

THE REPUBLICAN CHARACTER OF ISLAMISM
IN TÜRKİYE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF
'THE POLITICAL'

by

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The Department of
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Bilkent University
Ankara
December, 1998

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PERSPECTIVE OF 'THE POLITICAL'

The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences
of
Bilkent University

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tarafından hazırlanmıştır

In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements For The Degree Of DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

in

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION
BILKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

December, 1998

Thesis

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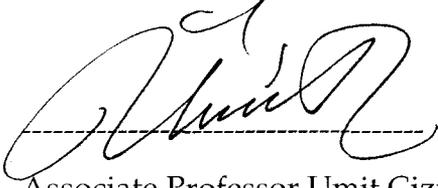
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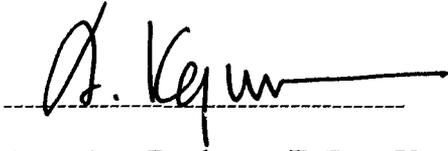
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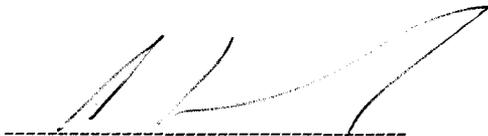
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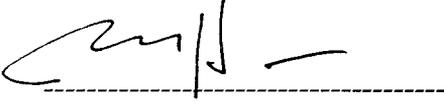
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ABSTRACT

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December 1998

This dissertation is an exploratory research that critically reviews the existing approaches to Islamism so as to evaluate their suitability and effectiveness and to suggest an alternative framework to approach Islamism. Islamism is primarily a political movement about the fundamentals of the society rather than a religious movement. Studying Islamism in terms of its religiosity, in terms of its modernity and in terms of its different civilizational outlook is not explanatory as far as its political aspects are concerned. Therefore, Islamism could be better comprehended if studied on political grounds and in relation to the context within which it emerges. This dissertation considers Islamism not in terms of its substance, which is Islamisation, but in terms of its alternative structuration of politics and in terms of its vision of state society relationship. The definition of concept of "the political" is central part of the alternative framework. A structuration of political sphere is determined by the underlying mode of societal integration. Although mixtures are possible, there are basically two modes of integration: liberal and republican. When viewed from this perspective it becomes apparent that the National Outlook Movement's Islamist opposition to Kemalist Westernization is accompanied by a grammatical similarity, i.e. the structuration of the legitimate sphere of politics. Despite their substantive differences, both Kemalism and Islamism resemble each

other grammatically and, as far as their structuration(s) of politics concerned, belong to the same family of republicanism.

Keywords: Islamism, Kemalism, Republicanism, The National Outlook.

ÖZET

'SİYASAL OLAN' AÇISINDAN TÜRKİYE'DEKİ İSLAMCILIĞIN CUMHURİYETÇİ KARAKTERİ

Menderes ÇINAR

Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Ümit CIZRE-SAKALLIOĞLU

Aralık 1998

Bu çalışma İslamcılığa yeni bir yaklaşım çerçevesi önermek amacıyla halen mevcut olan yaklaşımların uygunluğunu ve yeterliliğini eleştirel bir biçimde gözden geçirmektedir. İslamcılık bir dini hareket değil, toplumun temelleri hakkında siyasal bir harekettir. İslamcılığı diniliği, moderniteyle ilişkisi veya onun farklı olan medeniyetçi bakış açısı bağlamında incelemek, İslamcılığın siyasal yönlerini yeteri kadar ortaya çıkaran bir yöntem değildir. Bu nedenle, İslamcılık içinde ortaya çıktığı bağlamla ilişkili olarak ve siyasal bir zemin üzerinde daha sağlıklı değerlendirilebilir. Bu tez İslamcılığı onun içeriği ile değil, ki bu İslamlaştırma, onun alternatif devlet-toplum ilişkisi vizyonu ve siyaseti yapılandırması temelinde değerlendirmektedir. Nelerin "siyasal" olarak tanımlan(ma)dığı sorusu önerilen alternatif çerçevenin merkezi bir unsurudur. Siyasal alanın yapılandırılmasında varsayılan sosyal entegrasyon modeli belirleyicidir. Karışımlar mümkün olsa da, liberal ve cumhuriyetçi olmak üzere iki temel sosyal entegrasyon modeli vardır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, Milli Görüş Hareketi'nin Kemalist Batılılaşmaya karşı olan İslamcı muhalefeti aslında gramer olarak, yani meşru siyasal alanın yapılandırılması bakımından, bir benzerliği de göstermektedir. İçeriksel farklılıklarına rağmen, Kemalizm ve İslamcılık siyasal gramer olarak birbirlerine benzemekte ve siyasal anlayışı olarak her ikisi de cumhuriyetçilik ailesinden gelmektedirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Islamcılık, Kemalism, Cumhuriyetçilik, Milli Görüş Hareketi.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing a Ph.D. dissertation is an extended and exhausting process. In the course of last four years many friends and colleagues have supported, encouraged and motivated me. I consider myself lucky because it was their support and friendship that prevented my alienation from the study I was carrying out. I could only hope that the quality of this study deserves their name to be mentioned here. I owe this invaluable solitary environment in which I have written the dissertation to Simon Phipps. I thank Simon for his kindness, concern, respect and encouragement. Umit 'Hanim' has always been charming, constructive and supportive. Her noble presence in the department is in itself a relief. Our frank, educating and mind-broadening exchange of views has always been a source of motivation for me ever since I came to Bilkent in 1992. It is my privilege to complete the dissertation with her. Although the path I have been stumbling is somewhat alien to them, all of my brothers have consistently provided all kinds of support. I thank all of them, but especially to Salih who opened new avenues of self-development for me. I would also like to thank to Fuat Keyman and Ayse Kadioglu for their friendly support. Thanks also to Aylin and Filiz for their warm company.

In memoriam: Mehmet-Ali ınar

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INTRODUCTION

For almost thirty years the National Outlook Movement (*Milli Gorus Hareketi*) has been an actor on the Turkish political stage. It appeared with the National Order Party in January 1970, which was closed down by the Constitutional Court in 1971. The National Salvation Party as the successor, was founded in October 1972. After the coup of 1980, the National Salvation party was closed down along with all other political parties and the Welfare Party (WP) was founded in July 1983. Since its inception in 1970 until the mid-1990s the National Outlook Movement, or more accurately its parties, have been considered as “fringe” parties. In the mid-1990s, the Welfare Party has become a major actor on the Turkish political stage by steadily increasing its votes. In the 1994 local elections, the Welfare Party’s candidates were elected as mayors of many of the cities, including Ankara and Istanbul, the symbols of Turkish modernization. In the general elections of December 1995, the party increased its votes by almost 2 percent and received 21.38 of the total votes cast, which allowed it to have the plurality of the seats in the parliament. Thanks to this plurality of seats, 158 deputies, the party formed a majority coalition with the True Path Party in June 1996 and the “charismatic” leader of the movement, Necmettin Erbakan, became

prime minister. Although Erbakan as the key figure of the National Outlook Movement had formed coalition governments with the Republican Peoples Party and with the Justice Party and the Nationalist Action Party in the 1970s, this last coalition was different in that it made an Islamist leader a prime minister for the first time in the history of the secular Republic.

Can the rise of the WP be interpreted as the failure of the Kemalist Westernization? Was the increase in the number of votes for the Welfare Party an indicator of the reassertion of "Islamic periphery" *vis a vis* the secular center? Is it possible to consider the rise of the movement in terms of a center-periphery cleavage or modern-traditional dichotomy by employing a modernization paradigm? How can we comprehend the National Outlook better? Is focusing on its Islamic aspects adequate for a better understanding of the movement?

This study is an exploratory research that critically reviews the existing approaches to Islamism to evaluate their suitability and effectiveness and to suggest an alternative framework/perspective to approach, understand and analyze Islamism in terms of the parameters the above questions provide. The alternative framework of analysis is by no means an invention but an introduction of the primacy of political sphere/structuration as the proper focus of attention. Structuration(s) of political sphere in turn are determined to a large extent by the mode(s) of integration of society. Relatedly, similarities and differences between different political alternatives are

determined by the underlying mode of integration of society. Although mixtures are possible, there are mainly two basic modes of integration: republican and liberal. Islamism, this study postulates, is better understood if it is "contextualised," i.e. analyzed in relation to the political context/configuration within which it emerges and with respect to its impact on dominant power relations. An analysis of the context with respect to the political structuration is necessary for this reason. This study, therefore, is not a study of Kemalism. But Kemalist structuration of Turkish politics is studied because only then we could have a better understanding of the political aspects of Islamist National Outlook Movement.

An alternative framework will be suggested because the existing accountings for Islamism are found to be unsatisfactory. In chapter one, an attempt has been made first to elaborate what Islamism means and then to review critically some of the accounts for Islamism in the literature. The discussion throughout this chapter, and indeed throughout this study, is informed by a consideration of Islamism as a political rather than a religious movement, which should be assessed in terms of its politics rather than religiosity, that is, in terms of its positioning *vis a vis* the dominant power relations and *vis a vis* the society. Various explanations of Islamism are criticized on the basis of the deterministic links they build between Islamism and criticisms of modernity, the perceived failures of modernization and an essentialist conception of "Muslim society."

Analyses of Islamism on the basis of a “conservative Muslim reaction” are criticized in this dissertation, because of their essentialist portrayal of Islamic culture as a preindustrial defensive culture that could not be an agent of change and that could only react to modernizing regimes so as to *conserve* the Islamic status quo. As such, this account is misleading, for it misses the modernizing aspects of Islamism by building a direct relation between Islam and Islamism. Similarly, in this perspective Islamism is explained in terms of Islam. It provides us only with two options: either submergence of Islam as a preindustrial-defensive culture for the sake of modernization or resurgence of Islam(ism) as a “grass roots” movement. It misleadingly assumes that there is a culturally homogenous Muslim society whose politics and culture are determined by an essentialist definition of Islam.

Explaining the rise of Islamism in terms of failures of modernization, on the other hand, assumes that Islam, which is essentially a political rival to modernizing regimes and therefore, has been forced to submerge, has resurged as a result of the failures of modernization in delivering its promised goods. As such, modernization is associated with the effective administration of society and failures of it are deduced by the “resurgence” of Islamism. What is adequate for “solving” the problem of Islamism is more modernization. Yet, whether or not socio-economic modernization determines the political outcomes is an important question that has to be

tackled. Similarly, whether the legitimacy of modernizing states is based only on their “performance” in material development is a crucial question.

For some, modernization fails because the modernizing state is culturally alienated from the society and cannot legitimize its own modernization drive. By implication, Islamism could be regarded as the reassertion of Muslim society *vis a vis* the alienated state. What is assumed in this perspective is that modern societies are culturally homogenous entities. This is an assumption that will be carefully examined in this study along with other major concerns.

Other explanations of Islamism on the basis of postmodern deconstruction of modernity or on the basis of globalization(s) are no less deterministic in the links they establish between the rise of Islamism and postmodernism/globalization. Globalization as postmodern consumerism could actually be considered as an extension of the explanation of the rise of Islamism as a conservative reaction - a fundamentalist-religious movement - of Muslim society to modernization. What is different this time is the object of reaction which is conceived as postmodernization rather than modernization. Similarly, globalization as neo-liberalism, as will be shown in the first chapter, shares the same logic with the delivery failures perspective of the modernization paradigm. Postmodernism also allows for the possibilities of non-Western ways of modernization. It thereby triggers off a trend that renders Westernizing authoritarian regimes illegitimate.

However, the question that remains is, whether the legitimacy of the Westernizing regimes can be linked solely to Eurocentric definitions of modernity.

This study takes Islamism as both an alternative *modernizing* movement and a *political* movement about the fundamentals of society. In the former aspect, Islamism represents a challenge to the West and Westernizing regimes. In this respect, Islamism is both a modern and modernizing movement. But, modernity of Islamism tells us little about the political aspects of the movement, because not all modern(izing) regimes or movements are democratic-plural. In most studies of Islamism while its relationship *vis a vis* the Westernizing regimes or Islam is explained, its relationship to society and the political structures within which it emerges is by-passed. In other words, Islamism is not generally studied as a movement about the fundamentals of the society. In terms of its concept of “the political,” its vision of the state-society relations, and its definition of the political community, little is known. Little is known also about Islamism in relation to its context, or *vis a vis* the modernizing regime. In most studies, differences between Islamism and the modernizing regimes are explored especially as far as their civilizational outlook is concerned. Yet the fact that Islamism is anti-Westernizing does not tell us much about the political aspects of it, because we cannot associate a Westernizing regime automatically with democracy and pluralism. What is proposed in this study is “contextualisation” of Islamism in the sense of studying Islamism in

relation to and together with its context in *political* terms so as to avoid repudiating Islamism on the basis of its Islamicness or to avoid glorifying a modernizing regime on the basis of its Westernism.

Chapter two addresses the underlying assumptions that are apparent in most analyses of Islamism and, then, suggests an alternative framework. The first underlying framework is an essentialist definition of Islam as a political religion that merges state and religion and hinders modernization. The second underlying framework of most accounts of Islamism is a definition of modernity as a process of consistent progress and secularization in the sense of a decline in the social significance of religion. In this chapter, it is asserted that modernity is not about secularization but about the primacy of politics and modern functions of religion are indeed political but not religious functions. In this respect, it is suggested that secularization as a progressive decline in the social significance of religion has actually been a myth. It is also suggested that essentialist definitions of Islam foreclose the possibilities of a peaceful cohabitation between Islamism and the modernizing regime. Essentialist definitions of Islam portray the relations between modernization and Islam in terms of only submergence and resurgence and assesses the failures or successes of modernization in terms of “visibility” and “invisibility” of Islam.

This study attempts to develop an alternative perspective for studying Islamism on its political ground and political aspects. Relatedly, it is a

theoretical attempt to construct an alternative framework for studying Islamism. This alternative approach asserts the primacy of politics and urges one to study a political movement in terms of its politics or more accurately in terms of its definition of “the political,” of the political community and state-society relationship. In this way, the similarity of the political logic between a Westernizing regime and an Islamizing alternative could be discovered. The expected theoretical contribution of this study is therefore to suggest an alternative framework for studying Islamism that is different from the existing accounts, reviewed in chapter one, and that will enable us to discover both the political aspects of Islamism itself and its similarities/differences from the modernizing regimes it challenges. It is by adopting this contextual approach that it becomes a legitimate question to ask the extent to which Islamism allows for the realization of freedoms in the public sphere.

The crux of the alternative framework is the concept of “the political.” What is meant by studying Islamism in terms of its *politicalness* is a study of the concept of “the political” as understood by Islamism. The same tool is also useful for analyzing the modernizing regime as well. The concept of “the political” shows the legitimate sphere of politics and its significance cannot be explained without answering the question of what holds societies together. This study assumes that modern societies are culturally differentiated plural societies. Therefore they are not held together by common values, common good or a moral consensus, but by the very

activity of politics. Politics, it will be argued, is the sphere where commonalties between different identities and ideologies are discovered. The idea that societies are integrated on the basis of a pre-given moral consensus, it will be argued, restricts the legitimate sphere of politics.

In chapter two, this study will analyze the two different modes of integration which by and large determine the concepts of the political: liberal and republican. As will be shown, liberalism tends to empty political life of substantive argument by conceiving politics as founded upon self-interest and for fear that pursuing a moral purpose would lead to trespassing of individual's autonomy. The task of state in liberalism is to protect rights and liberties of individual's who are ultimately the best judges of their interests. Republican politics, on the other hand, is oriented towards the good life of the community, which is conceived as the highest good. The task of the state is to uphold the idea of common good and realize it. Defined as the republican trap, while the orientation towards common good is praised, moralization of it in republicanism, it will be suggested, is prone to authoritarian political practices in the name of realizing the common good of society.

The third chapter is a reading of Kemalism as a variety of republicanism that has fallen into the above republican trap. It must be emphasized at the very beginning that Kemalism in this study is not equated with a Westernization programme. What is meant by Kemalism, in this study, is a particular

structuration of politics regardless of its contents or substance. Kemalist structuration of politics is republicanist because of its concern with the establishment of a good society. Although politics is conceived as a process of discovering what is good for the whole society, the very possibilities of “discovery” of the common good, i.e., the activity of politics, are restricted. This is because what is good for the whole society is already defined and therefore it was not a matter of political deliberation. Kemalism is originally an emancipatory project that turned the subjects of the Sultan into citizens of a modern republic. It was with the foundation of the Kemalist republic that the modern Turkish society was constituted. In this respect, neither the society nor the rights and liberties preceded the foundation of the Republic. The sources of moralization of Kemalism could be traced back to the founding moment. By taking Kemalism as the public morality of modern Turkish republic, which concerns the domains of right and wrong, the nature of good life, and the question of obligations, this study will try to explain how the sphere of politics and thereby possibilities of a dynamic consensus between different political views on the issue of, for example, secularism, is restricted.

The sources of considering Islamism as a reactionary movement abusing religion for political purposes lies in Kemalist morality, which proposed a new interpretation of Islam in line with the Westernization project.

Kemalism has played a role in the politicization of Islam by plunging into a series of secularization policies that created a cultural cleavage between state

and society. Current Islamism, in Turkey, emerges out of this cleavage and takes up the issues created by Kemalist secularization. But whether Islamist National Outlook Movement is the exact representative of the society within this cleavage is a crucial question that will be elaborated in this dissertation. More importantly, the explanatory power of the cultural cleavage between state and society will be examined carefully. It is argued that the problem with Kemalism is not that it could not provide a public morality that would integrate masses to its modernization drive, but it is the very attempt to construct one that created political bottlenecks. The political implication of the cultural alienation thesis is the cultural unification of state and society which is quite contrary to the culturally differentiated nature of the society.

In chapter four, the goal is to study the National Outlook Movement in the light of the above summary description of the Kemalist regime and in relation to it. In doing so, as opposed to the conventional wisdom emphasizing the differences, the convergences between Islamism and Kemalism in terms of structuration(s) of politics, i.e. in terms of state-society relations will be examined. The overall aim is to reveal the resemblances between two substantively different alternatives, Islamism and Kemalism, in their structuration of politics or in terms of their political logic. Islamism converges with Kemalism on what might be called "culturalism," i.e. on seeing the appropriate culture as a precondition of modernization, though the deemed appropriate cultures are different. The concept of "the political" in Islamism, like in Kemalism, does not include the *debates about* the nature

of good life. Another resemblance revolves around the discussion on the task of the state, which is to promote a substantive life style and thereby to carry out a social engineering project. Society, in both Kemalism and Islamism, is seen as an object of government and as homogenous.

CHAPTER ONE

APPROACHING ISLAMISM

1. WHAT IS ISLAMISM?

1.1. What Islamism is not

Islamism is not religious fundamentalism. Contrary to the implications of the term fundamentalism, Islamism is not about the fundamentals of faith but of society. Although the leaders and ideologues of Islamist movements present their ideas in the way of a restoration of a pure, unsullied, and authentic form of religion, they actually seek to “revitalize and re-Islamize modern Muslim societies” to create a new society rather than to return the old one.¹ It is therefore a political movement. Once this fact is taken into

¹ Joel Beinin and Joe Stark, “On the Modernity, Historical Specificity and International Context of Political Islam” in *Political Islam: Essays From Middle East Report*, (London: I.B Tauris, 1997), 3, see also John Ruedy, “Introduction” in *Islamism and Secularism in North Africa*, ed. idem (London: Macmillan, 1996, [1994]), xv.

account, if Islamism is still considered as a fundamentalist (political) movement on the basis of its claims about the fundamentals of the society, many secular/modern counterparts (equivalents) of Islamism such as nationalism, which also is about the fundamentals of the society as well, must be considered fundamentalist as well. As such, fundamentalism is not a peculiarity of modernizing Muslim societies. It is visible in both the West and the Rest. Therefore, contrary to the opposite claims, fundamentalism does not necessarily occur "on the soil of traditional cultures or cultures in which people perceive and claim that they simply inherit a world view and way of life."² The term fundamentalism is also a pejorative and a non-discerning term putting all Islamist movements into a single basket. As such, the term fundamentalism is incapable of grasping the empirical reality of Islamism.

It is also better not to employ the term political Islam in referring to Islamism. This is because the public/private distinction which the term "political Islam" relies on is itself a political construction that should not be taken for granted and that has recently been questioned. The term political Islam reveals the underlying acceptance of the Enlightenment's prescription that the proper sphere of religion is the private sphere and the public realm is a realm of rationality. Consequently, the emergence of political

² Martin E. Marty, "Fundamentals of Fundamentalism" in *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective* ed. Lawrence Kaplan, (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 18.

movements utilizing religion, “political Islam”, is defined as a pathology by those who subscribe to the Enlightenment and modernizing regimes based upon the Enlightenment. As will be in the next chapter, the modern idea that religion is politically irrelevant in conditions of modernity is misleading. Modernity, indeed, is about various utilizations of religion. What is taken to be the non-political religion is itself a political construction as well. Also, given the fact that the distinction between public and private is a political construction, “political Islam” could bring an issue removed from political sphere back into politics. In other words, a de-politicized issue can be re-politicized by “political Islam” and there may be nothing intrinsically contrary to the democratic trends in this.

