in CHP's point of view. Thus, what CHP tackled with was not religion but religious oppression. Furthermore, once again, CHP championed for prevalence of reason over religion in social and political affairs. These stood as the main motives behind CHP's

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<sup>674</sup> “Anadol: 'Rozet çıkarma provokatif hareket ‘’, *Milliyet*, 06.02.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/anadol--rozet-cikarma-provokatif-hareket-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/06.02.2009/1056413/default.htm>

will to centralize religious education as otherwise would serve to desecularization of society.

#### **4.6. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı***

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* constitutes another issue betraying CHP's conception of laicite. CHP criticizes *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* for several reasons. In the first place, CHP is against basing state administration on religion owing to the principle of laicite which constitutes one of the six arrows of the party. Second, CHP criticizes the politicization of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which leads to partiality of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which constitutes another dimension in CHP's critique of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* with respect to its conception of laicite. In this sense, CHP mainly focuses on discrimination of Alevis in the Sunni dominant structure of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. CHP brings the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* into sharp relief while challenging the Sunni domination in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. In this respect, CHP criticizes the allocation of the resources of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as well as proportion of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget to the overall budget with respect to its conception of laicite. I argue that CHP's conception of laicite rests on a control account rather than separation. Therefore, CHP pictures a *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which holds control over religious activities. Therefore, proliferation of tarikats, religious communities, sheiks, Quran courses outside the surveillance of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* stands as another problem for CHP. As has been mentioned in the 2. Chapter, CHP's laicite also involves secularism which refers to oppression from the sacred. Therefore, CHP's laicite has a sociological concern. In this respect, CHP is against social regulatory role of religion which constitutes the fourth aspect of CHP's approach to *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. As equality of women and men lies at the heart of CHP's modernization project, CHP challenges religion's regulatory role targeting this equality among others. The use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as a

leverage to filling other state cadres with people having religious background is another problematique as it serves to desecularization of the state according to CHP.

#### **4.6.1. Reasons For CHP's Discontent About *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı***

##### **4.6.1.1. Basing State Administration on *Raison D'état***

As has been mentioned elsewhere, CHP's conception of laicite is based on *raison d'état* which contradicts with legitimization of state affairs/law with religion. As *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is a state institution which needs to be governed according to *raison d'état*, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s orientation towards religious order is problematized by CHP. In order to challenge legitimization of state affairs through religion, Osman Kaptan criticized the attempt to authorize *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* instead of Council of State.<sup>675</sup> In a similar vein, in 2008 Genç argued:

On the other day, the Council of State took a decision. The Council of State enforced the provision of the Article 24 of the Constitution, upon continuing lawsuit of a citizen and said... As you know the Article 24 puts forward "Religious Culture and Ethical Knowledge lesson is among compulsory lessons. Otherwise education of religion can be taught upon the consent of adults and with the demand of parents for children under age." There is no such natural, honest and lawful decree. But now the man who directs *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*—which is described in the Article 136 of our Constitution and aims at national solidarity and integration through keeping its distance to all political views and thoughts in line with the principle of laicite— we really respect to this institution—supported political power and he said: "The Council of State can't make such a judgment, they must consult with us." Dear friends, in a constitutional state, in which cases did the judges ask the advice from people who have religious profession? There is no such a thing.<sup>676</sup>

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<sup>675</sup> Osman Kaptan's speech on behalf of CHP Group, 16.12.2006,32, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>676</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 11.3.2008, 185, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c016/tbmm23016075.pdf>

Also, Durdu Özbolat problematized Prime Minister Erdoğan's words:

No amnesty, no amnesty. If someone commits a crime he must be punished. The state has no right to forgive a murderer. The right to forgive a murderer belongs to successors of the victim, as it has to be. We don't have such a right. If you make such a law then you make the worst cruelty. If he is the murderer, he must suffer the consequences.<sup>677</sup>

He criticized Director of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* for supporting Prime Minister as well as his declaration concerning Council of State's decision about compulsory religious courses in which he stated that Council of State should ask them.<sup>678</sup> Gök problematized *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s support for celebration "Holy Birth Week".<sup>679</sup> As can be seen in the examples above, CHP rejects basing state administration on religion. As *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* stands as a state institution, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s reference to religion in its administration is incompatible with CHP's conception of laicite. Given CHP's conception of laicite, legitimization of state administration with religious norms is unacceptable.

#### 4.6.1.2. Politicization of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.

Second concern of CHP in terms of the relation between laicite and *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is politicization of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. CHP's conception of laicite requires that *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* needs to be impartial towards all religious and political groups. One reflection of this attitude is incarnated in CHP's challenge of

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<sup>677</sup> Durdu Özbolat's written parliamentary question, 28.3.2008, 850, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c018/tbmm23018090.pdf>

<sup>678</sup> Ibid, 850.

<sup>679</sup> "Dersimiz 'Kutlu Doğum'", *Milliyet*, 19.04.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/dersimiz--kutlu-dogum-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/19.04.2009/1084863/default.htm>

politicization in the structure of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. In this respect, Tomanbay criticized politicization of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* in 2003 as follows:

The AKP government which aims to fill public offices with its own cadres and provide seats to its partisans instead of serving to our country in such an era which we need solidarity and consolidation and great efforts and messages are needed to reach these goals, caused resignation of the Director of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. The Director explained this oppression with these words: “If we don’t take the last term into account, we have not had any oppression from any government or minister.” We don’t know what lies beneath such an oppression that is exercised on the Director of one of the most sensitive institutions of our country. Neglecting such lean times that our country has been going through, a government that only aims to set up its own cadres in public offices does not serve to our country but conversely it damages it.<sup>680</sup>

Gökhan Durgun also problematized resignation of the Director of Religious Affairs through asking whether there was political oppression on him by the ruling party.<sup>681</sup> Özyurt was another CHP MP who brought the same issue into agenda.<sup>682</sup> Likewise, Kepenek problematized politicization of religion by referring to resigned Director of Religious Affairs Mehmet Nuri Yılmaz’s declaration concerning politicization of religion.<sup>683</sup> The oppression on the Director of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which betrays the attempt to interlink religious affairs with politics is incompatible with CHP’s conception of laicite. Okuducu also pointed out to the need to keep *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* out of politics:

*Diyanet* which was founded on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1924 was defined in the Article 36 of our Constitution. *Diyanet* that is included in general administration performs its duties through aiming national solidarity and integration in line with the principle of laicite through staying above all political opinions and thoughts. As per the imperative provision of this Article, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has to perform its duties with the aim of

<sup>680</sup> Mehmet Tomanbay’s speech on behalf of CHP, 24.3.2003, 12, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c010/tbmm22010054.pdf>

<sup>681</sup> Gökhan Durgun’s written parliamentary question, 9.4.2003, 601, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c011/tbmm22011064.pdf>

<sup>682</sup> Mustafa Özyurt’s written parliamentary question, 4.11.2003, 214, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c094/tbmm22094002.pdf>

<sup>683</sup> Yakup Kepenek’s oral parliamentary question, 3.12.2003, 587, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c031/tbmm22031023.pdf>



national solidarity through advocating the principle of laicite and staying above all political opinions and thoughts.<sup>684</sup>

CHP was also annoyed about insult of Atatürk and CHP as well as reverence of Prime Minister and AKP through using religious references. For instance, Okuducu argued with reference to Turkish Religious Foundation:

I would like to attract attention of our Parliament and public opinion to publications of this foundation. At this platform I would like to mention that it is required to review this publishing policy which inspires Islamic reactionary movements, Islamic reactionary thoughts and that don't comply with Ataturk's principles and revolutions.<sup>685</sup>

Politicization of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* by AKP was seen as serving to desecularization of the state by the CHP. In this sense, Ersin criticized employment of 2500 imams through privileging *İmam Hatip School* graduates and on the basis of manipulation and oppression of AKP MPs.<sup>686</sup> In order to question the partial nature of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, Nejat Gencan criticized involvement of Gülen's books in publications of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>687</sup> By the same token, Halil Akyüz problematized imams working for right parties: "Of course we have qualified religious functionaries, of course we have globally qualified religious functionaries; I have nothing to say about them, but I have some words for Imams that officially support you - the right parties. Please common."<sup>688</sup> Fahrettin Üstün problematized an imams's speech under *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. Accordingly, those imams set forth they would not wash the corpses of Head of Council of Higher Education, Kemal Gürüz and The President of Istanbul University, Kemal Alemdaroğlu who did not

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<sup>684</sup> Güldal Okuducu's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 19.12.2003, 17, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c035/tbmm22035031.pdf>

<sup>685</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>686</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 8.1.2004, 542, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c037/tbmm22037040.pdf>

<sup>687</sup> Nejat Gencan's written parliamentary question, 11.5.2004, 142, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c054/tbmm22054105.pdf>

<sup>688</sup> Halil Akyüz's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 73, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

allow veiled students to enter into university campuses and would not perform a prayer at their funeral.<sup>689</sup> Ahmet Sırrı Özbek emphasized the danger of religion's instrumentalization for political ends:

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should take any necessary measures to prevent intervention into politics, administrations, law, education and social life and to hinder people who exploit religion, use religion for political purposes, and merchandise religion in order to protect our democracy. Because of this, well educated and equipped religious functionaries should be trained in order to enlighten individuals about these issues and religion.<sup>690</sup>

Akyüz stressed the need for autonomy of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*: “*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* shouldn't intervene into politics.”<sup>691</sup> Adjustment of cadres of imams on the basis of political loyalty was also questioned. In this sense, transfer of a secular imam to another village as exile was criticized by Mehmet Nuri Saygun.<sup>692</sup>

CHP Denizli provincial Chairman Ali Kavak and District Chairman Osman Bartal made a criminal complaint about a book distributed by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which related Prime Minister with Allah and prophet and insulted Atatürk.<sup>693</sup> Nevin Gaye Erbatur problematized acknowledgement and distribution of the same book which involved expressions against Tevhid-i Tedrisat Law, words praising Prime Minister, claims about Atatürkist people as irreligious by *Diyanet İşleri*

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<sup>689</sup> Fahrettin Üstün's oral parliamentary question, 4.10.2005, 245, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c094/tbmm22094002.pdf><http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c094/tbmm22094002.pdf>

<sup>690</sup> Ahmet Sırrı Özbek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 18.12.2005, 567, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>691</sup> Halil Akyüz's parliamentary speech, 16.12.2006,81-82, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>692</sup> Mehmet Nuri Saygun's written parliamentary question, 26.12.2006, 170, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c143/tbmm22143044.pdf>

<sup>693</sup> “Erdoğan'lı ilahi kitabı Denizli'yi karıştırdı”, *Milliyet*, 28.03.2008, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/--font-color-red-tayyip-i--font--uzmek---font-color-red-allah-i--font--uzmektir-/guncel/gundemdetay/28.03.2008/510414/default.htm>

*Başkanlığı*.<sup>694</sup> Güvel questioned the claim concerning an imam who said that entrance to mosque with Atatürk badge was sin.<sup>695</sup> Therefore, CHP MPs converge in the need to maintain *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* impartial and abstracted from political oppression as *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is a state institution that needs to serve to all people from different political thoughts. In this respect, they challenge filling *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* cadres with proponents which facilitate *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s political manipulation.

#### **4.6.1.3. Partiality of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı***

Another problem concerning *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* with respect to laicite is *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s approach to different religious sects and beliefs which is borne out of politicization of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. In this respect, CHP challenged the Sunni prevailing structure of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. In this sense, İsmail Değerli brought up *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s neglect of Alevi, Christians, Jews, Caferis:

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* that is organized within the laic state, serves to only Sunni sect, what will happen to Christians, Caferis, Jews, Alevi? Dear friends, in addition to that *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* that is organized within the laic state doesn't serve to all segments in our society, other sects and religious communities; it occasionally causes conflicts among religious groups. Today 15.000.000 million Alevi citizens live in our country. I don't think that any Alevi citizen is employed within [*Diyanet*'s] 88.500 personnel. The cem houses cannot be established due to the word of "Cem". The courts expect *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to issue a fatwa. Dear members of the Parliament, this country is not governed by a caliphate; our regime is laic Turkish Republic. Dear friends, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* must respect to the Cem house. Belief groups do not have the right to define other belief groups, this is one of

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<sup>694</sup> Nevin Gaye Erbatur's written parliamentary question, 14.4.2008, 678, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c019/tbmm23019096.pdf>

<sup>695</sup> Hulusi Güvel's written parliamentary question, 8.5.2008, 701, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c022/tbmm23022115.pdf>

the basic principles of laicite; otherwise it is violation of human rights. Construction of mosques in Alevi villages should be stopped.<sup>696</sup>

That's why, Değerli called for an impartial *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should be a special institution that carries out religious services impartially, guides people in religious affairs according to the requirements of the current era, makes organizations without damaging the main rules of religion and hurting religious feelings and worship rituals, bowdlerizes people from superstitions and wrong information. The state should take off its hands from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* or re-organize it. This institution should be re-structured and it must be autonomous. Dear friends, in conclusion, the state should abolish the oppression on religion and supra-sectarian education should be implemented. *Diyanet* should become an independent institution respecting all religions.<sup>697</sup>

In a similar vein, Tomanbay also underlined the significance of a neutral *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

It is not possible for *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which secures the principle of laicite and therefore has a very important status in this regard to function on the basis of a single sect or belief. Therefore, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should approach impartially towards different beliefs and contribute to the development of tolerance in our world of beliefs through tending towards an open structure for all beliefs who want to be a part of it. On the other hand, it is an obligation not to deprive beliefs which do not want to be a part of state institution from state aid and support them with appropriate methods as per the principles of laicite and equality of the Constitution.<sup>698</sup>

Similarly, Vahdet Sinan Yerlikaya complained about *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s sidelining of Alevis:

A democratic state is obliged to be equidistant to all beliefs and ethnic groups. This is the requirement for respect and tolerance to different beliefs. With this perspective, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* must treat equally to different beliefs and must be open to all beliefs that intend to be

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<sup>696</sup> İsmail Değerli's speech at TBMM, 24.3.2003,29-30, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c010/tbmm22010054.pdf>

<sup>697</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>698</sup> Mehmet Tomanbay's speech on behalf of CHP, 24.3.2003, 13, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c010/tbmm22010054.pdf>

involved in its structure; it must treat equally to all sects, Alevi or Sunni, and it must provide equal support to them. Yet, it is seen that the Government doesn't allocate any fund for Alevi belief groups. It doesn't pursue any research to examine the problems of Alevi and find solutions to them. In religious course books there is no correct information about Alevism. My dear friends, this discrimination must be ended. Respecting all beliefs and tolerance towards them should be among the main duties of the state. A place should be assigned for Alevi in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and a unit should be established and a qualified Alevi thinker should be appointed as the director of this unit, and the substructure should be designed in line with this. So the necessary attempts should be launched for listening, determining and solving the problems of our Alevi citizens. Also *Diyanet Vakfı* should stop its biased policies, provide services to Alevi citizens and provide scholarship for Alevi students, and also publish books to introduce Alevi belief and inform people about it in the literal sense. The publications that remove slanders and misunderstandings that harm Alevi-Sunni brotherhood should be made, sermons should be given at the mosques about these issues.<sup>699</sup>

Yerlikaya also questioned what *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* had done to solve Alevi's problems so far and whether there was any unit representing Alevi. He also asked how many Alevi students *Türk Diyanet Vakfı* gave scholarships.<sup>700</sup> Also, Ali Kemal Kumkumoğlu argued that *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* did not give service to 10 millions of Alevi citizens.<sup>701</sup>

Another CHP MP who is sensitive about discrimination of Alevi by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* was Gülçiçek. Referring to the words of Deputy Director of Religious Affairs Gülçiçek argued:

Although there are 3500 beliefs in the world and there are millions of Alevi citizens in our country; freedom of belief of millions were insulted through not recognizing cem houses among places of worship besides calling cem houses, the places of worship of Alevi citizens as "places for revel". As we all know that "place for revel" means "place of festival, feast and entertainment. Considering a place for insight as a "place of

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<sup>699</sup> Vahdet Sinan Yerlikaya's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 24.06.2003, 35, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c019/tbmm22019097.pdf>

<sup>700</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>701</sup> "Diyanet 'tavan' yaptı", *Milliyet*, 25.6.2003, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/diyanet--tavan-yapti/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/25.06.2003/14322/default.htm>

revel” can not certainly be accepted. Recently replacement of the “mosque” with “place of worship” in the Sixth Legislative Package has been a source of happiness for me. However, we see and hear that only places of worship like churches, synagogues are considered in this scope. Yet, it is so upsetting not to include cem houses within this scope in a country where millions of Alevi citizens live.<sup>702</sup>

Gülçiçek questioned words of Deputy Director of Religious Affairs which degraded cem houses “cem house cannot be an official place of worship. Cem house is a house of revel, they play instrument there.”<sup>703</sup> He also asked:

Do you think it is right to keep such a religious functionary despising and condemning the beliefs of millions of Alevi citizens, acting against freedom of religion and having such an old-fashioned approach about cem houses as Deputy Director of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* in an institution that needs to dominate society with love and toleration perspective?<sup>704</sup>

Gülçiçek also criticized degradation of Alevis:

On the 21st November 2004, the Director of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* made a statement as follows “Alevis are not a minority group, they are a sub-group of Islam; we cannot provide services to all groups; if so, what happens when the Aczmen dis demand service?” My dear friends, religious interpretations have nothing to do with the content, spirit and aim of our religion. The current situation can already be understood from their acts and this pervert interpretation is denied by our society. However, Alevi and Sunni interpretations are accepted by the majority of our society. If Alevism is a sub-group of Islam, then Sunnism is also a sub-group. This understanding is an insult and inequity against our Alevi citizens who own our laic democratic Republic, Atatürk principles and revolutions, our national integrity. This should be fixed as soon as possible.<sup>705</sup>

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<sup>702</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP, 22.07.2003, 312-313, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c023/tbmm22023109.pdf>

<sup>703</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's oral parliamentary question, 1.10.2003, 578, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c026/tbmm22026001.pdf>

<sup>704</sup> Ibid, 578.

<sup>705</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 71, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

Gülçiçek also problematized the Sunni-biased structure of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* in 2004:

The duties that are assigned by the Constitution are aiming national solidarity and integration through keeping equal distance with all political and religious opinions and thoughts; and making plans and organizations to meet the demands of citizens concerning religion and belief; and performing the functions of observation and audit during these processes in line with the principle of laicite. Yet, the duties of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* turn out to be undertaking some duties in the direction of only a particular religious-belief's viewpoint and performing these duties widely along the country. Because of neglecting differences, this picture necessarily raises the question of imposing a particular standpoint to all society.<sup>706</sup>

Another issue which was underlined by Gülçiçek was the need to recognize as official places of worship: "It is hard to understand non-recognition of cem houses as places of worship whereas mosques, churches and synagogues are recognized with the amendments at the Settlement Plan Law during the EU process."<sup>707</sup> Akyüz was another CHP MP who was sensitive about representation of Alevis by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

Other part of society, Alevi segment could not express their beliefs in periods in which democracy and human rights were not improved and when they were under pressure. It is required that *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should pay importance to their belief and respect them. Dear friends, does arrangement of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to represent this segment of our society, this belief group harm our national integrity?! We neither desire oppression of religion nor religion to become an instrument of oppression. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has to maintain this and it must dissuade its personnel from looking hostilely to a segment of society and it must train them.<sup>708</sup>

Ersin criticized Director of Religious Affairs because of categorizing Alevis as a cultural tarikat as Aczmenhis, Nakşis and Kadiris.<sup>709</sup>

<sup>706</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 70, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>707</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 71, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>708</sup> Halil Akyüz's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 72-73, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>709</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 23.12.2004,395, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070038.pdf>



Değerli criticized *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s decision which did not accept houses other than mosques as official houses of worship finding it against laic and modern Republic, Atatürk Revolutions as well as the Constitution and Universal Human Rights. He argued that such kind of fatwas did not even exist in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>710</sup> Değerli's reaction stemmed from the need to give cem houses the official status of worship places, partial and political nature of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, exclusion of Alevi from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as well as construction of mosques in Alevi villages as a corollary of assimilation policy of the state towards other religious sects through *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. Değerli also pointed out to inequalities Alevi have faced in worshipping and in employment in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

In our country there are more than 20 million Alevi-Bektashi citizens. There are many people belonging to Caferi sect. Dear friends, these people cannot find a place for worshipping and when they want to establish a Cem house, the Ministry of Interior Affairs requires fatwa from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. I wonder whether we can provide a place of Cem house for Alevi and Bektashi citizens or not? You go to synagogue; I would like to pray at my home or I would like to go to the Cem house; meanwhile you don't say anything to people who desire to pray at church. Don't you accept the Alevi-Bektashi people as Muslims?! Is there any Alevi citizen who is employed among the 90.000 personnel of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*? Let's allocate 1000 personnel cadres to Alevi-Bektashi citizens among 9200 new personnel cadres that you will employ; let them learn their religion, let them have their own real thoughts. Please look sir, I don't want to pray in mosque. You don't say nothing if I go to Church; why do you shout when I go to Cem house?! Why don't you so when I go to a synagogue? It is so wrong. Look, please act fairly and don't make discrimination, I demand 1000 cadres to be allocated for Alevi citizens.<sup>711</sup>

Değerli called for allocation of cadres for Alevi-Bektashis as well as recognition of cem houses. Gülçiçek reacted against non-recognition of cem houses as official places of worship again in another speech in 2005: "Last year, in 2003 while the mosques, small mosques, churches and synagogues were recognized as official places of worship within the scope of law of Harmonization Code of European

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<sup>710</sup> İsmail Değerli's written parliamentary question, 21.04.2005,83-84, available at [www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c082/tbmm22082087.pdf](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c082/tbmm22082087.pdf)

<sup>711</sup> İsmail Değerli's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 27.04. 2005, 408-410, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c082/tbmm22082090.pdf>



Union, we have difficulty to understand why cem houses were not described as a place worship.”<sup>712</sup> Criticizing the absence of Organization Law for Religious Affairs and non-legislation of this Law, Akyüz related recognition of cem houses as official worship places to the absence of this law:

The government - at least dear Minister - doesn't recognize the cem houses as a place of worship and says that only mosques and madrasas can be places of worship and worship places are indoor places. Mustafa Kemal founded laic and democratic Republic in a Muslim country, then why don't you accept cem houses as official places of worship?<sup>713</sup>

Öğüt also questioned the partial structure of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

My dear friends there are approximately 20.000.000 Alevi citizens in Turkey. These approximately 20.000.000 Alevi citizens pray in cem houses now. This is a factual truth and in the Turkish Republic, as per the Copenhagen Criteria and 9/1st Article of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms it is stated that everyone has freedom of thought, conscience and belief. What kind of studies was made with regard to the freedom of belief that is given to the Alevi citizens according to the Copenhagen Criteria? Will the state contribute to recognition of cem houses officially? Will qualified people who have their own ways of life and are in compliance with the belief system and thus, hodjas be appointed to cem houses within the cadres of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*?<sup>714</sup>

Ahmet Sırrı Özbek also criticized devaluing of Alevis and discrimination against them:

The most important function that *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should perform is to make arrangements in order to remove oppression and outrage on Alevi citizens for many years. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should make new arrangements to remove the fatwas that are issued in the name of religion and in line with the reputation of Alevi citizens. As soon as possible, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should fulfill its responsibilities for Alevi citizens who contribute to *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget by

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<sup>712</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's speech at TBMM, 18.12.2005, 569 ,available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>713</sup> Halil Akyüz's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 18.12.2005, 511-512 , available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>714</sup> Ensar Öğüt's speech at TBMM, 18.12.2005, 568, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

paying their taxes and should distribute sermons and manifestos that remove all misunderstandings about Alevis all around Turkey and ensure that they are read in mosques on friday sermons for several times.<sup>715</sup>

Özbek emphasized the role of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* in changing the negative perception against Alevis. Yerlikaya also put forward in 2006:

Unfortunately, the original residents of this country – Alevis – have always been treated like stepchildren. Unfortunately, the obstacles and prohibitions in reflection of thoughts and worships of Alevi citizens have not been removed yet. That’s why, prejudices and misexplanations about Alevis continue. Unfortunately, our *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has no study for this purpose; it does not care for Alevis. Our *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is so self-oriented and performs its practices only for one sect. It shows us that from the viewpoint of this institution there is no society as Alevi, there is no such a belief, and there is no such a sect. As long as this institution neglects these realities, the respect of Alevi citizens and citizens who believe in democracy fades out. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* almost loses its objectivity. Turkey has to resolve this. It is necessary to acquire *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* an understanding that represents everyone in our country. From now on, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* should embrace all belief groups. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* who makes up its budget by collecting taxes applied to all citizens without discriminating as Alevi and Sunni has to serve also to Alevi belief. Both the government and *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* have to stop their exclusionary and damning styles. Therefore, I declare my affirmative vote for this legislative proposal that proposes recognition of cem houses as official houses and I request your affirmative votes.<sup>716</sup>

In another speech in 2006, Gülçiçek criticized non-recognition of cem houses as official worship places:

We shouldn’t forget that a laic state should treat equally to all beliefs. The taxes that are collected from our Alevi citizens have been spent for religious needs of our friends having other beliefs and this situation has been continuing. My dear friends, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* whose budget I have begun to speak about has been established and developed in this way. For this organization, 1 Billion 638 Million 383 Thousand YTLs were allocated from the overall budget. Besides, the government supplies electricity and water for mosques, small mosques, churches and synagogues for free. Of course, this kind of donation should be provided. However, same facilities should also be provided by the state for the cem houses. This discrimination doesn’t correspond to these words “Alevi

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<sup>715</sup> Ahmet Sırrı Özbek’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 18.12.2005, 567, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>716</sup> Vahdet Sinan Yerlikaya’s speech at TBMM, 21.11.2006, 32, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c136/tbmm22136021.pdf>

people are our friends, they are first class citizens”. For 1300 years, it is cem houses that our Alevi citizens use for worshipping. Nobody can determine where and how they pray, can’t make impositions. You can be fair by treating equally all the beliefs and not charging all places of worship for electricity and water.<sup>717</sup>

Akyüz also argued:

I could not tell a word about the representation of our Alevi citizens at *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*-as it corresponds to the principles of laicite and equality in the Constitution. This Alevi segment must be represented at *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. The worship methods of Alevi citizens in cem houses - as they are about 20 million citizens- should be given a status.<sup>718</sup>

Akyüz issued a call for representation of Alevis in the texture of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*: “This Alevi segment should be represented at *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.”<sup>719</sup> Kılıç drew attention to the need to make broadcasting concerning the Muharram month which is accepted as sacred for the Alevis:

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* makes some programs during the Month of Ramadan and makes religious suggestions and arranges talk shows. However, a great part of Islamic world fasts in Muharram month. Well, during the Muharram month, will you contribute to making TV programs with the contributions of Alevi leaders to be forecasted at TRT Channel whose budget resources are supplied from the state budget by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*?<sup>720</sup>

Ersin criticized neglection of Alevis by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>721</sup> Genç also questioned why Alevis were not represented in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. He posited: “Within the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* approximately 100 thousand personnel are employed. Unfortunately the people having Alevi belief are not

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<sup>717</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 113-115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>718</sup> Halil Akyüz’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 16.12.2006, 83, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>719</sup> Halil Akyüz’s parliamentary speech, 16.12.2006,83, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>720</sup> Muharrem Kılıç’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 116, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>721</sup> Ahmet Ersin’ s written parliamentary question, 31.01.2007,538, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c145/tbmm22145057.pdf>

accepted in this organization.”<sup>722</sup> Emek pointed out to the need for *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*’s equal service to all religious groups: “Sunni or Alevi, necessary studies must be carried out to inform all the believers.”<sup>723</sup> Ağyüz also criticized construction of mosques in Alevi villages.<sup>724</sup> Genç also expressed his discontent about non-recognition of cem houses by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has a circular. It says: “There are only mosques and small mosques in Islamic belief.” Well, alright. I don't say any contrary thing; you can call the place where you worship a mosque, a small mosque or a Cem House. What's wrong with that?<sup>725</sup>

Malik Ecdar Özdemir drew attention to exclusion of Alevis from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* cadres: “How many of our Alevi-origin citizens work in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*? How much wage do they earn, my dear friends?”<sup>726</sup> By referring to Director of Religious Affairs Ali Bardakoğlu’s words Genç argued that “in Islam, the worship is performed in mosques or in small mosques”<sup>727</sup> He also set forth: "The Director of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is the Caliph that they precisely wished".<sup>728</sup> Şevket Köse was another CHP MP who called for official status for cem houses.<sup>729</sup> Therefore, Köse objected to *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*’s assimilation policies directed

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<sup>722</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 20.11.2007,126, available at

<http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c005/tbmm23005022.pdf>

<sup>723</sup> Atilla Emek’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 5.12.2007, 77, available at

<http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c008/tbmm23008030.pdf>

<sup>724</sup> Yaşar Ağyüz’s written parliamentary question, 24.06.2008,485-486, available at

<http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023121.pdf>

<sup>725</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM,11.11.2008, 759, available at

<http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>726</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir’s speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 768, available at

<http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>727</sup> “CHP ve Genç’ten 'Cem evleri ibadethane' sayılsın teklifi”, *Milliyet*, 21.10.2009, available at

<http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-ve-genc-ten--cem-evleri-ibadethane--sayilsin-tekliifi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/21.10.2009/1152942/default.htm>

<sup>728</sup> Ibid.

<sup>729</sup> “CHP ve Genç’ten 'Cem evleri ibadethane' sayılsın teklifi”, *Milliyet*, 21.10.2009, available at

<http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-ve-genc-ten--cem-evleri-ibadethane--sayilsin-tekliifi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/21.10.2009/1152942/default.htm>

at Alevis. Drawing upon what has been said above, it is possible to suggest that CHP calls for an impartial *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which keeps equidistance with all religious sects. This means, in particular, recognition of Alevi belief system as an autonomous branch of Islam by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which would lead *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to serve Alevis among others like Jews, Christians, Caferis etc. as well as Sunnis.

#### **4.6.1.4. Budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı***

##### **4.6.1.4.1. Allocation of the Budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı***

CHP's discontent about *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s partisanship is not limited with its services but is also valid for the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. CHP is annoyed about allocation of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget to only Sunni Muslims. To problematize this, Değerli maintained in 2003:

The share of Alevi associations was 90 billion TL out of the 2001 budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* that equaled to 771 trillion TL whereas it was only 140 billion TL in 2002. This amount can only be given to beggars. The laic state must use this money for all 70.000.000 citizens.<sup>730</sup>

Değerli questioned the allocation of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s resources as follows:

No Alevi citizen has benefitted from the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* that equals to the total budgets of ten ministries. Today, no Alevi institutions, Christians, Jews, or other belief groups can benefit from the budget which is 771 trillions TL.<sup>731</sup>

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<sup>730</sup> İsmail Değerli's speech at TBMM, 24.3.2003,30, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c010/tbmm22010054.pdf>

<sup>731</sup> Ibid, 29.

Tomanbay also problematized uneven distribution of the budget to different religious groups:

Expenditure of the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* that is made up of the taxes collected from citizens irrespective of differences of belief and thought in line with respecting to differences of belief and thought and approaching fairly to all segments is a constitutional obligation for securing national solidarity and integrity.<sup>732</sup>

By the same token, Yerlikaya argued: “Some subsidies must be granted for establishment and equipment of cem houses.”<sup>733</sup> Ögüt asked whether there will be any resources allocated to different religious groups in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>734</sup> Gülçiçek also set forth: “It is so tragic that Alevi society and Alevi institutions are not included within the scope of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*’s budget that equals 740 trillion TL.”<sup>735</sup>

Değerli drew attention to the fact that Alevis could not receive any aid from the state even though they performed all their duties as citizens:

In laicite, a government is not obliged to allocate funds for religious worship. Please look, you spend additional 12 trillion TL for this purpose. Then I ask; has the government ever subsidized Alevi-Bektashi, Caferi institutions until today? Don’t they perform military service?! Don’t they pay taxes?!<sup>736</sup>

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<sup>732</sup> Mehmet Tomanbay’s speech on behalf of CHP, 24.3.2003, 13, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c010/tbmm22010054.pdf>

<sup>733</sup> Vahdet Sinan Yerlikaya’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 24.06.2003, 35, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c019/tbmm22019097.pdf>

<sup>734</sup> Ensar Ögüt’s written parliamentary question, 3.12.2003, 664, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c031/tbmm22031023.pdf>

<sup>735</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP, 22.07.2003, 313, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c023/tbmm22023109.pdf>

<sup>736</sup> İsmail Değerli’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 27.04. 2005, 409, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c082/tbmm22082090.pdf>

Correspondingly, Ögüt asked whether people who were accepted as qualified by the Alevis would be employed by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and whether any fund would be allocated for the Alevis from approximately the 1,5 quadrillion budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>737</sup> Ögüt asked whether *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* will allocate any budget for foundation of a Cem house in Ardahan.<sup>738</sup> Ögüt argued:

The duty of the state is to help to maintain the most basic rights of Alevis namely, living their beliefs and culture freely and right to establish spaces in line with this. The most of the citizens who live in Damal district of Ardahan province are of Alevi origin. Most of the citizens who live in that region have always attracted attention with their sensitive attitude about the unity of our country since the foundation of our Republic. However, they didn't reach a positive result concerning their demands for finding a fund from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which has a widespread organization, cadres and budget to establish a Cem house. The Alevi citizens who make sacrifices by paying their taxes to make up the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* reaching to quadrillions, can not find any support for constructing their places of worship, cem houses.<sup>739</sup>

Akyüz also drew attention to non-allocation of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget for Alevis' religious needs:

It is necessary to represent these belief groups at *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and to give cem houses a legal status. You don't give them two pennies. These people pay their taxes to the government; you support another sect by using these taxes; we don't do this fairly. This is not right, this is not fair.<sup>740</sup>

Gülçiçek also mentioned: "The %30 portion of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget is supplied from Alevi-Bektashi citizens. It is so hard for me to understand why the aids that are given in the past governments' era are not given during the era of AKP government."<sup>741</sup>

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<sup>737</sup> Ensar Ögüt' s written parliamentary question, 22.08.2005,416-417, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c096/tbmm22096012.pdf>

<sup>738</sup> Ensar Ögüt' s written parliamentary question, 19.9.2005, 1685, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c093/b127/tbmm220931271685.pdf>

<sup>739</sup> Ibid, 1685.

<sup>740</sup> Halil Akyüz' s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 18.12.2005, 513 , available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>741</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek' s question at TBMM, 18.12.2005, 569 , available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

Şahin problematized discrimination against cem Houses. Accordingly, the electricity and water bills of the cem Houses were not covered by the state even though the bills of other worship places were covered as a requirement of the Act 4736 Article 1.<sup>742</sup>

Services such as electricity and water are supplied to mosques, churches and synagogues on a discounted tariff. As cem Houses are not considered as a worship place by our Ministry, electricity and water debts are paid on the current price; their electricity and water supplies are even cut in case they fail to pay the bills. Article 10 of our Constitution determines the principle of equality. Do you approve that some of our citizens namely, our Alevi citizens among other citizens should pay for such services in worship places on current price just because of their beliefs?<sup>743</sup>

Gülçiçek also continued: “The rightful demands of our Alevi citizens on receiving the share they deserve from the budget should be heard; I believe that it would be quite right if steps are taken immediately for the solution of their problems.”<sup>744</sup> Ögüt asked whether a share of the budget would be allocated for the Alevi:

Article 10 of the Constitution states: “Everyone is equal before the law without discrimination due to their language, race, color, sex, political view, philosophical belief, religion, sect and similar reasons”. Nevertheless, no share is somehow allocated for Alevi who are essentially Turk and a branch of Islam and corresponds to approximately 20 million out of 72 million Turkish people. Will you allocate a share for Alevism in 2007 budget.<sup>745</sup>

Aslanoğlu asked to Minister of State Mehmet Aydın: “Do you allocate money from the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* for our Alevi citizens’ freedom of belief?

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<sup>742</sup> Feramus Şahin’s written parliamentary question, 24.04.2006,333, available at [www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c118/tbmm22118094.pdf](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c118/tbmm22118094.pdf)

<sup>743</sup> Muharrem Kılıç’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 115-116, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>744</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>745</sup> Ensar Ögüt’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 117, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>



Have you ever provided even a cent for this issue? Don't you have twinges of conscience?"<sup>746</sup> Kılıç also problematized lack of sponsoring the bills of cem houses:

Services such as electricity and water are supplied to mosque, church and synagogue on a discounted tariff. As cem Houses are not considered as a worship place by our Ministry, electricity and water debts are paid on the current price; their electricity and water supply are even cut in case they fail to pay the bills. Article 10 of our Constitution determines the principle of equality. Do you approve that our Alevi citizens should pay for such services in worship centers on current price just because of their beliefs?<sup>747</sup>

Özyürek also criticized lack of financial aid to cem houses: “*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* only provides service to Sunni citizens. The financial support that is given to other places of worship must also be given to cem houses.”<sup>748</sup> Genç underlined the fact that Alevis did not receive any fund for actualizing their beliefs despite the fact that they paid taxes:

Remember that these people are sons/daughters of this country and the greatest defenders of the laic Republic of Turkey and provide sources for them to perform their worship in a comfortable way, not just in line with the beliefs of brothers/sisters in Sunni sect; you should also provide these sources for our Mevlevi and Bektashi friends in addition to Alevi people. Do allocate some of the taxes paid by them to the state for them to perform worship in line with their beliefs.<sup>749</sup>

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<sup>746</sup> Ferit Mevlüt Aslanoğlu's speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 116, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>747</sup> Muharrem Kılıç's speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 115-116, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>748</sup> “AKP'li vekilin Alevilik çıkışı komisyonu gerdi”, *Milliyet*, 01.11.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/akp-li-vekilin-alevilik-cikisi-komisyonu-gerdi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/01.11.2007/220690/default.htm>

<sup>749</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 1.11.2007, 600, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c003/tbmm23003015.pdf>

Genç criticized non-allocation of resources for Alevis in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget:

The Alevi people have always been oppressed in this country. They couldn't have performed their beliefs. They pay huge amount of taxes to the state and *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* budgets but they are not tolerated about establishing a place of worship in line with their beliefs and worship, educating their own religious functionaries who would spread their beliefs, and their beliefs are not tolerated in the course books at schools and there isn't no expenditure in this direction.<sup>750</sup>

Referring to the change in the legislation, Ferit Mevlüt Aslanoğlu also asked: "Will cem Houses be considered as places of worship in this law? Will our Alevi citizens benefit from the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*?"<sup>751</sup> On the other hand, Emek stated his discontent about non-reservation of a fund for Alevis from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget:

While almost all of the expenditures from the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* are allocated for services carried out solely for a specific belief segment of the community, a significant belief segment of community can not receive share from these services. As cem Houses are not recognized as official places of worship, our Alevi citizens pay electricity and water bills on their own.<sup>752</sup>

Aslanoğlu problematized AKP's denial of allowance for repairing and renovation of cem houses and other needs.<sup>753</sup> Genç asked an oral parliamentary question concerning the payment of lightening of cem houses to Prime Minister.<sup>754</sup>

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<sup>750</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 20.11.2007,126, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c005/tbmm23005022.pdf>

<sup>751</sup> Ferit Mevlüt Aslanoğlu's speech at TBMM, 5.12.2007, 115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c008/tbmm23008030.pdf>

<sup>752</sup> Atila Emek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 5.12.2007, 75-76, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c008/tbmm23008030.pdf>

<sup>753</sup> Ferit Mevlüt Aslanoğlu's written parliamentary question, 24.06.2008,486, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023121.pdf>

<sup>754</sup> Kamer Genç's oral parliamentary question, 11.11.2008, 44, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

Köse called for allocation of resources from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget to cem houses: "Approximately 20 million of Alevi citizens live in our country. The electricity and water bills of the mosques are paid by using the taxes that Alevi citizens pay. We are not against this issue. But the bills of the synagogues and cem houses should also be paid."<sup>755</sup> In short, CHP questioned reservation of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget for only Sunnis even though all citizens from all sects and religious beliefs pay taxes for it.

#### 4.6.1.4.2. Proportion of the Budget to Other Parameters

If allocation of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget to Sunnis is one thing about CHP's conception of laicite, the proportion of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget to other elements in the general budget is quite the other. In this respect, CHP MPs also criticized portion of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget in the overall budget of the state, as it meant privileging *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and religious affairs over temporal affairs such as education, employment etc. Okuducu's speech at TBMM in 2003 is a case in point. Okuducu criticized the proportion of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s budget to other ministries' budget:

We see that the budget proposal for *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is 997,5 trillion TLs , in other words, it is approximately 1 quadrillion. And its budget has increased by 29%. The increase is parallel more or less to the increase seen every year. On the other hand, the budget of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security decreased by 11%, the budget of the Ministry of Finance decreased by 18%. The budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains about 538 trillion, and the budget of Ministry of Energy and Natural Sources remains at about 193 trillions and also we see another figure: The sum of investments which concerns the future of our

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<sup>755</sup> "CHP ve Genç'ten 'Cem evleri ibadethane' sayılsın teklifi", *Milliyet*, 21.10.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-ve-genc-ten--cem-evleri-ibadethane--sayilsin-teklifi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/21.10.2009/1152942/default.htm>

country is about 7,6 quadrillions. The budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is 1 quadrillion.<sup>756</sup>

Aritman also argued that the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* was 3 times the budget of General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection (SHCEK).<sup>757</sup> Aritman privileged temporal affairs over spiritual affairs which pointed out the prevalence of reason over religion in state administration. Gülçiçek made a similar emphasis in 2004:

The 2% of the national income is allocated for religious affairs and 0,5% is allocated for research and development and 1,7% is allocated for education. The budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* being more than the budget of many ministries is the proof of the above mentioned situation.<sup>758</sup>

Değerli also made a similar remark. Referring to new cadres for *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* Değerli argued: “The number of total schools in Turkey is 53.556; now we require 100.000 classrooms and we need 200.000 teachers. While we face such problems and requirements in our country, we prioritized this.”<sup>759</sup> Kart also brought the unequal distribution of the budget according to state services into the agenda: “Today we can see that the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is equal to the total budgets of eight ministries and 20 times the budget which is allocated for universities.”<sup>760</sup>

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<sup>756</sup> Güldal Okuducu’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 19.12.2003, 18, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c035/tbmm22035031.pdf>

<sup>757</sup> Canan Aritman’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 19.12.2003, 21, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c035/tbmm22035031.pdf>

<sup>758</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 70, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>759</sup> İsmail Değerli’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 27.04. 2005, 408, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c082/tbmm22082090.pdf>

<sup>760</sup> Atilla Kart’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 06.02.2008, 768, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

#### 4.6.1.5. Control of Religious Activities

Another problem concerning *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* for CHP stands as lack of control of religious activities. As CHP evaluated *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as state's control mechanism over religion, it questioned lack of state's authority in mosques. In this respect, CHP MPs called for *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s control of sermons, imams' and muftis' activities, tarikats, religious communities as well as Quran courses. In other words, lack of imams affiliated with *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* meant vacuum of state's control over religion. In this respect, Sami Tandođdu problematized an imam's sermon which did not involve Atatürk even though it was about Victory Day. Tandođdu questioned the preparation of sermons and implied control of imams' sermons by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>761</sup> He also problematized activities of a sheikh in Adıyaman. Accordingly, the sheikh was receiving people in audience for confession, medication and saving them from alcohol addiction. Tandođdu criticized non-regulation of sheiks as such and asked whether *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* was aware of the issue.<sup>762</sup> Equally, Engin Altay problematized decentralization of the organization of sermons.<sup>763</sup> Kesimođlu put forward illegal organization of tarikats in mosques which were under the supervision of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>764</sup> Gazalcı formulated a parliamentary question concerning the control of Quran courses. He asked for the auditing of those courses about the age of the students. He problematized facilitating participation of Quran courses.<sup>765</sup> Enver

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<sup>761</sup> Sami Tandođdu's written parliamentary question, 13.10.2004, 234, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c061/b005/tbmm220610050234.pdf>

<sup>762</sup> Sami Tandođdu's written parliamentary question, 10.3.2005, 405, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c077/tbmm22077069.pdf>

<sup>763</sup> Engin Altay's written parliamentary question, 10.5.2006, 582, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c119/b100/tbmm221191000580.pdf>

<sup>764</sup> Mehmet Kesimođlu's written parliamentary question, 26.10.2006, 772, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c132/tbmm22132011.pdf>

<sup>765</sup> Mustafa Gazalcı's written parliamentary question, 26.10.2006, 707, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c132/tbmm22132011.pdf>

Öktem problematized religious service by some tarikat and religious community members as a corollary of shortage of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel.<sup>766</sup>

Şimşek questioned a local district mufti's words "The villagers living in villages with minaret are circumcised and the villagers where there are no minarets are not circumcised."<sup>767</sup> Şimşek also criticized *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* for its lack of supervision of tarikats, sheiks, and religious communities:

It is not possible to say that *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has fulfilled its mission in its eighty three years' history after the dervish lodges were closed down. Unfortunately, Turkey has been transformed into a country where religious communities, religious orders, sheikhs and Sikhs swarmed and where those religious orders and their leaders established relations of sheikh and disciple with our citizens.<sup>768</sup>

Gazalcı also criticized the transfer of the authority to audit Quran courses from Ministry of National Education to *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

In the past, Quran courses were audited by the inspectors of the Ministry of National Education. During the era of AKP government was this duty was transferred to *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* from the Ministry. Thereby, the audit function was removed in practice if not officially. It is removed so that the children who are not at the age of primary school education can attend Quran courses for the last 2 or 3 years and *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* overlooks this situation. Just before a week a senior officer of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* said: "We display some tolerance to Quran courses."<sup>769</sup>

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<sup>766</sup> Enver Öktem's written parliamentary question, 21.11.2006, 120, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c136/tbmm22136021.pdf>

<sup>767</sup> Berhan Şimşek's written parliamentary question, 11.1.2007, 330, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c148/tbmm22148069.pdf>

<sup>768</sup> Berhan Şimşek 's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 30.05.2007,152, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c160/tbmm22160117.pdf>

<sup>769</sup> Melih Aşık, "Baskın'ın ezberi...", *Milliyet*, 19.07.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/baskin-in-ezberi---/melih-asik/guncel/yazardetayarsiv/19.07.2007/206599/default.htm>

Ersin brought mosques which were dominated by tarikats and religious communities into the agenda as he found this organization against laicite.<sup>770</sup> Ersin questioned the lack of control of mosques as a result of lack of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel due to their transfer to other state institutions. Ersin criticized tarikats and religious communities' as well as Hizbullah terrorist organization's hold of control over those mosques with no personnel from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>771</sup> Ergün Aydoğan criticized sermon of Balıkesir mufti which was against laicite and denounced European belief system.<sup>772</sup> Özbolat brought into the agenda the Quran courses opened without the permission of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>773</sup> Selçuk Ayhan problematized domination of a retired imam who became Sheikh of a tarikat afterwards in a mosque in Izmir and *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s overlooking the issue.<sup>774</sup> Referring to illegal Quran courses which were not audited by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* Kart also argued:

Well then, don't the officers of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* know this situation? Why don't they inform the top level authorities about this situation? They can't, because they encourage this situation. Ministry of National Education and the government encourage such structurings. Now unfortunately, Turkey experiences this situation.<sup>775</sup>

Gürol Ergin brought forward news concerning a mosque under the domination of a religious community that caused withdrawal of an imam appointed by *Diyanet İşleri*

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<sup>770</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 31.1.2008, 872, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c014/tbmm23014066.pdf>