Below, an attempt will be made to elaborate what Islamism is. This study will employ the term Islamism because it indicates a political stance that claims to be informed by Islam. As will be seen below, in this study Islamism is taken as primarily a political phenomenon and the term Islamism is preferable in this respect as well. This is because it allows us to consider it in same terms with other ideologies such as liberalism and Marxism.³ Also, the term Islamism includes the variations within Islamism as, for example, the term liberalism includes variations within liberalism.

³ Bobby Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, (London: Zed Books, 1997), 17.

1.2. The Substance and Modernity of Islamism

The modernity of Islamism is something beyond being a response to modern circumstances, i.e., contemporariness. The modernity of Islamism is also something beyond validation of religious knowledge on secular/rational grounds, for example, rationalization of fasting on the basis of its healthiness rather than on the basis of religious duty. Islamism represents a deviance from Islamic tradition for two reasons. First, under Islamism, Islam is interpreted by intellectuals and politicians who are usually products of secular education and who are familiar with the secular ideologies. Second, Islamist interpretation of religion is in social, economic and political terms rather than spiritual norms and values. Islamism is not a movement about Islam but about society and politics. As a movement of reaction, rather than protest, Islamism presents religiously inspired solutions to the contemporary problems created by uneven modernization. It also problematizes what is taken for granted. In this sense, the rivals of Islamism are other secular ideologies addressing the same problems but not other religions.⁴

⁴ See, inter alia, Mumtaz'er Turkone, *Siyasal Ideoloji Olarak Islamciligin Dogusu*, [The Emergence of Islamism as a Political Ideology], (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1994).

Islamism shares many similarities with other religio-political movements in suggesting moral/religious resolutions to the pressing political problems. Islamism could be seen as a variant of these religio-political that are visible world-wide. Once seen from this "global" perspective, i.e. since it is a variant religio-political/culturalist movements that are visible in both West and the Rest, Islamism could not be seen as a peculiarity of non-Western, traditional or Muslim societies. This is one of the reasons why Islamism should not be explained in terms of Islam or Muslim society.

Islamism also shares many similarities with *culturalist* movements that are visible in different parts of the world. Culturalist movements are self-conscious about identity, culture and heritage. Culturalist movements articulate the problematique of the time on cultural and moral grounds by underplaying social and economic struggles.⁵ Islamism, too, consciously mobilizes Muslim identity against the external forces and moral degeneration on the basis of its difference from other identities and of its consciousness about identity, culture, heritage. At the center of Islamic alternative lies Islam and Muslim identity. Islamism is related more to "identity" than to "ideas." Indeed, it could be suggested that the only religious aspect of the "religiously inspired solution" of Islamism is the

⁵ See Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 15. See also Salwa Ismail, "Confronting the Other: Identity, Culture, Politics and Conservative Islamism in Egypt" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 30, 2 (May, 1998): 199-225, 202.

Muslim identity. Yet, the definition of “Muslim identity” is still an ongoing process and, therefore, somewhat vague now.

Islamism could be considered as a political stance that represents an *alternative*⁶ way of *utilizing* religion by self-claimed *conscious* Muslims for acquiring political power and for the *revitalization* of Islamic civilization based on a concept of golden age. Islamisation of society is a part of this “political project” and serves the revitalization of Islamic civilization and re-presentation of Islamic identity *vis a vis* the West. The reference to a past golden age in Islamist discourses does not mean that it is an attempt to return a past order, because the conceptions of future plays a more important role than those of the past and the concept of golden age serves as a model and as a confidence-building measure for the current circumstances.⁷ Islamism is actually about (re)construction of Islam and Muslim society here and now.

⁶ I have deliberately used the word *alternative* to indicate that modernity is not solely about the decline in the social significance of religion but various utilizations of religion, that religion has always played a role in modern politics and that those who accommodate religion in their political discourses are not restricted to Islamist or other religio-political movements. Also historically, Islam was appropriated by the pre-modern(izing) state which described the opposition as heretic. The contemporary Islamism, as Ayubi pointed out, “now reverses the historical process -it claims ‘generic’ Islam for the protest movements, leaving to the state the more difficult task of qualifying and justifying its own ‘version’ of Islam.” Ayubi’s argument points to the centrality of politics and concomitantly to the centrality of hegemony in “neutralizing” a particular interpretation of Islam. See Nazih N. Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 5.

Islamism is a modernizing movement, and to the extent it could be defined as an ideology, it is a modernizing ideology. What it challenges is the equation of modernization with Westernization, an equation established not only by the modernizing elite but also by the Eurocentric social theory.⁸

Islamism asserts that one does not have to Westernize in order to modernize. The statement of the former Prime Minister of Sudan, Al-Sadiq Al- Mahdi, illustrates the point:

⁷ Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 32, notes that "some European monarchs have flattered themselves that they won the respect and even good will of the Ottoman Sultan." Islamism is a yearning for the similar terms of relationship with the West today. For two different concepts of Golden Age, *Asr-i Saadet* of the Prophet Muhammad and the classic and Ottoman versions, see Ira M. Lapidus, "The Golden Age: The Political Concepts of Islam" in *The Annals*, 524, (November, 1992): 13-25, 18. Lapidus notes that the first conception of golden age is integralist, in the sense that it seeks a unified state and society under the leadership of Caliph, whose authority extends to all realms of personal and public concerns. The second one tacitly recognizes the institutional division between the structures of state and religion. In this paradigm, Lapidus argues, "Muslims look for the religious sphere for personal and communal fulfillment, to Islam as a personal and social ethos and not a concept or constitution of political regime." The latter conception of Golden Age allows for a secular and imperial notion of state. According to Lapidus the current Islamism tends to be based the latter.

⁸ On the Eurocentrism of social theory, especially modernization theory, see Jeffrey Alexander, "Modern, Anti, Post and Neo", *New Left Review*, 210, (March/April, 1995): 63-101, 69, Anthony D. King, "The Times and Spaces of Modernity (or Who Needs Postmodernism?)" in *Global Modernities*, eds., Mike Featherstone et al, (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 110. John Brohoman, "Universalism, Eurocentrism and Ideological Bias in the Development Studies: From Modernization to Neoliberalism", *Third World Quarterly*, 16, 1, (1995): 121-140. Bobby Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear*, chapters 3 and 4.

“Westernization is the West’s version of modernization. It is embedded in Western culture and interests. ... Modernization can and must be divorced from those cultural and historical expressions of it.”⁹

The anti-Westernism of Islamism springs from this challenge which also includes a yearning for similar structures with that of West. For example, practicing religion is no more important than setting up an economic community of Islamic states. The maintenance of Islamic identity, according to Islamist discourse, is not just possible in the modernization process but it is rather essential for a successful (Islamic) modernization project. Islamism aims to appropriate modernity in Islamic, authentic, indigenous terms. As such, Islamism is a rejection of the Orientalist conceptualization of Islam as an obstacle to progress. In this respect, Islamism could be considered as a continuation of the trend set by the “Islamic reformism” of the late nineteenth century. The Muslim thinkers of this era, who are considered to be the pioneers of Islamic revival,¹⁰ held that it was not true Islam but the prevailing Islam which was an obstacle to progress. Current Islamism asserts the same point, but in a manner of “reinstating” the Islam that was

⁹ Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi, “Islam: Society and Change” in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 239. See also Nilufer Göle, “Authoritarian Secularism and Islamist Politics: The Case of Turkey”, in *Civil Society in Middle East*, Richard A. Norton, ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 24, for a definition of Islamism as a challenge to the equation established between Westernization and civilization. See also John Obert Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1994, 2nd edition), 291.

¹⁰ Ali Rahnemena, ed., *The Pioneers of Islamic Revival* (London: Zed Books, 1994).

denied by the Westernizing elite rather than reforming the prevailing Islam. In other words, it is not the current practice and interpretation but the negation of Islam that is the problem.

Pointing to a continuity between current Islamism and its "origins," however, does not mean that current Islamism is the same with Islamism of the nineteenth century. Otherwise, the employment of the terms such as revival and resurgence would have been adequate terms for Islamic movements. Although Islam is a common reference point, Islamist movements differ in space and time. They operate under dissimilar conditions and derive different inspirations from religion in addressing the contemporary problems.

In order to achieve Islamic modernization, and thereby re-present Islam as a civilizational model that relies not solely on reason but also on divine inspiration (*vahy*), Islamism utilizes technology and science. Based on the definition of modernity as consisting of two dimensions, the social organization and the Enlightenment derived ideas, Islamism is considered to be *semi-modern* or *hybrid* of modernity and anti-modernity.¹¹ It is so

¹¹ Fred Halliday, "The Politics of Islam: A Second Look", *British Journal of Political Studies*, 25, 3, (July, 1995): 399-417, 400, 416-417, and *passim*. Basam Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam: A Pre-Industrialist Culture in the Scientific-Technological Age* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988) and Basam Tibi, "Culture and Knowledge: The Politics of Islamisation of Knowledge as a Postmodern Project? The Fundamentalist Claims to De-Westernization" *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 12 (1995): 1-24.

because in its alternative modernization project, Islamism rejects the cultural underpinnings of modernity, which are essentially Western, while accepting the instrumental and organizational dimensions. In this respect, the explanations depicting Islamism as a reaction to alienation created by overmaterialization of social life understates the fact that Islamism operates within the *same* parameters of modernization that gave rise to the problem of alienation. What Islamism represents is an attempt for an alternative legitimization of the “rationality” and “modernization.” Here, Islam functions like Weber’s Protestant ethic. It could be suggested by using Marxist terminology that salvation in Islamist politics is through “Muslims for themselves” rather than “Muslims in themselves.” Being a conscious Muslim, according to Islamists, requires an awareness of the principle of *tawhid*. The principle of *tawhid* is revitalized by the Islamist, or self-claimed Muslims, to turn their “this-worldly” concerns into Islamic concerns so that these concerns could be made/depicted as beneficial also for the hereafter. What might be called the magic power of Islam to turn sacred into profane and profane into sacred is used in the following way: since Islam covers all aspects of life, a shift to this mundane world does not necessarily mean de-Islamisation. Indeed, Islam has never been a world-rejecting religion. The issue is not being either a this-worldly Muslim, or a ‘monkish’ pious one. Rather, the crucial thing in being this worldly is the *consciousness*. In these circumstances, for example, aspiring for wealth in this world is not necessarily relegating Islamic concerns to a secondary place, if wealth is created for the sake of re-building the Islamic civilization. In this picture,

Islam seems to function like a provider of meaning for the modernization process, thereby resolving the Weberian issue of legitimation of rationality.

But, behind the seeming similarity between the functions of Protestant ethic and Islamism in the Weberian issue of legitimation of "rationality," there is an important difference that might render the characterization of "semi-modern" and "hybrid" for Islamism ineffective. While Protestant ethic justifies the seeking of wealth for the sake of wealth, Islamist justification is goal-oriented, that is, seeking of wealth is for the sake of revitalization of Islamic civilization. In other words, Islamist rationality and legitimacy are goal-based, that is rational and legitimate are defined in terms of the contribution to the revitalization of the Islamic civilization. Islamic rationality, therefore, may not fit the Weberian type of rationality.¹² For example, an Islamist entity might prefer to develop economic relations with another Islamist entity even though it is more beneficial for him/her to do it with secularists, atheists or Jews. But, whether the concept of rationality should be the same as Weberian type of rationality in order to call Islamist rationality as modern and Islamic movements in general as hybrid is another question. For example, Japanese society, which beaten the West in its own game, is not rational in the Weberian sense because the objective features of modernity, i.e. capitalist rationality, are managed in cultural norms.¹³

¹² See Sami Zubaida, "Is There a Muslim Society? Ernest Gellner's Sociology of Islam" *Economy and Society*, 24, 2 (May, 1995): 151-188.

The term semi-modern could also be inappropriate and less meaningful if we bear in mind the fact that it is not only Islamism that rejects the Enlightenment derived idea(s) of individualism, secularism, cosmopolitanism, gender equality and so on. Originally, conservatism was a rejection of these ideals. There are also many right-wing movements which are doubtful about the capability of reason to improve society.¹⁴ In this context, Islamism could be considered as a variety of right-wing movements. By this token, the right-wing movements deserve to be called as semi-modern as well. But, only for Islamism the adjective semi-modern is employed as if there are no similar movements in the West and as if the practice of modernity was a smooth application of the Enlightenment derived ideas solely. One must not forget that fascism, political dictatorships, militarism and authoritarianism are all practices of modernity.

More importantly, assessing Islamism in terms of its relation to modernity, is not very meaningful as far as its contribution to our understanding of Islamism's political aspects are concerned. The fact that Islamic movements are modern and modernizing does not tell much about whether these movements are democratic-pluralist or whether they envision a change in

¹³ See John Clammer, *Difference and Modernity: Social theory and Contemporary Japanese Society*, (London: Kegan Paul International, 1995), 6, 8-9, 120.

the dominant power relations.¹⁵ Therefore, the relationship between Islam and modernity could not be a sufficient ground for the evaluation of Islamism. This is because unless one employs an essentialist definition of modernity, the substance of modernity itself is somewhat mixed. Considering Islamism in terms of modernity seems to operate within an Orientalist framework which portrayed Islam as a religion hindering modernization. Now that Islamist movement are not hindrance to development falsifies the Orientalist portrayal, but within the Orientalist framework. (A critique of the essentialization of Islam will be advanced in next chapter.) Furthermore, Islamism is a matter of positioning *vis a vis* the modern(izing) state whose modern nature does not tell us much about its political character. It is perhaps more accurate to look at the location of Islamism in the overall political configuration, and its positioning *vis a vis* it. In this respect, what kind of state-society relationship is envisioned by Islamists is a more fruitful question for discovering and assessing the political nature of Islamism.

¹⁴ See Roger Eatwell and Noël O'Sullivan, eds., *The Nature of the Right: European and American Politics and Political Thought since 1789*, (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989).

¹⁵ The fact that the relations between Western modernity and Islam is deepening and getting more complex in the course of Islamist challenge to the equation of civilization with Westernization is not explanatory as far as the political posture of Islamism concerned. For a sociological study that misses the political dimension see Nilufer Gole, "The Quest for Islamic Self within the Context of Modernity" in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, eds. S. Bozdogan and R. Kasaba (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997).

In the light of above discussion, we could suggest that, Islamist movements can be considered as modern ideological movements in the sense that they propose new “fundamental principles which organize behavior, frame of choices, constitute a world view and are considered to be the means of achieving ... the goal.”¹⁶ But, Islamist movements could not be considered as ideological if by ideological movements we mean those movements struggling to change whole the form of social life.¹⁷ This is because Islamist movements actually offer an alternative “ground” for the legitimation of capitalist rationality or the maintenance of the communal character of an actually differentiated society. Islamists usually are willing to work within the established order and promote hierarchical and partriarchical values that reinforce the status-quo.¹⁸ In this respect, Islamism could also be conceptualized as a conservative movement, because while accepting science and technology, it tries to fill the void in our souls created by materialism. This is because it is assumed that “[a]s modernization proceeds spiritual needs are also expanded.”¹⁹ In other words, Islamism rationalizes the reordering of a society on some ideological grounds such as revitalization of Islamic civilization by emphasizing the imagined past as a blueprint for

¹⁶ Clammer, *Difference and Modernity*, 12

¹⁷ Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991), 8

¹⁸ Salwa Ismail, “Confronting the Other: Identity, Culture, Politics and Conservative Islamism in Egypt” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 30, 2 (May, 1998): 199-225.

future, by asserting the primacy of community and moral principles over political, economic and social ones.²⁰ Islamist political ideal is characterized by hierarchy, harmony, unity, order virtue, reciprocity, shared values and mutual concern. Yet, Islamism could not be defined as conservative, if by conservatism, we mean an orientation against change, respect for established (secular) institutions, hierarchies and the elite. The fact that they work within the established order and promote maintenance of status quo and power relations may lead us to conclude that Islamist movements are conservative movements, but Islamists work through the established institutions to alter the substance of them. Islamism is an alternative modernizing movement and its ideological aspects spring from its offer of an alternative legitimation for the modernization/capitalism. Islamism's divergence from conservatism springs from this (Islamist) aspect of it. In this respect, if we are to employ the term conservative Islamism in referring to Islamism, the *conservative* implies maintenance of the institutional set up of politics while *Islamism* implies altering the substance that the institutional set up pursues.

Islamism, it could be suggested, resembles neo-conservative movement, because, unlike the conservative stance, neo-conservative/Islamist stance is

¹⁹ Serif Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Turkey: The Case of Bediuzaman Said-i Nursi* (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 1989), 221.

²⁰ See Louis J. Cantori, "The Islamic Revival as Conservatism and Progress in Contemporary Egypt" in *Religious Resurgence and Politics in Contemporary World*, ed. E. Sahliyah (Albany, SUNY Press, 1990) 185.

radical and reactionary and sees politics as a means of rescuing society from its crisis. Thus, Islamism/neo-conservatism differs from conservatism in its more ambitious aims. Also, Islamism, like neo-conservatism, believes that ideas shape the society but it wants its ideas to shape the society. Therefore, both Islamism and neo-conservatism relies on state power to shape the human activity and thereby neglect the importance of limited government.²¹

1.3. Holding the Society Together: Islamism as a Project of Construction

The culturalist reassertion of *Islamic identity* for the purposes of Islamic/indigenous modernization implies a process of the construction of the Islamic identity and Muslim society as well. There is an Islamist imagination of society as Muslim society. Indeed, as noted above, Islamists seek secular salvation through first and foremost construction of Muslim identity and Islamic awareness. Ideas are irrelevant to the “solutions” of the Islamist movements as culturalist movements. What is usually meant by Islamisation, however, is not necessarily a return to *Sharia* rule but a modern construction of Muslim society anew, which, in turn, is depicted as a return to “our roots” in Islamist discourses. It could be suggested that Islamism represents the same aspiration with nationalism in the sense that it involves an alternative definition of the society and an alternative ground on which

society is united. In this sense, Islamism could better be thought as a substitute for nationalism. Mark Jurgensmeyer rightly describes Islamic movements as religious nationalist on the basis of the fact that they fuse their religious perspective with the economic and political destiny of the nation.²²

While Islamist movements could be considered as religious nationalist movements, contrasting them with secular nationalism may well be less meaningful than it seems at first sight. In Jurgensmeyer's comparison between religious nationalism and secular nationalism, for example, the dominant paradigm of secular nationalism is the idea that legitimacy of the state is rooted in the will of people and divorced from any religious sanction. Jurgensmeyer problematized religious nationalism and prefers secular nationalism as an ideology of order in a manner reproducing the modern vs. traditional dichotomy. He seems to take for granted the arguable positive correlation between secularism, democracy and pluralism, whereas the relation between them is not necessarily positive. On points crucial to pluralism, secularism too could become "de-differentiating," that is, fundamentalist. Jurgensmeyer seems to neglect that the so-called "secular" nationalism is a de-differentiating and homogenizing ideology as well.

²¹ See Shedia B. Drury, *Leo Strauss and the American Right* (London: Macmillan, 1997) for aspects of neo-conservatism.

²² Mark Jurgensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*, (Berkeley, LA: University of California Press, 1993), 20-41.

Therefore, the fact that the grounds of de-differentiation is not religious in secular nationalism does not make it more pluralist.

Moreover, neither the so-called secular nationalism is as secular as it seems, nor the religious nationalism is as religious as Jurgensmeyer thinks. Politics and political concerns reigns supreme in both kinds of nationalism, and the overall pattern is subordination of both religious and secular principles whenever the exigencies of politics require. As will be seen in the following chapter, modernity is about various functionalizations of religion and religion and "secular" nationalism have been interactive in different ways. It is a commonplace fact that nationalisms have religious components. It is the so-called secular states that produced "Protestant America" or "99 percent Muslim Turkey." The difference between secular and religious nationalism is not the degree of de-differentiation or homogenization, let alone the lack of promotion/preference of a model man on the basis of either *takva*, or modern dressing, or the American way of life that fits into the ideology of the state, but the ground on which homogenization will take place. In this sense, religious nationalists are not anymore or any less de-differentiating than secular nationalists. The comparison of different formulations of the same aspiration, that is, religious and secular nationalism thereby becomes less meaningful. Also, Islamists link the legitimacy of the state to the will of the people as well. The definition of "the people" as Muslims does not make an important difference because secular nationalism too defines "the people" as Muslim. In this sense, religious nationalists are not confronting

an entirely secular state.²³ But, most importantly, if we accept the argument that the imagined community of nation is a site of ideological contestation and power struggles, there is nothing extraordinary in the challenge of Islamist politics to the “secular” nationalism. Ernest Renan’s claim that “the existence of a nation is an everyday plebiscite” actually illustrates the fact that unity and fixity of nation cannot be taken for granted.²⁴ Therefore, whether or not the challenge of Islamism to the secular state is made on the basis of a pluralist/democratic outlook is a more important question than the distinction between religious and secular nationalism. Is, for example, the differentiated nature of society is recognized?

Islamism as alternative nationalism and as an alternative legitimation of capitalist rationality, has in its imagination a particular model of society, and thus mode of societal integration, idea of common good and common values. It is in this sense that Islamic movements are considered to be ideological or anti-systemic movements. But, Islamic movements should not be problematized on the grounds of being ideological, anti-systemic. This is because modern politics is not just about who gets what, when and how. Such a definition of politics misses the essence of modern condition; the

²³ see for example Edward A. Tiryakiyan, “The Wild Cards of Modernity,” *Daedalus*, 126, 2 (Spring, 1997): 147-181, 165-176 for the interaction of religion and nationalism under modernity.

²⁴ *ibid.*, 153. For Ernest Renan see John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds., *Nationalism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 17.

contradiction between is and ought.²⁵ Hence, moral criticism, questioning of the political system, conflicts about the meaning and nature of common values and common good are also part of modern democratic politics, which is about the search for a good society. It is in this respect the fact that Islamism challenges to “the system” cannot *per se* mean that Islamism is a pathology. The opposition (but not necessarily the alternative) of Islamic movements may broaden the sphere of politics, that is they may open certain issues that are defined by the political system as above and beyond politics to democratic deliberation by questioning the system. To what extent Islamism contributes to the realization of freedom in the public sphere and to what extent the current structuration of public sphere allows such a contribution of Islamism are more meaningful questions.

If Islamist alternative could be considered as an ideology concerning the fundamentals of a political community, like nationalism, then the proper ground for the assessment of Islamism is their definition of the political community and legitimate politics. To what extent Islamist mode of integration limits the sphere of political and to what extent Islamist alternative allows for the realization of freedom in the public sphere? What are defined as above and beyond politics and removed from the sphere of democratic deliberation by Islamists?

²⁵ Agnes Heller, “The Concept of the Political Revisited,” in *Political Theory Today*, ed. David Held (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 337.

The crux of the issue concerning Islamism, therefore, lies in the Islamist definition of the “political” and we can not assess and judge the National Outlook Movement (NOM) or Islamism in general solely on the basis of its “Islamicness” or in terms of its relation to modernity. If modernity is about rationalism, Islamists could be considered as rational. If modernity is about religious tolerance, individualism, decline in the social significance of religion the practice of modernity itself is somewhat mixed. Hence, Islamism could be defined as thoroughly modern movements but still we would not know about the political aspects of Islamism. In other words, modernity of Islamism does not necessarily points to a positive aspect of Islamism from a normative-democratic perspective. The modernity of Islamism does not tell us anything about whether it is an emancipatory political movement or not because it does not say anything about the stance of Islamism towards the dominant power relations in society.

At this stage, a brief critique of the talking about Islamism in terms of Islam, as indicated by such titles as “Islam and Democracy”²⁶ can be advanced. The assessments of Islamism in terms of Islam and Democracy seems to essentialize Islam as a political religion and as a culture that could not be democratic. However, the real question as far as democracy and modernity are concerned is not Islam per se, but the specific interpretation of it and the

perceptions of democracy and freedom by those groups and movements that utilize and instrumentalize Islam in their political discourses. In other words, the relation is between Islamists and democracy but not between Islam and democracy. Why then, one should search for conditions of democracy in Islam as if it has an autonomous essence? The view taken in this study fancies neither confinement of religion into the private sphere nor the defense of religion in the public sphere. The issue is not “whether religion essentially is good or bad for politics, functional or dysfunctional for social system, historically progressive or regressive.”²⁷ This study pays attention to the purposes and ways of utilization of religion and does not consider the emergence of movements/groups in the name of religion/Islam on the political stage as something essentially negative for democracy. Therefore, Islam in the public sphere is not something that should be avoided per se for the sake of maintaining democracy since not all political movements are democratic in the “established” Western democracies.

When considering the more important relation between the Islamist and democracy, the conditions of democracy should not be searched in Islam as

²⁶ See for example Bernard Lewis, “Islam and Liberal Democracy” *Atlantic Monthly*, 271 (February, 1993).

²⁷ Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), 66. Casanova argues that only those public religions at the level of civil society, as opposed to the ones at the level of political society and at the level of state, are consistent with the modern universalistic principles and with modern differentiated structures. (p. 219). This view too could be challenged because Casanova seems to essentialize all movements at the level of civil society as democratic.

if it has an autonomous essence and the political context/configuration within which Islamist act should be taken into account as well. Otherwise a risk of over-abstracting and decontextualisation will be faced and the forces that shape Islamist politics will be underemphasized. There are recent studies that link "radicalism" of Islamism to the totalitarian or non-democratic contexts they live in.²⁸ Also, at a general level, it could be suggested that a party's contribution to democracy should not be considered without taking into account the other fields, which hinder or promote the parties' usefulness in advancing democracy.²⁹ In other words, parties' contribution to democracy is possible if other fields are democratized as well. To the extent that Islamism is shaped more by its context than by Islam itself, the question of whether Islamic movements are democratic movements should be asked in conjunction with the broader structuration of the political sphere.

What is proposed in this study is that not only the "ideology" or the Islamist "alternative" and the political behaviour of the Muslim politicians but also

²⁸ See Ahmed S. Moussali, "Modern Islamic Fundamentalist Discourses on Civil Society, Pluralism and Democracy" in *Civil Society in Middle East*, ed. Augustus R. Norton (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), see also Mary-Jane Deeb, "Islam and the State in Algeria and Morocco: A Dialectical Model" and William I. Zartman, "The Challenge of Democratic Alternatives in the Maghrib" both in *Islamism and Secularism in North Africa*, ed. John Ruedy (London: Macmillan, 1996 [1994]). Sayyed V. Nasr, "Democracy and Islamic Revivalism" *Political Science Quarterly*, 110, 2 (1995): 261-285.

²⁹ Alan Ware, *Citizens, Parties, and the State: A Reappraisal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 242.

the context within which Islamists movements emerge should be taken into account when evaluating Islamism. In this way, we could assess Islamism in political rather than religious terms and allow for an accidental contribution by Islamist to the further democratization without glorifying Islamism.

When considering the relationship between Islamists and democracy, it is important to bear in mind that a mere non-violent accommodation of Islamists within the secular-democratizing polity should not be confused with the consolidation of democracy or with the democratic character of Islamism. The participation of Islamist movements in the electoral processes should be associated neither with the consolidation of democracy nor with the inevitable dilution of the Islamist ideology.³⁰ This is because Islamist movements can de-legitimize and undermine the political system in the process of their (pragmatic) participation. Therefore, participation cannot be associated with the legitimacy given by Islamist movements to the system. It could be instrumental for a non-democratic form of state-society relationship.

Democracy could be taken as a regulative idea of modern politics, aiming the expansion of freedom and participation. We lack an empirical reality of democracy as a criterion for the assessment of Islamism unless we freeze the

³⁰ See for example Ali Kazancigil, "Democracy in Muslim Lands: Turkey in Comparative Perspective" *International Social Science Journal*, 43, 2, (1991): 343-360, 357.

concept of democracy by neglecting the fact that democratic development is an ongoing and never-ending process, consolidation of which is pretty impossible. The question of the relationship between Islamists and democracy then is not a question of successful accommodation of Islamist movements within a democratic system at any given moment so as to consolidate democracy. Rather, the question is about the political attitude concerning the issue of further democratization, which is an eternal issue of politics. In other words, democratization is a never-ending project, and we can evaluate Islamist alternatives better by posing the question as to what extent Islamists consider democracy as a never-ending project. As noted above, the essence of modern condition is the contradiction between “is” and “ought.” The political life of modernity and political actors must be aware of the centrality of the contradiction between “is” and “ought” to the operation and dynamics of modern society.³¹ To what extent Islamists are aware of the centrality the distinction between is and ought? Closely linked to this is the Islamist conception of the political, because an issue should first be considered as a political issue in order for it to be democratically resolved. The concept of the political in turn is determined by the proposed mode of social integration, which removes certain issues from the legitimate jurisdiction of politics, and its concomitant state-society relationship, which gives us clues about the possibilities of democratic resolution of the issues. This argument will be elaborated in next chapter.

³¹ Agnes Heller, “The Concept of Politics,” 337.

1.4. Personalism of Islamism

The immediate target of Islamism as an alternative modernizing project is the so-called Westernizing state, which is depicted as alien and oppressive on the basis of its "secularity." The following quote illustrates the point:

Westernization in Muslim lands tried to super-impose the values of Western liberalism on Muslim society with the result that the grip of traditional values was weakened; but no new morality could be developed to fill the gap Islamic resurgence represents a rebellion against this state of affairs. It stands for a reaffirmation of Islamic morality and a rededication of the sources of the *ummah* -material as well as human- to the achievement of social justice and self-reliance.³²

Islamism draws two conclusions from this state of affairs. First, it aims to obtain and maintain the control of the state³³ and second it proposes to resolve the issue of alienation through a cultural "re-unification" project which might be called Islamisation process rather than through a political project such as democratization. The second aspect is about the substantive aspect of Islamism and it involves construction of the Muslim society, but is

³² Khur-Shid Ahmad, "The Nature of the Islamic Resurgence" in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1983), 227.

³³ Ghassan Salame, "Introduction: Where are the Democrats?", and John Waterbury, "Democracy without Democrats?: The Potential for Political Liberalization in the Middle East", both in *Democracy without Democrats: The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, ed. G. Salame (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1994). It must be noted here that politics in general and Islamic politics in particular cannot be reduced to struggles for the attainment of the power of the state. The target of Islamism and its political project Islamisation is broader than just the attainment of power of the state. It comprises political actions at the level of civil society and

not a reconstruction since it does not necessarily imply a return to *Sharia* rule. Once the source of all problems is defined as cultural alienation, it then becomes comprehensible why Islamism does not question the institutional/political set up of the polity and why Islamists do not offer democratization as a resolution to actually political problems. If the problem is cultural, so is the solution. As will be seen below the cultural resolution, in turn, is misleadingly associated with democracy. The cultural resolution necessitates not only an intellectual Islamist activity but also power-seeking, which results in the flexibility of Islamism. In both of these aspects, the question of democratization is underplayed if by democracy we do not mean rule by a certain group or cultural integration of state and society. To the extent that the question of democracy is a question of institutional set up or structuration of politics, Islamism is not about democratic politics in this sense, though Islamists depict themselves as the vanguards of democratic forces and their cultural project as a democratic project. The priority is given to Islamisation of all public spheres, for example, of professional syndicates, the Bar Associations and so on, rather than to the elaboration of the cultural project. Hence, what the cultural project involves will be defined on an ad hoc basis. It is in this sense that Islamism is less about the politics of ideas than politics of presence as a way of empowerment.³⁴ But, this is not to say

intellectual debate as well. Otherwise, we would not, for example, be able to speak of Islamist intellectuals.

³⁴ for politics of presence and politics of ideas see Anne Phillips, "Dealing With Difference: A Politics of Ideas, or a Politics of Presence?" in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, ed.

that the presence would not be followed by actions towards establishing an Islamic society. It only points to ad hoc nature of Islamism.

It could be suggested that, the crux of Islamist politics is “personalization” of all issues. *The problem*, according to Islamists, is that those who hold power are not the *true representatives* of the “Muslim society.” Islamism challenges the secular/Westernizing state, but conceives the state not as a particular institutional configuration. Islamism, in reality conflates the state with the group that inhabits it. Its challenge, therefore, to the incumbents of the state, which is essentially the Westernizing modernizing elite, the ruling class. The (incumbents of the) state criticized for they lack a concern about the well-being of people and material as well as spiritual development of society. They are depicted as extensions of colonialism, as alienated from their own society. In effect, the challenge to the equation of modernization with Westernization, turns out to be a challenge to Westernizing elite only and the realization of democracy turns into replacement of modernizing elite with the pious Islamist cadres. Meanwhile, the form or the terms of the state-society relationship is left out of debate. This signals the possibility of the maintenance of the “same” form of state-society relationship with a different (Islamic) substance. Hence, the challenge of Islamism is not to “the system” as an institutional set up or political configuration but to the system as people. The core of Islamist alternative is, thus, a group of pious and

Seyla Benhabib (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 139-152.

conscious people who are by definition competent and concerned potential rulers.

The portrayal of the current state of affairs in personalized terms represent a continuum with the traditional Islamic political theory, which focuses on types of statesmen and conflates it with the category of politics.³⁵ All contemporary Islamist reduce the social problems to the moral character of leadership. Institutional arrangements are considered to be secondary, for they are unimportant.³⁶ Islamism, in reality, lacks a philosophical background for its aims and claims. Islamism is a discourse about ethics/morality of both the rulers and ruled. This “personalization” of the issues, however, enables Islamism to derive support from different social classes. For example, since social inequalities are not portrayed as a consequence of capitalism, Islamist are able to derive support from both businesspeople and workers.

³⁵ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 8. See also Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984 [1962]), 15-16, for an emphasis of al-Ghazali on the rule by best men. This emphasis on the rule by best men could be considered as a continuum of the Greek philosophy for which the ruler should be the perfect man as well. Another continuity was the Greek doctrine that there is an inherent harmony between human nature and society and man can only attain his natural end in the community. To the extent that these two aspects continued in republican thought, Islamism could be located within the context of republicanism as well. Republicanism will be discussed in chapter 2.

³⁶ A contemporary Islamist thinker Mawdudi is an exemplar. See Charles J. Adams “Mawdudi and The Islamic State” in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1983).

The personality based alternative of Islamism explains the reason why Islamists are primarily power-oriented. But Islamist politicians are seeking power not like the other politicians, who are “greedy and unconcerned.” Islamist politics and politicians are above and beyond conventional politics and politicians. They have a mission. To make this point clear, Islamist differentiate between politics and politicking. The latter refers to conventional politics in which politicians work for themselves, show lack of concern for people, are scandalous, greedy, filthy and guilty. In the former, politics includes a mission concerning the well-being of people and is dedicated to the realization of a pre-defined notion of good life and its concomitant common good and so on. The success of Islamism, therefore, lies in degrading the ruling elite and convincing the people that Islamists and/or pious people are better rulers. It is for this reason that Islamism tries to make the most of the political scandals of the secular politicians. In its degradation, Islamism employs conspiracy theories, identifies the ruling elite as villains and depicts its own cadres as superior to others. The personalistic alternative of Islamism also points to the “negativism of Islam” as well.³⁷ Islamism is capable of successful opposition and delegitimation, but it cannot produce concrete and constructive alternatives.

³⁷ Patrick D. Gaffney, “Popular Islam” *The Annals*, 524, (November, 1992): 38-51, 49.

The Islamist depiction and degrading of all rulers apart from themselves as an alienated and corrupt political class is often followed by (strategic) alliances to advance the 'cause' within the framework of the 'alien' state. This seems perplexing when we bear in mind the fact that Islamists depict their opponents not as adversaries but enemies to be destroyed. This "collusion" also reveals the flexibility of Islamist movements in choosing their strategies. Islamist cadres exempt themselves from the moral standards they impose on others and their political maneuvering call their morality into question. However, such a seemingly paradoxical behaviour of Muslim politicians does not represent a shift from the original discourse for two reasons. First, as pious and therefore morally sound people, Islamist politicians offer themselves as *the* alternative. Hence, there is no political program that could be used as a criterion to check the consistency of Muslim politicians. What is important is the accession of Muslim politicians to political power who are by definition competent rulers. Closely linked to this is the fact that participation in Islamist movements is interpreted as an end in itself. Participation in Islamist movement is depicted as the expression of person's values and demonstration of a commitment even though it has no role in policy making. Second, Islamist politicians legitimize themselves on the basis of the achievement of a goal, which is an ambiguous cultural project. As long as the goal is kept in sight, Islamists do not lose their legitimacy and the seeming shifts from the goal can be justified as instrumental/strategic shifts for the achievement of the goal. It is in this sense that the participation of Islamists in the electoral processes does not

necessarily lead to the softening of the Islamist ideology or to the recognition of the society as differentiated as it is.

The claim that Islamist cadres are the true representatives of (Muslim) society, points to a future Islamisation of society as well. This intention of Islamisation is justified on the basis of democracy, i.e. rule by (the true representatives) of people. The reason behind the integration of democracy into the Islamist discourse could be the status of democracy as a universal common good of the modern world.³⁸ However, democracy is adopted in a nominal fashion. Democracy is a means of expressing the will of an essentially Muslim nation *vis a vis* the so-called alien state. Islamist politicians, as the true representatives of the people, will be able use political power to mould the society in accordance with their own imagination, and this will be legitimate for they are the true representatives of society. In effect, it is not the people but the Islamist elite that determines what the “will of people” is. Islamists deserve to dominate, but domination is regarded as the reassertion of the true self.³⁹ This is, in reality, a distorted and misleading understanding of democracy that, in effect, is a form of populism rather than democracy. It also points to a disrespect for different political choices, to a depiction of other political choices as manifestations of false-consciousness. Conscious people choose the true representatives of the

³⁸ John L. Esposito and James P. Piscatori, “Democratization and Islam” *Middle East Journal*, 45,3, (Summer, 1991): 427-440, 438, 440.

society, the Islamists. Islamist notion of democracy is, therefore, limited to electoral processes and neglects such issues as limited government, pluralism and accountability. In this respect, that the source of legitimacy is secular, that is the people, does not make Islamist politics democratic, plural because "the people" is not recognized as it is but defined in a homogenous, de-differentiated fashion. According to Islamists, government is a product of society, society and government are not partially interdependent and partially autonomous. Hence, there is no need to be consensus-seeking when ruling. Islamist politics neglects the differentiated structure of the society.

Consequently, the notion of political liberties are interpreted in a way that valorizes democracy for a particular anti-democratic ideological current.⁴⁰

This, however, does not spring from the nature of the religion, Islam, but from the lack of any "adoption of either the ethical and legal precepts of Islam, or the attitudes and institutions of traditional society, to democracy", despite the contrary claims of Islamists.⁴¹ But still, in their struggle to gain the power of the state to re-built the 'golden age', or Islamic civilization, Islamists, *per accidens*, may contribute to democracy, if the state they are challenging is not a democratic state either.

³⁹ See Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities* (London: Verso, 1993), 29.

⁴⁰ See *ibid.*, 115, 121 for an eloquent description of Islamist understanding of democracy.

⁴¹ See Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of the Shi'i and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1986, [1982]), 135.

2. ACCOUNTING FOR ISLAMISM: PARADOXES, CRISIS AND FAILURES OF MODERNIZING STATES

By some established scholars, Islamism is explained in terms of the inability or declining capabilities of the modernizing regimes to control Islam. More accurately, Islamism is explained as a response of "Muslim society" to a number of crises such as identity, socio-economic, legitimacy and meaning(lessness) crises.⁴² Such accounts take for granted the durability of "Islamic bedrock."⁴³ These accounts of Islamism actually differ in the factors to which they link the crises, inability or declining capabilities of the modernizing regimes/states. Hence, there is a deterministic link between the failures of the states and the rise of Islamism, even the recent attempts to go beyond the modernization paradigm and essentialist conceptualization of Muslim society, as will be seen below, seems to be stranded in this same view. There is actually not much difference between linking the rise of Islamism to the economic disparities or globalization, to which economic disparities are linked to in this era. In both, it is the state that fails and in

⁴² Emile Sahliyeh, "Religious Resurgence and Political Modernization," in *Religious Resurgence and Politics in Contemporary World*, ed. idem (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), Emmanuel Sivan, "The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back" in *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Lawrence Kaplan (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 98-101.

⁴³ This is the view taken by, for example, Richard Bulliet *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). Bulliet argues that Islam persisted at the periphery ("the edge") of the society and the center of society was unable to strike a deal with them because of its secular language.

both failure could be economic. Similarly, there is little difference between linking the emergence of Islamism to the postmodern deconstruction or universal crisis of modernity and the declining capabilities of modernizing regimes to secure their legitimacy because the former eventually boils down to the latter. The only difference is the level of crisis is now higher. Most of the accounts that will be reviewed below are not mutually exclusive but overlapping.

2.1. Islamism as a Conservative Reaction of Muslim Society to Modernization.

Islamic resurgence ... is the result of the disorientation caused by rapid economic development and the disaffection with social change brought about by the transplantation of certain aspects and appurtenances of modernity [which is Christian] ⁴⁴

In this perspective the focus is on "Muslim society," in which Islam revives or resurges. Islamism is depicted as a conservative reaction of Muslim society to the unsettling social and economic consequences that accompany modernization or to the modernizing state itself on the basis of its' alienation from Muslim society. Islamism is an assertion of Muslim people against the West or Westernizing regime, but not, for example, against the

⁴⁴ P. J. Vatikiotis, "Islamic Resurgence: A Critical View" in *Islam and Power*, eds. Alexander S. Cudsi and Ali E. Hilal Dessouki (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 193.

authoritarianism of Westernizing regimes. The underlying (Weberian) assumption in this approach is the definition of modernity as essentially Christian and a view of Islam as a religion that could not act as an agent of change.⁴⁵ In other words, Islam is defined as a pre-industrial defensive culture, while the modern Western European culture is scientifically and technologically based industrial culture.⁴⁶ Since Islam could not be an agent of change, it could not become the basis of a modern political order.⁴⁷ Therefore, if modernization is to take place, it will take place in spite of Islam. As a corollary, the modernizing state is (has to be) by definition a “secular” or more accurately Islam-unfriendly state. Hence, this is a view of politics with a non-accommodating, uncompromising attitude towards Islam.

This approach is misleading in its Orientalist⁴⁸ portrayal of Islam as a religion that could not be an agent of change. Linked to this is the caricatured portrayal of Islamist movements as regressive and

⁴⁵ Vatikiotis, “Islamic Resurgence: A Critical View,” 177, see also William Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology: An Extended Survey* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985 [1962]), 160 and W. M. Watt, *Muslim-Christian Encounters: Perceptions and Misperceptions* (London: Routledge, 1991), 119-120.

⁴⁶ Bassam Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam*, 5, 24, and passim.