<sup>771</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 18.02.2008, 890, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c015/tbmm23015072.pdf>

<sup>772</sup> Ergün Aydoğan's written parliamentary question, 12.3.2008, 752, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c016/b078/tbmm230160780752.pdf>

<sup>773</sup> Durdu Özbolat's written parliamentary question, 03.07.2008, 623, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c025/tbmm23025133.pdf>

<sup>774</sup> Selçuk Ayhan's written parliamentary question, 04.07.2008, 177-178, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c025/tbmm23025130.pdf>

<sup>775</sup> "CHP: Hükümet kaçak yurtlara göz yumuyor", *Milliyet*, 08.08.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp--hukumet-kacak-yurtlara-goz-yumuyor/siyaset/siyasetdetay/08.08.2008/976121/default.htm>

*Başkanlığı* for security reasons.<sup>776</sup> Genç also mentioned his dismay about dominance of religious communities in the absence of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*:

I don't want *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to be abolished because when you abolish *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, religious communities will be dominant in this country. Thus, it is necessary to have a *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* under the supervision of the state but in compliance with the definition stated in Article 136 of the Constitution pursuant to the structure of the State of Turkish Republic; but today, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which carries out its duties solely in conformity with the Sunni sect, can not embrace the Turkish society<sup>777</sup>

Ali Koçal also called for audition of Quran courses: “*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is affiliated with Prime Ministry. All courses have to be supervised effectively and all Quran courses other than those which are active in summer holidays, and organizations providing similar services should be prevented.”<sup>778</sup> Anadol also underlined the need to control religious education via *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*: “*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is authorized for religious education. The other trends are religious communities’ fashion. They are out of control.”<sup>779</sup> Özbolat also asked whether Quran courses were sufficiently audited by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*: “One of the weakest parts of the system is the Quran courses. Are all of these courses affiliated with *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*? Can those courses be audited adequately? Are all the expenses of these courses covered by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*?”<sup>780</sup>

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<sup>776</sup> Gürol Ergin’s written parliamentary question, 23.10.2008, 719, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030014.pdf>

<sup>777</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 758, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>778</sup> Ali Koçal’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 18.12.2008,303, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c035/tbmm23035030.pdf>

<sup>779</sup> “CHP’li milletvekillerinden Sefa Sirmen’e destek”, *Milliyet*, 6.2.2009, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/default.aspx?aType=SonDakika&ArticleID=1056533>

<sup>780</sup> Durdu Özbolat’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 29.06.2010, 554, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c073/tbmm23073125.pdf>



#### 4.6.1.6. Social Regulatory Role of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*

Another problem determining CHP's approach to *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s policies to descularize society. CHP is against religion's regulation of social life and that's why, challenge *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s role in engineering of society according to religious norms. In line with the party's orientation as such, Gülçiçek brought attempt of Director of Religious Affairs for a sermon concerning New Year's Eve into agenda in his speech concerning the budget of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*: "Calling for a sermon about the New Year's Eve by the Director of Religious Affairs at the mosques is a blunder. In a context in which we are about to become a member of the EU, such statements will not bring any benefit to our country. Conversely, it is a fact that such statements attract reactions and suspicions as in the case of adultery."<sup>781</sup> Gazalcı also criticized *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s intervention into social life with reference to religion:

I have a writing that is supposed to be delivered as a sermon on 31.12.2004 in my hands; it is written by a specialist of *Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu*. This was also published in the media. 'The New Year's Eve parties have no cultural or traditional basis. Drink...' it goes on and says: 'it is not possible to associate these with our national and religious values'. And this circular letter was issued for New Year's Eve. 37 people were roasted alive in Sivas on 2nd July 1993, I ask whether *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has made any statement about this issue.<sup>782</sup>

In a similar vein, when family advisors in Office of Istanbul Mufti advised prayed water as a solution to intrafamily violence, Öktem brought it to the agenda in 2006.<sup>783</sup> Kesimoğlu also criticized activities of Family Advice Offices of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* in the form of advising praying to the water which would be poured into spouse's water as a solution to intrafamily violence. Kesimoğlu asked whether

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<sup>781</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 71, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>782</sup> Mustafa Gazalcı's speech at TBMM, 21.12.2004, 105, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>783</sup> Enver Öktem's written parliamentary question, 5.10.2006, 233, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c131/b004/tbmm221310040233.pdf>

those bureaus were under the supervision of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>784</sup> Erbatur also problematized the issue and evaluated it as superstition.<sup>785</sup> Nail Kamacı asked whether some films were portrayed as problematic in terms of their approach to religiousmen in a publication of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>786</sup> Özyürek problematized Istanbul Mufti's sermon using left hand in the meal as inappropriate and as a Western tradition.<sup>787</sup> Özyürek's reaction derived from basing social life according to religious dogmas. Furthermore, it betrayed that CHP's laicite had a Western connotation.

#### 4.6.1.7. Approach of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to Women

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s approach to women has been another problem for CHP given the social regulatory role of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. In this respect, Mehmet U. Neşşar criticized *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s declaration of artificial fertilization as adultery.<sup>788</sup> Özyurt criticized a sermon in Bursa mosques which declared kissing women other than wives, children and mothers illicit causing act of marrying illegitimate.<sup>789</sup> Similarly, Gürol Ergin criticized Mudanya Mufti's sermon which attained shaking hands with women other than mothers, spouses and children as

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<sup>784</sup> Mehmet Kesimoğlu's written parliamentary question, 26.10.2006, 711, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c132/b011/tbmm221320110711.pdf>

<sup>785</sup> Nevin Gaye Erbatur's written parliamentary question, 26.10.2006, 712, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c132/b011/tbmm221320110712.pdf>

<sup>786</sup> Nail Kamacı's written parliamentary question, 2.2.2007, 347, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c151/tbmm22151081.pdf>

<sup>787</sup> Mustafa Özyürek's written parliamentary question, 6.3.2007, 176, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c155/tbmm22155097.pdf> and Mustafa Özyürek's written parliamentary question, 2.5.2007, 176, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c155/tbmm22155097.pdf>

<sup>788</sup> Mehmet U. Neşşar's written parliamentary question, 14.2.2005, 153, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c079/tbmm22079076.pdf>

<sup>789</sup> Mustafa Özyurt's motion, 9.1.2007, 439, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c143/tbmm22143047.pdf>

adulterous leading to illegitimacy of the act of marriage.<sup>790</sup> Also, Özlem Çerçioğlu questioned silence of State Minister Responsible for Women and Family Çubukçu as she did not react to imam's words "working women commit adultery".<sup>791</sup> Çerçioğlu also criticized an imam's sermon in Istanbul which denounced working women and set forth men whose wives work became sinful.<sup>792</sup> In addition, Erbatur criticized an article on the official website of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which denounced feminism as being against family structure as it might lead to the perception of defense of women's rights as being against religion.<sup>793</sup> Fatih Atay questioned an imam's declaration relating the death of woman who was bitten by tick with prostitution.<sup>794</sup> Erbatur problematized gendered expressions attaining women secondary and restricting their liberties in their sexual lives that took place on the official website of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>795</sup> In short, as *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* came to target the central element of CHP's modernization project namely equality between sexes, CHP MPs questioned it as CHP's laicite involved emancipation from the oppression of the sacred that usually addressed women.

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<sup>790</sup> Gürol Ergin's written parliamentary question, 20.3.2007, 740, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c153/tbmm22153089.pdf>

<sup>791</sup> Meral Tamer, "Çalışan kadın aldatır mı Sayın Çubukçu?", *Milliyet*, 09.01.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/calisan-kadin-aldatir-mi-sayin-cubukcu-/meral-tamer/ekonomi/yazardetayarsiv/09.01.2008/233161/default.htm>

<sup>792</sup> Özlem Çerçioğlu's written parliamentary question, 14.1.2008, 282, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013055.pdf>

<sup>793</sup> Nevin Gaye Erbatur's written parliamentary question, 3.4.2008, 811, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c018/tbmm23018090.pdf>

<sup>794</sup> "Keneyi fuhuşa bağlayan imam Meclis gündeminde", *Milliyet*, 04.06.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/keneyi-fuhusa-baglayan-imam-meclis-gundeminde/siyaset/siyasetdetay/04.06.2008/762784/default.htm> Please also see Fatih Atay's written parliamentary question, 03.07.2008, 625, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c025/tbmm23025133.pdf>

<sup>795</sup> Nevin Gaye Erbatur's written parliamentary question, 11.07.2008, 134, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c026/tbmm23026135.pdf>

#### 4.6.1.8. Use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as a Leverage for Other State Cadres

CHP has also been against use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as a tool to serve to desecularization of the state. In other words, transfer of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel who has religious background to other state cadres was questioned by CHP MPs. In this context, Gülçiçek problematized transfer of personnel from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to other state institutions.<sup>796</sup> Also, Emin Koç questioned the transfer of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel to other state institutions.<sup>797</sup> Koç questioned transfer of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel to other state institutions.<sup>798</sup> In this respect, Gülçiçek argued: “Recently, it has become clearer that the religious and the state affairs are intermingled with transferring the personnel of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to other ministries, especially to the Ministry of National Education.”<sup>799</sup>

On the other hand, Gazalcı stated:

In a reply to the written parliamentary questions in my hand, the Minister said: “There are 909 personnel who were transferred to other Ministries’ cadres from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*’s cadres”. Yet, there are only 735 personnel who are transferred to the Ministry of National Education cadres. If *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* really needs more personnel, why is the transfer of personnel to other Ministries approved?<sup>800</sup>

Akyüz also criticized use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as a leverage to move to other state cadres:

Dear parliamentarians, the cadre of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* consists of 65 or 70 thousand personnel. It is claimed that the staff is not enough, I think it is true. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* requires 15 or 20 thousand more

<sup>796</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s written parliamentary question, 20.1.2004, 152, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c039/tbmm22039044.pdf>

<sup>797</sup> Emin Koç’s oral parliamentary question, 13.10.2004, 215, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c061/tbmm22061005.pdf>

<sup>798</sup> Emin Koç’s oral parliamentary question, 3.11.2004, 99, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c063/b013/tbmm220630130099.pdf>

<sup>799</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 21.12.2004, 70, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>800</sup> Mustafa Gazalcı’s speech at TBMM, 21.12.2004, 105, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

personnel. We have talked about the lack of personnel; my dear friends, but some of these cadres are transferred to other institutions by the approval of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. From 2002 to 2005, approximately 1500 personnel were taken from the staff of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and appointed to other cadres and institutions. And I guess they were mostly transferred to Ministry of National Education. What are we doing? Why do we take these personnel from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and give them to the Ministry of National Education? Do we aim a specific cadre setting up in the Ministry of National Education? There is need for personnel in an institution but instead of meeting the needs of this institution, we weaken this institution through taking this personnel who we need elsewhere out from this institution. This reflects an understanding of cadre setting up and this is not right my friends.<sup>801</sup>

Akyüz was anxious about desecularization of national education. Karademir was another CHP MP that questioned transfer of personnel from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* which had shortage of 12.000 personnel to other state institutions and asked whether this serves to Islamization of the state.<sup>802</sup> Similarly, Tandoğdu questioned transfer of imams from the cadres of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to the personnel cadres of other ministries.<sup>803</sup> Similarly, Gazalıcı questioned transfer of cadres of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to cadres of Ministry of National Education.<sup>804</sup> Ersin inspected the claim concerning the use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as a springboard to transit to other institutions.<sup>805</sup> He also problematized use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as a leverage to be transferred into other ministries.<sup>806</sup> Likewise, Hüseyin Mert also questioned the transfer of personnel from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to other ministries.<sup>807</sup>

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<sup>801</sup> Halil Akyüz's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 18.12.2005, 511 , available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>802</sup> Erdal Karademir's written parliamentary question, 14.3.2006, 554, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c113/tbmm22113074.pdf>

<sup>803</sup> Sami Tandoğdu's written parliamentary question, 26.10.2006, 708, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c132/b011/tbmm221320110708.pdf>

<sup>804</sup> Mustafa Gazalıcı's written parliamentary question, 2.5.2007, 348, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c155/tbmm22155097.pdf>

<sup>805</sup> "TÜSİAD'ın uyarısı Meclis gündeminde", *Milliyet*, 11.09.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/tusiad-in-uyarisi-meclis-gundeminde/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/11.09.2007/213139/default.htm>

<sup>806</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 4.10.2007, 303, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c003/tbmm23003012.pdf>. Please also see "5 yılda 2 bin imam kurum değiştirdi", *Milliyet*, 24.02.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/chp-cozseydi-sorun-olmazdi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/24.02.2008/241883/default.htm>

<sup>807</sup> Hüseyin Mert's written parliamentary question, 4.10.2007, 300, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c003/tbmm23003012.pdf>

Another MP questioning the passage from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to other state institutions was Ersin.<sup>808</sup> Halil Ünlütepe also questioned transfer of personnel from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* to other state institutions.<sup>809</sup> In addition, Güvel inquired passage of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel to other state institutions.<sup>810</sup> Öztürk questioned substitution of cadre of teaching with imams from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>811</sup> Turgut Dibek questioned the transfer of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* personnel to other state cadres by bringing to the fore the claims for filling state cadres with *İmam Hatip School* graduates.<sup>812</sup> As has been mentioned many times, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* was founded to control and delimit religious activities. In other words, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* served to drawing the boundaries of religion in social life. However, with use of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* by its personnel as a gate to enter into other state cadres, desecularization of the state erupted according to CHP.

#### 4.6.2. Concluding Remarks

All in all, even though *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* was founded to make religion subservient to the state by the CHP, it became a tool to serve to desecularization of state as it was open to political manipulation. It has contributed to challenge state reason with religion. Furthermore, through using its social regulatory role to the favor of religious norms, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has induced reproduction of religious oppression in society. Regeneration of gendered society has been a

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<sup>808</sup> Ahmet Ersin's written parliamentary question, 4.10.2007, 303, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c003/tbmm23003012.pdf>

<sup>809</sup> Halil Ünlütepe's written parliamentary question, 25.10.2007, 332, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c005/tbmm23005022.pdf>

<sup>810</sup> Hulusi Güvel's written parliamentary question, 31.1.2008, 874, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c014/tbmm23014066.pdf>

<sup>811</sup> Ali Rıza Öztürk's written parliamentary question, 28.2.2008, 335, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c017/tbmm23017082.pdf>

<sup>812</sup> Turgut Dibek's written parliamentary question, 14.4.2008, 1142, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c020/tbmm23020105.pdf>

dramatic aspect of it. Plus, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* has stood like a tunnel facilitating the passage of religiousmen to other state cadres. In this respect, religiousmen did not remain under the control of the state but they became the state according to CHP. CHP also criticized *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'s Sunni-biased structure which excludes other religious sects in general, especially Alevis in particular in both services and financial aids. Therefore, CHP calls for an impartial *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* for all religious sects which paves the way for other religious groups, especially Alevis' receiving of equal service from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. This would also lead to recognition of cem houses as official places of worship and correction of misperceptions about Alevis as well as grant of equal budget aid to religious sects other than Sunni Muslims. Last but not the least, as CHP pays special attention to secularization of society to reverse the trend of religious oppression, it legitimizes the existence of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* — If we neglect Mehmet Küçükaşık who questioned the existence of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*.<sup>813</sup>— as far as it remains impartial to be able maintain religious activities subservient to the authority of the state.

#### 4.7. Alevis

Another issue that would betray CHP's conception of laicite is CHP's approach to Alevis. As CHP is against Sunni domination as well as use of religion in state administration, CHP defends the rights of the Alevis who have faced discrimination and come to believe in the laic and democratic republic. CHP is sensitive about several issues concerning Alevis. In the first place, CHP questions the partial nature of education. In this respect, CHP is against compulsory religious courses which excludes Alevism or misinforms students about Alevism as it constitutes a tool for religious oppression on Alevis. Second, CHP pays attention to recognition of cem houses as it believes that no religious sect can be privileged over the other in a laic

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<sup>813</sup> Mehmet Küçükaşık's speech at TBMM, 7.11.2006, 68, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c134/tbmm22134015.pdf>



state. Another concern of CHP with respect to Alevis stands as Sivas Massacre in which 35 intellectuals most of which were Alevis were killed in Madımak Hotel which hosted a celebration of Alevi poet Pir Sultan Abdal. CHP MPs condemned the occasion which erupted because of Islamic fundamentalism. CHP offers to turn Madımak Hotel into a memorial and a museum as it respects the freedom of belief and conscience as well as memoirs of the killed intellectuals. Fourth, CHP is against religious oppression on Alevis. In this respect, CHP MPs challenge assimilation and normalization as well as redefinition of Alevis. In this sense, CHP has brought the common culture between Alevis and Sunnis in the foreground and embraced Alevi culture against state's assimilation policies between 2002 and 2010. CHP has also challenged devaluing of and insult against Alevis. Last but not the least, CHP has opposed state's discriminatory policies against Alevis.

#### **4.7.1. Reasons for CHP's Concern With Alevis with Respect to Laicite**

##### **4.7.1.1. Compulsory Religious Courses**

CHP is against imposition of compulsory religious courses on Alevis as those courses donate students with mostly Sunni teachings. In this respect, Değerli criticized the compulsory religious courses: "Religious lesson taught at schools should become optional. In a Sunni religious lesson, basic philosophy of Alevism should be taught."<sup>814</sup> In another speech, Değerli problematized the existence of religious courses. He argued that state considered religion as a social right that needed to be fulfilled by the state. However, he also questioned the very existence of religious courses in a laic state:

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<sup>814</sup> İsmail Değerli's speech at TBMM, 24.3.2003,30, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c010/tbmm22010054.pdf>



Religious education has been considered as a Constitutional choice, a social right to be performed by the state, not as a matter of freedoms. Especially the 1982 Constitution left the education, by the way the religious education, to state monopoly, in accordance with the Law of Unification of Education. Dear all, 24th article of the Constitution writes that "everyone has freedom of conscience, religious belief and thought" and nobody shall be disapproved or accused due to their religious beliefs, worship, beliefs and thoughts. However, it made it obligatory that religious and moral education is under the supervision and control of the state. In our country, education of religion and ethics has been included in compulsory lessons in secondary education since fourth year; for younger children it has been left to the tutelage of their legal tutelars. However, dear friends, should not religious and political affairs be separated in laic state understanding?<sup>815</sup>

He also argued:

In public television, educational hours concerning Alevism should at any rate take place. Sunniization is against Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is a kind of assimilation. Insults and humiliations against Alevi should be included within the scope of crimes against religion. Approaches meaning insult should be removed from books and encyclopedias.<sup>816</sup>

CHP also questioned the compulsory courses which had Sunni prevailing content and lack of schools which trained Alevi elders and zakirs as well as of lack of sufist teachings in theology faculties. In this respect, Yerlikaya asked whether Alevi doctrines would be included in Religious Culture and Ethical Knowledge courses which are compulsory in secondary schools.<sup>817</sup> Ögüt questioned the content of compulsory religious courses taught in secondary schools which are confined to Sunni doctrines so as to include Alevi doctrines in those courses.<sup>818</sup> Gülçiçek also submitted a parliamentary question criticizing the incompatibility of Religious Culture and Ethics lesson with the principle "Turkish Republic state has no religion" stated in the Article 4 and 24 of the Constitution. He also added that the compulsory

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<sup>815</sup> İsmail Değerli's speech at TBMM, 24.3.2003,29, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c010/tbmm22010054.pdf>

<sup>816</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>817</sup> Vahdet Sinan Yerlikaya's oral parliamentary question, 24.06.2003, 33, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c019/tbmm22019097.pdf>

<sup>818</sup> Ensar Ögüt's written parliamentary question, 3.12.2003, 664, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c031/tbmm22031023.pdf>

religious lesson contradicted with the principle “everyone has freedom of thought, conscience and belief” stated in the Article 24 of the Constitution.<sup>819</sup>

Fikret Baloğlu criticized the content of religious books of compulsory religious courses which did not touch upon Alevi culture.<sup>820</sup> Özbek posited: “Moreover, chapters explaining and introducing Alevism should be included in the curriculum of religious lesson and books of religious lesson should be regulated within this framework and while performing this task, they should appeal to the opinion and suggestion of our Alevi citizens.”<sup>821</sup> Concerning the decision of Istanbul 5. Administrative Court about exemption of an Alevi student from compulsory religious courses Ali Rıza Yüksek evaluated it as the most significant decision about Alevis in the history of the Republic. He also added that CHP would struggle for abolishing compulsory religious courses.<sup>822</sup> Gülçiçek problematized compulsory religious courses in the sense that they donated students with merely Sunni teachings: “Education of religious culture and ethics included in the Constitution, has degraded Islam to education of a single sect and struck a blow against secular doctrine and enlightenment revolution.”<sup>823</sup> On the other hand, Öğüt pointed to the lack of schools which trained Alevi elders and zakirs:

You know, there is an elder in Alevism and there is a zakir. Zakir is the assistant of the elder. As there is a large number of people understanding Alevism with very different understandings in Anatolia, Turkey; do you

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<sup>819</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s written parliamentary question, 29.04.2004,499, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c154/tbmm22154094.pdf>

<sup>820</sup> Feridun Fikret Baloğlu ‘s written parliamentary question, 23.12.2004,227, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070038.pdf>

<sup>821</sup> Ahmet Sırrı Özbek’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 18.12.2005, 567, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>822</sup> “Alevi örgütlerinden dava açma çağrısı”, *Milliyet*, 19.4.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/alevi-orgutlerinden-dava-acma-cagrиси/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/19.04.2006/256278/default.htm>

<sup>823</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 113-115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

think to open a school for training elders and zakirs? Therefore, do you think to establish elder and zakir schools for development, extension and better understanding of Alevism, which is essence of Islamism? Do you plan to establish Sufism charis in faculties of theology?<sup>824</sup>

Gülçiçek also challenged the compulsory religious courses later in 2007.<sup>825</sup> Also, İnce underlined the need for universal religious education: “Who will give universal religion lesson? Present religious lesson teachers do not have adequate competence.”<sup>826</sup> Kart opened the content of religious courses which damaged laicite and excluded Alevism into discussion: “The dimension of current religious lesson which buffets laicite and excludes Alevism should always be discussed. This is an issue to be discussed, evaluated and interrogated.”<sup>827</sup> He continued: “Laicite prevents domination and oppression of religions on each other, and it purposes and guarantee survival of all kinds of belief.”<sup>828</sup> Baykal congratulated Hubyar Sultan Alevi Culture Center Chairman Ali for their struggle against compulsory religious courses.<sup>829</sup>

In addition, concerning State Council’s decision which found compulsory religious courses against the law, Yerlikaya as a Central Executive Board member argued:

The Government should evaluate this decision thoroughly. Democratic countries do not make religious lesson compulsory. Indeed, it is an apparent violation of human rights. The Government should take necessary measures in this optimistic scene. We are ready to give support about legal regulations. In this respect, CHP’s attitude is apparent. Compulsory religious lesson should be abolished. Government has not taken a step for a legal regulation about this issue yet. Discourse of the

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<sup>824</sup> Ensar Öğüt’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 117-118, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>825</sup> “Alevilerin bilirkişi itirazı”, *Milliyet*, 29.9.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/alevilerin-bilirkişi-itirazı/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/29.09.2007/260887/default.htm>

<sup>826</sup> Ibid.

<sup>827</sup> Atilla Kart’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 06.02.2008,768, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>828</sup> Ibid, 769.