⁴⁷ Vatikiotis, “Islamic Resurgence: A Critical View,” 193

⁴⁸ See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1987 [1978]), for a critique of Orientalism, which portrays the Orient, for example, as “holds

conservative movements, rejecting modernity. Islamist movements are considered as conservative, regressive solely by virtue of their utilization of religious language in their discourses, whereas, Islamism is a kind of movement aiming to reformulate and regulate modernity by claiming the relevance of the Islamic principles to politics and by appropriating Islamic identity and values to address pressing social issues.⁴⁹ We, therefore, cannot say that Islamism is a rejection of modernity solely on the basis of its utilization of religion. The portrayal of Islamist movements as anti-modernization legitimizes the non-compromising and non-accommodating attitude of "secularist modernizing" regimes towards Islamic movements. Muslim countries within this framework have two options: either (authoritarian) modernization or Islamisation. The paradox here is that the uneven process of modernization will constantly produce dislocations, which is considered to be the source of Islamic resurgence. As such, this approach is too "mechanical" in the sense that it neglects various possibilities of politics. Why is it, for example, that it is not the "secular ideologies" addressing the same issue of dislocation which do not resurge and why is it only Islam(ism) which resurges? The answer to these questions boils down to an Orientalist concept of Muslim society and/or Islam, but is

little belief in progress and change, and finds salvation only in the hereafter." 310, 310-314, and passim.

⁴⁹ Lionel Caplan, "Introduction" in *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism*, ed. Idem (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), Haldun Gulalp, "A Postmodern Reaction to Dependent Modernization: The Social and Historical Roots of Islamic Radicalism" *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 8 (Fall, 1992)15-26, C. E.

there a Muslim society and are modern societies culturally homogenous are the questions that are left unaddressed.

2.2. Islamism as a Consequence of the Failures of Modernizing State

This perspective on Islamism is the most often employed perspective and links the resurgence of Islam or more accurately the rise of Islamism to the failures of the modernizing state. The general picture of this perspective is that, in order to keep Islam in its "proper" place, a strong state is needed; the failures of the modernizing state in delivering the promised goods or in providing a meaningful Weltanschauung, weakens the state, which is the agency to control Islam; therefore (civil) society, which turns out to be not only Muslim but also Islamist, strikes-back in the form of resurgence.⁵⁰ The modernizing states could be liberal, socialist or Marxist, and we can understand where their strength is derived from by looking at what they mean by failure. Failure means either failure in delivering the promised goods of modernization or failure in overcoming the alienation of society from the state.⁵¹ In the latter case it may become visible as a consequence of

Butterworth and I. W. Zartman, "Foreword" *The Annals* 524, (November, 1992) 8-12, and Halliday, "The Politics of Islam: A Second Look."

⁵⁰ Emmanuel Sivan, "The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back," 98-101.

⁵¹ See for example Hasan Hanafi, "The Origins of Modern Conservatism and Islamic Fundamentalism" in Ernest Gellner, ed. *Islamic Dilemmas:*

modernization rather than the lack of it. Viewed from a different angle, the failures-approach associates the strength of state either with effective administration or cultural “unification.” In both cases, the failures-approach converge with the claims of Islamism according to which state is culturally alienated from society and the country is undeveloped.

2.2.1 “Failure” as Cultural Alienation

For Emmanuel Sivan and Serif Mardin, failure is the inability of the secular modernizing state “to modify its people’s core values in relation to the ultimate meaning of life” in the process of modernization.⁵² It is important to note that failure here is not in carrying out modernization reforms but in giving a sense to them. In this respect, failure could be seen as a consequence of further modernization which produces “social mobility” and “immigration.” These, in turn, produce insecure people displaced from their own communities and desperately in need of a meaning. Kemalism, or other modernizing ideologies, fail exactly at this point. Because modernizing regimes are culturally alienated, they could not provide a social ethos that

Reformers, Nationalists and Industrialization: The Southern Shore of the Mediterranean (Berlin, Mouton Publishers, 1985).

⁵² Sivan “The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back,” 100, Serif Mardin, “Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey” in *Islam in the Political Processes*, ed. James Piscatori (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 155-156, and Serif Mardin, “Islam in Mass Society” in *Politics in the*

appeals to the heart as well as to the mind of people.⁵³ Modernization fails because it could not legitimize its own rationality. Islam persisted at the edge of the society, and only the center was secularized. Therefore, there appears a disjunction between “the people” and the political center. People ask questions to which Islamic answers are more convincing.⁵⁴ Hence, Islamism occurs as a consequence of further modernization and it becomes an expression of discontent about the alienation of the state from the (Muslim) society.

This approach actually springs from the Weberian approach to religion which functionalizes religion as a meaning-provider and which links successful modernization to a proper (rationalist) culture such as “Protestant ethic.”⁵⁵ “Modernization”, in this picture, “carries with it a conception of a relatively autonomous individual ...{who} requires a society in which he feels like a full participating member, whose goals he shares and can meaningfully contribute to” and the success of a modernizing society is “partly dependent on its success in the field of meaning and motivation.”⁵⁶

Third Turkish Republic, eds. M. Heper and A. Evin (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994).

⁵³ Mardin, “Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey” 156. See also Hakan Yavuz, “Political Islam and the Welfare (Refah) Party in Turkey” *Comparative Politics*, 30, 1 (October, 1997): 63-82, 64

⁵⁴ See Bulliet, *Islam: The View From the Edge*, 189-200

⁵⁵ More will be said on Weber in next chapter.

What is assessed within this framework (of meaning provision) is the modernizing ideology in question, for example, Kemalism rather than Islam. For example, Kemalism as a meaning-provider has been meaningful only for a small educated/Westernized elite and modernization, therefore, failed.

As such this approach underplays the importance of the role of the “modernization theory,” or, should one say, the modernizing ideology, in providing meaning and motivation. Modernization theory, as Jeffrey C. Alexander argued, “functioned as a metalanguage that instructed people how to live” by turning “a historically specific categorical scheme into a scientific theory of development applicable to any culture around the entire world.”⁵⁷ In other words, to the extent that Kemalism has been a modernizing regime, not only its relations with the Muslim society but also international social theory had been a source of its legitimacy as well.

It seems Islam could step in two different ways as a response to the failure of modernizing ideology to provide a meaning. Firstly, Islam could “softly” step in to redress the balance broken by the overmaterialization and overrationalization of life by providing a stable refuge. Hence, it has been suggested that psychological and cultural dimensions of the recent visibility of Islam are the most important aspects of relieving the everyday life of the

⁵⁶ R. N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-traditionalist World* (Berkeley, L. A: University of California Press, 1991), 159, 73.

⁵⁷ See Jeffrey Alexander, “Modern, Anti, Post and Neo”, 69, 71.

masses from the austerity of modernization.⁵⁸ Islam in this picture complements the material dissatisfactions with the ethical principles that could not be provided by Kemalism. Islam in this perspective counters the destructive tendencies of modernization. As such, Islam as ethic-provider is neither oppositional nor political nor ideological. Indeed, to the extent that Islamic modernization is possible, it could become a soft ideology providing a meaning to life and modernization. Here, a functional definition of religion is employed and religion, therefore, is equated with the political ideologies performing the same function of “meaning provision.”

Secondly, Islam could step in to resolve the (political) issue of cultural alienation of the state from the society and the erosion of indigenous cultural values due to Westernization, by attempting to replace the Kemalist project in a reactionist manner through political means. In this respect, Islam steps in not as a psychological religion but as a political religion challenging the current order so as to bring the state closer to the society. In this political stepping in, too, Islam could be a modernizing, but this time in a way that challenges to the state’s version and aims to revitalize the Islamic civilization.

The idea that the (“secular”) state is culturally alienated from the society and therefore cannot integrate people into its modernization drive implies that

religion in some way has to be integrated to the modernizing ideology of the regime.⁵⁹ This is because it is assumed that successful modernization requires a meaning. This might well be true. But unless we pose the question “what sort of accommodation/deal,” we might either play right into the hands of Islamists or produce other problems that would spring from the communitarian nature of a deal.⁶⁰ To pay attention to this question one must prioritize the institutional set up of politics rather than the cultural alienation of the modernizing state. This is because if one focuses solely on the cultural aspects of the modernizing-secular regime, the resolution of the above problem would likely to be cultural/Islamic unification of the state and society, which is precisely what Islamists claim. But, if in the resolution of the issue of cultural alienation a concept of homogenous society is

⁵⁸ Metin Heper, “Islam, Polity and Society in Turkey: A Middle Eastern Perspective” *The Middle East Journal* 35, (1981), 345-363, 363.

⁵⁹ By employing traditional-modern dichotomy, we might, alternatively, think that modernizing regimes aimed to turn traditional sectors of society by a project of social engineering so as to make all people subscribe to the values of the center, thereby resolve the issue of cultural alienation gradually. One can also draw the conclusion that the modernizing state should keep pursuing its project from the cultural alienation thesis. In this way, anti-participatoriness of the modernizing regimes could be explained: participation is based on the precondition of being “modern” first. Thus, seems to be a justification for anti-participatoriness. As Ghassan Salame pointed out “secularization too often meant the exclusion of those who, in the name of tradition, required this modern machine [the state] to be accountable.” See his “Introduction: Where are the Democrats?,” 13. Focusing on the cultural aspects of modernizing regime, or Islamism, may lead us to neglect/justify the undemocratic political consequences of modernization. Therefore, this study attempts to focus on political sphere to assess the regime/movement in question in terms of democracy and pluralism.

employed, in this case, society will be considered as a community and the differentiated structure of the society will be ignored in terms of not all sectors of society being culturally alienated from the state. The issue concerning the “problem” of Islamism is not cultural but political, and a political issue could best be resolved by political measures rather than cultural ones. Also, if we bear in mind the fact that modernizing regimes are not necessarily super-secular regimes and they, too, have often resorted to religion to legitimize their ends, the question of failure turns out to be a question of politics rather than of cultural alienation. The question could, therefore, be the political and institutional set up rather than cultural alienation. Even if we accept the point that cultural alienation from the state has been the issue, it is useful only as a starting point for studying current Islamism. Otherwise, we might misleadingly consider Islamist movements as the “true” representatives of society.

2.2.2. Failure in Delivering the Promised Goods

The term failure is most often used in the sense of the failure of modernizing state in delivering its promised goods in responding to the socio-economic needs of society or as a product of the frustration with the promises of

⁶⁰ See below promotion of Islam by the state as an unsuccessful attempt to strike a deal with Islam.

Westernist modernization.⁶¹ These failures becomes apparent generally with the dismantling of the old "social contract" and the inability of secular regimes to maintain the clientalist ties, for example by neo-liberal economic policies.⁶² With this approach, "broken promises" becomes a representative of the crisis of Kemalist ideology and Islamism becomes an inevitable expression of dissatisfaction rather than a political *choice* for the expression of discontent. Hence, the relation between Kemalism and Islamism is in either/or terms and those who subscribe to Islamism are reduced to the economically marginalized sector of the society only. In this picture, Islamism is equated with the "losers" of the modernization process, be them the small bourgeoisie or the *gecekond* settlers. The argument that Islamist movements perform better in electoral terms because of their charity activities is based on this perspective. Alternatively, it is misleadingly suggested that, Islamist perform better because "religious ideologies do not disappoint in the same way [as secular ideologies which offer material

⁶¹ John L. Esposito, "Islam and Muslim Politics" in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 11; Haldun Gulalp, "The Crisis of Westernization in Turkey: Islamism vs. Nationalism," *Innovation*, 8, 2, (1995): 175-182; Mark Tessler, "The Origins of Popular Support for Islamist Movements: A Political Economy Analysis" in *Islam, Democracy and the State in North Africa*, ed. John Pitelis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); Jeff Haynes, *Religion in Third World Politics* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1994), 145; Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 212; Keddie, "The Revolt of Islam, 1700 to 1993", 486; Basam Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam*,. Jurgensmeyer, *The New Cold War?* 194.

⁶² Assuming that the old social contract was not democratic in the modernizing authoritarian regimes, the dismantling of it could be considered as an opportunity for a new democratic "social contract."

benefits] because they [i.e. the expectations created by religious ideologies] are not expected to be fulfilled in this world"⁶³

Consequently, the solution to the "problem" of Islamism is some kind of equal distribution of wealth by the state or charity activities by the secular NGOs, or simply by more modernization.⁶⁴ In other words, the solution for this perspective is administrative in the sense that a prudent government that will address the grievances of ordinary people will resolve the issue. Assuming that only the marginalized sector supports the Islamist movement makes this approach deterministic in the sense that it assumes certain economic facts determine certain political outcomes. This approach thereby does not heed political sphere as providing different channels for expression of discontent.

But more importantly, this approach deduces the failure of modernization solely from the presence of Islamism. This is because this approach employs an either/or logic and its underlying concept of secularism proposes the decline of religion as modernization proceeds. It is true that Islamists argue

⁶³ Mark Jurgensmeyer, *The New Cold War?*, 194 As noted above, Islamist movements are essentially this worldly salvationist movements, offering material goods. Therefore Jurgensmeyer's argument here seems to be defective. The legitimacy of Islamist movements is at least partially dependent upon the delivery of the material goods.

⁶⁴ This is also the perspective Atatürkcu Düşünce Derneği and the Republican Peoples Party in Turkey. See Kazancıgil, "Democracy in

that modernization has failed but by which indisputable criteria can we judge the success or failure of modernization? Was there a deadline for modernization to succeed by? Was the legitimacy of the state based solely on delivery, and if so why? In order for this argument to be convincing, it must first show how the modernizing state based its legitimacy solely on delivery. The positive point of the failures thesis is that it does not link the emergence of Islamism to the religiosity of people but to their political experience. This approach, on the whole, has the merit of drawing our attention to double-edgedness of modernization process and to the fact that resurgence is a reaction to unevenness in modernization, rather than modernization per se. In this way, this approach emphasizes the fact that Islamism is actually about claiming a stake in modernization process. But, since this is basically a political economy approach, it neglects the cultural dimension in claiming a stake in modernization process.

2.3. Islamism as a "Paradoxical" Outcome of Modernization.

Modernization, in above explanations is conceived "despite Islam," but modernization in both economic, social and political aspects creates an opportunity for the revitalization of Islam in a "Muslim society" as well. The presence of the modern state apparatus and increasing ability of state to

Muslim Lands: Turkey in Comparative Perspective" for a similar argument linking the rise of WP to socio-economic inequalities.

control the lives of its subjects may lead to expectation of a responsiveness by the state to the Islamic concerns of Muslim "citizens."⁶⁵ Also, it could be suggested that modernization in communications and education enables Islam to revitalize itself better, i.e., it provides better opportunities for the expression and representation of Islamic concerns. Gellner's sociology of Islam suggests that modernity led to renewal of the essence of Muslims under new conditions. Gellner identifies two versions of Islam: high and low. High Islam, under modern conditions, according to Gellner, functions like Weber's Protestant ethic. It is therefore, compatible with capitalist enterprise, accumulation and capitalist development.⁶⁶

Alternatively, secular and therefore alien states may manipulate religious symbols to prop up their legitimacy and this may create an opportunity for Islamism (see below). Politically, in the case of Turkey, the 'liberal' constitution of 1960 has eased the birth of Islamism by allowing the emergence of political pluralism.⁶⁷ Such democratization eventually led to the infiltration of peripheral, by definition Islamic, elements to the center,

⁶⁵ R. M. Burrell, "Introduction: Islamic Fundamentalism in the Middle East - A Survey of Its Origins and Diversity", in *Islamic Fundamentalism*, ed. Idem., Papers read at a seminar held at SOAS, University of London, on March 10th 1988. (London: Royal Asiatic Society Seminar Papers No. 1, Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland), 10-11.

⁶⁶ See Sami Zubaida, "Is There a Muslim Society?" 151-188.

⁶⁷ Sabri Sayari, "Politicization of Islamic Re-traditionalism" in *Islam and Politics in the Middle East* eds., Metin Heper and Raphael Israeli (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984).

which historically had kept Islam on the periphery. To the extent that Islamism is considered to be a “problem” as far as modernization/democratization is concerned, this approach draws our attention to the trade-off between Westernization and control, participation and stability if we are to remain within the paradigm of Westernization. It also implicitly suggests that modernizing regimes should never be popularized and pluralized, if modernization process is to continue.

Economically, the National Outlook movement was born as a consequence of further economic modernization, which was beneficial more to the big bourgeoisie than to the small one. This economic modernization resulted in the widening of the gap between the interests of these two groups. National Outlook movement emerged as an outspan of Justice Party, representing a conservative group of the small bourgeoisie. The small bourgeoisie, in this picture, is considered to be essentially Islamist.

2.4. Promotion of Islam by the State

In the case of Turkey, as will be seen below, Kemalism was not a super-secular ideology, it persistently used religion for (legitimizing) its own modernizing ends⁶⁸ and to maintain the political community. The official

appeal to Islam, it seems, was informed by Durkeimian-Parsonian views on the place of religion in modern society, i.e. civil religion that legitimizes the modernizing ends and maintains the moral community. In this respect, depoliticization of religion has been a myth. While real religion was considered to be an impediment to modernization, religion was also considered to be functional in holding the society together. In explaining the rise of Islamism in Turkey, some of the accounts point to the change in the official ideology of the state with regards to Islam. Heper points out that Islam along with "science" was recognized as an element of Turkish identity in the 1980s.⁶⁹ This change in the approach of the state, at first sight, could be considered as a compromising attitude of the Kemalist state towards Islam and an attempt by the state to bridge the gap created by the above mentioned cultural alienation of the state from society. It could also be suggested that the appeal of the state to Islam in the post-1980 period

⁶⁸ See *Ataturk, Din ve Laiklik*, 1968, Belgelerle Turk Tarihi Dergisi Ozel Yayin, no:2 Istanbul, Mentec, for one of Ataturk's speeches illustrating the point here. Also, the President of the Turkish Republic in 1960s, Cemal Gursel, stated that "[t]hose who blame religion for our backwardness are wrong. No, the cause of our backwardness is not religion but those who have misinterpreted our religion to us. Islam is the most sacred, most constructive, most dynamic and powerful religion in the world. It demands of those who believe in this faith always to achieve progress and higher wisdom. But for centuries Islam has been explained to us negatively and incorrectly. That is why we are lagging behind the nations of the world" cited in Edward Mortimer, *Faith and Power: The Politics of Islam* (New York: Vintage Books, 1982)150. This statement illustrates what the official appeals to Islam was informed from. See also Bahir M. Erureten, "Turk Devrimin ve Islama Bakisi" *Cumhuriyet*, February 13, 1996 for an illustration of Kemalism's view of Islam from a Kemalist perspective.

contributed to the rise of Islamism in Turkey by “normalizing” Islamic discourses in the public sphere.⁷⁰

The shift, however, was an instrumental accommodation with Islam to maintain political community in accordance with the Kemalist vision of classless society, maintenance of which became impossible due to the liberalization of the economy in the 1980s. As a consequence, Islam was promoted both as the unifying factor and also in order to disguise the differentiated nature of society in the 1980s. The strength of Islam, in this picture, is an unintended consequence of political *volte face* of the republican elite, rather than revival of a latent cultural item.⁷¹ To the extent that the Islamist movement in the 1990s get out of the control of the state, it could be suggested that Kemalism has fallen into its own trap by legitimizing Islamist discourses. This approach is accurate in not linking Islamism to Islam and/or Muslim society and emphasizing the role of the “secular” state in the normalization and revitalization of Islam. However, it tells little about the better performance of the movement whose

⁶⁹ Metin Heper, “The State, Religion and Pluralism: The Turkish Case in Comparative Perspective” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 28, (1991): 38-55, 53-54.

⁷⁰ Binnaz Toprak, “Islamist Intellectuals: Revolt against Industry and Technology” in *Turkey and the West: Images of a New Political Culture* eds., Metin Heper et. al. (London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd. Publishers, 1993), 243.

⁷¹ Faruk Birtek and Binnaz Toprak, “Conflictual Agendas of Neo-Liberal Reconstruction and the Rise of Islamic Politics in Turkey: Hazards of Rewriting Modernity” *Praxis International*, 13, 2 (1993), 192-212, 194.

interpretation of Islam is not only among many others but also challenging to that of the state.

2.5. "Fundamentalism" as a Reaction to Globalization(s)

There are recent attempts for alternative accountings of Islamism going beyond the context of nation-state as the sole circumstance of Islamism. The starting point for these attempts is the Giddensian belief that globalization should have a key position in the lexicon of social scientists because there has been a steadily increasing trend of globalization in the last decades so that world has become increasingly interconnected and "societies are no longer simply tied to single places or particular times."⁷² Hence, since we all share a common social environment, boundaries are losing their meaning and the concepts (East vs. West, Orient vs. Occident) we have thus far used are made redundant. The rhetoric of globalization claims that the autonomy of the national states losing its meaning in the face of increasing globalization because the power of the state under globalization shifts upwards to international organizations such as the IMF, sideways to international corporations and downwards through decentralization to local

⁷² Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), see also Evan Luard, *The Globalization of Politics: The Changed Focus of Political Action in the Modern World*, (London: Macmillan, 1990), R. Friedland and D. Boden, "NowHere: An

governments.⁷³ There are many “independent” nation-states devoid of substance in economic, military and political terms. States are no longer able to provide cultural identity, physical security and economic well being. Since issues such as the ecology and poverty are now global problems, affecting not only the people who face them, there are hardly national solutions to them. As a consequence, the sphere of politics is extended beyond the nation-state, the traditional domain of politics.⁷⁴ Globalization basically means a new structuration of the playing field of politics.⁷⁵ Hence, in the light of this sea of change, it is asserted, approaching Islamism from a globalization perspective would give way to a better understanding of the

Introduction” in *NowHere: Space, Time and Modernity*, eds., idem (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁷³ Susan Strange, “The Defective State” *Daedalus*, 124, 2, (1995): 55-74 on the declining capabilities of the state see also David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press, 1995), 136, 176-185, David Held and Anthony McGrew “Globalization and Liberal Democratic State,” *Government and Opposition*, 28, 2, (1993): 261-288. Barrie Axford, *The Global System: Economics, Politics and Culture*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 152-164. For a dissident view on the decline of the state thesis see Leo Panitch, “Globalization, States and Left Strategies,” *Social Justice*, 23, 1-2, (1996): 79-90. Panitch argues that the decline of state thesis *vis a vis* capital overestimates the previous power of nation-state in controlling capital and ignores the role played today by the states in facilitating globalization. Also Philip Cerny takes globalization not as a decline of the state but transformation of nation-state into a competition state, which is no longer able to pursue a common good but more powerful to monitor economic activity. See his “Paradoxes of Competition State: The Dynamics of Political Globalization” *Government and Opposition*, 32, 2 (Spring 1997): 251-274, 251.

⁷⁴ Susan Strange, “The Limits of Politics” *Government and Opposition*, 30, 3, (1995): 291-311

⁷⁵ Philip Cerny, “Paradoxes of Competition State..” 253.

phenomenon. Below, first the discourse of globalization, then the accountings for Islamism on the basis of globalization will be reviewed.

The process of globalization is defined in a number of ways and with each definition of globalization, conceptualization of Islamic movements changes. One of them is that globalization is a trend, culturally and institutionally, towards homogenization of the world. As such globalization is actually Westernization by another name.⁷⁶ By homogenization it is usually meant the undebatable triumph of the Western liberal democracy. The end of history thesis, which depicts liberal-capitalist “democracy” as the last point, or synthesis, that the world society has reached, is an exemplar. From this perspective, Islamist movements could be depicted as both anti-Westernist and anti-modernist reactions to globalization and as an outcome of the global delegitimization of the authoritarian modernizing regimes, which now turned out to be non-modernizing as well. The clash of civilizations thesis could be situated in this definition as well.⁷⁷ In this picture, the global sphere is divided into civilizational spheres in which states collaborate along civilizational lines *vis a vis* other civilizations. The clash of civilizations perspective not only denies the possibility of modernization without Westernization but also signals the end of modernization as Westernization,

⁷⁶ Jan Nederveen Pieterse, ‘Globalization as Hybridization’, in *Global Modernities*, eds., Mike Featherstone et al, (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

for it takes culture as something that cannot be changed. It considers identity politics in general as an anomaly and therefore conflicts with the thesis that globalization is a process producing identity politics. It also seems to indicate a replacement of the cold war with the clash of civilizations.

Globalization could also be considered as an extension of modernization theory in the sense that it argues that the modernization of the West has directly resulted in the spread of certain institutions of the West such as the nation-state and capitalist economics. But, this global spread resulted in a new social unit which is more than the simple expansion of the Western modernity or homogenization.⁷⁸ The structures such as the nation-state may well be the original products of Western modernity, but these structures produce distinct localities. As Talal Asad pointed out, "the idea that cultural borrowing must lead to total homogeneity and to loss of authenticity is clearly absurd, but the idea of projects' having translatable historical structures should not be confused with it."⁷⁹

Globalization is a process that indicates an increasing awareness of the world becoming a single place, which in turn generates an awareness of

⁷⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, 72, 3, (Summer, 1993): 22-49.

⁷⁸ Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 1992).

cultural difference. It corrodes inherited or constructed identities and calls upon various collectivities to declare their identities because the process of globalization weakens the state and its ability to provide identity/meaning. Consequently, globalization is a process producing strivings for recognition of cultural differences, i.e. identity politics, at the global sphere.⁸⁰ Islamism, in this picture, could be considered as a movement aiming at the global recognition of Islam as a legitimate, equal and respectful identity. In this sense, it makes little sense to consider Islamic movements as anti-modern movements in a context modern institutions are globally spread. This is one way of seeing Islamism from globalization perspective. As such, Islamism is an aspect rather than a reaction to globalization process. But, if/when Islamism involves a struggle beyond the recognition of Islamic identity, this approach becomes inadequate.

Viewed from the globalization perspective, Islamist movements are prone to be seen as conservative movements and are prone to be caricaturized as "fundamentalist" movements. Indeed, religious movements in the globalization perspective are generally referred to as de-differentiating

⁷⁹ Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 13.

⁸⁰ see for example Robertson, *Globalization*, 183, Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Globalization and Culture: Three Paradigms," *Economic and Political Weekly*, (June, 1996): 1389-1393, see also Raymond L. Lee, "Modernization, Postmodernism and the Third World" *Current Sociology*, 42, 2 (Summer, 1994): 1-64, Vincent Cable, "The Diminished Nation-State" *Daedalus* 124, 2 (1995).

fundamentalist reactions to the process of globalization, defined as either a trend towards homogenization or as postmodern ephemerality or as ambivalence. Even if the process of globalization is employed in other senses than Westernization, almost all varieties of globalization actually replace the traditional-modern dichotomy with the global-local. They trace the origins of religious movements to the ascendance of modernity and reduce them all to the fundamentalist movements which attempt to use aspects of religion for coping and shaping the world. The globalization perspective, then, as will be seen below, tends to become "the old wine in new bottles," replacing the category of modernity with the category of globalization. It might be suggested that the explanation which offers globalization as leading to the rise of religious movements is inadequate, because the effects of globalization is not the same everywhere, which invites us to a study of local context as well. In other words, globalization perspective could be too homogenizing, for it may lead us to neglect the local contexts.

2.5.1. Globalization as Postmodernity

This perspective could be considered as an extension of the above mentioned account that portrays Islamism as a conservative reaction of Muslim society to the process of modernization. This approach differs from the above mentioned approach in the subject that fundamentalism reacts against. Islamism is portrayed as fundamentalism, which now reacts to the

process of globalization, multiculturalism, and postmodern pluralism. Postmodernization is actually associated with the process of secularization, "because it is difficult for religions to protect themselves from the critique of postmodern culture which regards all religious accounts of the world as merely 'grand narratives'."⁸¹ In this picture, Islamism, in effect, turns out to be a reaction to secularism via reaction to postmodernization. As such, the only difference of this approach is the replacement of the dichotomy of the modern vs. traditional with the dichotomy of the postmodern vs. modern. Indeed, Bryan S. Turner suggests that "fundamentalism appears now ... as the defender of the project of modernity against the disjointed pluralism of postmodernity."⁸²

In this approach, globalization involves the spread of Western life-style and consumerism to the Rest of the world in an hyperreal fashion, that is as free-floating signifiers disengaged from its origins.⁸³ In this context, religious faith is threatened and revitalized by the commodification of everyday life, which offers a range of possible life-styles that competes and contradicts

⁸¹ Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, (London: Routledge, 1994), 185.

⁸² Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, 80.

⁸³ Lee, "Modernization, Postmodernism and the Third World" , 29 Timothy W. Luke, "New World Order or New World Orders: Power, Politics and Ideology in Informationalizing Glocalities," in *Global Modernities*, eds., Mike Featherstone et al, (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

with the uniform life style demanded by Islamism.⁸⁴ In such a fragmented, fluid and differentiated context, which lacks a dominant ideology, fundamentalism is defined as an attempt of de-differentiation, as a collective nostalgia that seeks to restructure the world in terms of more simple entities and communal relations. Fundamentalism is a conservative reaction to maintain the local regulation of the life world *vis a vis* the postmodern ephemerality of consumerism.⁸⁵ Fundamentalism, therefore, provides a rock standing out in an ocean of doubt. In this context, it is said that fundamentalism "is promoted not by social change, but by the *pace* of transformative process and by its magnitude that goes beyond culturally and intellectually determined possibilities to *comprehend* the world"⁸⁶ Islam, in this picture assumes the Weberian function of religion, which is meaning provision, but not in a manner legitimizing the postmodernity.

This approach is deterministic in the sense that it assumes that sociological aspects of modern society determines the political outcomes, whereas, in reality they provide the raw material of the politics, which is another process of meaning-making. This sociological approach focuses on the capability of religion to supply ideas of orderliness, normative guidelines for action and

⁸⁴ Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, 10, 90.

⁸⁵ Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, 74, 78, 184-186.

⁸⁶ Bronislaw Misztal and Anson Shupe, "Making Sense of the Global Revival of Fundamentalism" in *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*:

the ultimate grounds for meaning, but neglects "the societal forces which shape and constrain the social construction of meaning."⁸⁷ In this perspective, fundamentalism seems to arise inevitably because the mesmerized people can not comprehend the things going around them and resort to religion to curb/control the speed of social change in a conservative way. By implication, those who are not fundamentalists are capable, intellectually, of comprehending the world around them, and happy with the changes taking place because they do not use religion to cope with and change the world. Hence, the pace of change is actually subjective rather than objective.

2.5.2. Globalization as Void and Revitalization of Identities

The leading theorist of globalization, Roland Robertson, and his colleagues advanced a view of globalization in which there is a problem of order. While the world increasingly becomes a single place, a problem of "societal order" in relation to "global order" emerges, and cultures, doctrines, and ideologies becomes relativized.⁸⁸ This is because, first, the process of globalization calls

The Revival Religious Fundamentalism in East and West, (London: Preager, 1992), 5, emphasis added.

⁸⁷ James Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 167 see also Daniel Levine, 'Religion and Politics in Comparative and Historical Perspective', *Comparative Politics*, 19, 1, (1986): 95-102, 97.

upon the collectivities to declare their identities. Secondly, globalization undermines the capabilities of the state which is the main agency providing order and Weltanschauung while there are frail global equivalents of it.⁸⁹ Consequently, the emerging "global society is anything but a stable harmonious, cohesive system in rough equilibrium."⁹⁰ Globalization "produces yawning gaps between the ideological (even metaphysical) needs of peoples to maintain a meaningful Weltanschauung and the capabilities of the culture-producing political regimes to provide them."⁹¹ This leads to "political-ideological and religious movements ... in reference to the issue of defining societies in relationship to the rest of the world and the global circumstance as a whole."⁹² It is in such a situation that religion steps in to provide a meaning, identity and order *vis a vis* the chaos/ambivalence. Religio-political movements search for fundamentals, and the 'search for fundamentals' is an aspect of, rather than a reaction to, globalization. In this sense, the 'search for fundamentals' is universal and each 'search for fundamentals' is actually the particularization of the universal 'search for fundamentals'. These searches involves attempts to enhance the power of the groups concerned. The enhancement is to spring from representation of

⁸⁸ Robertson, *Globalization*, 69, 87.

⁸⁹ See inter alia, Zygmunt Bauman, "Searching for a Center that Holds" in *Global Modernities*, eds., Mike Featherstone et al, (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

⁹⁰ Peter Beyer, *Religion and Globalization*, (Sage, London: 1994), 105.

⁹¹ Misztal and Shupe, 'Making Sense of the Global Revival of Religion', 8.

authenticity/identity, for the search for fundamentals means/involves, according to Robertson, identity/authenticity representation as a claim to power.⁹³ This is the conservative type of publicly influential religion.⁹⁴ The conservative option is a purifying, defensive and communitarian option that aims to maintain the control of local life *vis a vis* globalization. It is a particularistic revitalization of tradition. It is a political option seeking to restore the moral community by getting rid of Westoxification or by aiming to make "America great again."⁹⁵ Conservative type of publicly influential religion is a vital element of globalization and is the most amplified and visible type of religion in today's world. New Christian Right in America, Islamic Revolution in Iran and the New Religious Zionism in Israel are the exemplars.

Beyer also identifies a liberal type of publicly influential religion, which not de-differentiating and totalizing. Liberal publicly influential religion, functions as a cultural resource system for solving the problems generated in other spheres and akin to new social movements.⁹⁶ It addresses the income

⁹² Robertson, *Globalization*, 69-70.

⁹³ *ibid.*, 166-180.

⁹⁴ Beyer, *Religion and Globalization*, 90-93.

⁹⁵ see for example Jurgensmeyer *The New Cold War?* on world-wide resurgence of "religious nationalist" movements which diagnose the source of all social problems as the lack of moral community.

⁹⁶ New social movements generally advocate a new social paradigm that contrasts with the dominant goal structure, intentionally remain outside

inequalities, the ethos of community etc. It is a more tolerant variant of publicly influential religion in that it "may, but need not be, 'dedifferentiating'." It takes up the values of an emerging culture. The Liberation theological Movement in Latin America and Religious Environmentalism provide are the exemplars of the liberal type of publicly influential religion.⁹⁷

If in Turner's account fundamentalism is a reaction to postmodern ephemerality, here it is the revitalization of Islamic identity in reaction to the ambivalence/void created by globalization. However, as such, globalization does not adequately account for Islamism as a search for fundamentals. This is because by taking the weakening of the capacities of states for granted, globalization perspective rejects the possibility of search for fundamentals on different grounds. In other words, on what terms the identity of the society will be represented is a contingent (local) matter. Therefore, the globalization perspective only provides the ground on which the search for fundamentals has been made. But, it does not account for why this search for fundamentals and/or authenticity is made predominantly through Islam nowadays. Why should the inability of the state to provide a stable identity be translated into Islamic reassertion? In other words, why Islamism and/or

the institutional framework of government, prefer to influence public opinion and violate the Olson's logic of collective action for their goals go beyond the goals of group members. See Dalton J. Russell and Manfred Kuechler, eds., *Challenging Political Order: New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1990).

Islamist nationalism, and why not, for example, secular nationalism? The globalization perspective cannot adequately answer this question perhaps because it takes for granted the decline of the state, which is considered to be the patent-owner of the project of nationalism. But, the idea that the capabilities of the states are decreasing could be a myth. For example, Edward Tiryakiyan draws attention to East Asia, where “nationalism has effectively been used in the mobilization of the population to achieve global competitiveness on a par with the former “developed world” where economic prowess has provided a new channel for expressing the national pride and a determination to refuse kowtow to the Western claim of possessing a universal model of development.”⁹⁸ Therefore, as Clammer pointed out, the globalization perspective “is not a substitute for a detailed historical analysis of examples”⁹⁹

2.5.3. Neo-liberal Globalization and Multi-polar Global Order

In this picture, the dismantling of communist bloc results in the emergence of a polycentric world with a shared commitment to the market.¹⁰⁰ It also

⁹⁷ Beyer, *Religion and Globalization*, 105-109, see also 135-159 and 206-224.

⁹⁸ Edward A. Tiryakiyan, “The Wild Cards of Modernity,” 170.

⁹⁹ Clammer, *Difference and Modernity*, 125.

results in the dismantling of the old international "social contract." Hence, the clientele state system that was operative in the bi-polar world is dismantled. The USA is no longer the global hegemon because accumulation is globalized and other centers of economic power such as Japan have emerged. The links between the global context and the emergence of Islamism is based on the argument that when there was a clientele state system during the bi-polar world, the USA was able to support client states in keeping Islam in its proper place. In other words, the subjugation of Islam was done by the state and the capabilities of the state were dependent upon the support of the USA. Now that the USA is no longer a global hegemon its ability to support the states has declined, and the rise of Islam is linked to this fact.¹⁰¹ Hence, Cyrus Bina proposed that "Islamic revivalism, therefore, can be regarded as a political response to decline of the client-state system."¹⁰² Alternatively, it is suggested, what paved way to fundamentalism was the former strategy of promoting conservative Islamic regimes in Muslim countries as a bulwark against communism and as a tactical resource for controlling Arab oil by Western liberalism.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge, *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 193.

¹⁰¹ See Cyrus Bina, 'Towards a New World Order: US Hegemony, Client-States and Islamic Alternative' in *Islam, Muslims, and the Modern State: Case Studies of Muslims In Thirteen Countries*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994) for such a framework.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, p.5. and *passim*.

Globalization is also conceptualized as economic globalization, which diminishes the ability of governments to control their national economies and the decline of clientelism within Muslim countries can be linked to this. Economic globalization removes certain economic issues from the political agenda. The rhetoric of globalization claims that states are forced to comply with the dictates of the global economic powers. In effect, the abilities of the state to maintain welfare state and the clientelistic relations are hindered. Hence, the states fail in delivering their promised goods, and Islamism as well as right-wing extremism could be seen as a consequence of this process of globalization.¹⁰⁴

Within this perspective, but from a different angle, the rise of Islamist movements could also be explained by taking into account the effects of neo-liberal consensus on politics.¹⁰⁵ There is an overwhelming consensus on

¹⁰³ Fatema Mernissi, "Palace Fundamentalism and Liberal Democracy: Oil, Arms and Irrationality," *Development and Change*, 27, 2 (1996): 251-265, 251.

¹⁰⁴ See for example, Ziya Onis, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective" *Third World Quarterly*, 18, 4 (1997), 743-766.

¹⁰⁵ See for example, Alain de Benoist, 'End of Left-Right Dichotomy: The French Case, *Telos*, 102, (1995): 73-89, 82, Chantal Mouffe, 'The End of Politics and the Rise of the Radical Right' *Dissent*, (Fall, 1995): 488-502, Robert Cox, "Democracy in Hard Times: Economic Globalization and Limits to Liberal Democracy" in *The Transformation of Democracy? Global and Territorial Democracy*, ed. Anthony McGrew (Cambridge: Polity Press in Association with Open University, 1997), 63-64. For an explanation of the rise of Islamism in Turkey within this framework, see

liberal democratic capitalism as the only rational solution to the problem of organizing modern societies. Neo-liberal consensus, in this picture, signals “the end of politics,” in the sense of rendering politics to administration “by shrinking the moral basis of liberal politics to a market guided model of narrowly circumscribed political discourse.”¹⁰⁶ Politics, in this context, is no longer about the rival projects of society and revolves around different personalities, i.e., not the question of “what” but “who,” and to some extent “how” are the questions of politics. The overwhelming consensus creates a vacuum that facilitates the growth of extreme-right. Only in such a context, Islamist political parties that address the problems created by neo-liberal economic policies in a personalistic manner could perform better in electoral terms. Furthermore, the secular state could play a function in the rise of Islamism by promoting Islam so as to maintain community in the face of conflicts of opposing ideologies.¹⁰⁷

2.6. Postmodernism and Islamism

Based on the argument that “the fortunes of fundamentalist movements depend on the events and trends within their large societal context to create

Birtek and Toprak, “Conflictual Agendas of Neo-Liberal Reconstruction and the Rise of Islamic Politics in Turkey..”

¹⁰⁶ Birtek and Toprak, “Conflictual Agendas of Neo-Liberal Reconstruction and the Rise of Islamic Politics in Turkey..” 193.

“symbolic capital” to be used in their growth, as much as they depend on the particular grievances of the persons attracted to them,” it has been suggested that although fundamentalism is originally a reaction to modernity, “its current vigor must be attributed to the passage from modernity to postmodernity.”¹⁰⁸ Here the concept of postmodernism differs from postmodernity, the commodification of life. Postmodernism refers to the philosophical/intellectual critiques of messianic modern ideologies such as liberalism, Marxism and socialism. Postmodernism scrutinizes the claims of objectivity and rationality, and suggests that “the very production of knowledge is a political enterprise that involves contests among conflicting interests.”¹⁰⁹ The postmodernist critique, in other words, is an assertion that “we are far too ready to attach the adjective ‘just’ to cognitive, ethical, and political arrangements that are better understood as phenomena of power that oppress, neglect, marginalize, and discipline others.”¹¹⁰ By suggesting, therefore, that it is no longer possible to generate universal solutions and answers, it renders the Enlightenment invalid and irrelevant.¹¹¹

Postmodernism allows for the possibilities of the non-Western ways of

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, 201, *passim*.

¹⁰⁸ Misztal and Shupe, ‘Making Sense of the Global Revival of Religion’ 8, 12

¹⁰⁹ Scott, ‘Multiculturalism and the Politics of Identity’, *October*, 61, (1992), p.12.

¹¹⁰ Stephan K. White, *Political Theory and Postmodernism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 115-116

¹¹¹ Barry Smart, *Modern Conditions, Postmodern Controversies*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 183

modernization. As a corollary, the project of Westernization and its concomitant social engineering and authoritarian modernization is rendered illegitimate.

Given the fact that Islamism is a critique of Western modernity, postmodern critiques may well be functional for Islamists in advancing their claims.¹¹² Indeed, Islamist and postmodern critiques of modernity converge on many points such as secularism, rationality, the idea of impartial public sphere and so on. Also postmodernism could encourage tolerance towards Islam. In this picture, postmodern deconstruction of the West gives us a possibility of recognition of Islamic identity in reconstructing global civilization. But Islamism and postmodernism diverge at one important point: postmodernism does not really offer an alternative but Islamism does, and does so in a way that goes against the pluralizing ethos of postmodernism. Islamism as part of the postmodern critique of modernity is, in this picture, both a challenger and a beneficiary of the postmodern-turn.