<sup>829</sup> “CHP ile Aleviler arasındaki buzlar eriyor”, *Milliyet*, 10.03.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/10.03.2008/503685/default.htm>

Government regarding Alevi has remained unfulfilled. As CHP, we will give necessary support to the legal arrangements about this issue.<sup>830</sup>

Ağyüz asked whether Alevi's demands for abolishing the compulsory religious courses in schools would be taken into consideration.<sup>831</sup> Genç problematized the content of books used in the compulsory religious courses which devalued Alevi:

Education of Religious Culture and Ethics indicated in the Article 24 of the Constitution. Religion should be taught as a culture. Ethics should be taught as an ethics lesson; however the education, in question, is not a kind of education that the Ministry of National Education put into school books, it is not an instruction of this type. For example, you know, Hz. Ali has a horse. It is called 'Düldül'. This is given as a sacred belief; however you put it in religious book and say: "A mule ridden by Hz. Ali." Is it appropriate now? Can there be any appeal as such?<sup>832</sup>

Genç was sensitive about misinformation and ridiculing about Alevi worship in religious books: "For example, it mentions a cem in a religious lesson. They took a play of children on the 19th May and the 23rd April in our district called Pülümer and they published it in book as cem. If something is to be done, it needs to be carried out in a suitable form. Furthermore, beliefs of people should not be made fun of."<sup>833</sup> Özdemir also argued that compulsory religious courses violated the 2 Article in the 1. Protocol of European Convention on Human Rights.<sup>834</sup> Özbolat argued that call for implementation of the decision of State Council and AIHM about abolishing compulsory religious courses did not stand as a marginal idea.<sup>835</sup> Therefore, CHP both criticized adjustment of religious education according to Sunni teachings and exclusion of Alevi doctrines in religious education. Whereas some MPs criticized the

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<sup>830</sup> "CHP ile Aleviler arasındaki buzlar eriyor", *Milliyet*, 10.03.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/10.03.2008/503685/default.htm>

<sup>831</sup> Yaşar Ağyüz's written parliamentary question, 24.06.2008,485-486, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023121.pdf>

<sup>832</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 758, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>833</sup> Ibid, 759.

<sup>834</sup> Malik Eder Özdemir's written parliamentary question, 18.12.2008,535, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c035/tbmm23035030.pdf>

<sup>835</sup> Durdu Özbolat's written parliamentary question, 18.12.2008,533, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c035/tbmm23035030.pdf>

content of religious books, some others criticized the compulsory structure of those courses as they saw it an imposition on Alevi students.

#### 4.7.1.2. Religious Oppression

Another issue that concerns CHP about Alevis regarding laicite stands as religious oppression on Alevis. For instance, Hüsnü Çöllü problematized the partial attitude of the Prime Minister by bringing the religious oppression of 4 students in a vocational high school in Amasya to the fore.<sup>836</sup> Similarly, Baykal argued that Turkey was undergoing a religious hegemony. He wrote a letter to the Alevi student who experienced religious oppression from the literature teacher.<sup>837</sup> Okay also problematized the same issue.<sup>838</sup> Concerning the decision of the state council with respect to compulsory courses Baykal also drew attention to religious suppression: “It is said that there is outrage to *türban*. Isn’t there any outrage for 15 million Alevis?”<sup>839</sup>

Ağyüz criticized oppression on Alevi students whose human rights and freedoms were violated in some education institutions.<sup>840</sup> Hüseyin Ünsal questioned religious

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<sup>836</sup> Melih Aşık, “İstanbul bereketi”, *Milliyet*, 5.12.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/istanbul-bereketi/melih-asik/guncel/yazardetayarsiv/05.12.2007/226309/default.htm>

<sup>837</sup> “Baykal: Türkiye dini hegemonya altına giriyor”, *Milliyet*, 13.12.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/baykal--turkiye-dini-hegemonya-altina-giriyor/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/13.12.2007/227469/default.htm>

<sup>838</sup> Hakkı Süha Okay’s parliamentary speech, 06.02.2008,688, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf>

<sup>839</sup> “CHP ile Aleviler arasındaki buzlar eriyor”, *Milliyet*, 10.03.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/10.03.2008/503685/default.htm>

<sup>840</sup> Yaşar Ağyüz’s written parliamentary question, 24.06.2008,485-486, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023121.pdf>

oppression in a classroom in Amasya which had Alevi administrators who had modern and Atatürkist views. He criticized police bust to the classroom.<sup>841</sup> Özdemir brought to the fore the violence applied to an Alevi student.<sup>842</sup> Aslanoğlu asked when legal arrangements concerning the recognition of cem houses as official houses would be made.<sup>843</sup> Genç criticized Minister of State's statement concerning that Alevis were not Muslims as they did not go to the mosques for worshipping.<sup>844</sup> Genç reacted against religious oppression and assimilation of Alevi culture: "belief is a tie of affection. In other words, people worship in line with their own hearts and their own thoughts. In other words you can not say: "You have to worship there."<sup>845</sup> Köse criticized AKP's attempt to redefine Alevism.<sup>846</sup>

#### 4.7.1.2. Recognition of Cem Houses as Official Places of Worship

CHP is also sensitive about recognition of cem houses as official houses as it defends neutrality of the state vis-a-vis all religious groups and sects as a corollary of its conception of laicite. In this respect, Gülçiçek asked an oral parliamentary question on whether a place would be reserved for cem houses in places reserved for public service according to the Settlement Law.<sup>847</sup> Referring to Alevis, Kumkumoğlu argued:

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<sup>841</sup> Hüseyin Ünsal' s written parliamentary question, 08.04.2008,150, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c018/tbmm23018087.pdf>

<sup>842</sup> "Meclis Komisyonu Nevruz olayları için Doğu'ya gidecek", *Milliyet*, 17.04.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/17.04.2008/518133/default.htm>

<sup>843</sup> Ferit Mevlüt Aslanoğlu's written parliamentary question, 24.06.2008,486, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023121.pdf>

<sup>844</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 1.7.2008,898, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023124.pdf>

<sup>845</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 766, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>846</sup> Şevket Köse's speech at TBMM, 6.1.2010, 478, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c058/tbmm23058044.pdf>

<sup>847</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek's oral parliamentary question, 6.1.2004, 16, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c037/tbmm22037038.pdf>

When some citizens say “We are at least 10 000 000 people and we are within a different belief group; we do not perceive Islam in a way that our Sunni citizens do; our worship place shall not be mosques, our worship places are cem houses, allocate a budget for cem houses”, it is said : “No, you do not know. Your place of worship can not be cem houses but mosques.” Then what are these places; these are cultural houses, cultural activities are performed here. Yes; then, let’s think like that; cultural activities are performed there. The place, which you define as “where cultural activity is performed”, is a place considered as “a place of worship” by our citizens, number of which exceeds 10 000 000... and it could not receive the contribution it has demanded from the government, from the budget of Prime Ministry. Then, how much money has been allocated from the budget of the Ministry of Culture for the unit which Dear Prime Minister considers as a place where our 10 000 000 citizens perform their cultural activities? Dear Prime Minister, how much money has been allocated from the Ministry of Culture budget for the unit which you consider as a place where our 10 000 000 citizens perform their cultural activities? Can there be a double standard as such? Dear friends, in this country if we consider Turkish Republic citizenship compact which has been constituted through the compact of citizenship, not through blood or race relation within Turkish Republic citizenship, in other words, if we consider it a uniform human model when it serves to the purpose, and a different model when it does not serve to the purpose, we can persuade nobody with this double standard.<sup>848</sup>

Öğüt called for freedom of conscience and religion for Alevi. He criticized non-recognition of cem houses as official places of worship in Settlement Law.<sup>849</sup> Feramus Şahin questioned the damages for unlawful occupation of a Cem House in Tokat as a result of the change in the Settlement Law by the municipality by reminding the law regarding that no damage can be taken from religious establishments. He also criticized that Cem House should be evacuated.<sup>850</sup> Kılıç also questioned non-recognition of cem houses as official houses:

In the Settlement Law, the indication of “mosque” was changed as “place of worship”, actually this was changed within the term of this Government and we welcomed it as we were thinking that cem houses would be included within this scope. However; only mosques, churches, synagogues have been indicated among these official places of worship within the statements made. Will this understanding continue in the term of your government, will not cem Houses be accepted as official places of

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<sup>848</sup> Ali Kemal Kumkumoğlu’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP group, 21.12.2004, 18, available at [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/tutanak\\_g\\_sd.birlesim\\_baslangic?P4=13265&P5=B&page1=18&page2=18](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/tutanak_g_sd.birlesim_baslangic?P4=13265&P5=B&page1=18&page2=18)

<sup>849</sup> Ensar Öğüt’ s written parliamentary question, 22.08.2005,416-417, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c096/tbmm22096012.pdf>

<sup>850</sup> Feramus Şahin’s written parliamentary question, 02.05.2006,575-576, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c118/tbmm22118096.pdf>

worship? Second point: Dear Minister Hacibektaş constitutes an important place in Alevi belief, it is an important belief centre. The date of foundation of cem Houses in Hacibektaş was 1367, Dear Minister. However, unfortunately, Alevi can only enter these belief centers by buying tickets. In other words, Ministry of Culture appropriated there, now when Alevi enter Hacibektaş, they have to buy ticket, they can only enter their places of worship by this way. Will we able to say no to this injustice?<sup>851</sup>

Öğüt stated: “People who want to worship in cem houses, there are mosques in some villages, there are mosques in Alevi villages, Alevi want to worship in mosques in their own way. Can Alevi worship in mosques? If they can, please can you explain it with a circular?”<sup>852</sup> Therefore, Kılıç criticized evaluation of the Cem house in Hacibektaş as a cultural element rather than a worship place. CHP presented a motion concerning recognition of cem houses as official houses in 2006.<sup>853</sup> Gülçiçek called for official status to cem houses.<sup>854</sup> Ersin criticized the ban on Cem houses.<sup>855</sup> Ersin criticized the ban on cem houses.<sup>856</sup> Ersin argued “Until now, they were saying that it was not a place of worship.” At present, they say; “ it is a private place of worship”. State has to recognize cem Houses as official places of worship.”<sup>857</sup> Emek also set forth: “The necessary legal regulations and decisions which are among the demands of our Alevi citizens should be taken for cem Houses to be accepted as

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<sup>851</sup> Muharrem Kılıç’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>852</sup> Ensar Öğüt’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 118, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>853</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 114, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>854</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 113-115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>855</sup> Ahmet Ersin’ s written parliamentary question, 31.01.2007,538, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c145/tbmm22145057.pdf>

<sup>856</sup> Ahmet Ersin’s written parliamentary question, 31.01.2007,538, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c145/tbmm22145057.pdf>

<sup>857</sup> “Cemevi tartışması büyüyor”, *Milliyet*, 22.6.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/cemevi-tartismasi-buyuyor/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/22.06.2007/203161/default.htm>



places of worship.”<sup>858</sup> In this respect, Emek mentioned that CHP would be the guarantee of Alevis’ freedom of conscience and belief:

Like every citizen, our Alevi citizens constituting a considerable majority of our society, in terms of population, have the right to perform their beliefs freely as the essential components, as the enlightened people loyal to laic republic, Atatürk’s thought, integrity of the country, nation-state and unitary structure by all means. Basically, Republic has guaranteed the right to practice beliefs freely and in peace of our every citizen residing in this country as a nation having come up from a great empire and established Turkish Republic nation-state. CHP will continue to be the guarantee of performance of this right provided by the laic democratic Republic by these citizens.<sup>859</sup>

As state did not recognize cem houses as official places of worship, CHP saw this as a deficiency in terms of laicite as well as human rights. In this respect, CHP subsidized Alevis in a way state did not do. For instance, CHP gave food aid to cem houses for aşure as a response to Alevi elders because of Muharrem month.<sup>860</sup> To meet the demands of Alevis concerning places of worship, Baykal assigned Çankaya Municipality for construction of a Cem House as a response to Cem Foundation administrators.<sup>861</sup> Consequently, Çankaya Municipality maintained a land for construction of Turkey’s greatest Cem house.<sup>862</sup> Özyürek asked which religious oppression Muslim majority in Turkey faced and whether the official permission for cem Houses was given.<sup>863</sup> CHP Group Vice Chairman Anadolu: "CHP accepts and sees cem Houses as official places of worship." Anadolu stated that CHP had

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<sup>858</sup> Atila Emek’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 5.12.2007, 76, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c008/tbmm23008030.pdf>

<sup>859</sup> Ibid, 75.

<sup>860</sup> “CHP'den Alevilere erzak”, *Milliyet*, 16.01.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/chp-den-alevilere-erzak/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/16.01.2008/262070/default.htm>

<sup>861</sup> “CHP ile Aleviler arasındaki buzlar eriyor”, *Milliyet*, 10.03.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/10.03.2008/503685/default.htm>

<sup>862</sup> “Deniz Baykal da Alevi dedelere mektup yazdı”, *Milliyet*, 14.01.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/deniz-baykal-da-alevi-dedelere-mektup-yazdi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/14.01.2008/234183/default.htm>

<sup>863</sup> “MHP'li Vural: Babacan'a sormak lazım neyi kısıtlıyor?”, *Milliyet*, 29.05.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/mhp-li-vural--babacan-a-sormak-lazim-neyi-kisitlaniyor-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/29.05.2008/760621/default.htm>

submitted a motion concerning recognition of cem houses as official houses which was rejected by the ruling party. He called for passing it into law.<sup>864</sup> Ateş asserted that cem houses should be recognized as official places of worship.<sup>865</sup> Anadol stated that CHP saw cem houses as places of worship and reminded that CHP moved a motion in the 22th Period which was rejected by other MPs. He stated that the motion involved recognition of cem houses as official places of worship and called for passing the legislative act for it.<sup>866</sup>

In line with party's policy for supporting cem Houses, CHP Izmir Mayor Aziz Kocaoğlu stated they started constructing cem houses in order to contribute to keep the traditions alive.<sup>867</sup> He announced the construction of cem houses in Bornova, Menemen, Çiğli, Selçuk, Torbalı, Altındağ ve Gültepe besides Narlıdere.<sup>868</sup> Ağyüz also brought cem houses into the agenda and asked whether construction of cem houses would take place in the Settlement Law.<sup>869</sup> Özdemir asked: "what if cem Houses become official places of worship and they benefit from the legal rights and discounts like mosques, like our mosques? Whom does this harm?"<sup>870</sup> Criticizing State Minister Yazıcıoğlu's definition of Alevi demands as marginal, he criticized non-recognition of cem houses: "Alevi want official status for cem Houses. At

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<sup>864</sup> "Çamuroğlu'ndan 'cemevi' çıkışı", *Milliyet*, 01.07.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/camuroglu-ndan--cemevi--cikisi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/01.07.2008/888508/default.htm>

<sup>865</sup> Yılmaz Ateş's speech at TBMM, 1.7.2008, 916, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023124.pdf>

<sup>866</sup> Kemal Anadol's speech at TBMM, 1.7.2008, 897, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023124.pdf>

<sup>867</sup> "Hamzababa'da "birlik" mesajı", *Milliyet*, 1.9.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/hamzababa-da--birlik--mesaji/ege/haberdetay/02.09.2008/985564/default.htm>

<sup>868</sup> "Narlıdere'de miting gibi cemevi açılışı", *Milliyet*, 11.01.2009, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/narlidere-de-miting-gibi-cemevi-acilisi/gundem/gundemdetay/11.01.2009/1045769/default.htm>

<sup>869</sup> Yaşar Ağyüz's written parliamentary question, 07.10.2009, 321, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c049/tbmm23049fih.pdf>

<sup>870</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir's speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 768, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

sight, no AKP authority refuses it, however when it comes to legislative proposal, unfortunately our proposal has been being rejected for years.”<sup>871</sup>

Referring to the demands of Alevis, Genç called for equality to Alevis in worshipping facilities: “Says: ‘Bro, I want to beg Allah with string of saz in cem Houses, in other words in cems performed there, I want to perform my religious worship in this way. In other words, why don’t you give the opportunity you have provided for church and synagogue for this?’”<sup>872</sup>

Özdemir also presented a motion for recognition of cem houses as official houses in the 22. Term.<sup>873</sup> CHP Group Vice Chairman Okay mentioned that they were preparing a legislative proposal for meeting the demands of Alevi associations such as recognition of cem houses and turning Madımak Hotel into a museum. He also argued: “We find discrimination of belief and culture in Sunni-Alevi distinction wrong.”<sup>874</sup> He asked whether cem houses would acquire official status of worship places.<sup>875</sup> Özbolat implied that whether cem houses were worship places could not be determined by the government.<sup>876</sup>

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<sup>871</sup> Ibid, 767.

<sup>872</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 766, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>873</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir’s speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 767, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>874</sup> “Alevi dernek temsilcileri CHP’yi ziyaret etti”, *Milliyet*, 28.11.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/alevi-dernek-temsilcileri-chp-yi-ziyaret-etti/siyaset/siyasetdetay/28.11.2008/1022156/default.htm>

<sup>875</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir’s written parliamentary question, 18.12.2008, 535, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c035/tbmm23035030.pdf>

<sup>876</sup> Durdu Özbolat’s written parliamentary question, 18.12.2008, 533, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c035/tbmm23035030.pdf>

CHP MPs who have Alevi origins namely, Özbolat, Köse, Ersin, Fuat Çay and Genç moved motion for recognition of cem houses as official houses of worship in 2009. When AKP did not support the notice, they blamed AKP for not being sincere in Alevi opening. Özbolat emphasized that freedom of conscience and belief was guaranteed in the Articles 10 and 24 of the Constitution. Köse demanded recognition of cem houses as official houses and appropriation of resources from the budget for them.<sup>877</sup> In short, CHP finds non-recognition of cem houses as unjust and against the freedom of conscience and belief as well as laicite.

#### 4.7.1.3. Madımak Masacre

Another sensitive issue for CHP regarding Alevis is Sivas Massacre that took place in Madımak. Şimşek called for transforming Madımak Hotel into a museum for Alevis killed in Madımak by religious fundamentalists.<sup>878</sup> Erol Tınastepe submitted a parliamentary question concerning Madımak.<sup>879</sup> CHP attended commemoration ceremonies in Madımak in 2006. 100 CHP members laid wrath and MP Sözen took place in the ceremony.<sup>880</sup> CHP presented a motion concerning turning Madımak Hotel into a museum in 2006.<sup>881</sup> CHP MP Nurettin Sözen, MP candidate Özdemir and other party members attended the march in Sivas. Sözen mentioned that they would transform Madımak into a museum of peace and tolerance as they had pledged

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<sup>877</sup> “CHP ve Genç'ten 'Cem evleri ibadethane' sayılsın teklifi”, *Milliyet*, 21.10.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/chp-ve-genc-ten--cem-evleri-ibadethane--sayilsin-teklifi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/21.10.2009/1152942/default.htm>

<sup>878</sup> “Müze eğilimi güçleniyor”, *Milliyet*, 9.7.2005, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/muze-egilimi-gucleniyor/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/09.07.2005/253132/default.htm>

<sup>879</sup> Ibid.

<sup>880</sup> “Elde var hüznün”, *Milliyet*, 3.7.2006, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/elde-var-huzun/guncel/haberdetayarsiv/03.07.2006/257061/default.htm>

<sup>881</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 114, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

to their people.<sup>882</sup> Emek also underlined the need to turn Madımak hotel into a museum:

Our hearts still pain because of the event in which many people were burnt in Sivas Madımak Hotel that hurts us as a nation. Our Alevi citizens desire Madımak Hotel where this event causing this pain occurred to be turned into a museum. What needs to be done should be done about this issue. If legal regulation is needed, this should be actualized by our Parliament.<sup>883</sup>

Sevigen argued that they would do their best to turn Madımak into a museum. He mentioned that CHP would collect the money as much as they could to buy Madımak Hotel on sale and would want the rest from the state. He proposed that the museum would bring peace to Sivas.<sup>884</sup> Ali İhsan Köktürk reacted to Sivas massacre and the people having such a mentality: “Moreover, I memorialize 35 intellectual people having died as a result of an inhumane event in Madımak Hotel on 2nd July 1993 with endless love, respect and longing. And one more time I condemn and damn people having such a mentality to have performed this hateful attack vigorously.”<sup>885</sup> Ateş suggested that Madımak Hotel should be transformed into a museum and criticized its use as a kebab restaurant.<sup>886</sup> Mengü reacted against Çorum Municipality’s launching of a festival in the anniversary of Sivas massacre.<sup>887</sup>

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<sup>882</sup> “Bütün partiler Madımak'ta”, *Milliyet*, 3.7.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/bütün-partiler-madimak-ta/yasam/haberdetayarsiv/03.07.2007/204558/default.htm>

<sup>883</sup> Atıla Emek’s speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 5.12.2007, 76, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c008/tbmm23008030.pdf>

<sup>884</sup> “Madımak müzesi için finansmanı CHP bulacak”, *Milliyet*, 05.05.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/05.05.2008/524184/default.htm>

<sup>885</sup> Ali İhsan Köktürk’s speech at TBMM, 1.7.2008, 900, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023124.pdf>

<sup>886</sup> Yılmaz Ateş’s speech at TBMM, 1.7.2008, 916, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023124.pdf>

<sup>887</sup> “Katliam yıldönümünde festivale tepki”, *Milliyet*, 02.07.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/katliam-yildonumunde-festivale-tepki/siyaset/siyasetdetay/02.07.2008/888973/default.htm>

Şimşek moved a motion for transforming Madımak hotel into a museum in the 22. Term. Özdemir also presented a motion about it in the 23. Term.<sup>888</sup> Özdemir also asked whether Madımak Hotel in which Sivas massacre as the greatest uprising of Republican history took place would be turned into a museum of Enlightenment.<sup>889</sup> Furthermore, Sav argued that Sivas Massacre stood as one of the most painful occasions of the Republican history. He said that they shared the pains of people who lost their relatives and acquaintances in the massacre. He added that the necessary steps should be taken for turning Madımak hotel into a Museum of Tolerance.<sup>890</sup> Özdemir reacted against non-transformation of Madımak Hotel into a museum: “What if Madımak Hotel in Sivas is turned into an enlightenment museum, where is the harm to you, to anyone else?”<sup>891</sup> Özdemir argued what was tried to be burnt in Sivas not only intellectuals. What was tried to be casted down was laic and democratic Republic. He argued that Madımak Hotel should be turned into a museum again.<sup>892</sup> CHP submitted a proposal for turning Madımak Hotel into a museum which was rejected by AKP MPs.<sup>893</sup> Köse presented a motion for transforming Madımak into a museum of Democracy Martyrs which was rejected.<sup>894</sup>

#### 4.7.1.4. Religious Oppression

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<sup>888</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir’s speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 767, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>889</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir’s written parliamentary question, 18.12.2008,535, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c035/tbmm23035030.pdf>

<sup>890</sup> “Sav: Sivas’ı unutmak, yeni katliamlara zemin olur”, *Milliyet*, 02.07.2009, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/sav--sivas-i-unutmak--yeni-katliamlara-zemin-olur/guncel/gundemdetay/02.07.2009/1113137/default.htm>

<sup>891</sup> Ibid, 768.