At a more general level Richard Falk argued that postmodernism emphasizes the severe problems created by the modernist application of

¹¹² On the relation between postmodernism and Islam, see Jeff Haynes, "Religion, Secularization and Politics: A Postmodern Conspectus," *Third World Quarterly*, 18, 4, (1997): 709-728, Ernest Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*, (London: Routledge, 1992), Akbar Ahmad, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise* (London: Routledge, 1992), Haldun Gulalp, "Globalizing Postmodernism: Islamist and Western Social Theory" *Economy and Society*, 26, 3 (1997): 419-433.

science and reason, i.e. crisis of modernity whose secularism no longer inspires confidence.¹¹³ Religion, in this context, provides the materials out of which to fashion a response. Postmodernism, therefore, describes a new orientation to the nature politics as a result of the loosening of the modernist grip on the political imagination. Modernism was about disconnection of religion and other spheres of life. Now that the compartmentalized modernity is under serious scrutiny, "sacred interconnections" have been established between religious and economic and political spheres. Religion has now been deprivatized and the autonomy of morality from religion is rejected.¹¹⁴ The religiously inspired responses can be both constructive and destructive, or as Beyer pointed out, liberal and conservative.

A more direct link between postmodernism as weakening of the foundations of modernity and Islamism is established by Bobby Sayyid.¹¹⁵ Sayyid's approach is a sophisticated and highly dialectical one and argues that rise of

¹¹³ Richard Falk, "Religion and Politics: Verging on the Postmodern" in *Sacred Interconnections: Postmodern Spirituality, Political Economy and Art*, ed. David Ray Griffin (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), 85, 93- 98 see also Casanova, *Public Religions...* 230 for postmodernism as a facilitating and legitimating factor of the rehabilitation of religious traditions which had usually been the target of rationalist critique.

¹¹⁴ David Ray Griffin, "Introduction," in *Sacred Interconnections: Postmodern Spirituality, Political Economy and Art*, ed. David Ray Griffin (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), 3, 11.

¹¹⁵ Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, and Bobby Sayyid, "Sign O'Times. Kaffirs and Infidels Fighting the Ninth Crusade" in *Making of Political Identities*, ed., E. Laclau (London: Verso, 1994)

Islamic identity as a claim to hegemony is a result of weakening of the foundations of Kemalism through postmodern deconstruction of modernity. In Sayyid's perspective Islamism is a product of Kemalism rather than failure of it. This is because Sayyid employs a relational, as opposed to essential, concept of identity. Islamist identity, in this respect, is a construction of Kemalism. In this way Islamism is less linked to Islam than to Kemalism. Islamist identity is constructed by Kemalism but Kemalism was able to put it in its "proper" place as long as it maintained its hegemony. The hegemony of Kemalism, which is a Eurocentric modernization discourse, in turn, was dependent upon the hegemony of Eurocentrism. The increasing discrediting of the Western modernity by postmodern discourses, therefore, has led to weakening of the Kemalist Westernization. This, in turn, gave rise to its internal other; Islam(ism).¹¹⁶

Sayyid's approach is sound in pointing to the relationship between the Eurocentric discourse modernity and Kemalism as a Westernization (Eurocentric modernization) project. It is also reasonable to emphasize the relationship between Islamic political identity and Kemalism. However, Sayyid's perspective has its own shortcomings as well. First, Sayyid links the maintenance of Kemalism to the maintenance of Eurocentrism. As such, he takes the Kemalist state as a passive agent whose legitimacy is solely dependent upon other factors than its own performance, actions and nature.

Indeed, the most important defect of this approach springs from its deduction of the incapability of Kemalism to maintain its hegemony from the postmodern deconstruction of the West. By taking Kemalism only as a discursive formation, this approach does not heed the empirical reality of the ways in which Kemalism is maintained. But, Kemalism in reality is something beyond a discourse, it has its own institutions, dynamics and mechanisms to protect and reproduce itself. Above all, the emergence of Islamism does not necessarily signal the end of Kemalism but may provide a new opportunity for Kemalism to regenerate. Indeed, by following Sayyid's logic we could suggest that if Islamism owes its *raison d'être* to Kemalism, then the reverse is also true.

Second, Kemalism, in his dialectical approach produces only Islamism as its anti-thesis, and therefore they are the only available political alternatives. This is an *either* Kemalism *or* Islamism logic that associates all other political identities with Kemalism on the basis of their "Eurocentrism." As such, this perspective fails to explain why only Islamism emerges as an alternative to Kemalism, because it underplays the importance of the relationship of Kemalism with other political identities such as social democracy. It may well be the Kemalist state that hindered to development of other political identities as an alternative channel of expression of discontent with Kemalism. Moreover, the question as to why Islam should be the only

¹¹⁶ Bobby Sayyid, 'Sign O'Times. Kaffirs and Infidels Fighting the Ninth Crusade' 275

beneficiary of the decline of Kemalism in the face of increasing globalization which makes available a wide range of political discourses is unanswered.¹¹⁷ It is precisely at this point “does Sayyid, unwittingly, employs an essentialist conception of Muslim society” becomes a legitimate question.

Third, while pointing to the relationality of political identities is preferable in that it prevents us from considering Islamism in terms of Islam, the reduction of Islamic identity to the construction of Kemalism runs the risk of depicting Islamist political actors as merely passive agents of Kemalism. In this way, we lack a ground to problematize Islamism in its own terms but in terms of Kemalism. Hence, the blame is solely put on Kemalism for the undemocratic and non-pluralist aspects of Islamism.

¹¹⁷ Here I rely on Jeffrey Alexander’s definition of “reflexive modernization” as a new stage of modernity in which reflexivity is going beyond community-situated ethics and reflexive modernization is possibility of the construction of syncretic meanings and wide availability of options for different kinds of social actions. See Jeffrey Alexander, “Critical Reflections on ‘Reflexive Modernization’” *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 13, 4 (1996): 133-138, 137-138.

CHAPTER TWO

ELABORATING AN ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING ISLAMISM

The discussion in the previous chapter critically reviewed various accountings of Islamism and tried to define what Islamism is (not). Most of the accounts of Islamism operate on an *either* Islamism *or* modernization (modernizing ideology) logic. These are the only options of politics in modernizing Muslim societies. Behind this either/or logic lies two underlying frameworks. The first one is modernization paradigm, and its concomitant, the conventional secularization thesis, which proposed a decline in the social significance of religion as modernization proceeded, that is as society is organized along rational lines. Modernization paradigm regards religion as an epiphenomenon of traditional structures.¹

Consequently, to the extent Islamism is problematized, it is problematized as a return of the traditional or as a sign of being traditional and therefore irrational. But more importantly and not surprisingly, modernization perspective deduces the failures of modernization from the visibility of Islam(ism) in the public sphere. Hence, the success of modernization is

actually assessed in terms of its ability to prevent public visibility of Islam(ism).

The second underlying framework is a company to the modernization perspective and reveals the reason why modernization is associated with the public invisibility of Islam. It is a framework with a particular concept of "Muslim society" and an essentialist conceptualization of Islam as an inappropriate culture and as a religion that unites religion and politics. This framework leads to considerations of Islamism in terms of Islam rather than politics. Islam in this picture could not accommodate modernization due to its essential features. The sources of such conceptualization of Islam could be traced back to the beginnings of modernity.

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to elaborate an alternative framework for the assessment of Islamism as *a political phenomenon* and *on political grounds*. In order to do this, first, the two underlying frameworks of most of the accountings for Islamism will be critically reviewed. The first underlying framework is the essentialist definitions of Islam as a religion that unites religion and politics. The second underlying framework is the perception of modernization as secularization, that is decline in the social significance of religion. What this chapter suggest is that there is no such thing as a culturally homogenous society and hence there is no such thing as

¹ Daniel Levine, 'Religion and Politics in Comparative and Historical Perspective', *Comparative Politics*, 19, 1, (1986): 95-102, 96.

a "Muslim society;" that secularization does not necessarily mean a decline in the social significance of religion; and that in modern societies it is politics that defines the functions of religion.

1. THE PROBLEM OF CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ESSENTIALISM

One might suggest that the conceptualization of Islam as a religion that could not reach an "accommodation" with modern trends and that could not act as an agent of change could be linked to the Enlightenment tradition's distaste for religion in general and its belief in the capability of secular reason and scientific interrogation to deliver progress and freedom. But, as will be seen below, when we bear in mind the various functionalizations of religion in modern world by the founding fathers of sociology, the assessment of Islam as a dysfunctional or malfunctioning religion turns out to be a product of Orientalism. Most assessments depicting Islamism as contra-democracy are based on the Orientalist portrayal of Islam -and the values and institutions associated with it- as an impediment to modernization. In this picture, Islam could not be a "functional" religion like Christianity.² Islam is an impediment to modernization and it could not be an agent of change.³

² A notable exception in this respect is Ernest Gellner's conceptualization of (high) Islam. Gellner suggests that "[b]y various obvious criteria - universalism, scripturalism, spiritual egalitarianism, the extension of full

In what might be considered as the inaugural theory of modernity, Kant, for example, assessed Islam negatively because his philosophy, according to Bryan S. Turner, connected Christianity with the spread of global politics and the ideal of a common humanity.⁴ Similarly, Hegel contemplated that “Islam has long vanished from the stage of history at large, and has retreated into Oriental ease and repose.”⁵ According to Turner, Hegel traced back the origins of modern consciousness to the subjectivity of Christian spirituality.⁶ In this picture, Christianity had a dialectical process by which self-consciousness could be achieved, whereas Islam lacked such a process.

participation in sacred community not to one, or some, but to *all*, and the rational systematisation of social life- Islam is, of the great Western monotheisms, the one closest to modernity.” See Ernest Gellner, *Muslim Society*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984 [1981]), 7.

³ Those who define Islamist movements positively as modernizing movements on the basis of their observation that there is an accommodation between Islamism and modernity seem to have taken for granted previously the Orientalist/Weberian assessment of Islam as in a state of repose. Now that the Islamist movements are modern and modernizing is quite astonishing for them and this “great” achievement of Islam(ism) could now be celebrated! But, such an accommodation, as will be seen below, does not tell us much about the relation between Islamism and democracy for example.

⁴ See Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, (London: Routledge, 1994), 137-140.

⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (New York: American Home Library, 1902), 456.

⁶ Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, 137-140.

It could be suggested that the guiding paradigm of postwar social research, the ideology of “developmentalism,” had been the legacy of the nineteenth century assumption of Western superiority over non-Western societies. The American variant of this Western ideology is the modernization theory which combined scholarly inquiry with policy-oriented recommendations to foster the replication of liberal capitalist societies in the “Muslim societies.”⁷

Max Weber, it has been suggested, gave a social-scientific status to the construction of Islam as a culmination of deficits.⁸ Weber’s work is considered as the classical statement of Orientalism. Orientalism could be defined as a way of thinking/studying the Orient. Based on the Foucauldian assumption that production of knowledge also involves production of power relations, Orientalism denotes an exercise of power/knowledge over the Orient. Edward Said in his seminal book, *Orientalism*,⁹ shows how Orient is created and reproduced by the Orientalists so as to reflect the self-image of the West on an Oriental mirror. In this image the West is rational, developed, humane and superior, while the East is aberrant, undeveloped and inferior.

⁷ See Lisa Hajjar and Steve Niva, “(Re)Made in the USA: Middle East Studies in the Global Era,” *Middle East Report*, 205 (October-December, 1997): 2-10, 3.

⁸ Armando Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity* (Berkshire, Ithaca Press, 1997), 98.

⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 1987 [1978]).

1.1. Cultural Essentialism

The Weberian is associated with Orientalist,¹⁰ because of Weber's account of the emergence of rationalist capitalism in the West in terms of Protestant ethic. This is because the corollary of accounting for the rationality of the West in terms of its culture is accounting for the irrationality of East in terms of its culture. But this is a valid claim only if the same framework is employed in the analysis of the lack of rationalist capitalism in Islamic societies. In fact, whether Weber linked the lack of rationalist capitalism to the lack of appropriate culture, i.e. Islamic ethic, is a subject of controversy. It has, indeed, been suggested that "Weber's account of the Islamic ethic is defective."¹¹ It has also been suggested that when it comes to studying Islam Weber's focus of attention shifts from cultural realm to political realm.¹² Yet

¹⁰ See for example Nazih N. Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 55-56. According to Ayubi, Weber thought that the warrior tradition, the Sufi orders, the unincorporated guilds, and even the self-indulgence and sexual appetite attributed to Muslims were all responsible for the lack of capitalist development. cf. Mohammad R. Naffissi, "Reframing Orientalism: Weber and Islam," *Economy and Society*, 27, 1 (February, 1998): 97-118. Naffissi challenges to the widespread view that Weber's work is a classical statement of sociological Orientalism.

¹¹ Bryan S. Turner, *Weber and Islam: A Critical Study*, (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1974), 175.

¹² See for example Ralph Schroeder, *Max Weber and the Sociology of Culture*, (London: Sage Publications, 1992), 70,142. See also Naffissi, "Reframing Orientalism: ..."

the ambiguity in Weber's analysis did not prevent some modernization scholars from focusing on Islamic culture.

When the cultural realm has been the focus, "there is a close association between Christianity and the secular aspects of Western thought, such as the acceptance of science and of historical methodology."¹³ Consequently, "Europe was able to conquer and reorganize a large part of the non-Western world with the power provided by a *culture* based on science and technology."¹⁴ Islamic culture, whose substantive source is Islam, tends to be defined as "a preindustrial culture which is incapable of meeting the requirements of our technological-scientific age."¹⁵ For example, Islamic culture is a religiously dogmatic and defensive culture that makes no attempt to analyze the situation.¹⁶ Such a "Weberian" or essentialist portrayal of Islamic culture, as noted above, is possible thanks to Weber's

¹³ William Montgomery Watt, *Muslim-Christian Encounters: Perceptions and Misperceptions*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 131.

¹⁴ Basam Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam: A Preindustrial Culture in the Scientific-Technological Age*, trans. Judith von Sivers (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 2.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, 138.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 5-6.

attempt to show how Christian religion furthered the rise of the modern individual, capitalism, the modern state and science.¹⁷

Indeed, Weber suggested that “one of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the basis of the idea of the calling was born from the spirit of Christian asceticism.”¹⁸ To the extent that it is a temptation to idleness and sinful enjoyment of life, the search for wealth, in Christianity, was ethically bad. But “as a performance of duty in a calling it [wealth] is not only morally permissible, but actually enjoined.”¹⁹ Protestant asceticism “approved the rational and utilitarian uses of wealth which were willed by God for the needs of the individual and the community.”²⁰ By acting powerfully against the spontaneous enjoyment of passions, Protestant asceticism restricted the consumption, especially of luxuries. Combined with the release of acquisitive activity, the limitation of consumption resulted inevitably in the accumulation of capital.²¹ As such, Weber sees the original accumulation of

¹⁷ Wolfgang Schluchter, *Rationalism, Religion and Domination: A Weberian Perspective*, tr. By Neil Solomon (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 253

¹⁸ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958), 180.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, 163

²⁰ *ibid.*, 171

capital as “an *unanticipated consequence* of religiously induced self-denial coupled with the pursuit of workmanship as the mundane reflection of divine grace.”²²

This line of thinking gives rise to the assumption that if it was the Christian religion that eased rise to capitalism of the West, it must be Islam that hindered the possibility of such development. Therefore, the absence of capitalism and the modern state in the East is explained by the religion of the East. Although the theological and ethical precepts of Islam were addressed to urban strata initially, Islam turned out to be a “warrior religion” soon after.²³ Therefore, “[t]he ideal personality type in the religion of Islam was not the scholarly scribe (*līrat*), but the warrior.”²⁴ This ideal gave rise to an economic ethic that is significantly different from Protestant ethic. Unlike Protestant ethic, Islamic economic ethic was “purely feudal” in that it gave positive significance to attaining wealth by political or military means. As such, it is in diametrical opposition to the Protestant devaluation

²¹ *ibid.*, 172

²² Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992), 171, emphasis original.

²³ Max Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964 [1963]), 262.

²⁴ *ibid.*, 265.

of this worldly wealth and luxury in favour of religious salvation beyond.²⁵

In this picture, it is logical to agree with Weber that “[t]he impediments to development must be sought primarily in the domain of religion, although certain purely political factors, such as the inner structural forms of domination, also played important roles.”²⁶

1.2. Political Essentialism

Focusing on the political factors, Weber’s writings could be read in another way. Nevertheless, the role attributed to religion is significant in this reading as well. Weber also argued that acquisitive drive of Muslim merchant, trader or artisan was no less than ascetic Protestant.²⁷ In this respect, industrialization in Islamic societies “was not impeded by the Islam as the religion of individuals ... but by the religiously determined structure of the

²⁵ *ibid.*, 263-264.

²⁶ *ibid.*, 269. This translation should be compared with the translation in below mentioned edition *Economy and Society*. It reads, “impediments to rational economic development must be primarily sought in the domain of religion, insofar as they must not be located in the purely political conditions, the structures of domination.” Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. G. Roth and C. Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 630.

²⁷ Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 269.

Islamic *states*, their officialdom and their jurisprudence."²⁸ The focus here is on the political character as the unique and central feature of Islam.²⁹ In this case, the reason why Western rationalism did not emerge under Islam is not that it did not create a suitable worldview and a way of life to encourage such development, but that the form of political domination precluded such possibility. Islamic society is characterized by patrimonialism. According to Weber, the patrimonial ruler's own authority is rooted in the sanctity of tradition and his rule is characterized by arbitrariness and unpredictability. Weber states that

Both traditionalism and arbitrariness affect very deeply the developmental opportunities of capitalism. Either the ruler himself or his officials seize upon the new chances of acquisition, monopolize them and thus deprive the capital formation of private economy of its sustenance, or the ubiquitous resistance of traditionalism is reinforced by them so as to hinder economic innovations that might endanger the social equilibrium or meet religious and ethical objections.³⁰

Patrimonialism also meant lack of political and procedural predictability which are indispensable to the capitalist development. In his own words:

the arbitrariness and unpredictability of patrimonial domination had the effect of strengthening the realm of subjection to sacred law. And since, on the other hand, the theoretical rigidity and immutability of *shariah* was "corrected" by the judges through subjective and often

²⁸ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1095 emphasis original. See also Schroeder, *Max Weber and the Sociology of Culture*, 68.

²⁹ "Equally political in character is the distinctive religious obligation in Islam, its only required dogma: the recognition of Allah as the one god and of Muhammad as his prophet." See Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 264.

³⁰ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1094.

quite unpredictable interpretation, the components of patrimonialism, equally hostile to capitalism, reinforce one another.³¹

Thus, it could be suggested that Weber can be read in two different ways.

First, by following the same logic he employed in his account of the spirit of capitalism, it could be suggested that Islam has been an inappropriate culture for the development of rationalism and capitalism. Secondly, it could be suggested that Weber actually problematized not the Islamic culture but the Islamic political configuration that goes against one of the central ingredients of modernity, i.e. secularization in the sense of separation between state and society. In both cases Islam functions as a hindrance to modernization.

The portrayal of Islam as a hindrance to modernization in terms of its essence is actually based on both political and cultural grounds. On political grounds the comparison is actually a comparison of the relations between

³¹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1096. cf. Maxime Rodinson, *Islam and Capitalism*, trans. Brian Pearce, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973). Rodinson argues that "there is nothing to indicate in a compelling way that the Muslim religion prevented the Muslim world from developing along the road to modern capitalism, any more than there is anything to indicate that Christianity directed the Western European world along that road" (p.117) In addition to this general challenge, Rodinson also argues that "European judge of the Middle Ages ... was not so very much more closely restricted by hard-and-fast rules, or so much less free to give rein to his own views of right and wrong, than the *qadi* of the Muslim world, who was himself guided, in principle, by the huge corpus of the *fiqh*, which was much more thoroughly systematized, unified and rationalized than was Western custom" (p.106). The question of the origin of modern rationality and/or capitalism is left unanswered by Weber because he

religion and politics in Islam and Christianity.³² Central to this political comparison is the Islamic principle of *tevhid* and the Christian doctrine of two swords. The doctrine of two swords, it is said, allowed Christianity to differentiate between the sacred and profane, between the *sacerdotium* and *imperium*, between the Church and the state. It also allowed a room for the development of the Roman idea of a fully legitimate secular political authority, the state and its secular laws.³³ Hence, secularization, which is so essential for rationalization, is considered to be intrinsic to Christianity.

The principle of *tevhid*, on the other hand, means not only the unity/ oneness of God, but also unity of religion and state, religion and economy, religion and sexuality and so on. Islam, in this picture, is not only a religion but also a life style, a state style or more accurately a complete scheme for ordering life. Because politics is a vital instrument for ordering life, Islam, it is said, is inevitably a political religion. Also, as a consequence of the principle of *tevhid*, the ruler is held responsible not only for well-

“describes substantial features of higher rationality existing in Europe only in the modern age” (p.117).

³² It must be noted here that Weber failed to analyze the connection between religion and politics in Christianity. See Schroeder, *Max Weber and the Sociology of Culture*, 70.

³³ Antony Black, ‘Classical Islam and Medieval Europe. A Comparison of Political Philosophies and Cultures, *Political Studies*, XLI, 1, (1993): 58-69. See also Peter Berger’s “The Process of Secularization” (Chapter 5) in his *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1990 [1967]). Berger argues that secularization has its roots in the Western religious tradition.

being in this world but also in the hereafter.³⁴ One, therefore, can be a Muslim only under an Islamic state.