<sup>892</sup> “Sivas katliamında ölenler anılıyor”, *Milliyet*, 02.07.2009, available at <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/sivas-katliaminda-olenler-aniliyor/gundem/gundemdetay/02.07.2009/1113325/default.htm>

<sup>893</sup> Şevket Köse’s speech at TBMM, 6.1.2010, 478, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c058/tbmm23058044.pdf>

<sup>894</sup> Şevket Köse’s motion, 6.1.2010, 465, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c058/tbmm23058044.pdf>

CHP is also against assimilation of Alevi culture by the dominant Sunni culture as it evaluates this as religious oppression. In this respect, Gülçiçek criticized religious oppression on Alevi:

Dear Prime Minister ignored the cem houses which are the places of worship of our Alevi citizens in his speech he made on 3rd September 2003 in Berlin saying: “Now that you are Muslims, then you go to the mosques too.” Dear Prime Minister may have problem with Alevi belief and the cem houses. Our citizens with Alevi belief, which is another interpretation of Islam do not have any problem with Islam, mosque, they have not had and they will not have my dear friends. The place where Alevi citizens have worshipped for a thousand three hundred years is the cem houses. No one can take decision regarding how and where they worship, no one can make imposition.<sup>895</sup>

Aslanoğlu also criticized normalization of Alevi:

Dear Minister, it is not politician’s duty to resolve belief issues. This is the duty of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. Sewing a new dress is not our job. I really can not accept the saying “sewing a new dress” on behalf of Alevi Bektashi citizens. Only Alevi Bektashi citizens can sew a new dress for themselves.<sup>896</sup>

Özdemir brought an issue concerning an Alevi village into the agenda. He mentioned that the imam who was sent to the Cem House abrogated the photos of Hz. Ali besides Atatürk. He called Prime Minister to apologize from students in some high schools who faced religious oppression.<sup>897</sup> Ateş questioned religious oppression on Alevi students in a high school in Amasya. He also criticized AKP MP Üskül’s

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<sup>895</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 114, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>896</sup> Ferit Mevlüt Aslanoğlu’s speech at TBMM, 5.12.2007, 115, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c008/tbmm23008030.pdf>

<sup>897</sup> “Cemevine imam gönderildi”, *Milliyet*, 8.12.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-cemevine-imam-gonderildi-/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/08.12.2007/226728/default.htm>

interrogation of four female students in Amasya by questioning the source of the authority to interrogate.<sup>898</sup> Sacid Yıldız problematized religious oppression on Alevi students by a religious course teacher and pension manager in Amasya and exile of a teacher who brought this occasion into the agenda.<sup>899</sup> Tekin also problematized cast down of the additional building of the Cem House in Karacaahmet Cemetry by Prime Minister. He reacted: "Here is a cemetery. In consequence, it is not enough that it is Alevi citizens' cemetery. No matter whoever it is, whether Armenian, Jew or Muslim, as a result if current government does not respect living people, I hope they have respect towards the dead. We are waiting for the attitude of Dear Prime Minister within that sensitivity."<sup>900</sup>

In order to prevent religious oppression, CHP pays attention to protection of Alevi culture. In this sense, Baykal emphasized the significance of unity and common culture and criticized religious exploitation based on polarization between Alevis and Sunnis:

Discrimination efforts based on religion and abuse of common values lie behind the mistake leading us to conflicting each other and feelings of hostility. The most dangerous abuse is the abuse of religion because religion is the common base of all of us. Creating hostility by imposing discrimination on common beliefs is the worst malignity. Unfortunately, this malignity was tried 1329 years ago. We will not fall into this trap. We will share both pain and happiness.<sup>901</sup>

CHP attends Alevi festivals and shares Alevi culture. In this sense, in 2008, even though there was not an official invitation, Baykal invited Alevi leaders to share aşure with a letter:

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<sup>898</sup> Yılmaz Ateş' s written parliamentary question, 25.12.2007,425, available at [www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c010/tbmm23010041.pdf](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c010/tbmm23010041.pdf)

<sup>899</sup> Sacid Yıldız 's written parliamentary question, 18.03.2008,671, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c016/tbmm23016078.pdf>

<sup>900</sup> "AKP'ye mezarlık elestrisi", *Milliyet*, 17.12.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/akp-ye-mezarlik-elestrisi/siyaset/siyasetdetay/17.12.2008/1029344/default.htm>

<sup>901</sup> "Din hepimizin ortak temelidir", *Milliyet*, 11.01.2009, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/din-hepimizin-ortak-temelidir/siyaset/siyasetdetay/11.01.2009/1045519/default.htm>



My dear borther/sister who feels the pain of Kerbela which is a crime against humanity, who mourn and fast for it. Kerbela is a shame for humanity. Such great pains are resisted as one, by being stronger, strengthening feelings of brotherhood, aiding each other and acting with solidarity. With this understanding, we will boil ashure in our headquarter this year, as we did last year. I am inviting you to boil ashure on 23rd of January, Tuesday, I present my love and respect.<sup>902</sup>

CHP General Secretariat Sevigen also argued:

We have been arranging such activities for 4-5 years. Our purpose is not propaganda but totally a humanistic feeling, and this belongs to our culture. We are going to houses and dervish lodges, we share their pain. We will visit nearly 30 dervish lodges together with members of the parliament.<sup>903</sup>

Baykal traditionalized aşure ceremonies in CHP Headquarters. He supported Karacaahmet dervish lodge which was tried to be casted down by the Prime Minister. Those developments warmed the relations between Alevis and CHP. What's more, Baykal's meetings with CHP administrators who are from Alevi origin stopped the debates concerning the exclusion of Alevis from the party. Those steps turned the tides and warmed the relations between CHP and Alevis. Furthermore, it prevented rumors concerning exclusion of Alevis from the party.<sup>904</sup> Another occasion which betrayed CHP's respect for traditions of Alevis was attendance of İzmir Mayor Kocaoğlu to Hamzababa Comemmoration.<sup>905</sup> Özyürek also stated that CHP would

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<sup>902</sup> "Deniz Baykal da Alevi dedelere mektup yazdı", *Milliyet*, 14.01.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/deniz-baykal-da-alevi-dedelere-mektup-yazdi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/14.01.2008/234183/default.htm>

<sup>903</sup> "Deniz Baykal da Alevi dedelere mektup yazdı", *Milliyet*, 14.01.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/deniz-baykal-da-alevi-dedelere-mektup-yazdi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/14.01.2008/234183/default.htm>

<sup>904</sup> "CHP ile Aleviler arasındaki buzlar eriyor", *Milliyet*, 10.03.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/10.03.2008/503685/default.htm>

<sup>905</sup> "Hamzababa'da "birlik" mesajı", *Milliyet*, 1.9.2008, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/hamzababa-da--birlik--mesaji/ege/haberdetay/02.09.2008/985564/default.htm>

support the proposal concerning declaration of Aşura as official holiday and CHP agreed with all of the demands of Alevis.<sup>906</sup>

#### 4.7.1.5. Insult Against Alevis

CHP was also sensitive about devaluing of Alevis because of its difference from Sunni sect of Islam. Gülçiçek also criticized grievance against Alevis: “in the confidential Constitution, Alevism and sects stand as dangerous as the most critic article. We learn this from the press. How do you evaluate this injustice against Alevism and Alevi citizens among other sects and putting them under suspicion?”<sup>907</sup> CHP moved a motion concerning prevention of insult against Alevis which were rejected by other MPs.<sup>908</sup> Köse criticized Turkish Historical Society Chairman’s words which defined Kurd Alevis as having Armenian origin and insulting on Alevis with a racist discourse<sup>909</sup> Özbolat also drew attention to the racist discourse Turkish Historical Society Chairman and called Prime Minister to apologize from Kurds, Alevis and Armenians.<sup>910</sup> Gürol Ergin also criticized devaluing of Alevis by equalization with Satanists by an AKP MP Mustafa Özbayrak: “You consider Alevi population exceeding 10 million in this country equal to Satanists, alas, it is too

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<sup>906</sup> “Alevilerin AKP’den altı talebi”, *Milliyet*, 29.12.2008, available at <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/alevilerin-akp-den--font-color--red--alti-talebi--font-/siyaset/siyasetdetay/29.12.2008/1033926/default.htm>

<sup>907</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s question at TBMM, 21.12. 2004, 106, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>908</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s speech at TBMM, 16.12.2006, 114, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c141/tbmm22141034.pdf>

<sup>909</sup> Şevket Köse’s written parliamentary question, 18.10.2007,671-672, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c002/tbmm23002009.pdf>

<sup>910</sup> Durdu Özbolat’ s written parliamentary question, 18.10.2007,678, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c002/tbmm23002009.pdf>

wrong."<sup>911</sup> Macit called him to apologize.<sup>912</sup> Ateş also proposed that Özbayrak's words reflected AKP's mentality. On the other hand, Mehmet Ali Özpolat questioned whether AKP shared his opinion.<sup>913</sup> Ateş and Özpolat criticized the words of AKP MP Özbayrak's equalization of Alevi with Satanists.<sup>914</sup> Genç also reacted to the same speech: "Dear all, I think this friend is very illiterate. In other words, Satanist means a pervert person, it has nothing to do with religion."<sup>915</sup> Likewise, Emek rejected equalization of Alevi with Satanists:

While resolution of reasonable and relevant demands concerning Alevi belief are recommended in Planning and Budget Commission, a parliamentarian of AKP said: "Although it will not be considered within the scope of Alevism, maybe Magi, Bahais, Satanists, Yezidis may come with the same demands. In such a case, to tell the truth, I do not admittedly know how to meet demands of Alevi or the people calling themselves Alevi." We vigorously refuse these sayings, evaluations that consider Alevi equal to Satanists by going beyond the purpose in a way that will cause disagreement in society.<sup>916</sup>

Likewise, Ağyüz also criticized insult of Alevi through equalization with Satanists.<sup>917</sup>

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<sup>911</sup> "AKP'li vekilin Alevilik çıkışı komisyonu gerdi", *Milliyet*, 01.11.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/akp-li-vekilin-alevilik-cikisi-komisyonu-gerdi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/01.11.2007/220690/default.htm>

<sup>912</sup> Hasan Macit's speech at TBMM, 1.11.2007, 553, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c003/tbmm23003015.pdf>

<sup>913</sup> "AKP'li vekilin Alevilik çıkışı komisyonu gerdi", *Milliyet*, 01.11.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/akp-li-vekilin-alevilik-cikisi-komisyonu-gerdi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/01.11.2007/220690/default.htm>

<sup>914</sup> "Satanist tepkisi", *Milliyet*, 02.11.2007, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-satanist--tepkisi/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/02.11.2007/220844/default.htm>

<sup>915</sup> Kamer Genç's speech at TBMM, 1.11.2007, 599-600, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c003/tbmm23003015.pdf>

<sup>916</sup> Atilla Emek's speech at TBMM on behalf of CHP Group, 5.12.2007, 76, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c008/tbmm23008030.pdf>

<sup>917</sup> Yaşar Ağyüz's written parliamentary question, 24.06.2008, 485-486, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c023/tbmm23023121.pdf>

#### 4.7.1.6. Discrimination Against Alevis

Another fact CHP challenges about Alevis is discrimination against Alevis. For instance, Sav condemned the use of expression of “minority” for Alevis in the EU Progress Report.<sup>918</sup> Furthermore, Kumkumoğlu argued:

For two years, during term of this government, this problem has been ignored. While freedoms are redefined in many areas, this is ignored. This is not a correct approach. This is the segment which will be irritated the most, for which the greatest efforts will be made for creating a problem and trouble in Turkey, and whom the segments that make ethnic separatism appeal the most with a search for an alliance. State should prove that it approaches its citizens equally.<sup>919</sup>

Gülçiçek pointed out to lack of broadcasting concerning the month Muharram on state TV channel, TRT: “During Ramadan months TRT makes religious broadcasting. It is useful however it is thought provoking that TRT does not give any place to Muharrem month which is the most sacred and mournful days of Alevi, Bektashi citizens.”<sup>920</sup> Aslanoğlu also criticized politicization in serving to Alevi villages and discrimination against an Alevi village in Malatya. He also criticized that Malatya Municipality was not turned into Malatya Metropolitan Municipality even though cities which have less population had metropolitan municipalities.<sup>921</sup> Özbolat, Öğüt and Ateş problematized a soap opera devaluing and insulting on Alevis in Germany and demanded from the government to take action against it.<sup>922</sup>

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<sup>918</sup> “Sav: Erdoğan dengesiz”, *Milliyet*, 1.11.2004, available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/sav--erdogan-dengesiz/siyaset/haberdetayarsiv/01.11.2004/93427/default.htm>

<sup>919</sup> Ali Kemal Kumkumoğlu’s speech at TBMM, 21.12.2004, 51, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c070/tbmm22070036.pdf>

<sup>920</sup> Ali Rıza Gülçiçek’s question at TBMM, 18.12.2005, 569, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c104/tbmm22104035.pdf>

<sup>921</sup> Ferit Mevlüt Aslanoğlu’s speech at TBMM, 30.5.2007, 117-118, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d22/c160/tbmm22160117.pdf>

<sup>922</sup> Durdu Özbolat’s written parliamentary question, 06.02.2008,823, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013059.pdf> &

Öğüt criticized Marmara University Faculty İbrahim Öztürk’s words devaluing Alevi women during his course in university.<sup>923</sup> Aslanoğlu implied that this owed much to Alevis populating Malatya. Likewise, Genç asked whether there would be any broadcasting with respect to Alevi beliefs referring to the passed motion concerning broadcasting in languages other than Turkish by the TRT.<sup>924</sup>

Genç suspected that Bolu Governor was removed from office because of being Alevi and not being near Prime Minister in performance of namaz on a Friday. He put a parliamentary question concerning it.<sup>925</sup> In addition, he drew attention to discrimination against Alevis: “I have never seen any government with such a discriminatory mindset against Alevis as your government. You are following such a discriminatory recruitment policy...”<sup>926</sup> He continued: “You are make discrimination against the Alevi citizens in employment in public service. Treat these people equally in employment in public service too.”<sup>927</sup>

Bayram Ali Meral criticized exclusion on the basis of ethnicity and sect:

Excluding, despising; they do not help anyone. We all are citizens of this country. It is too wrong to make discrimination in this country. It does not matter who he/she is, they may also be Kurdish, they may be Alevi, they

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Yılmaz Ateş ‘s written parliamentary question, 05.02.2008,625, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013058.pdf> & Ensar Öğüt ‘s written parliamentary question, 05.02.2008,623, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c013/tbmm23013058.pdf>

<sup>923</sup> Ensar Öğüt ‘s written parliamentary question, 28.03.2008,1107, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c020/tbmm23020105.pdf>

<sup>924</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 29.5.2008, 944, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c021/tbmm23021111.pdf>

<sup>925</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 29.5.2008, 897, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c021/tbmm23021111.pdf>

<sup>926</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 5.6.2008, 442, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c022/tbmm23022114.pdf>

<sup>927</sup> Ibid, 447.

may be Sunni; we have challenged together in this country. That is why, give up discrimination, embrace society.<sup>928</sup>

Genç criticized insult against Alevis:

There is an insultation within the saying of Director of Turkish Historical Society: “ The Alevis are transArmenians.” “Trans” involves an insultation. “Trans” you know it means someone from woman to man, from man to woman...The Alevis were people who have been oppressed for long years. They could not have performed their worship.<sup>929</sup>

Besides, Genç pointed out to discrimination against Alevis in TRT which is state’s TV channel:

This General Director of TRT did not renew contracts of 12 workers out of 500 temporary workers, all of these 12 people are Alevis. If you behave like this, it causes problem in this country. Come on...Let me say you, you were exclaiming from this platform long ago: “They do not employ graduates of *İmam Hatip Schools*.”Do not discriminate against Alevi people.<sup>930</sup>

Köse also asked whether TRT General Manager would be removed from office if the reason of taking 12 TRT employers from Office is proved to be Alevism.<sup>931</sup>

Özdemir pointed out to discrimination against Alevis in filling the state cadres:

While employing for Ministries, let alone general manager and undersecretary, a teamaker they demand that they are employed without being asked date and place of birth, without considering whether Alevi or

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<sup>928</sup> Bayram Ali Meral’s speech at TBMM, 5.6.2008, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c022/tbmm23022114.pdf>

<sup>929</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 20.11.2007,126, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c005/tbmm23005022.pdf>

<sup>930</sup> Kamer Genç’s speech at TBMM, 10.6.2008, 623, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c022/tbmm23022115.pdf>

<sup>931</sup> Şevket Köse’s speech at TBMM, 10.6.2008, 634, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c022/tbmm23022115.pdf>

Sunni they are. They desire to be employed fairly and impartially in democratic terms.<sup>932</sup>

He asked: “How many general managers with Alevi origin do you have during the term of your government?”<sup>933</sup> Özdemir also added: “Alevi demand equality in service, they demand equality in recruitment and equality in service to villages, they want respect towards their beliefs, dear all. Therefore, I also demand that legislative proposal submitted by Genç should be brought into agenda.”<sup>934</sup>

On the other hand, Koçal criticized government’s discriminatory policies against the Alevi:

The viewpoint of the government about Alevi and Bekhashi citizens should change. Government should pursue a policy which will respect all beliefs. The Alevi want to perform their religion within a laic country as equal citizens against discrimination. Our Alevi citizens have always been the guarantee of the laic and democratic Republic, and they have been loyal to the unitary state structure and nation-state understanding and Atatürk’s principles and reforms. That’s why, Alevi citizens are worried about AKP’s Alevi opening initiatives as AKP is a party consisting of individuals with worrisome opinions about laic republic which is *raison d’être* of the Alevi.<sup>935</sup>

Özbolat drew attention to discrimination against 12 Alevi football arbiters by not assigning them in matches.<sup>936</sup>

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<sup>932</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir’s speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 767, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>933</sup> Ibid, 768.

<sup>934</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir’s speech at TBMM, 11.11.2008, 768, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c030/tbmm23030015.pdf>

<sup>935</sup> Ali Koçal’s parliamentary speech, 18.12.2008,301-303, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c035/tbmm23035030.pdf>

<sup>936</sup> Durdu Özbolat’s written parliamentary question, 21.04.2009,1211, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c043/tbmm23043079.pdf>

Özdemir problematized the indictment prepared by Erzurum Commissaire Prosecutor who blamed FullGeneral Saldıray Berk with taking service to Alevi villages, and constructing schools in Alevi villages:

My dear friends, since when has it been a crime to be an Alevi? We know that being an Alevi may sometimes become defect and sometimes fault with regard to receiving services from the state, careering in bureaucracy, becoming governor, district governor or chief of police but it is the first time we saw that being an Alevi has been rendered a crime in an indictment by a man titled "public prosecutor" and it is in your term of government. I make a denunciation against this prosecutor on this platform, on nation's platform. Quite simply, I am waiting for the state to take action against this prosecutor who committed the crime of discrimination included written in the Constitution.<sup>937</sup>

#### 4.7.2 Concluding Remarks

All in all, as CHP's conception of laicite targets religious oppression, CHP has been sensitive about Alevis who have faced religious oppression by the Sunni majority. In this respect, CHP questions the partial character of education which privileges Sunni teachings whereas excludes Alevi teachings or misinforms about Alevi culture. In this sense, CHP brings to the fore the partial content of compulsory religious courses as well as faculties of theology which do not include mysticism (tasavvuf) philosophy. Non-recognition of cem houses as official houses is unacceptable for CHP as it is one of the domains of religious oppression. In a similar vein, CHP challenges assimilation policies of the state directed at the Alevis and insult against Alevis. Furthermore, CHP pays significance to Sivas Massacre in which intellectuals majority of which were Alevis were killed as it resembles the religious oppression Alevis have faced besides a humanitarian tragedy. Discrimination of Alevis has been

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<sup>937</sup> Malik Ecdar Özdemir's speech at TBMM, 10.3.2010, 423-424, available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d23/c063/tbmm23063071.pdf>



another vital issue given CHP's conception of laicite. In short, the examination of the issue of Alevi reflects CHP's conception of laicite which tackles with religious oppression and state administration according to religious beliefs and creeds.

#### 4.8 General Overview

Universal principles of social democracy namely, freedom, equality, solidarity, pluralism, among others like supremacy of labor, peacefulness, environmentalism and employment which have been in force in CHP programme<sup>938</sup> acquire CHP a social democratic party character. Furthermore, CHP recognizes laicite which refers to separation of religious and political affairs as well as freedom of religion and conscience in the party programme. However, CHP's policies as well as other tenets in CHP party programme are contradictory. For example, according to the CHP Programme, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* needs to be impartial towards different beliefs and should have an open structure to all believers. Furthermore, beliefs which do not want to be represented at the level of the state should not be exempted from state support.<sup>939</sup> CHP questions the partial character of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, in other words prevalence of Sunni interpretation of Islam in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. CHP basically calls for equality for all religions. In opposing the dominance of one religion over the others, CHP stands as the proponent of secularism. At the first glance, this seems egalitarian and democratic. Yet, CHP does not problematize the existence of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as it should be for actualizing the claim of separation of political and religious affairs but rather legitimizes it. Stated in other words, although CHP stresses the importance of freedom of religion and conscience and calls for transference of religion to civil society, legitimization of the DRA in party programme is contradictory with those tenets. To put it that way, CHP's party

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<sup>938</sup> CHP Party Programme, 1994, 14,21, 23, 24, 26 and passim.

<sup>939</sup> CHP Party Programme, 1994,41.

programme involves incompatible elements such as the acceptance of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and transference of religion to civil society. In a parallel vein, CHP's conception of laicite in party programme tosses around separation and control account of religion. In other words, even though laicite is defined as separation of religious and political affairs in party programme, CHP's approach to laicite has been more akin to control of religion and religious activities which acquires CHP a statist position. Actually, CHP programme is double edged in terms of laicite. On the one hand, laicite is the guarantee of democracy and human rights. On the other, laicism refers to control of religion by the state rather than separation. Hence, separation used in defining laicite implicitly refers to protection of state from religion, not vice versa. Therefore, it is not possible to call for it laicite in the Western sense of the term but rather laicism which involves the connotation of control.

The extent of CHP's statism depends also on which angle we look at the issue. In other words, CHP is too secular for Sunnis but might not be enough secular for Alevis and other religious groups. From a different angle, the distance of Alevis who support CHP in elections and state might be interpreted as a distance of CHP and state in terms of religious oppression. In other words, CHP is against the religious abuse of Sunni majority. To put it differently, some Sunnis want to practice their religious creeds more freely without subjection to state's control as state establishment inherited from past has been more akin to Republican cadres. On the other hand, for religious groups other than Sunnis, imposition of a version of Islam that is, Sunni Islam has been the very problem itself. The criticisms directed at CHP's controlling laicism derive from the desire to leave religious activity to the civil society and thus from a liberal desire. Actually, despite the fact that CHP's policies are sometimes far from liberalism as well social democracy in practice, CHP's programme includes liberal tenets concomitant with contradictory tenets— as has been mentioned above. It would be fairer to evaluate CHP's attitude more akin to statism regarding pious Sunni majority as it prioritizes the survival of the nation

state. Seen from the angle of pious Sunni Muslims, CHP's position is more etatist in adopting a secularism as the cement of national identity.

On the other hand, its approach to Alevis is more democratic as CHP challenges Sunni prevailing establishment in state to tackle with religious oppression. Drawing upon CHP's approach to Alevis concerning religious oppression, CHP's understanding of secularism is based on democracy which protects the rights of all religious sects vis-à-vis the dominant groups. In this respect, CHP is democratic rather than etatist as it protects Alevis through respecting different religious beliefs and practices vis-à-vis the state to which men and Sunni version of Islam dominate. As Chantal Mouffe argues, democracy does not only mean unity and homogeneity. As she reminds democracy always includes heterogeneity and thus a pluralist dimension.<sup>940</sup> CHP opposes intervention to religious beliefs and its practices. Rather than interpreting laicite from the perspective of the state and state interests, CHP's party programme emphasizes the importance of individual rights concerning religious beliefs and worship. Hence, in this respect, CHP's conception of laicite can not be accounted as simply etatist. Conversely, it is democratic.

In short, it is misleading to call CHP simply etatist. Actually, by opposing religious oppression of Sunni version of Islam upon minority groups such as Alevis and other religious groups, CHP adopts a democratic approach by defending the rights of religious sects and individual rights. In this respect, CHP's position is democratic rather than statist as it challenges Sunni-prevailing state establishment incarnated in education curriculum as well as *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. Therefore, it would be fairer to suggest that CHP oscillates between statism and democracy.

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<sup>940</sup> Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*, (London: Verso, 2000), passim.

#### 4.9 Concluding Remarks

CHP's conception secularism which aimed at confronting religious oppression has had an emancipating role through paving the way to people to gain their individuality. However, as the context changed, CHP's emancipatory laicite has given way to oppressive laicism for people who want to actualize their religious creeds by their own will rather than religious oppression. In other words, secularism through deciding on behalf of people how to practice their religion has transformed into what it tackles with from the other side of the coin. To put it that way, just as religion, laicism has become a controlling tool for disciplining women.