Indeed, it is said that the term *din* primarily evokes submission to God and obligations that God imposed on his "reasoning creatures,"³⁵ while the Latin term *religio* evokes ties that bind men to God. As a corollary, in Islamic theology this submission involves following the obligations, that includes wresting power for the righteous, the rooting out of evil and the bringing about of a good life, rather than mere passivity and acceptance.³⁶ Islam, therefore, is a religion of obligation rather than confession or creed.

1.3. Political Implications

Therefore, in a "Muslim society" Islamic norms and values are key determinants of political behaviour due to principle of *tevhid*. In this case, none of the types/aspects of secularization is applicable to the case of Islam:³⁷ "Polity secularization" -institutional separation of religion and

³⁴ Ahmet Davutoglu, *Alternative Paradigms: The Impact of Islamic and Western Weltanschauungs on Political Theory*, (Lanham, New York: The University Press of America), 132.

³⁵ *E. J. Brill's First Encyclopedia of Islam*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987), 1913-1936.

³⁶ John L. Esposito, "Islam and Muslim Politics" in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. Idem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 4.

polity and the denial of religious identity of the polity- is impossible simply because Islam is a state religion. "Polity-expansion secularization," that is the political regulation of the arenas of society formerly regulated by religion, is also impossible unless the state submerges it, because Islam is a whole life-style. Similarly, "political culture secularization" is impossible because in Muslim societies the political community is at the same time religious community and the values associated with the community are essentially religious. Decline in the salience and influence of religious issues and weakening of religious identity, i.e. "political-process secularization" is impossible because Muslims expect their state to uphold the *sharia* and keep the religion flourishing. In sum, Islam is a religion that cannot be the private matter of individual. In this case, only "polity-dominance secularization" is possible in Islamic societies. Such secularization refers to a radical program of secularization that recognizes no area of religious autonomy and refers to an effort to either eliminate the influence of religion entirely or to alter the contents of religion radically so as to bring it in line with the official ideology.

But the fact that Islam is a political religion does not in itself explain the "polity-dominance secularization" because Islam as a political religion could also have been practically instrumentalized for the purposes of

³⁷ Types of secularization in this paragraph are borrowed from Donald E. Smith, see Donald E. Smith, "Religion and Political Modernization: Comparative Perspectives" in idem, ed., *Religion and Political Modernization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 8.

modernization by the modernizing regimes -if only Islam has not been a modernization-resistant religion. But, it is claimed that the idea of development is part of Western outlook and there is "complete absence of the idea of development" in Islam.³⁸ "For Muslims," Watt claims, "unchangingness is both an ideal for human individuals and societies, and also perception of the actual nature of humanity and its environment."³⁹ This assumption of unchangingness of human nature blinds Muslims to the new problems created by technological advances and justifies the assertion of the finality of the rules and laws of human conduct which are expressed in Qur'an and *Sunna* of the prophet. Islam's claim to be the final religion, in turn, leads to the belief that all moral and religious truth necessary for all humanity is available in Islam. As such, Islam is a self-sufficient religion that does not need to borrow from other cultures. Hence, all that is not Islamic is subject to suspicion, and there is reluctance to borrow from alien cultures. In addition, the idealization of Muhammad and early Islam results in a community that fails to see and deal with the real challenges and problems of the present and that is obsessed with recreating something past. Fundamentalists, conservatives or traditionalists, according to Watt, are those who subscribe to the above description of Islam. Liberals are those who see a need for correcting such an understanding of Islam.

³⁸ See William M. Watt, *Islamic Fundamentalism and Modernity*, (London: Routledge, 1988), 3. The portrayal of Islam in this paragraph draws from Watt's portrayal on pp.1-23.

Hence, if a Muslim society is to be modernized/secularized, Islam has to be kept under control⁴⁰ for two different set of reasons. First, culturally speaking, Islam, as noted above, is considered as culturally resistant to modernization. Indeed, most of the modernizing regimes adhered to this "Weberian" view that linked modernization to appropriate (Western) culture.⁴¹ This in turn necessitated a top-to-down modernization of Muslim societies. Linked to this, second, politically speaking, by virtue of being a political religion Islam could be considered as a permanent potential regressive rival to the progressive modernizing regimes and ideologies. Therefore, the relation between Islam and the modernizing state could only be in terms of "submergence" or "resurgence." In most studies of Islamism,

³⁹ *ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁰ Among many others, Binnaz Toprak's *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981) is informed from this perspective. For her "the history of secularization movement in both Ottoman and Republican Turkey is, in a sense, the history of the attempt to cope precisely with this problem of limiting Islam's influence in a predominantly Muslim society where the belief system considers it heretical to separate the religious realm from the secular." "If in Islam religion and politics went together, the best means of making sure that religion played no role in political life would be to put it under control." See p.25 and 33. Hence, the characteristics of the Turkish secularization is explained by the characteristics of Islam. Thereby, whatever the anomalies of Turkish secularism are, they are justified on the basis of the claim that in Islam makes no distinction between secular and religious life. This, I believe, is an inadequate approach. A reading of Kemalism in the light of republicanism could show that this type of secularism could also be linked to the republican nature of Kemalism rather than political nature of Islam.

⁴¹ Turner, *Weber and Islam*, 175. See also Bobby Sayyid, "Sign O'Times: Kaffirs and Infidels Fighting the Ninth Crusade" in *Making of Political Identities*, ed., Ernesto Laclau, (London: Verso, 1994), 269.

as a consequence, Islam is taken as an essentially political religion and therefore as a permanent rival to modernizing regimes. And, the emergence of Islamist movements are explained by referring to the "Muslimness" of the society whose characteristics are determined by the "special" features of Islam which as noted above induces Muslims a propensity to seek for an Islamic state, a yearning for "good old days of the early Islam" and for a static world.

Consequently, the general picture is that there is a Muslim society; the Muslimness of society is "submerged" by the state for the sake of modernization; and when the state is weakened as a result of its failures or when Islam finds better opportunities to realize itself better as a consequence of further modernization, Islamism has "revived" or "resurged" inevitably to reassert Muslim identity. It resurged inevitably because Islam cannot legitimize the modernization in progress and because Islamic culture is modernization-resistant. The practical effect is the feeling of anxiety by Muslim people as a result of change that came about through Westernization. Hence, Muslim people assert their Islamic identity to protect themselves from the destructive effects of change. By implication, Islamism is explained in terms of Islam, which has remained at the level of society as a dormant political force. Neither the extra-ordinary effort of self-conscious Muslims nor the possibility of other forms of political expression than Islamism in "Muslim societies," nor the interaction between modern structures/ideologies and Islam as a factor shaping Islamism are taken into

account. Consequently, to the extent that Islamic revival is a problem to be resolved, the resolution lies either in dismantling the Islamic bedrock or in the constant supervision of it by the (modernizing) state. By implication, the possibilities of a talk of secularization and a concept of democracy which is accommodating Islam or Islamism in the public sphere is foreclosed.

In a seemingly paradoxical manner the view of Islam as a religion that cannot be separated from politics is a picture not only of Orientalists but also of Islamists as well. Such a convergence on the conceptualization of Islam as an essentially political religion by two diametrically opposing alternatives could be explained by suggesting that the idea that Islam as an autonomous essence is actually part of the strategy of both the confinement and defense of Islam.⁴² From the perspective of Islamism, the defense of Islam as both religion and state is actually a strategy of upholding the religion, suggesting it as a communal ethos, collective identity and as a solution to (almost every) social, economic and political problem. Such a definition is also useful for the secularists and Orientalists, because only then could Islam be considered as something to be controlled for the sake of “modernization” and the so-called “Islamic” movements could be depicted as deviance, if necessary, to be repressed.

⁴² Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 29. Asad’s argument here is a general argument about the conceptualizations of religion.

1.4. Religion as Human Construction

However, in reality, the link between religious theory and practice is a matter of constructing religion in this world rather than a matter of cognition.⁴³ There is, in fact, no transhistorical definition of religion and the authoritative status of religious practices, such as the unity of state and religion, “are to be explained as products of historically distinctive disciplines and forces.”⁴⁴ Islam has become an instrument of communal reference and a basis for the assertion of an authentically indigenous identity only in the 18th century.⁴⁵ Initially, it was an ethical path and later, through Orientalist intervention, it became a civilization comparable to the Western Christian one.⁴⁶ Islam could be taken as a “plural hermeneutics” of a complex civilization and a flexible medium of a collective identity centered on one Qur’anic keyword, Islam. By doing so, Armando Salvatore identifies seven different hermeneutic circles that interpret Islam either in a conflationist manner, for they conflate Islam and politics, or in a deconflationist manner, for they take Islam only as a religion centered around belief, that is *iman*. Hence, historical evidence shows that not all interpretations of Islam are political and more importantly different political

⁴³ *ibid.*, 44.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 54.

⁴⁵ John O. Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1994, 2nd edition), 83.

interpretations of Islam are possible. As Hamid Enayat has pointed out, a liberal would try to deduce from the Qur'an and the traditions all the necessary guarantees of individual rights while a socialist would be more keen on demonstrating the collectivist ethos of Islam.⁴⁷ In fact, every religion is a joint creation of men and God.⁴⁸ Islam, therefore, is not an independent variable.

Also, the widely held belief that in Islam religion and politics is closely intertwined

understates the close church-state relations of the Eastern Orthodox churches and of religion and politics in the pre-modern West... In practice, despite the often-cited special role of Roman law and the existence of a clear relationship between church and state in the West, Christianity and Islam had rather similar levels of relations between religion and politics in pre-modern times.⁴⁹

Therefore, the differentiation between Islam and Christianity on an essentialist basis may be misleading. Indeed, Patricia Springborg has shown that the continuity of the Western political tradition *vis a vis* the despotic Orient is a work of the imagination.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Armando Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity*, xiv.

⁴⁷ Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of the Shi'i and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1986 [1982]), 99.

⁴⁸ Bikru Paraekh, "The Concept of Fundamentalism" in *The End of "Isms"*, A. Stormas ed. (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994), 107.

⁴⁹ Nikki R. Keddie, "The Revolt of Islam, 1700 to 1993: Comparative Considerations and Relations to Imperialism," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 36, 3, (1994): 463-587, 463.

The doctrine of two swords, for example, led to the recognition of secular authority as fully legitimate not as smoothly as it is supposed. What it led to was dual structuration of this world into “the religious” and “the secular.” The rulers were to be legitimized by the church/pope through consecration to gain the loyalty of God’s creatures. And, this was not only due to Church’s position as the only representative of God on earth, but also due to the fact that it held significant secular power in terms of its wealth. This was in Christian West Europe where the influence of Germanic tribal traditions and Catholic church were apparent in the legitimation of the ruler. Since the jurisdictions of sacred and profane overlapped in practice, there were a series of centuries-long conflicts between the Church, the only authentic interpreter of sacred texts, and the state in Western Europe. These conflicts between the sacred and secular authorities eventually led to the emergence of modern state and nationalized churches as opposed to the universal church of the Holy Roman Empire. Secularization, here, refers to the breakdown of the dualistic system and replacement of it by an all encompassing secular sphere requiring the religious sphere to adapt.⁵¹ The

⁵⁰ Patricia Springborg, *Western Republicanism and the Oriental Prince*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 1, 4. Springborg points out that it was not until the post-reformation period and the rise of the early modern European state that the East, as a constant reference point for the West, became definitively different and characteristically “despotic.”

⁵¹ Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), 15.

so-called privatization and marginalization of religion was not something intrinsic to Christianity and Christianity has resisted the process until today.

But, the same doctrine of two swords did not work in the same way in the Eastern part of Christian Europe. Here, the influence of Hellenistic and Orientalist elements merged and gave rise to a conception of the Emperor as representing the God on earth.⁵² Hence, the two swords were united in one, which had two edges and there were no restrictions on the jurisdiction of the holder of the sword except the internal matters of the church. Hence, the Western European experience with religion cannot be explained by Christianity alone.

It is true that Islam was born simultaneously both as a religious and political community, and Muhammad was both God's messenger and political-military leader. Also, the *umma* was both religious and political community. But, it is inaccurate to suggest that Islam does not have differentiated religious and political spheres. "The supposed near-identity of religion and politics in Islam is more a pious myth rather than reality for most of Islamic history," and the link has been symbolic and formalistic rather than real.⁵³ Indeed, the history of Islam could be viewed as the history of various

⁵² See Reinhard Bendix, *Kings or People: Power and Mandate to Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 23.

institutionalizations of the religious and political charisma of Muhammad into differentiated religious and political institutions.⁵⁴ There was a conceptual and a *de facto*, as opposed to institutional and *de jure*, differentiation of state and religion that was reflected in the depiction of them as twins.⁵⁵

Designated with the task of upholding the *sharia* and the maintenance and well-being of the political-cum-religious community, the state in the realm of Islam reigned supreme and ruled in reality, supposedly to keep the religion flourishing. The *ulema* took the state for granted and were motivated to ensure its stability. The legitimacy of the state/ruler was practically based on fulfillment of the deemed Islamic values and achievement of these goals,⁵⁶ “even if this meant a more or less complete

⁵³ Keddie, “The Revolt of Islam, 1700 to 1993,” 463, see also Ayubi, *Political Islam* ch. 1. and Sami Zubaida, *Islam, People and the State*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), 41.

⁵⁴ Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, 48.

⁵⁵ Reinhard Schulze, “Günümüz Batı ve İslam Toplumlarında Laiklik ve Din” [Secularism and Religion in Contemporary Western and Islamic Societies] in *İslam ve Demokrasi* [Islam and Democracy] eds. Yurdakul Fincancı et. al. (Istanbul, Tüses Vakfı, 1994), 58.

⁵⁶ David Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power*, (London: Macmillan, 1991), 193, and Davutoglu, *Alternative Paradigms*, 123. Bernard Lewis describes how the initial concept of legitimacy, which “meant that the ruler was qualified and entitled to the office which he held and that he had acceded to it by lawful means,” changed in later centuries to the consideration of power as legitimate *per se*. Just rule was emphasized more than legitimate ruler. See Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 99.

separation between temporal affairs and spiritual concerns."⁵⁷ As a corollary, rather than being the norm to be followed, Islam had been mobilized in the service of the state by the political leaders, although they "rarely sought to extend the purview of their faith to include politics."⁵⁸

It is only in theory that the Islamic form of government was a nomocracy in which ruler does not have any legislative power and only applies the Holy law. The Muslim ruler, in reality, exercised a considerable degree of legislative power. This was secular legislation based on the Islamic principle of *maslaha*, interest of the community. In reality, Muslims mostly paid lip service to the political directives of Islam, though formalistic links were present. It was perhaps for this reason that call for a return to the original message of Islam was a *perennial* problem of Islam after the period of the four rightly guided caliphs.⁵⁹

What was absent in the realm of Islam was an equivalent of *institutionalized* Church with a monopoly over the interpretation of the sacred text and with

⁵⁷ Bendix, *Kings or People...*, 44.

⁵⁸ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan*, (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1994), 15-16. It must be noted that Islam in the course of history is not only appropriated by the state and rulers but also by those who are challenging the status quo. See M. Ayoob, "Conclusion: Discernible Patterns" in *The Politics of Islamic Reassertion*, ed., idem, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981).

secular power to force its claims. The *ulema*, evidently, took an acquiescent stance towards the priority of the state and even rationalized it on religious grounds by prioritizing stability and by giving “pragmatic” advice to the rulers to maintain stability. Islamic political theory was ready to sacrifice Islamic political/ethical principles for the sake of stability. Ibn Taymiya’s (d.1328) famous formulation that “sixty years with an unjust ruler is better than one night without a ruler” illustrates the point.⁶⁰ Similarly, al-Ghazali, before Taymiya, held that ‘necessity makes legal what would otherwise not be legal,’ and even an unjust ruler should not be deposed if strife would follow, because unity will be lost.⁶¹

The theoretical restrictions imposed on the ruler were moral rather than procedural and/or legally binding obligations. As a corollary, the theory of government in Islamic political theory actually addressed the conduct of the ruler by focusing on the types of statesmanship. The influence of Greek philosophy, more accurately the Platonic framework, is apparent here. In a way, Islamic political theory as reflected in the Mirrors “perpetuated the classical ‘republican’ tradition ... as a model for the Islamic state.”⁶² This model defined the virtuous state as the one in which all cooperate in pursuit

⁵⁹ Abdul R. Moten, *Political Science: An Islamic Perspective*, (London: Macmillan, 1996), 30, emphasis added.

⁶⁰ Cited in Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 12.

⁶¹ Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1938*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984 [1962]), 14.

of common good. Thus, in the Islamic Mirror of Princes, which could be considered as the technical manuals for the rulers, the ruler first and foremost had to be the best man, whose faculties included modesty, good temper, compassion, forgiveness, humility, generosity, sincerity, forbearance, gratitude, mercy, knowledge, reason and justice. It could, therefore, be suggested that Islamic political "theory" left the establishment of justice and enforcement of the limitations to the ruler's religiosity/morality, or more accurately, to his mercy.⁶³ These Mirrors also stated the terms of obedience to the rulers, though resistance to unfitting "tyrants" was rarely realized in practice. In such a context, to the extent there has been a unity of religion and politics in Islam, it was surely not a unity of equals. Political concerns, or the *hikmet-i hükümet* (reason of state) during the post-*Asr-i Saadet* period reigned supreme. Nevertheless, this supremacy was achieved in the formal name of Islam.

⁶² Patricia Springborg, *Western Republicanism and the Oriental Prince*, 268.

⁶³ There is a striking similarity of this approach with that of Kant, who according to Habermas inaugurated the Enlightenment. Kant, too, in practice, placed no institutional constraints upon the operation of the executive. He placed only normative constraints, which the ruler might impose upon himself. The only help available to monarch in the observation of the norms was the existence of freedom of discussion among the philosophers- the guardians of the purity of the republic. See Gareth S. Jones, "Kant, the French Revolution and the Definition of the Republic" in *The Invention of the Modern Republic*, ed. Fontana Biancamaria (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 171.

1.5. Islamic Reformism as a Response to Essentialism?

“Muslims entered the modern age with structures, ideas and religious beliefs quite similar to past ones”⁶⁴ and reacted to circumstances in a “reformist” manner in the sense that they used European categories in their attempts to revitalize Islamic civilization. As Salvatore pointed out, both Orientalism and colonialism delegitimized the indigenous Muslim intellectual traditions and thereby jeopardized their capacity to appropriate modernity selectively but reflexively. Since then any attempt at rejuvenating Islam had to be related either to European modernity through the concept of *nahda* (renaissance) or to the formative period of Islam through the concept of *islah* (reform) or to a blend of both.⁶⁵ In either case European categories had to be used, and this could best be done by referring to original sources in the name of reinstating true Islam. In effect, the attempt of reinstating “true” Islam included a restatement of the motifs of the Enlightenment and positivism. It is in this sense that the so-called cultural conflict is actually an epiphenomenon to simultaneous cultural transition.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Keddie, “The Revolt of Islam, 1700 to 1993,” 464.

⁶⁵ See Armando Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity*, 75-76, see also Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 68 for how modernists’ overconfident and intemperate mood hindered “whatever potential for reform existed inside the religious community.”

⁶⁶ C. A. O. Nieuwenhuitze, “Fundamentalists of all Faiths: Decolonization in Suspense,” *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, LIII, 1-2, (1996): 5-16, 9.

Indeed, "Islamist thinkers" of the late nineteenth century were all dissatisfied with the prevailing Islam. This is because, for them, the most progress-prone religion, Islam, as it was practiced then actually functioned as an obstacle to progress. Thus, Jamal al-din Afhgani (1838/9-1897), one of the pioneers of Islamic modernism, concluded that "Muslims are weak because they are not really Muslims," for the true Islam is not only belief in transcendence but in reason as well.⁶⁷ Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), a student of Afhgani, claimed that since Islam, unlike Christianity, propagated creation of a civilization in this world,⁶⁸ the issue was not Islam but the lack of it. Such contentions were both converging with and diverging from the Orientalist claims. They were converging with Orientalist depiction in their claim that the prevailing Islam was functioning as a hindrance to progress. But unlike Orientalist claims they did not depict Islam as an essential hindrance to progress. The real Islam for them was progressive.

It is in this period that Islam as *iman* was replaced by Islam as a suitable term for asserting an authentically indigenous identity and for constructing a framework of communal reference which was legitimized on the basis of

⁶⁷ Cited in Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, 129. for similar views of "Islamists" in the late Ottoman Empire see also Tarik Zafer Tunaya *Islamcilik Cerayani* [Islamism Movement] (Istanbul, Simavi Yayinlari, 1991), Ismail Kara, *Islamcilarin Siyasi Görüşleri* [Political Opinions of Islamists], (Istanbul, Iz Yayıncılık; 1994), 18, Mumtaz'er Türköne, *Islamciliğin Dogusu* [The Emergence of Islamism] (Istanbul, İletisim, 1994), 28.

rationality rather than *wahy* (divine revelation).⁶⁹ Thereby, Islam began to compete not with other religions but with secular ideologies. Both Abduh and Afhgani, for example, focused on the necessity of creating a vibrant Muslim nation as a valid response to Western domination. They emphasized the need for the development of a new Muslim human grounded in moral and spiritual foundations of faith and the need to create a renewed Islamic society to be actualized through economic and social development.⁷⁰ Rachid Rida (1865-1935), a Syrian-born Egyptian thinker, constructed Islam as a principle of social and political cohesion. As a follower of Abduh, Rida published a journal called *al-Minar* between 1898 and 1935. The journal became the organ of Islamic modernists.⁷¹ Abduh, aimed to show that Islam contained in itself the potentialities of the rational religion, the social science and moral code that could serve as the basis of modern life. Rida postulated that the duty of Muslims is to study the sciences and ways of modern world so as to be strong.⁷² The Young Ottomans, to whom “any serious attempt to

⁶⁸ The sources of the claim that Western civilization is based on might could, I think, be traced to this claim.