CHP is criticized for its statist tendencies especially when controlling feature of laicism is put into circuit. It is that point where CHP acquires the feature of an etatist party especially when free practice of Sunni religious creeds is concerned as we have discussed in the "*Imams and Imam Hatip Schools*" and "Veiling" sections." On the other hand, CHP's sensitivity about religious oppression was handled in "Quran Courses" and "Alevis" sections.

It is also possible to suggest that CHP embraces several liberal elements given its party programme. Moreover, it reads laicite in terms of public/private dichotomy. CHP's understanding of secularism redounds that religion needs to be private and should not pass to the public realm. No need to remind that whereas public refers to the state or institutions connected to the state, private refers to the civil society. Hence, CHP is obviously against the publicization of religion rather than visibility of religious symbols in civil society. To put it that way, CHP is not against the use of religious symbols in private sphere. In contrast to critics that blame CHP with vice

versa, CHP's horizon of public and private fits exactly into liberal dichotomy of public and private in that the public sphere resembles the state or state-related institutions in spite of its divergence from liberalism in interference of state into civil society.

Drawing upon what has been said above, CHP's conception of laicite can be defined as double-edged and can neither be called statist nor democratic on itself. To the extent that secularism guarantees human rights, it acquires a democratic character. On the other hand, to the extent that secularism serves to the survival of the state, it acquires a more etatist tone. In this sense, CHP's conception of laicite oscillates between etatism and democracy depending on the relationship between laicite and human rights&state respectively. As can be seen in the examples of women and Alevis, CHP's approach to laicite constitutes a democratic element as it provides a tool to avoid from religious oppression and maintain equality. Nevertheless, in terms of respect for differences, that is religious identities like veiled women, *İmam Hatip School* graduates etc. vis-à-vis laic identity of the state, CHP's conception of laicite has remained monistic and restricting. In a different vein, it serves to marginalization of religious identities and marking them as other.

All in all, CHP sees laicite as integral to democracy as laicite stands as the guarantee of women's and religious sects' rights against religious oppression. Briefly, CHP has reproduced a controlling attitude towards religion both in practice and its programme: In programme because of its legitimization of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and controlling private religious education relying on *Tevhid-i Tedrisat Law* and in practice because of controlling religious symbols in the public sphere. However, it should be noted that the party opposes politicization of Islam as well as activities of

Islamic organizations which try to Islamize society.<sup>941</sup> Actually, control account of laicism derives from the motive to protect the individual from the abuse of religion leading sometimes to violation of human rights and social equality. Therefore, CHP's main concern is secularism which refers to breakaway with the oppression of the sacred in Berkes' conceptualization which is tried to be maintained by the control of religion by the state. In short, CHP programme contains liberal tenets such as transference of religion to civil society as the ultimate goal which has not been reached yet.

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<sup>941</sup> Sencer Ayata & Ayşe-Güneş Ayata, "The Center-Left Parties in Turkey", 218.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

I have analyzed CHP's conception of laicite with respect to secularization thesis which points out to diminishing social importance of religion. In my point of view, CHP's conception of laicite which rested on privatization of religion and exclusion of religious elements from the public sphere fits the secularization thesis. Even though secularization thesis highlight CHP's conception of laicite, challenge of CHP's laicite by religious identities who claim to be involved in public sphere exposes the need to reformulate its conception of laicism for a more democratic society. For re-interpretation of CHP's conception of laicite so as to include religious identities in the public sphere as soon as they do not limit the freedoms of others, I found Habermas' theory of post-secular society salutary. Nevertheless, transition to a post-secular age does not attain secularization thesis pointless. I believe such an attempt to refute secularization thesis via this phenomenon would be anachronistic. Conversely, increasing visibility of religious identities refers to the genesis of a new age.

Turkish secularization has followed a different path of secularization than its European counterparts. Because of Turkish state tradition which unified all the powers in Sultan unlike Europe in which the authority was divided between the temporal authority and the Church, Central Asian, Persian and Ottoman roots which gave the Sultan the absolute authority as well as the primacy of the state over religion Turkish Republic did not adopt the separation model which rested on separation of religious and political affairs, namely laicite. Rather, Turkish model of laicite rested on a control account which maintained subservience of religion to the state through *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*. Therefore, it would not be erroneous to call it laicism.

Turkish laicism is one of hybridity of its state tradition and interaction between Western modernity. Hence, I suggest that the thesis which accuses Turkish modernity with Orientalism in terms of repression of local Islam through Western based Turkish modernity with thesis remains ahistorical. What's more, alternative modernity which aims to constitute an alternative modernity with reference to our authentic culture which was repressed by Western modernity. However against this argument, I suggest that the boundaries between Western modernity and other modernities are not clear-cut and set forth the ambivalence of those boundaries with respect to the hybridity I have mentioned above. Furthermore, inclusion of identities into the public sphere is quite a Western democratic phenomenon. In this respect, leaving Western secularism aside while stressing the importance of alternative modernities to include different Islamic identities into the public sphere is paradoxical. If Turkey would produce its unique modernity completely different from the West, then it should leave aside Western categories altogether by merely focusing on its social dynamics. Conversely, if we are going to use the Western terminology, then Turkish modernity's interaction with the Western modernity should also be accepted.

I argue that Turkish secularism has both continuity and rupture with the Ottoman modernization efforts. In contrast to the critics who evaluated Turkish secularism as melting of the "particular" Turkish culture in universal secularism, I argue that Turkish experience of secularism had a secularizing dynamic within itself incarnated in its state tradition which prioritizes the state over religion. Turkish secularism resembles a rupture with the Ottoman Empire in legitimization of the state with *raison d'état* instead of religion. However, Turkish secularism can be traced back to the Ottoman modernization efforts in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, against the critics which attain Turkish laicism as alien to Turkish society, I suggest that the historical roots of the Turkish secularism dates back to the Ottoman Empire as well as Central Asia and Persia. Against the critics that criticize Turkish modernization with elitism, borrowing from Taylor's argument concerning the gap between elites and people



concerning disenchantment for three centuries in the era of secularization, I remind the possibility of elitism as the course of events in the process of secularization. Last but not the least, I argue that even though Islamic identities pose a challenge to the authoritarian nature of states by criticizing the homogenous public spheres for democratization, I see religious oppression on women and religious sects as a threat for democracy. In this respect, Habermas' warning that a post-secular society can emerge more or less in a secular state needs to be taken serious.

As Turkey could not complete the process of secularism, conception of laicite implemented by the CHP since the foundation of the Turkish Republic rested on the control of religious activities. As has been written in the CHP Programme, the ultimate goal of CHP is to leave religious activities to the initiative of the civil society. However, as there are still examples of religious oppression discussed so far on women, Alevis as well as religious exploitation through politics, CHP persisted controlling policies between 2002 and 2010. In this respect, we observe that CHP MPs make a distinction between religion and religious dogmas. Whereas they respect the former, they challenge the latter as they see these as a tool for religious oppression in general, controlling women's sexuality and discriminating Alevis in particular.

In this sense, CHP's conception of laicite renders CHP sensitive about people under religious oppression such as women and Alevis and in this respect; it is the proponent of subordinates instead of people at the dominant positions which are mainly Sunni people. In this respect, Turkish example of laicism is amorphous because Sunni ideology is both the oppressor and the oppressed. In this context, CHP's conception of laicite which has sensitivity about religious oppression has made up for it. On the other hand, CHP tries to balance the oppression of Sunni

majority through excluding the ones who carry religious symbols from the public sphere with the fear of new possibilities of oppression. However, if intervention to religious creeds in public sphere is one thing about authoritarianism, basing state legitimacy on religion is quite the other. In other words, a state which relies on religion can no longer safeguard the rights of other believers or non-believers. Yet, in the social domain, the imposition of a scientific alternative to the religious value system derives from the control account of laicism which creates problems in terms of democracy.

Within the light of CHP's conception of laicite discussed above, I have examined the period between 2002 and 2010 by focusing on CHP's approach to veiling, *imams/İmam Hatip Schools*, Quran courses, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and Alevi. I chose those five issues as they reflected CHP's approach to religious identities/symbols in the public sphere and its attitude towards religious oppression. Whereas veiling, *imams/İmam Hatip Schools*, Quran courses and *Diyanet* dropped hints about the extent of CHP's etatism; veiling, Alevi and Quran courses mirrored the extent of CHP's democratic attitude.

To put that way, CHP's conception of laicite was akin to etatism with respect to veiling as it served to exclusion of veiled women from the public sphere for the sake of state interests. However, if CHP's concern that veiling in public sphere might reproduce religious oppression on women and Alevi is taken into account, then it appears that this etatism derives from the worry to keep democracy. CHP's opposition to veiling in the public sphere derives from mostly religious oppression on Alevi and women. In this sense, CHP's remark on patriarchal relations which force women to veil is significant and oppression on Alevi by the Sunni majority is vital for a democratic formulation. On the other hand, exclusion of veiled women

from the public sphere such as universities entraps women to the private sphere causing the reproduction of patriarchal relations on women. In addition, this is against the principle of equality which stands one of the important notions for democracy. Also, CHP's incentive to protect the regime attains it etatist by causing it to underestimate individual vis-à-vis the state.

CHP's attitude towards *İmam Hatip Schools* both reflects its sensitivity about religious oppression which was actualized by some imams and control account of laicism. Concerning the former, CHP is democratic whereas control account of CHP's conception of laicite such as opposition to implementation of equal ratio to *İmam Hatip School* graduates approaches CHP to etatism. In other words, CHP continues its exclusionary attitude towards religious people with regard to *İmam Hatip School* graduates. This is both problematic for democracy and the principle of equality which is one of the milestones of democracy. Therefore, regarding its attitude towards university entrance exam ratios for *İmam Hatip* Schools, CHP's conception of laicite privileges state over citizens and underestimates equality. However, this also derived from the worry of desecularization of the state.

Quran courses constitute another example exposing CHP's conception of laicite. CHP calls for the control of Quran courses by *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* as CHP targets oppression of the sacred and thus is against domination of tarikats and religious communities which would fill the minds of students with religious dogmas. CHP's opposition to religious oppression and exploitation of religion in the case of Quran courses is vital for a functioning democracy. On the other hand, intervention into civil society approaches it to etatism. With respect to Quran courses, CHP exhibits both a democratic and an etatist attitude. Whereas CHP is etatist in terms of defending intervention to religious activities of Quran courses in civil society, its

concern to prevent religious exploitation of tarikats under the name of “Quran courses” is a vital attempt for democracy.

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* constitutes the arm of the state to control religious activities but it has turned to an instrument to control society according to religious norms. CHP’s critic of social engineering with respect to religion can be seen as an attempt against the oppression of the sacred. It is also a democratic step in terms of defending liberties and tackling with religious oppression. CHP’s problematization of desecularization of society and the state as well as call for a suprasectarian *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is vital for the development of a democratic state. On the other hand, CHP also mirrors an etatist approach in its approach to *Diyanet işleri Başkanlığı* as it calls for control of religious activity by the state. Yet, this also results from CHP’s concern to prevent religious oppression, exploitation and politicization of religion.

As CHP’s conception of laicite requires opposing religious oppression and challenges state’s sponsoring of any religious sect, CHP advocates Alevis’ rights. CHP’s attitude towards state’s sidelining of Alevis is a democratic attempt which leads CHP to distance itself from its etatist position. In other words, CHP’s notion of laicite serves to maintaining Alevis as equal citizens and is like a safety valve for guarding Alevis from religious oppression.

As can be seen, CHP’s notion of laicite ranges from etatism to democracy. In cases where CHP’s conception of laicite is etatist, there is a concern for the possibility of a religious oppression behind. On the other hand, with regard to issues which are

pertinent to religious oppression, CHP's notion of laicite is democratic. Therefore, as far as religious oppression against Alevis and women is concerned, CHP's conception of laicite is democratic. In other words, CHP stands for freedom of religion and conscience in this respect. However, concerning a part of Sunnis who use religious symbols in the public sphere and *İmam Hatip School* graduates who want to be employed by the state, CHP's conception of laicite is exclusionary. In this respect, CHP approaches Western modernity and melts particular local culture in the universal Western secularism. This is also the point where CHP's conception of laicite evaluates religion with the lenses of the secularization thesis. It seems to me that this is the point where Habermas' post-secular society formulation needs to be put into force to create an inclusionary public sphere in which religious identities are represented together with the secular identities. On the other hand, the unique structure of Turkish society which has not gone through an age of Reformation and other historical transformations Europe has achieved, leads CHP to tackle with religious oppression and to a controlling attitude.

If we speak with the Western terminology, CHP's conception of laicite is not the one best fit for democracy as it is based on subjugation of religious activity to the state. However, as Turkish laicite has a unique character in that it is not based on separation of religious and political affairs because of the guiding role of Islam in social affairs as has been argued by Mardin and Berkes, it is not possible to picture a conception of democracy exactly in the Western sense of the term. In other words, Turkish society is open to religious oppression and CHP's conception of laicite carries the ills of possibility of further spillover of religious oppression to society. Even though leaving religious activity to civil society from *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* is stated in the party programme, this remains as a goal to be achieved. That's why, if we evaluate CHP's conception of laicite between 2002 and 2010 in terms of democracy, CHP might be called etatist in terms of bringing religious people to the administration of the state such as *İmam Hatip School* graduates and veiled women. In this respect, CHP takes care of distancing those people from the state and thus

separation. However, as CHP is not against employment of these people in *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* and existence of *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, it might be said that CHP approves accommodation of Islam within the state provided that it remains within the boundaries drawn by the state. It is at this point CHP's conception of laicite turns to control. In short, CHP oscillates between etatism and democracy between 2002 and 2010. Yet, given the party programme aiming to leave religious activities to the civil society, further democratization was on the horizon.

As a matter of fact, democratization of conception of laicite and softening of laicism have been launched by the new CHP administration under the Chairmanship of Kılıçdaroğlu since May 2010. In July 2010, Kılıçdaroğlu mentioned that everyone would use her/his right to education and they would solve the *türban* problem<sup>942</sup> pointing out to a more flexible and inclusive notion of laicite. In September 2010, Kılıçdaroğlu stated that he did not think that laicite was under threat.<sup>943</sup> He set forth that CHP was not against allowance of wearing turban in universities in principle but they were worried about that this would create religious oppression on unveiled students.<sup>944</sup> In October 2013 when AKP MPs who wore *türbans* declared that they would attend the TBMM with their *türbans*, the issue was highly debated in CHP circles. After long discussions, CHP changed its negative attitude towards allowance of *türban* in the TBMM and was able to alleviate nationalists who were against it. In short, Kılıçdaroğlu administration consolidated the party around the idea of preventing AKP from using religion for political purposes. However, CHP MP and Vice Chairman Şafak Pavey spoke at the parliament on the day AKP MPs attended the parliament with their *türbans*. In her speech, Pavey emphasized the importance of

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<sup>942</sup> “Kılıçdaroğlu: Üniversitede türban serbest olacak”, *Ntvmsnbc*, 1.07.2010, available at <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25111012/>

<sup>943</sup> “Laiklik Tehlikede Değil Diyen Kılıçdaroğlu'ndan Laiklik Yorumu”, *SolPortal*, 24.9.2010, available at <http://haber.sol.org.tr/devlet-ve-siyaset/laiklik-tehlikede-degil-diyen-kilicdaroglundan-tophane-yorumu-haberi-33665>

<sup>944</sup> “Başı açıklara mahalle baskısından endişeliyiz”, *Vatan*, 10.10.2010, available at <http://haber.gazetevatan.com/basi-aciklara-mahalle-baskisindan-endiseliyiz/333758/9/siyaset>

mentality rather than attires as well as equality between sexes in conservative circles in terms of freedom of attires. Whereas Pavey mentioned her anxiety about secularism, she underlined that this did not have any relevance with symbols constricted between *türban* and red lipstick. Pavey also criticized AKP MPs who attended the parliament with *türban* for not paying attention to freedom of belief of minority schools, cem houses, seminaries etc.<sup>945</sup> She also referred to oppression on Alevis. Therefore, even though CHP's thought concerning *türban* has not changed so much in that it could reproduce religious oppression and has been used for political purposes, CHP emphasized freedom of conscience and belief and did not oppose to attendance of AKP MPs to TBMM with their *türbans*. This has been no doubt a democratizing attempt in terms of equality and freedom of beliefs and conscience. CHP's opposition to religious oppression on Alevis and politicization of *Diyanet* was also sustained. Kılıçdaroğlu also called for respect to tarikats as long as they were not politicized and underlined. He mentioned respect for beliefs but also added that CHP was against exploitation of beliefs.<sup>946</sup> Kılıçdaroğlu also exhibited a more embracing and an egalitarian tone towards Quran courses students by mentioning that it was unacceptable not to give student cards to Quran courses students.<sup>947</sup> On the other hand, CHP adopted a more flexible approach with regard to *imams/İmam Hatips*. Serter and Dilek Akagün Yılmaz applied to the Court of Appeal for cancelling the implementation of equal ratio for *İmam Hatip* graduates in university entrance examination. However, Kılıçdaroğlu stressed that this should be taken as their individual applications and can not be taken as application of the CHP.<sup>948</sup>

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<sup>945</sup> "CHP'li Şafak Pavey:Gelecek olimpiyat tanıtımına kimi koyacaksınız?", *Radikal*, 31.10.2013, available at [http://www.radikal.com.tr/politika/chpli\\_safak\\_pavey\\_gelecek\\_olimpiyat\\_tanitimina\\_kimi\\_koyacaksiniz-1158364](http://www.radikal.com.tr/politika/chpli_safak_pavey_gelecek_olimpiyat_tanitimina_kimi_koyacaksiniz-1158364)

<sup>946</sup> "Kılıçdaroğlu'ndan tarikat açılımı", *Habertürk*, 24.01.2011, available at <http://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/594519-kilicdaroglundan-tarikat-acilimi>

<sup>947</sup> "İftarda Kuran Kursu uzlaşması", *Habertürk*, 21.7.2013, available at <http://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/862164-iftarda-kuran-kursu-uzlasmasi>

<sup>948</sup> "İmamhatip okullarını CHP açtı", *Sabah*, 1.2.2012, available at <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2012/02/01/imamhatip-okullarini-chp-acti>

Therefore, CHP adopted a more tolerant and egalitarian notion of laicite and approached to democracy after oscillation between etatism and democracy between 2002 and 2010. Therefore, my critique to CHP's conception of laicite for the period between 2002 and 2010 is valid for a period in which CHP was laicist and AKP was more liberal in terms of its approach to laicite. However, in 2012 AKP passed 4+4+4 Education Law which served to desecularization of education through increasing the number of *İmam Hatip* schools as well as duration of education in *İmam Hatip* schools and number of religious lessons. Also, in September 2013, AKP brought restrictions on sales of alcohol and prohibited buying alchocol after 22.00 p.m. until 6.00. a.m causing worries in the secularist circles. Change in CHP's notion of laicite in a conjecture in which AKP adopted a less secular attitude refers to a further attempt of democratization but it also derives from the need to adopt a new and more inclusive notion of laicite towards appealing to conservative constituents. All in all, it can be suggested that CHP has evolved into a laic party from a laicist party with chairmanship of Kılıçdaroğlu and this, no doubt, has acquired the party a democratic character with respect to its conception of laicite.



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**Party Programmes**

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CHP Regulation published in 2005.

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## APPENDIX A CURRICULUM VITAE

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

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Surname, Name : Uygur Dođan, Ayşegül.  
Nationality : Turkish (TC)  
Date and Place of Birth : 15 March 1981, İstanbul  
Marital Status : Married  
Email : ayseguluygur2004@yahoo.com

### EDUCATION

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Year of Graduation	Degree	Institution
2013	PhD	METU, Political Science and Public Administration
2006	MS	METU, International Relations
2003	BA	Marmara University, Political Science and International Relations
1999	High School	Beşiktaş Atatürk Anatolian High School, İstanbul

### WORK EXPERIENCE

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Year	Place	Enrollment
2010-2011	Okan University	Lecturer
2007	European University of Lefke	Lecturer
2006	Yıldız Technical University	Lecturer

### COURSES TAUGHT

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“History of Civilizations and Science” (lecturer)  
“Business Communication” (lecturer)  
“Behavioral Sciences” (lecturer)  
“International Organizations” (lecturer)  
“Social Structures and Historical Transformations” (lecturer)

### FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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English (Advanced)  
German (Beginner)

## **PAPERS**

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1. Paper on “The Conception of Laicite of the Republican People’s Party Between 2002 and 2010 With Respect to Alevis” presented in The Turkish Political Science Association Congress (09.11.2013-METU/Ankara)
2. Paper on “An Outlook to the Euro-Centric Structure of International Relations Via Identity/Difference Perspective” presented in The Turkish Political Science Association Congress(04.12.2010-Okan University/Istanbul)
3. Paper on “Is Turban Simply a Difference? An Answer with a Feminist Perspective” presented in Turkish Social Sciences Congress. (11.12.2009-METU/Ankara).

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

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TUBITAK doctoral scholarship.

## **FIELDS OF STUDY**

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Turkish politics, modern political theory, political sociology.

## APPENDIX B

### TURKISH SUMMARY

Günümüzde dini kimlikler, ulus-devletlerin kamusal alanlarında etki sahasını artırmaya başladı. Ne var ki, sekülerleşme süreciyle birlikte kamusal alandaki etkisi kırılan dini kimliklerin seküler kamusal alanlarda görünür olmaya başlaması sekülerleşme kuramının gözden geçirilmesi açısından da önemli bir araç teşkil ediyor. Diğer bir ifadeyle, sosyal ilişkilerde dinin etkisinin azalması şeklinde tanımlanabilecek sekülerleşme sürecinin tersine çevrilip çevrilmediği gibi bir soru ile karşı karşıyayız. Bu bağlamda, gittikçe yayılan dini kimliklerin taleplerinin günümüzde nasıl karşılanacağı da çağımızın önemli bir sorusu olarak karşımızda durmaktadır. Bu açıdan, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde sekülerleşme sürecini başlatmış ve sürdürmüş parti olan Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP)'nin kamusal alana dahil olmak isteyen dini kimliklere nasıl yaklaştığı önemli bir soru olarak karşımıza çıkıyor. “2002 ve 2010 Seneleri Arasında Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin Laiklik Anlayışı” adlı çalışmamda, CHP'nin seküler kamusal alanı zorlayan dini kimlikler karşısındaki laiklik anlayışının ayrıntılı bir incelemesini sunmaya çalıştım.

CHP'nin laiklik anlayışını ele alırken, 2002 ve 2010 seneleri arasındaki döneme yani Deniz Baykal'ın Genel Başkanlık dönemine odaklandım zira bu dönem, laikliği yeniden tanımlamak isteyen AKP'nin tek parti iktidarı dönemi olması açısından da önem arz ediyordu. Dolayısıyla CHP tarafından başlatılan ve sürdürülen Türk sekülerleşme tecrübesinin başından beri dinin devlet tarafından kontrolüne dayanan laiklik anlayışı ile laikliğin yeniden tanımlanmasını öngören AKP arasındaki çatışmalar açısından 2002 ve 2010 arasındaki dönem yeterince bol malzeme sunmakta. Bu bağlamda, bu çatışma alanlarını beş başlık altında ele aldım: *Türban, imamlar/İmam Hatip Liseleri, Kuran kursları, Diyanet işleri Başkanlığı ve Aleviler.*



CHP'nin bu dönemdeki laiklik anlayışını derinlemesine anlayabilmek için bu çalışmada ilk olarak sekülerleşme tezlerine odaklandım. Bu bağlamda modernleşmenin bir sonucu olarak sekülerleşme ve sekülerleşmenin tarihsel yolculuğuna değindim. Sekülerleşme, modernleşmenin endüstrileşme, sosyal farklılaşma, sosyalleşme, kültürel çeşitlilik, bireycilik, eşitlikçilik, rasyonalite, teknolojik bilinç, sosyal mobilite, dinin özel alana çekilmesi gibi bileşenlerinin çoklu kanallardan yeniden ürettiği bir süreçtir. Bu bağlamda evrenin dışarısında duran Tanrı tahayyülüne sahip olan Tevrat, Tanrı ve insan arasındaki bağı Tanrı'nın sözüne indirgeyen Protestanlık, rasyonalitenin iyice yerleşmesine sebep olan Reform Hareketi, Aydınlanma Devrimi sekülerleşmeye katkıda bulunan süreçler olmuşlardır.

Sekülerleşme tezi ise, Batı'daki kapitalizm, bireycilik, Reform gibi süreçlerin sonucu olarak dinin özel alana çekilmesi tezidir. Bu tez, toplumun modernleşmesi ve nüfusun sekülerleşmesi arasında bir bağ olduğunu ileri sürer. Buna göre, bilim ve teknoloji alanındaki gelişmeler sebep sonuç ilişkisine dayandırılarak açıklanacak ampirik olaylara yol açar. Bilimsel olarak aydınlanmış mantalite, teosantrik ve metafiziksel dünya görüşleriyle çelişmeye başlar. Din özel alana çekilir ve dini örgütler hukuk, siyaset, kamusal alan, eğitim ve bilim gibi alanlarda kontrolünü yitirir.

Bu çalışmada yukarıda değinilen sekülerleşme sürecini modernleşmeyle ilişkilendiren ve dinin özel alana çekilmesi olarak yorumlayan sekülerleşme tezini savunan Weber, Durkheim, Berger ve Bruce'un argümanlarını ele aldım zira dinin modernleşmeyle birlikte özel alana çekildiği ve kamusal alandaki etkisinin azaldığını öne süren sekülerleşme tezi, özel /kamusal ayrımına dayanan CHP'nin laiklik anlayışını açıklayıcı nitelikte. Bu vesileyle CHP için "kamusal" olanın devlet ve devletle ilintili kurumları simgelediğini belirtmekte fayda var. Öte yandan, özel alan

ise sivil topluma işaret ediyor. Dolayısıyla, CHP'nin özel/kamusal kavramsallaştırmasının bu manada liberal olduğundan söz etmek yanlış olmayacaktır.

Sekülerleşme tezini destekleyen düşünürlerden olan Durkheim'e göre, modern toplumun oluşumuyla iş bölümü ve organik dayanışmanın belirginleşmesiyle din, insan ilişkilerinden özel alana çekilir. Öte yandan Weber, modern toplumun ve rasyonelleşmenin yükselişi ile dinin etkisini yitirdiğini belirtir. Berger ise, sekülerleşmeyi toplum ve kültürün dini kurum ve sembollerin tahakkümünden kurtulması olarak tanımlar. Sekülerleşme tezinin diğer bir savunucusu Bruce ise, dinin kamusal rolünün azalmasından bahsederken "esas dinin" kapsadığı alanın değişmediğini öne sürer.

Öte yandan, sekülerleşme tezinin karşıtları Taylor, Casanova, Dobbelaere, Martin, Bellah, Sheehan, Hill ve Glasner'in argümanları da üzerinde durulmaya değer. Bu eleştirilerin genel olarak odaklandığı noktalar, sekülerleşme tezinin doğrusal karakteri, modern öncesi dönemi homojen olarak ele alması ve çeşitliliği gözardı etmesi. Örneğin Taylor, din ve ruhaniliğin kaybolmadığını, daha ziyade yeniden şekillendiğini ileri sürer. Taylor, ne "Hristiyanlık'ın Altın Çağı"'nın ne de sekülerleşme sürecinin homojen olmadığını belirtir. Ayrıca, Taylor'ın sekülerleşme sürecinin toplumun katmanları arasında eşit dağılmadığı argümanı yine önemli bir eleştiridir. Sekülerleşme tezini eleştiren diğer bir düşünür olan Casanova ise, devlet, ekonomi ve bilim gibi seküler alanların ayrılması ve özgürleşmesinin illa ki dini özel alana çekilmesi ve modern dünyada dinin marjinalleşmesiyle sonuçlanmadığını belirtir. Dobbelaere da sekülerleşmenin modernitede dinin etkisinin azalmasıyla açıklanmasına itiraz eder ve daha geniş bir din tanımı önerir. Martin ise, endüstriyel toplumlardaki dini uyanışlara dikkat çeker ve doğrusal bir sekülerleşme anlayışına

karşı çıkar. Diğer taraftan, Bellah ise “sivil din” tanımı ile dinin tanımını genişletir ve dinin işlevini gören etmenlerden bahseder. Sheehan da doğrusal tarihsel dönemselleştirmeye karşı çıkar. Hill de benzer şekilde Hıristiyanlık’ın “Altın Çağı” fikrine ve modern toplumun zorunlu olarak dinde çekilme yaratacağı savına eleştiri getirir. Glasner ise, dini kurumların azalan etkisinin kişiler arası ilişkilerde dinin azalması anlamına gelmeyeceğini savunur. Fenn de, kutsal ve seküler arasındaki sınırların muğlâklaştığını belirtir.

Öte yandan, sekülerleşme tezini eleştirenlere cevaben, Wilson toplumun kurum ve örgütlerinin ve bireylerarası ilişkilerin gittikçe dinin etkisinden çıkması sebebiyle, modern çağda dini hareketlerin alternatiflerin varlığının paradoksal olarak dinin etkisinin azalmasına işaret ettiğini söyler. Öte yanda, Berger de sekülerleşmenin modern toplumlarda aynı biçimde dağılan bir süreç olmadığını teslim eder. Bruce ve Wallis ise sekülerleşmenin dinin çöküşü değil, kamusal alandaki rolünün azalması olduğunu öne sürer. Bruce, sekülerleşme paradigmasının ilerlemeci ve sonunda ateizm olan bir paradigma olduğu görüşünü reddeder.

Sekülerleşme tezlerinin eleştirisinin hepsi, sekülerleşme tezlerinin evrimci ve tarihçi yapısını sorgulayıp, dinin kurumsal tanımlamaya indirgenmesini eleştirir. Ne var ki sekülerleşme tezlerinin savunucuları arasında bulunan Durkheim ve Weber’in analizlerinde dinin dışarıda tutulmadığını görüyoruz. Ayrıca Mert’in belirttiği gibi, sekülerleşme tezinin eleştirisini yapanlar dinin sosyal hayatı belirleme işlevi üzerinden yorum yapar ve sosyal ve bireysel hayatların aslında farklı alanlara ayrılabilceğini ve dinin bu alanlardan birinde yaşamaya devam edeceğini savunur. Oysa Mert’in ileri sürdüğü üzere, bu modern görüşlere içsel bir şeydir ve tek tanrılı

dinlerin hayatın tüm alanlarını belirleme gayesi güttüğü gerçeğini göz ardı eder. Diğer bir ifadeyle, modern görüşler aracılığıyla geçmişin sekülerleştirilmesi hatasına düşer.

Dolayısıyla, sekülerleşme tezi eleştirilerinin de kendi içinde başka şeyleşmeler yarattığını söylemek yanlış olmayacaktır. Bu bağlamda ben, sekülerleşme tezlerinin günümüz Türkiye'si'nin ihtiyaçlarına cevap vermekte yetersiz kaldığını savunmakla birlikte, sekülerleşme tezlerinin ele aldıkları dönem için geçerli oldukları sonucuna vardım. Ne var ki, bu tezlerin günümüzde çoğalan ve kamusal alana dahil olmak isteyen dini kimliklerin durumunu açıklamada karşı karşıya kaldığı kısıtlamalar da ortada. Dinin sosyal öneminin artması yönünde sekülerleşme sürecinin karşı eğiliminin CHP'nin laiklik anlayışına baskı yapması günümüzde gittikçe önem kazanıyor. Dolayısıyla, anakronizmden kaçınarak sekülerleşme tezlerinin hakkını teslim ederken, günümüzdeki mevcut ihtiyaca cevap vermesi açısından Habermas'ın formüle ettiği "post-seküler toplum" analizinin yerinde olduğunu düşünüyorum. "Post-seküler toplum" argümanı farklı dini kimliklerin kamusal alanda eşit bir şekilde yer alabileceği önkabulüne dayanıyor ve bu sebeple demokrasi adına bir alan açıyor. Habermas'ın "post-seküler toplum"u aslında Aydınlanma'nın üst anlatisının yaratmaya çalıştığı homojen seküler kamusal alanın bir eleştirisi niteliğini taşıyor. Fakat, Habermas dinin kamusal alanda bir şekilde var olduğunu dile getirir. Habermas, dindar insanların da kamusal alandaki müzakerelerde eşit bir şekilde yer alabileceğini dile getirir. Ancak, Habermas parlamento, mahkemeler, idari ve yürütmeye ilgili kurumlar gibi karar alma sürecine dahil olan kurumların, kamusal alanda oluşan ve resmi olmayan bu süreçlerden ayrılması gerektiğinin de altını çiziyor. Ayrıca, devletin seküler normatif temelleri üzerine bina edilmesi gerektiğini de ekler.

Kabul etmek gerekir ki Habermas'ın kamusal alanda çoğulculuk ve demokrasiyi destekleyen “post-seküler toplum” analizi, Türkiye’de demokrasi ve laiklik arasındaki gerilimin yeniden gözden geçirilmesi açısından da kanımca önemli bir araç teşkil ediyor. Ancak öte yandan, Habermas'ın Reform sürecini geçirmiş, kendi yaşadığı coğrafyanın etkisinde kalarak yani seküler bir kültürün etkisinde kalarak bu önermelerde bulunduğunu da not etmek gerekiyor. Diğer bir deyişle, dinsel kimliklerin seküler kamusal alana dahil olduktan sonra “dini baskı” yaratması halinde ne olacağı hala ucu açık duruyor. Bu nokta, Habermas'ın analizinin Batılı olmayan toplumlarda kısıtlamasını bize gösteriyor. Ancak Habermas da kilise ve devlet ayrımının bu konuda dini etmenlerin devlete girmesinin önünde bir emniyet sübabı işlevini gördüğünü teslim eder. Bu ayrıca, sekülerizm ve Batı-dışı toplumlar arasındaki ilişkiyi tartışmayı da gerekli kılıyor. Bu bağlamda, sekülerleşme Hristiyan toplumlardan ithal edilen bir süreç olsa da bunun başka toplumlarda uygulama alanı olmayacağı doğru değil. Ancak, Batı ülkelerindeki gibi kilise ve devlet şeklinde ayrışmaların olmadığı ülkelerde, dini baskıyı önlemek için devletin başka kontrol mekanizmalarına başvurduğunu görmekteyiz. Bu bağlamda Türk tipi laikçilik anlayışı da bir istisna değil.

Bu vesileyle, sekülerleşme, laiklik ve laikçilik kavramları arasında ayırım yapmakta da fayda var. Sekülerleşme(çağdaşlaşma), Berkes'in dediği gibi kutsalın baskısından toplumun özgürleşmesi süreci ve dolayısıyla bu terimin daha sosyolojik bir tınısı var. Laiklik din ve devlet işlerinin ayrılması olarak tanımlanıyor. Öte yandan laikçilik dinin devletin kontrolü altına girdiği bir anlayışı temsil ediyor. Türkiye’de “laiklik” olarak tabir edilen ve CHP parti programında da aslen “laiklik” olarak geçen kavram din ve devlet işlerinin ayrılması olarak yorumlansa da Türkiye’de laikliğin “laikçi” bir yöne evrildiğini gözden kaçırmamak gerek. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmada CHP'nin ilkeleri arasında yer alan “laiklik”ten bahsederken, dinin devletin boyunduruğuna girdiği durumları tarif etmek için “laikçilik” terimini kullandım. Dolayısıyla gerek Anayasa’da gerekse CHP parti programında ismen “laiklik” olarak ele alınsa da, pratikte Batılı anlamda “laiklik” anlayışından farklılaştığını ileri sürdüm. Diğer bir

ifadeyle, Türk “laikliği” Batı’daki gibi din ve devlet işlerinin ayrılmasına değil, devletin dini faaliyetleri kontrol ve gözetimine dayanan “laikçilik” anlayışını bünyesinde barındırıyor.

Türk çağdaşlaşma tarihi, CHP’nin laiklik anlayışını konumlandırmak için önemli bir referans noktası. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmamda ben Türk çağdaşlaşma tarihini de ele aldım. Türk çağdaşlaşmasının Osmanlı modernleşme çabalarının devamı olup olmadığı oldukça tartışmalı bir konu. Ben bu çalışmada Osmanlı modernleşme çabalarıyla Türk sekülerleşme sürecinin hem devamlılığı olduğunu hem de ikisi arasında bir kopuş olduğunu savunuyorum. Osmanlı ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti arasındaki süreklilik dinin devlet kontrolüne girmesi açısından düşünülebilir. Bu çalışmada ben Osmanlı’daki Sultan’ın mutlak otoritesinin dinden üstün tutulması şeklinde vücut bulan devletin dini kontrolü altına alma geleneğinin, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti devletinde de bir şekilde sürdürüldüğünü iddia ediyor ve aradaki sürekliliğe dikkat çekiyorum. Ayrıca Osmanlı modernleşme çabalarının Türk laiklik anlayışında önemli bir katkısı olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bu noktalardan hareketle, Türk modernleşmesinin basitçe bir Batı modernitesi ithalatı olduğuna karşı çıkıyorum. Diğer bir deyişle, merkezinde yer alan en önemli konulardan birinin “laiklik” olduğu Türk modernleşmesinin Batılı değerler ve kökenlerini Orta Asya ve Persler’den alan Türk devlet geleneğinin bir bileşkesi olduğunu ileri sürüyorum. Dolayısıyla bu noktada, “laiklik” anlayışının Batı modernitesi ve Türk devletlerinin kökeninden gelen ve Türk modernleşme tecrübesine de zemin oluşturmuş devletin biricikliği geleneği arasında etkileşimin sonucu olarak anlayışının kurgulandığını ileri sürüyorum.

Diğer bir taraftan, devlet işlerinin “devlet aklı” tarafından meşrulaştırılması ve meşruiyetin kaynağı Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve Osmanlı arasında keskin bir kopuşa

işaret eder. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti devleti İslam'ı farklı bir biçimde, gözetim altında tutabileceği şekilde uysallaştırmış bulunuyor. Bu yönüyle Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, Avrupalı örneklerinden daha farklı bir laiklik anlayışına sahip. Kısaca söylemek gerekirse, Atatürk'ün kültürel reformları dinin sosyal hayattaki etkisini azaltmak üzerine kurgulanmıştı. Devletin dine dayandırılması da yine aynı şekilde yasaklandı. Kamusal alanın rasyonelleştirilmesinde, Atatürk dini sembollerden arındırarak dini özel alana hapsetti.

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde din ve devlet arasındaki sınır ulus-devlet inşasına içseldi. İslam, devletin "ötekisi" olarak ulus-devleti yeniden üretme yönünde bir araç oldu. Bu dini devlet gözetiminde tutmak için önemli sebebi. Devlet dini özel alana iterek kamusal alanda dini faaliyet ve simgeleri dışlamış oldu ancak dinin devlet tarafından kontrolü sadece kurumsal düzeyde kalmadı. Dinin toplumdaki etkisi de Cumhuriyet rejiminin kontrol etmek istediği konulardan biri oldu. Bu bağlamda 1923 ve 1950 arasındaki dönem, devletin iddialı bir sekülerizm programı uyguladığı yıllar oldu. 1924'te Halifelik'in kaldırılması, geleneksel dini eğitim kurumlarının kaldırılarak Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından denetlenecek bir din eğitiminin uygulanması, 1926'da Medeni Kanun'un kabul edilmesi, Şeyhülislam'ın işlevinin ve Şeriye ve Evkaf Vekaleti'nin kaldırılması ve yerine *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'nın getirilmesi uygulanan reformlardan bazılarıydı. 1928'de devletin dininin İslam olduğu ibaresi Anyasa'dan çıkarıldı. Yine aynı yıl, Arap alfabesinin yerine Latin alfabesi getirildi. Geleneksel ve dini kostümler yasaklandı. Metrik system ve Gregoryan takvimi benimsendi. İslami eğitim 1933-1040 seneleri arasında ilk öğretimden çıkarıldı. 1937'de Anyasa'ya laiklik ilkesi girdi. Kuran Türkçe'ye çevrildi. Erkekler için verilen seçme seçilme hakkı 1934'te bayanlar için genişletildi. Bu millet egemliği fikrinin hayat geçmesi açısından önemli bir dönüm noktası oldu. 1932'de Halk Evleri'nin, 1940'da Köy Enstitüleri'nin kurulması, CHP'nin milli bilinci yaymak amacıyla başlattığı diğer girişimler oldu. Bu bakımdan, CHP'nin bu manada tepeden inmecici bir siyasetten ziyade, kitleleri mobilize ederek rejime entegre etmeyi hedefleyen bir politika izlediği öne sürülebilir. 1946'da çok partili hayata

geçilmesiyle birlikte CHP'nin dine ilişkin politikaları yumuşadı. Dini siyasete alet etmeye getirilen yasaklar sıkılaştırılsa da, ilk ve ortaöğretime seçmeli din derslerinin konması, Ankara Üniversitesi'nde İlahiyat Fakültesi'nin açılması CHP'nin halka yakınlaşabilmek için dine ilişkin yürüttüğü politikalarda yumuşamaya işaret ediyordu.

Türk modernleşmesini incelerken ona ilişkin eleştirileri de ele aldım. Bu eleştirileri genel olarak üç grupta toplamak mümkün: Elitizm, otoriterlik ve oryantalizm. Türk sekülerleşme sürecini elitist olmakla suçlayan argümanlara bakıldığında anakronizm tuzağına düştükleri söylenebilir. Diğer bir ifadeyle, laiklik anlayışı milli iradeye dayalı ulus-devlet kurulmasında olmazsa olmaz bir unsuru teşkil eder ve halk iradesinin önünü açtığı için Osmanlı Dönemi'ne göre daha az elitist olduğunu ileri sürmek yanlış olmayacaktır. Başka bir deyişle, sekülerleşme tarihsel olarak bakıldığında elitizmden uzaklaşmak bağlamında ilerlemecedir. Bu noktadan hareketle, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde CHP tarafından başlatılan ve yürütülen sekülerleşme sürecinin demokratik bir potansiyel taşıdığı sonucuna varılabilir.

Ayrıca sekülerleşme sürecinin dinin Türkiye'deki gibi yönlendirici rolünün olmadığı Avrupa'daki katmanlar arasında bile homojen bir şekilde dağılmadığını göz önünde bulundurduğumuzda elitizm tartışmasına farklı bir açıdan bakmak mümkün olabilmekte. Taylor'un belirttiği gibi elitler tarafından büyümenin bozulması şeklinde 18. Yüzyılda tezahür eden sekülerleşme ancak üç yüzyıl sonra Avrupa'da kitlesel bir kavram haline dönüşmüştür. Dolayısıyla bu açıdan bakıldığında Türk modernleşmesi hakkında karar vermek için erken olduğunu dile getirmek yanlış olmayacaktır. Diğer bir ifadeyle, sekülerleşmenin başladığı Avrupa toplumlarında bile sekülerleşme elitler tarafında yürütülmüşse, bunun Türk sekülerleşmesinin noksanlığından ziyade sekülerleşme sürecinin istikametiyle ilgili bir durum olduğu sonucuna varılabilir.



Türk modernleşmesinin otoriter yönü de diğer bir eleştiri noktasını oluşturuyor. Örneğin Tunçay, Cumhuriyet devrimlerinin kitleleri yabancılaştırdığını ve otoriter olduğunu söylüyor. Ancak, bu kanımca Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin devraldığı tarihsel mirasla da ilintili. Batı toplumlarında, birey ve devlet Kilise'nin otoritesine karşı birlikte hareket ederken, Türk çağdaşlaşması örneğinde devlet ve bireyin birbirine yabancılaştığını gözlemliyoruz. Batı toplumlarında, kapitalizmin ve burjuvanın yükselişi ve fen bilimlerinin evrimi bireyin ve güçlenmesini ve akabinde de zihnin özgürleşmesini beraberinde getirmişti. Dini ahlaka aşağıdan yukarı gelen mücadele, devletin siyasi teolojiden özgürleşmesine yol açtı. Ne var ki, Osmanlı Devleti dini kuşatmadan kurtulmak için bireyin desteğinden yoksundu. Başka bir ifadeyle; Osmanlı yöneticileri dini otoriteyle mücadelelerinde yalnız kaldılar. Üstelik, Osmanlı düzeni Batı devletlerinin aksine, kapitalizm, bilim ve ideolojik rölativizm gibi İslamcılık'ı içerden zayıflatacak unsurlara sahip değildi. Kısacası, Osmanlı toplumu sadece devlet yöneticileri tarafından ve devletin kendisi için yukarıdan zorlanabildiği için sabit kalmaya mahkumdu. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin devraldığı miras buydu.

Oryantalizm eleştirisi, yerel Türk kültürü/geleneği—bizim konumuz açısından dini geleneklerin— evrensel Batı modernitesinin içinde eridiği tezinden hareket ediyor. Bu perspektife göre, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti diğer modern devletler gibi eşitlik ve sekülerizm ilkeleri üzerine bina edilmiş ve “Batı medeniyeti”ni benimsemiştir. Evrensellik iddiasını elinde tutarak yerel kültürleri homojenize etmiş ve bastırmıştır. Bu bağlamda Göle'ye göre, Türk modernleşmesi, yerel şablonların ve geleneksel değerlerin değersizleştirildiği ve bertaraf edildiği bir medeniyet projesidir. Bu medeniyet projesi çerçevesinde pozitivist ve rasyonalist değerlere yabancı görünen yerel İslam'ın tarih dışına itilmesi ve dışlanması söz konusu olmuştur. Göle, Avrupalı (“*alla franca*”) kültürel pratiklerin ve yaşamlarının, “*alla turca*” olanlardan üstün tutulması noktasından hareketle medeniyetin Batı'nın modernitenin taşıyıcısı olarak tarihsel üstünlüğünü kurduğunu ileri sürer. Bu noktadan hareketle, Göle özgün bir alternatif modernite geliştirme çağrısı yapar zira Göle, Batılı olmayan toplumların modernitenin aynasında analiz edilemeyeceğini savunur. Tam tersine, modernite

Batılı olmayan toplumlara referansla analiz edilmelidir. Ancak Göle'nin Batılı değerlerin Türk toplumuna intikali noktasında analizinde haklılık payı olsa da bu analiz birkaç sebeple kanımca eksik kalıyor.

İlk etapta, Türk devlet geleneğine bakıldığında, İncılık'a referansla kökenlerini Orta Asya ve Persler'den alan ve dini devletin kontrolüne veren geleneğin, İslami hukukun izin verdiği ötesine geçen Sultan'ın emirlerine dayanan Osmanlı devlet geleneğininin mutlakçılığının kökenini oluşturduğunu görüyoruz. Bu bağlamda Orta Asya kökenleri devletin yönetici tarafından yapılan *törü* ya da *yasa* adı verilen kanunlar aracılığıyla var olduğuna düşüncesine dayanır. Öte yandan, Pers kökenleri, devleti Sultan'ın mutlak otoritesi ve onun adaletiyle değerlendirmesini sağlar. Bu devlet geleneği dini sembol ve aktiviteleri devlet kontrolünde tutan Türk "laikçilik" anlayışının da temelini oluşturur. Türk modernleşmesi projesinin merkezinde duran sekülerleşme sürecinin sonucu olan "laikçilik" anlayışının Batı'dan kopyalanıp Türk toplumuna uyarlandığını söylemek tarihsel mirası inkar etmek demek olacaktır. Bu da tarihsellik adına önemli bir kısıtlama oluşturuyor.

Ayrıca, Doğu-Batı kategorilerinin keskin ayrımlarla belirlenemeyeceğini ve aralarında bir geçişkenlik olduğunu gözden kaçırmamak gerek diye düşünüyorum. Bu noktada Bhabha'nın dikkat çektiği Doğu ve Batı arasındaki "kararsızlık(ambivalence)" analizi bize önemli bir teorik araç sunuyor. Buradan da hareketle, ben Doğu ve Batı arasındaki keskin ayrımların kültürel özcülüğe bizi sürüklemesi bakımından sakıncaları olduğunu düşünüyorum. Nitekim, bu bakış açısı Osmanlı/ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ve Batı devletleri arasındaki etkileşimi gözden kaçırmamıza sebep oluyor. Ayrıca Göle'nin analizi Batılılaşmayı "Türk modernleşmesi" üzerinden alıyor ve bu bağlamda Osmanlı modernleşme çabalarının değerlerin ve kültürel kodların "Batılılaşması" üzerindeki etkisini de görmezden

geliyor. Kısacası, Türk modernleşmesi ve konumuz açısından onun sonucu olan “laiklik” anlayışı, Osmanlı’dan devralınan tarihsel miras ile devlet geleneği ve Batı ile kültürel etkileşimin sonucunda ortaya çıkan bir sentezdir demek yanlış olmayacaktır.

Türk modernleşmesinin yerel İslam’ı yok ettiği yönündeki eleştiri içinse Taylor’ın öne sürdüğü Avrupa örneği yine açıklayıcı olacaktır diye düşünüyorum. Buna göre sekülerleşme Avrupa’da resmi olmayan dinin elitler tarafından bastırılmasını beraberinde getirdi ve bu elit olmayanların kendi popüler inanç sistemlerini yeniden üretmesini sağladı. Bu sekülerleşme 21. yüzyılda kitlesel bir sürece dönene kadar bu şekilde diyalektik biçimde devam etti. Dolayısıyla, sekülerleşme sürecinin elitizmi Türkiye ile sınırlı değil ve Avrupa’daki sekülerleşme sürecinin de doğasına ait bir şey.

Bu çalışmada, AKP’nin ortaya çıkışını anlayabilmek için Türkiye’de İslamcı aktörlerin yükselişine de değindim. Elit kültür ve kitle kültürü arasındaki fark İslami uyanış açısından önemli bir faktör oldu. Osmanlı’da yüksek ve alçak kültür arasında yer alan fark Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde de devam etti. Bu bağlamda Mardin’in askeri ve bürokratik eliti temsil eden merkez ve İslamcı aktörleri de temsil eden çevre analizi dikkate almaya değer. Mardin, Türk modernleşmesinin çevredeki İslam’a karşı merkezdeki seküler elit tarafından empoze edildiğini öne sürer. Ancak Taylor’ın Avrupa sekülerleşmesi analizi göz önüne alınacak olursa, elitlerin halkın dini ile mücadelesi Türk sekülerleşmesine özgür bir şey değil. Avrupa’da “büyünün bozulması” ve buna karşın halkın yeni inanış biçimleri üreterek tepki vermesi göz önüne alınacak olursa, çevrenin yükselişinin de benzer bir diyalektiğin parçası olabilme ihtimali var. Ayrıca, Ayşe ve Sencer Ayata’nın belirttiği gibi, merkez ve çevre paradigması yekpare bir bütün olarak ele alması sebebiyle, CHP’nin elitler ve

devletle ilişkisinin Cumhuriyet tarihi boyunca deęişkenlik göstermesi sebebiyle ve çevrenin her zaman sosyal ve kültürel olarak parçalanmış olması sebebiyle ve elitler ve kitleler arasında pazar ekonomisi, demokrasi ve modern popüler kültür sebebiyle daralan boşluğu görmezden gelmesi sebebiyle eleştiriye açıktır. Ayrıca, merkez-çevre paradigması sınıf ilişkilerini bütünüyle inkar etmese de, sınıf ilişkilerine yeterince dikkat çekmemesi açısından da eleştirilebilir. Ayrıca Sunar da Osmanlı'da İslam'ın çeşitliliğine dikkat çeker. Kanımca, Mardin kültür ve ideolojiye çok fazla odaklandığı için, merkez ve çevre arasındaki temel ayrım hattının kültürel olduğunu öne sürer. Bu da merkez ve çevre arasındaki ekonomik ayrışma noktalarına yeterince odaklanamamamızı beraberinde getiriyor. Kısacası, merkez-çevre paradigması, İslami aktörlerin yükselişinin kültürel ve ideolojik sebepleri konusunda fikir veriyor. Ancak bu yükselişi açıklamak için başka açıklamalara da ihtiyaç var. Örneğin farklı kimliklere alan açan postmodern çağın da katkısını unutmamak gerekiyor. Ayrıca devletin baskısı da İslami aktörlerin yükselişinde paradoksal olarak rol oynadı. Haksızlığa dayalı sınıf ilişkileri de İslami kitleleri mobilize eden bir güç olarak ortaya çıktı. Kısacası, İslam'ın yükselişini tek bir sebebe indirgemek yanlış olacaktır. İslam'ın yükselişi, siyasi, kültürel, ekonomik ve sosyal boyutları olan çok yönlü bir konu olarak ele alınmalıdır.

Demokrasinin, çağdaşlaşma ile ilişkisi yine üzerinde durulmayı hak ediyor. Türk çağdaşlaşması, bir kriz içinde ve demokratik ve çok kültürlü bir temel üzerinden yeniden yapılandırılması gerekiyor. İslami kimliklerin tanınma konusundaki taleplerini ve kültürel grup hakları bağlamında Türk çağdaşlaşması ve laikçi ulusal kimlik ciddi bir meşruiyet kriziyle karşı karşıya. Keyman'a göre bu meşruiyet krizi devletin bir taraftan bütün dini kimliklere karşı tarafsızlığını kaybetmezken, diğer taraftan da kamusal alanda dini kimliklerin taleplerine müzakere alanı açarak olur. Ancak, çağdaşlaşmanın demokrasinin olmazsa olmazı olduğunu tam da bu noktada hatırlatmakta fayda var. Ayrıca İslami aktörlerin ortaya çıkışının otomatik olarak sivil toplumun oluşmasına ve demokrasinin gelişmesine katkıda bulunacağı önkabülü de tartışmaya açık. Çünkü İslami projedeki toplumsal cinsiyet boyutu, en az Türk

modernleşmesindeki toplumsal cinsiyet boyutu kadar sorunlu çünkü Türk modernleşme projesinde olduğu gibi İslami modernleşme de erkek aktörler eliyle yürütülüyor ve kadınları bu bağlamda dışlıyor. Ancak şunu belirtmekte fayda var ki; Türk modernleşmesi, kadınlar başı açık ve sekülerleşmiş olduğu sürece kadınları kamusal alana dahil etme konusunda göreceli olarak daha kapsayıcıydı. Demokrasi ve çağdaşlaşma ilişkisi açısından bakıldığında kadın ve erkekler arasındaki ataerkil ilişkilerin de sorgulanması gerekiyor ve bu açıdan bakıldığında Türk modernleşmesine alternatif olarak ortaya konan İslami proje, demokrasi ve toplumsal cinsiyet açısından tartışmalı bir hale geliyor.

Bu çalışmamda AKP'nin yükselişinin sebeplerine de değindim. AKP'nin yükselişi ilk olarak mevcut siyasi durumu ve siyasi durgunluğun toplumun geniş kesimlerince reddedilmesinden kaynaklandı. İkincisi, 2001'de Türkiye büyük bir ekonomik krizden geçmişti ve seçmen ekonomik durumun düzelmesi için bir alternatife ihtiyaç duydu. Ayrıca uluslar arası faktörler de AKP'nin yükselişinde etkili oldu. ABD'nin Ortadoğu'ya girmeye çalıştığı bir dönemde milliyetçi bir sol ya da milliyetçi sağ bir parti stratejik sebeplerle tercih edilecek durumda değildi. Bu bağlamda AKP'nin iktidara yürüyüşü, Genişletilmiş Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika Girişimi çerçevesinde düşünülebilir. Türkiye'de Kemalist rejim ile bu rolün oynanabilmesi imkansızdı. Son olarak da, seçilmiş RP-DYP hükümetinin 28 Şubat süreci ile iktidardan uzaklaştırılması İslamcı ve liberal çevrelerde tepkiye sebep olmuştu. Dolayısıyla, AKP'nin seçim başarısı siyasetin askeriye tarafından dizaynı ile de ilintilendirilebilir.

2002 ve 2005 arası dönemde AKP, AB'ye üyelik için ciddi çaba gösterdi. MGK'nın siyasetteki rolünün azaltılması, ifade özgürlüğü, Kürtçe eğitim ve yayın yapma, anti-terörizmle ilgili maddelerin kaldırılması ve vatandaşların yeniden yargılanma hakkının gerçekleştirilmesi gibi bir takım reformlar yapıldı. Ne var ki, 2005'ten

sonra AKP'nin reform momentumu yavaşladı. Ancak iktidara ilk geldiğinden beri AKP laik çevrelerde kaygıyla izlendi. Dinin kamusal alanda görünürliğini artırmak için çeşitli girişimlerde bulundu. Bunlarda biri, ayrımcılık ve kişi hak ve hürriyetlerine aykırı olarak uygulanmasını yasaklayan Kamu Yönetimi hakkında Temel Kanunu tasarısıydı. Bu seküler çevrelerde türbanın kamusal alanda serbest olmasına sebebiyet vereceği düşüncesiyle eleştirilmişti. 2004'te AKP'nin *İmam Hatip Okulları'na* eşit katsayı uygulaması ile ilgili bir kanun tasarısı, zinayı suç kapsamına almayla ilgili çalışma, alkollü içkilerin içildiği kamusal alanların belirlenmesi yetkisinin belediye ve ilçe meclislerine verilmesi laik çevreler için AKP'nin İslamcı niyetlerini gösteren diğer gelişmelerdi. AİHM'nin Leyla Şahin kararından sonra Başbakan'ın yetkili karar mercinin ulema olduğunu açıklaması da yine laik çevrelerde huzursuzluğu artırdı. 2007'deki Cumhurbaşkanlığı seçimi de yine seküler çevreler için bir diğer dönüm noktası oldu çünkü Cumhurbaşkanı'nın eşi türbanlı olduğu için, DSP milletvekillerinin protestosuyla meclis dışına çıkarılan Kavakçı'dan sonra türban kamusal alanda ilk kez görünür olacaktı. Ayrıca AKP'in belli politikaları da topluma tersine sekülerleşme yaşattığına dair kaygıları pekiştirdi. 2003'te AKP 15.000 imam kadrosu açtı. Ayrıca AKP tarikat ve cemaatler için manevra alanı yarattı. Kuran kursları AKP döneminde giderek tarikatların hakimiyeti altına girdi. 2005'te AKP, kaçak Kuran kursları için de hapis cezasını kaldıracak bir değişiklik önerdi. Ayrıca *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı'nın* bütçesi 2002'de 553 milyondan, 2010'da 2 milyar 650 milyon 530 bin TL'ye yükseldi. Ayrıca, çoğu Alevi olan 35 aydının yakılarak öldürüldüğü Madımak Katliamı sorumlularının avukatlarının AKP'de görevlendirilmesi, bazılarının AKP milletvekilliği, bir tanesinin de Devlet Bakanlığı yapmış olması ve Aleviler'e uygulanan ayrımcı politikaları sürdürmesi de hem Aleviler hem de seküler çevrelerde hoşnutsuzluk yaratan diğer bir faktör oldu. AKP'nin bu politikaları elbette CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı ve laiklikle ilgili politika üretmesinde önemli bir belirleyici oldu.

Bu çalışmada CHP'nin laiklik anlayışını ilk olarak normatif temelleri bağlamında ele aldım ve bunu yaparken 2002 ve 2010 seneleri arasında kullanılmış parti tüzükleri ve

programlarını referans aldım. Buna göre, gücünü halktan alan demokratik sol bir siyasal kurum olan CHP, çoğulcu ve katılımcı demokrasi, hukukun üstünlüğü ve insan haklarına dayanan siyasal bir partidir. 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 ve 2010 parti tüzükleri CHP'nin cumhuriyetçilik, milliyetçilik, halkçılık, devletçilik, laiklik ve devrimcilik ilkelerine bağlıdır. 1994'te benimsenen ve 2008'e kadar yürürlükte kalan CHP Parti Programı CHP'nin modern çağa seküler toplum, eğitim reformları ve köy enstitüleriyle girdiğini belirtir. Kısacası, laiklik CHP'nin modernleşme projesinin merkezinde yer almaktadır. Ayrıca eğitim reformları ve toplumu dönüştüren köy enstitülerine yapılan vurgu, CHP'nin aynı zamanda sosyolojik bir anlamı da ihtiva eden çağdaşlaşmanın da savunucusu olduğunu altını çizer.

CHP, laikliği din ve devlet işlerinin ayrılması olarak tanımlar ve farklı din mensuplarının bir arada yaşayabilmesi için ve din ve vicdan hürriyeti için bir gereklilik olarak görür. CHP bütün dinlere eşit mesafede kendinin konumlandırır. CHP dinin istismarına karşıdır. Devletin dini yoktur. Laiklik kadın-erkek arasındaki eşitliğin, modernleşme ve modernitenin garantisidir. Din CHP'ye göre kamusal alana ait bir mesele değil, özel alana ait bir meseledir. Laiklik cumhuriyet ve demokrasinin garantisidir. CHP, din baskısına ve dinin baskı aracı olarak kullanılmasına karşıdır. Laiklik, CHP'ye göre çoğunluğun yönetimi olarak demokrasi değil, çoğulcu ve farklılıkların bir arada yaşayabilmesi anlamında demokrasinin ön şartıdır. CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı sadece devlet yönetimiyle sınırlı olmayıp aynı zamanda insanları dini baskıdan kurtararak toplumun özgürleştirilmesini de içerir. CHP, temel hak ve hürriyetler arasında yer alan din ve vicdan hürriyetini savunur. Bu hakkı, kamu güvenliği ve kamu düzeni ile çelişmediği sürece dinin kamusal veya özel olarak yaşandığına bakmaksızın destekler.

CHP'nin laiklik anlayışını ilk olarak türban konusuna olan yaklaşımı üzerinden değerlendirdim. CHP, örtünmeyi özel ve kamusal alan ayrımı üzerinden okur. CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı özel alanda örtünmeye saygı gösterirken, kamusal alanda herhangi başka bir dini sembol gibi türbana da karşı çıkar. CHP'ye göre türban, kadınların cinselliğini kontrol etmeye yarayan ataerkil bir araçtır. Diğer bir ifadeyle, CHP türbanı patriarka ile ilintilendirir ve bu anlamda örtünmeyi kadınlar üzerinde bir baskı aracı, insan hakları ihlali ve kadın-erkek arasındaki eşitliğe aykırı bulur. CHP, dini baskıyı sadece örtünmeyen kadınlar üzerinden değil, Aleviler üzerinden de okur. Dolayısıyla CHP'ye göre kamusal alanda türbana izin verilmesi, toplumun ve devletin tersine sekülerleşme sürecine hizmet edecek bir adımdır. CHP'nin kamusal alanda türbana karşı çıkmasının diğer bir sebebi de, rejimi koruma refleksidir. Ayrıca, CHP türbana bir kez izin verilmesi halinde bunun diğer kamu kurumlarına da yayılacağından endişe eder. Son olarak CHP, devletin meşruiyet kaynağının dini prensiplere göre tayin edilmesine karşı olduğu için türban kamusal alanda serbest bırakılmasına karşı çıkar. 2002 ve 2010 seneleri arasında CHP tutarlı bir biçimde kamusal alanda türban takılmasına karşı çıkmakla beraber, medya tarafından “*çarşaf* açılımı” olarak tabir edilen süreçle birlikte 2007'den sonra örtülü kadınlara karşı CHP'nin daha kapsayıcı bir söylem benimsediğini görmekteyiz.

CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı bağlamında hassas olduğu diğer bir konu da imamlar ve *İmam Hatip Liseleri*'dir. CHP'nin imamlar ve İmam Hatip Liseleri konusundaki tepkisinin sebeplerinden biri, devlet kadrolarının ihtiyaç olmamasına rağmen imamlar ve İmam Hatip mezunları ile doldurulması zira CHP'ye göre bu devletin tersine sekülerleşmesine hizmet eder. İkinci olarak, CHP dini eğitim temeline sahip kişilerin başka alanlarda eğitimini tamamlayıp ileride devlet kadrolarına atanmasına karşı olduğu için İmam Hatip mezunlarına diğer meslek liseleriyle birlikte eşit katsayı uygulanmasına karşı çıkar. Diğer bir ifadeyle, devlet yönetiminde devlet aklı yerine dinin geçirilmesine karşı olduğu için eğitimin dinselleştirilemesine karşı olması sebebiyle CHP eşit katsayı uygulamasına karşı çıkmaktadır. CHP'nin *İmam Hatipler* ile ilgili diğer bir hassasiyeti de öğrencilerin seküler eğitim almasını sağlayan 8 yıllık kesintisiz eğitimidir. CHP, bu sebeple AKP'nin *İmam Hatip* okullarındaki eğitimin



süresini artırmaya çalışmasını sorunsallaştırmakta. CHP, eğitimin dinselleşmesi sebebiyle de *İmam Hatip* okulları konusunda çekincelidir. CHP, imamların kadın-erkek eşitliğini hedef alan konuşmaları ve aktivitelerinden rahatsızlık duymaktadır. CHP, imamların seküler bir dünya görüşüyle donatılması gerektiğine inanmaktadır. Son olarak CHP, devletin düz liselerin karşısında İmam Hatip okullarını desteklemesine ve taraf tutmasına karşıdır.

CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı hakkında fikir veren diğer bir konu Kuran kursları. CHP, dini eğitimin tarikat ve cemaatlerin kontrolüne girmesini istemediği için Kuran kurslarının *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* tarafından kontrol edilmesi gerektiğini düşünmektedir. Bu bağlamda kaçak Kuran kursları CHP için kabul edilemez. CHP'nin Kuran kursları hakkında diğer bir rahatsızlığı, Kuran kurslarına katılım yaşı, kurs açmak için gerekli öğrenci sayısı, kaçak Kuran kursları açanlar hakkında cezaların azaltılması gibi konularda devlet tarafından bu kurslara kolaylık gösterilmesi. Çünkü CHP'ye göre devletin dini aktiviteleri desteklemesi değil kontrol etmesi gereklidir. CHP dini eğitimi din ve vicdan hürriyeti kapsamında değerlendirir. Ancak, eğitimin seküler eğitimden dinsel eğitime kaymasına karşıdır. CHP aslında dini eğitime değil, Kuran kurslarındaki denetimsizliğe eleştiri getirir. CHP'nin 2008'den sonraki "Kuran kursları açılımı" bu bağlamda değerlendirilebilir.

*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*, CHP'nin laiklik anlayışını yansıtan diğer bir konudur. CHP, devlet yönetimini akla dayandırmak istediği için *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* konusunda hassasiyet gösterir. İkincisi, CHP bu *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'nın tarafsızlığına gölge düşüreceği için siyasallaşmasına karşıdır. Üçüncüsü, CHP *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'nın Sünni ağırlıklı ve Aleviler'i dışlayan yapısına karşı çıkar. Dördüncüsü, CHP, *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'nın bütçesinin dağılımına ve bu bütçenin toplam devlet bütçesine oranına da yine laiklik ilkesi gereği eleştiri getirir. CHP *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'nın dini aktiviteler üzerinde kontrolü elden bırakmaması gerektiğini düşünür. Dolayısıyla, tarikat, cemaat, şeyh ve Kuran kurslarının *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* gözetiminden uzak bir şekilde çoğalması, CHP

için yine bir sorun teşkil eder. CHP, laiklik anlayışı gereği dinin sosyal alandaki düzenleyici rolüne karşı olduğu için buna sebebiyet veren *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'na eleştiri getirir. *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*'nın diğer devlet kurumlarında kadrolaşmak için basamak olarak kullanılması da devletin dinselleşmesine sebebiyet vereceği düşüncesiyle CHP için bir sorun teşkil eder.

CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı konusunda aydınlatıcı olacak diğer bir konu da Alevilerdir. CHP, dinin devlet yönetiminde kullanılmasına ve devletteki Sünni hakimiyetine karşı çıkmaktadır. Aleviler'le ilgili ilk olarak CHP, eğitimin taraflı yapısını sorgular ve zorunlu din derslerinde Alevilik'in dışlanmasını ya da Alevilik hakkında yanlış bilgilerin verilmesini eleştirir. İkincisi, CHP laiklik anlayışı gereğince cem evlerinin resmi ibadethane statüsüne kavuşturulması gerektiğini düşünür. CHP ayrıca çoğu Alevi olan 35 aydının katledildiği Sivas katliamının yaşandığı Madımak Oteli'nin müzeye ve anıta dönüştürülmesini savunur. CHP ayrıca Aleviler üzerindeki dini baskıya karşı çıkar. Buna ek olarak, CHP Aleviler'in asimilasyonu ve normalleştirilmesini ve yeniden tanımlanmasını da eleştirir. Bu bağlamda CHP Aleviler ve Süniler arasında ortak kültüre vurgu yaparak Alevi kültürünü kucaklayacak faaliyetlere yönelmiştir. CHP, ayrıca Aleviler'in aşağılanması ve hakarete maruz kalmasını da sorunsallaştırır. Son olarak CHP, devletin Aleviler'e karşı ayrımcı politika izlemesine karşı çıkar.

Bütün bu bilgiler ışığında, bu çalışmamda CHP'nin laiklik anlayışının tek başına ne devletçi ne de demokratik olarak adlandırılmayacağı sonucuna vardım. Sekülerleşmenin insan haklarını garantilediği noktalarda, daha demokratik bir karakter kazanması söz konusu. Öte yandan, sekülerleşme anlayışı devletin bekasını sağlamaya hizmet ettiği ölçüde daha devletçi bir pozisyona savruluyor. Aleviler konusunda görüldüğü üzere, dini baskıdan korunmayı sağladığı ve eşitlik ilkesine hizmet ettiği için CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı demokratik bir ton kazanıyor. Ancak, örneğin türbanlı kadınlar gibi farklılıklara saygı gösterilmesi açısından CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı daha tektipçi kalıyor. Türbanlı kadınların kamusal alandan dışlanması

ve onların özel alana hapsolmesine hizmet etmesi açısından CHP ataerkil ilişkilerin yeniden üretilmesine katkıda bulunuyor. Eşitlik ilkesine de aykırı olan bu durum, çoğulcu demokrasi açısından önemli bir sorun teşkil ediyor. Ayrıca CHP'nin bu noktada rejimi koruma gayesi de onu bireysel hakları ikinci plana atması sebebiyle devletçiliğe yaklaştırıyor.

CHP'nin *İmam Hatip* mezunları ile katsayı eşitliği konusundaki dışlayıcı tavrı da eşitlik ilkesi açısından sorun teşkil ediyor ve CHP'yi devletçiliğe sürüklüyor. CHP'nin Kuran kurslarındaki dini baskı unsurunu sorunsallaştırması din ve vicdan hürriyetini savunması açısından önemli ve bu CHP'ye demokratik karakter kazandıran bir yaklaşım. Öte yandan sivil toplum alanına ait olan bir konuda kontrolcü laiklik anlayışını savunması onu devletçiliğe yaklaştırıyor. Kuran kursları konusunda CHP'nin hem devletçi hem de demokratik bir pozisyonu olduğunu savunmak yanlış olmayacaktır. CHP'nin *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* konusundaki yaklaşımı da hem devletçi hem de demokratik özellikler barındırıyor denilebilir. Bir taraftan dini aktivitelerin kontrolünü savunması CHP'yi devletçi kılarken, öte yandan devletin ve toplumun *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* aracılığıyla dinselleşmesine tepki göstermesi ve mezhepler üstü bir *Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı* çağrısı sebebiyle CHP'nin demokratik olduğu ileri sürülebilir. Kısacası bu noktalardan hareketle, CHP'nin laiklik anlayışı 2002 ve 2010 seneleri arasında devletçilik ve demokrasi arasında salındığı sonucuna varılabilir.

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