⁶⁹ Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity*, 48, Türköne, *Islamligin Dogusu*, 25, Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change*, 83.

⁷⁰ Yvonne Y. Haddad, “Islamist Depictions of Christianity in the 20th Century: The Pluralism Debate and the Depiction of the Other”, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 7, 1 (1996): 75-89, 79.

⁷¹ Ali Rahnema, “Introduction” in *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, ed., idem, (London: Zed Books, 1994), 3.

⁷² See Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, for a detailed review of Afhgani, Rida and Abuh.

reinject Islam into the foundations of Turkish state" today must refer,⁷³ admired the strength and progress of Europe and reinterpreted Islamic injunctions in accordance with Western liberalism. Thus, the Islamic principles of *shura* and *meshveret* became parliament and democracy respectively, whereas, in the Qur'an, there are few and only advisory references to the term *shura*.⁷⁴ In effect, the Young Ottomans, while setting a high value on the social morality of Islam, were trying to justify the adoption of Western institutions in Islamic terms.⁷⁵ Ali ahd al Raziq, writing in the 1920s, disclaimed Islam as a blueprint for government by claiming that religion had nothing to do with the administration.⁷⁶ In this respect, Ayubi suggest, Raziq could be considered as a Muslim theorist of secularism.⁷⁷

It has been suggested that the accommodating reaction of the Islamist thinkers was actually a reflection of the prevailing trust in modernity in Europe, because Islamic fundamentalist (sic) political thought is actually a part of the transcultural and multivocal reassessment of the value and

⁷³ Serif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideals*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962), 3-4.

⁷⁴ Ismail Kara, *Islamcilarin Siyasi Görüşleri*, 166.

⁷⁵ See Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, 68.

⁷⁶ cited in Bobby Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, (London: Zed Books, 1997), 62.

⁷⁷ Ayubi, *Political Islam*, 54.

definition of modernity.⁷⁸ As the trust in modernity is eroding due to postmodern critiques of modernity, at present, Islamist thinkers' relation to modernity changes as well. The depiction of current Islamism as a continuation of the Muslim's response to colonialism in the 18th century is misleading in this sense as well. The link between the conceptualizations of modernity in the West and in the Islamist circles was taken up in the previous chapter reviewing the relations between postmodernism and Islamism. The next section will focus on the relation between modernity and religion/secularization as another "conditioner" of the studies of religious-political movements so as to prepare the ground for an alternative framework.

2. MODERNITY, SECULARIZATION AND POLITICS

If one of the determinants of account of Islamism is the above mentioned essentialist approach to Islam as a culturally inferior religion that unites politics and religion, the other determinant has been the discussions about "modernity and religion." Drawing from Ronald Robertson, we could suggest that religion has become a subject of scientific study with the emergence of the modern social landscape and the study of religion under modernity, i.e. sociology of religion, was divided over the question of

⁷⁸ Roxanne L. Euben "Pre-Modern, Anti-Modern or Post-modern? Islamic and Western Critiques of Modernity," *Review of Politics*, 59, 3 (1997).

whether religion is central or peripheral to maintenance of social order and holding society together.⁷⁹ The question was brought up by the dismantling of the old forms of social control through increasing modernization, industrialization, individualization of (modern) societies and it was based on the assumption that religion used to play a major role in the integration of society in pre-modern times.⁸⁰ Leaving aside the extent of truth in this assumption for a while, the declining agreement on 'common' values, the pluralization of life worlds were either seen as a gain in autonomy and freedom or a loss of community and authenticity. Central to the debates was the notion of secularization which could best be described as a project proposing a decline in the social significance of religion.

By way of a discussion about the "place," "role," and "significance" of religion in the modern world, especially with regard to the question of "what holds society together" and the maintenance of social order, this section will critically review one of the determinants of the perceptions of

Similar studies illustrating the new sensibility of globalization have mushroomed in recent years.

⁷⁹ Roland Robertson, "Community, Society, Globality, and the Category of Religion" in *Secularization, Rationalism and Sectarianism: Essays in Honour of B R Wilson*, ed. E. Barker, J. A. Beckford, and K. Dobbelaere (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), and Bryan S. Turner, *Religion and Social Theory: A Materialist Perspective* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983), 135.

⁸⁰ Bryan S. Turner notes a point of convergence in the etymological origins of the terms religion and sociology: "the term 'religion' is derived from *religio*, the bond of social relations between individuals; the term

Islamism, that is, the conventional secularization thesis. But, the “coverage” of this section, however, is beyond a critique of the secularization thesis. This section aims to assert the primacy of political in “disclosing” the practice of modernity concerning the relations between religion and politics and by arguing that modern societies are held together neither by rational, scientific administration, which is the Enlightenment belief, nor by a common (civil) religion or cultural values. It aims to suggest that politics is the activity that holds society together by producing the common values and the common good society shares. The very idea of a common good or common values as something above and beyond politics is an impediment to politics and thus to the maintenance of society in a pluralist and democratic manner. The legitimate sphere of politics as well as the form of state-society relationship is determined by the mode of integration of society. *This study aims to evaluate Islamism in terms of its conception of the political and in terms of the form of state-society relationship it proposes.*

‘sociology’ is derived from *socius*, the bond of companionship that constitutes societies.” See Bryan S. Turner, *Religion and Social Theory*. 8.

2.1. The Enlightenment and Religion: The Rationalist Strand

The modern age was inaugurated with the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment hoped to discover universal, eternal and immutable qualities of *all humanity* so that a universal civilization could be built up and progress, freedom and bliss in this world could be realized on the basis of scientific rationality and secular reason. As a corollary, the Enlightenment proposed to displace local, customary or traditional moralities and all forms of transcendental faith by a rational morality, which was projected as the basis of universal civilization.⁸¹ Although not all of the Enlightenment thinkers were unbelievers, there was an almost unanimous opposition to theocratic government and to all forms of blind obedience to mystical powers among them.⁸² Religion was considered to be illusory and irrational, from which rationality would liberate us. It was proposed that religion would eventually disappear as rationalization/modernization proceeded. The Enlightenment thinkers assumed that reorganization of society along more rational lines would be adequate for social integration, and that the role of religion as the basis of legitimacy and social integration would decline.

⁸¹ John Gray, *The Enlightenment's Wake*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 123.

⁸² See "the Enlightenment" in *Dictionary of Modern Political Ideologies*, ed. M. A. Riff, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 74-86.

The nineteenth century Enlightenment belief in science as an avenue to true happiness was, in fact, a continuity of the belief in science as an avenue to different “true” things in the history of Greek-Western political thought. In Greek philosophy, for example, science was seen as an avenue to true being. During the Renaissance, science was an avenue to true art.⁸³ The Enlightenment thinkers were, therefore, concerned with the institutional links between social theory (rationality) and practice. This concern could be taken as representing a similarity with Plato’s ideal form of government under a ‘philosopher king’, who had both the power and knowledge. The sources of the assessment of religion as politically dispensable can be traced back to Plato as well. Plato saw the exercise of philosophy as the supreme way of gaining virtue and considered mere religious habituation as an inadequate way of gaining virtue.⁸⁴

⁸³ Nevertheless, Weber considered all these views as illusions. See Wolfgang Schluchter, *Rationalism, Religion, and Domination: A Weberian Perspective*, translated by Neil Solomon (Berkeley, LA: University of California Press, 1989), 268-271.

⁸⁴ “If a man ... always philosophizes in a healthy way and the lot for his choice does not fall among the last, it is likely... that he will not only be happy here but also he will journey from this world to the other and back again... through heavens” Allan Bloom, tran. and ed., *The Republic of Plato*, (New York: Basic Books, 1991 {first published in 1968}), 302. See also, Ronald Beiner, “Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau on Civil Religion”, *The Review of Politics*, 55, 4 (1993): 617-638, 638.

2.1.1. Secularization as Modernization?

According to “the orthodox model,” secularization is a consequence of the modernization process which consists of three sub-processes: “social differentiation” of religious institutions from other social institutions, “societalization” which leads to privatization of belief and “rationalization” as decline in the social significance of religion.⁸⁵ Social differentiation refers to the emergence of specialist institutions providing services that were previously in the domain of religious institutions. Societalization means organization of life not locally or communally but at the level of society, i.e. at the nation-state level. Since it is believed that religion has its source in the community, or more accurately it is the ideology of community, societalization strips religion of its communal functions. Both of these processes lead to a decline in the plausibility of any single overarching moral and religious system. Religion, thereby, becomes a matter of private choice. Lastly, with the pursuit of technically efficient means of securing this-worldly ends, i.e. rationalization, the social significance of religion declines.

The conventional secularization thesis has been a derivative of the Enlightenment thought on religion. It was deeply embedded in the Enlightenment’s trust in the capability of reason and it saw religion as an

⁸⁵ See Roy Wallis and Steve Bruce, “Secularization: The Orthodox Model,” Steve Bruce, ed., *Religion and Modernization: Sociologist and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

obstacle to rational progress. According to this thesis, actions of rational men would improve society and rational bureaucratic impersonal administration would be a sufficient ground for social integration.⁸⁶ Accordingly, if a society were rationally organized there would be no need for the “contribution” of religion to a stable order as a “factor of cohesion,” because in a rationally ordered society there would be no need for common values of which religion is one. Therefore, the role that religion supposedly played once in a traditional, i.e., non-rationalized, society was to become obsolete. As a corollary, religion would have “no major functions for the *entire* society” in a fully rationalized/modernized society.⁸⁷ Bryan Wilson’s thesis -that there is no need for religious ideology in increasingly rationalized societies because the logic of rationality, function, system and utility provides

⁸⁶ R. N. Bellah’s comments on the contemporary Japanese society is a recent illustration/application of both the Enlightenment approach and the conventional wisdom on secularization. Bellah observed that in the Japanese *kanri shakai* (administered society) the abolishment of state *shinto* did not lead to an ethical vacuum, because of proper/good administration of society through technical expertise and engineered prosperity. In Bellah’s perspective good (rational) administration itself is the basis of legitimacy rendering both politics and religion incapable of providing legitimation. Needless to say this perspective on the Japanese society is significantly different from the same commentators views on the American society, which led him to the concept of “civil religion.” See Robert N. Bellah, “Legitimation Processes in Politics and Religion”, *Current Sociology*, 35, 2 (1987): 89-99, esp. pp. 91-93. Also compare Bellah’s views on the Japanese society with John Clammer, *Difference and Modernity: Social Theory and Contemporary Japanese Society*, (London: Kegan Paul International, 1995), 120-122. Clammer puts some emphasis on the role of culture in Japanese modernization as opposed to “pure” rational administration.

⁸⁷ See Malcom B. Hamilton, *The Sociology of Religion: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 1995).

integration and purpose- could be situated within this strict Enlightenment perspective. For Wilson, religion belongs to the experience of the community, but in society religions will inevitably erode. The legitimacy of social order in rationalized society does not depend upon moral values, and thereby the maintenance of the social system becomes less dependent upon people being good, but more on people being predictable.⁸⁸

The Enlightenment and its derivations constituted the historical site from which Westerners approach non-Western traditions.⁸⁹ Hence, most studies of Islamism are informed by the modernization framework. As the above discussion implies, secularization and modernization are synonyms within the Enlightenment perspective. It was believed that modernization breeds secularization, that is the disappearance of religion or, at least, a decline in the social significance of religion. Persisting religion was, therefore, a symbol of irrationality and being traditional, or at best a leftover from the past.⁹⁰ The modernization paradigm, thus, took the visibility of religion as an epiphenomenon of traditional structures.⁹¹ Logically, politically significant religion is a symptom of being traditional within this perspective.

⁸⁸ Bryan R. Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 165 cited in James Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 110.

⁸⁹ Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 200.

⁹⁰ David Martin, "Sociology, Religion and Secularization: An Orientation," *Religion*, 25, 4 (1995), 295-303, 296.

2.1.2 Secularization as a Policy

However, modernization also meant secularization not as a process but as *policies* towards that end. In a way, the original culture-structure relationship which proposed that if the social structures has changed the superstructure (religion) would change as well, was turned inside out: cultural change, i.e. secularization of culture, breeds modernization. The policies aiming cultural change were justified and promoted by the modernization theory, which functioned not only to explain the world in a rational way but also to interpret the world in a manner that provided “meaning” and “motivation.”⁹² In this respect, modernization theory functioned like Weber’s Protestant ethic functioned in the modernization of the West. Weber, as noted above, linked the possibility of modernization to an appropriate culture and Islam, in this respect, was not a proper culture for modernization. The modernization school injected a hope by not rejecting the possibility of change in Muslim societies, but started by attempting to change the “Islamic” culture. Hence, the relation between Islam and political modernization is considered in terms of secularization. Since the contents of Islam as a culturally inferior and as essentially political religion could not be altered, since Islam could not be eliminated from the Muslim societies and since Islam was conceived as an impediment to

⁹¹ Daniel Levine, “Religion and Politics in Comparative and Historical Perspective,” 96.

modernization, the success in modernizing has meant the success in marginalizing the religion. The modernization paradigm thereby legitimized the submerging of Islam. Politically modern turned out to be politically secular, which in turn meant a circumstance in which Islam is submerged.

2.2. Religion under Modernity: The Practice

In this section an attempt will be made to consider critically the idea of secularization as a progressive decline of religion and the relations between politics and religion under modernity. It will be suggested that separation of religion and state as secularization is a misnomer, that religion and politics has always been intertwined and that secularization as decline of religion is misleading. The general theme of the discussion converges with what Casanova has pointed out: conceiving the process of secularization as the progressive decline of religious beliefs and practices is actually reproduction of a myth that “sees history as the progressive evolution of humanity from superstition to reason, from belief to unbelief, from religion to science.”⁹³

⁹² Jeffrey Alexander, ‘Modern, Anti, Post and Neo’, *New Left Review*, 210, March/April, (1995): 63-101, 69.

⁹³ Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, 17.

2.2.1. Religion and state: reconfiguration or secularization?

Separation between religion and politics as secularization is a misnomer because religion and politics had been two separate (but interrelated) realms in Christian world. The Christian doctrine of two swords divided this world into secular and religious realms, *sacerdotium* and *imperium*, each represented by different institutions, the Church and the State. The Churchmen, however, were deeply involved in politics because their political theories and administrative techniques had a direct impact on lay government. Like the Islamic ulema, Churchmen were also teaching that it was the secular rulers' duty to give peace and justice. This doctrine concerning the duty of the rulers, Strayer suggests, logically demanded the creation of new judicial institutions.⁹⁴ But, creation of new judicial institutions had to wait until the collapse of the Church hierarchy, which was central to the emergence of modern state.

The emergence of the modern nation-state is one of the most important watersheds symbolizing the passage to the modern age. Given the fact that there was a dual institutionalization of the religious and secular spheres in the pre-modern period, what modernity signifies, as far as the relation between religion and the state is concerned, is the emergence of the secular

⁹⁴ Joseph R. Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), 16. See also Black, "Classical Islam and Mediaeval Europe..."

sphere as an all-encompassing sphere, in which the religious sphere lost its power to legitimize and to which the religious sphere was to “adapt,” rather than “separation.” Modern state monopolized all the faculties and facilities pertaining to rule as far as possible.⁹⁵ Such monopolization entailed the enforcement of toleration and definition of religion as a belief and religious belief as a personal/private matter.⁹⁶ As Asad pointed out “in the eyes of those who wanted a strong, centralized state, the disorders of the Reformation proved that religious belief was the source of uncontrollable passions within the individual and of dangerous strife within the commonwealth. It could not, for this reason, provide an institutional basis for a common morality -still less a language of rational criticism.”⁹⁷

The modern state has also been a modernizing state because it was “a network of secular powers that assume[d] the task of remoulding the material and moral condition of its subjects in accordance with the Enlightenment principles.”⁹⁸ The modern state, thereby, penetrated deeper into society by regulating various spheres of life through its secular legislation and bureaucratic “rational” administration. However, that these

⁹⁵ Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of Modern State: A Sociological Introduction*, (London: Hutchinson, 1978).

⁹⁶ Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 206.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, 205.

⁹⁸ Asad, “Religion and Politics: An Introduction”, *Social Research*, 59, 1, (1992), 3-16, 15.

spheres were previously under the control of religious and communal mechanisms and that now they are under the jurisdiction of the secular sphere, that is the societalization, does not necessarily point to secularization as decline in the social significance of religion unless we associate religion with the institution representing it, the Church.⁹⁹

It is true that with the emergence of the modern state, institutionalized religion (the Church) was detached from the apparatus of social control and legitimacy. But, this does not necessarily mean a decline in the social significance of religion. What was left behind with modernity, in reality, was the previous configuration of religious and secular powers, but not the social significance of religion.¹⁰⁰ In this new configuration, the Church was no longer the "subject" of control, and in certain respects it has become an "object" of the modern state's control by losing its autonomy. Also, as a result of "societalization" religion ceased to provide major values, moral constraints and legitimation in society. But this separation of religion from the apparatus of social control and legitimation did not mean that the religious symbols and values would no longer be (ab)used. It rather meant that the way(s) of the utilization of religion are now less predictable and more contestable and controversial, because religion is no longer associated

⁹⁹ Raimundo Pannikar, "Religion and Politics: The Western Dilemma" in *Religion and Politics in Modern World*, eds., Peter Merkl and Ninian Smart (New York: New York University Press, 1983), 55.

¹⁰⁰ Schluchter, *Rationalism, Religion and Domination*, 251.

with an institution or age-old communities.¹⁰¹ “Secularization,” in sum, did not eliminate religion from the political realm.

The second criticism of the association of the “separation” of religion and state with secularization could be made by showing various political “functionalizations” of religion in modern society. The functionalizations of religion represent the acceptance of the idea that religion is central to the maintenance of social order. In this respect, the functionalizations represent a divergence from the Enlightenment critique of religion. The sociology of religion shows various functionalizations of religion.

2.2.2. Functionalizing Religion: The Sociology of Religion

Many commentators on the social significance of religion have suggested different reasons for the (probable) persistence of religion, and the different roles of religion under secular modernity. James A. Beckford in his *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society* identified three distinct categories of contribution to the sociology of religion in the twentieth century. The first suggests that religion promotes social system integration, social solidarity and social integration and the process of differentiation is the most

¹⁰¹ Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, 110, 170, see also C. C. Park, *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*, (London: Routledge, 1994), 48.

important factor in this function. The second category finds religion socially relevant because of its (supposed) capacity to supply ideas of orderliness, in other words, normative guidelines for action and the ultimate grounds for meaning. The last one assumes that the social significance of religion lies primarily in its ideological effects, that is, in its ability to disguise the material interests of social classes and class fractions. All these approaches follow the footsteps of either Durkeim, or Weber or Marx respectively and it was under their impact that the religion was functionalized.¹⁰² Obviously, all of these categories of contribution are somehow related to the question of societal integration.

2.2.2. A) Religion as the Bond: Civil Religion and Nationalism

Modernity was not all about rationalism or rational administration or Enlightenment principles. It was actually a mixture of the Enlightenment and anti-Enlightenment as well as tradition and the modern.¹⁰³ The modern state as an integrative framework was allocated the task of holding society

¹⁰² For the ideas of Durkeim, Marx and Weber see Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkeim and Max Weber*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984 [1971]), see also Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, 25-35, 166-169, and Turner, *Religion and Social Theory*.

¹⁰³ For the distinction between the myth and the reality of the modernity see Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Mélange Modernities in the East: Modernization and Globalization", *unpublished mimeo* (1995), 9.

together, and it was clear that the societies could not be held together by rational administration only. Rather, modern society was an (imagined) community of people who supposedly share the same culture. Modern state assumed *gemeinschaftlich* and *gesellschaftlich* characteristics at one and the same time. Indeed, it was assumed by modern theorists that a viable modern society had to be *culturally homogenous* and must have a *central value system*.¹⁰⁴ Social integration thereby was tied to the development of a cohesive political community, which was bound up with the concept of nation.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, drawing from Greenfeld we might suggest that the constitutive element of modernity was neither industrialization driven by capitalism, nor organic solidarity, nor rational will, but nationalism.¹⁰⁶ Nationalism, which provided “the something in common” in modern societies, therefore, replaced the supposed role religion used to play in pre-modern communities. But, the relation between religion and nationalism

¹⁰⁴ Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 1992), 109, For T. H. Green, for example, society was a system of shared values, and common good can only be fully articulated in a society where its members are conscious of being part of a larger whole. For Green see T. Walton “Justifying the Welfare State” in *The Idea of Modern State*, eds., G. McLennan and D. Held (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1987), 126. Various social scientist can be added to the list, for example, Almond and Verba in their civic culture argues that support for stability of a political system derives from the political culture and value-consensus. See Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963).

¹⁰⁵ Ronan Paddison, *The Fragmented State: Political Geography of Power* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1983), 58.

have not been in zero-sum terms, rather they have been “interactive in myriad ways,” not necessarily as reactions to modernity but as part of the complex processes of modernity.¹⁰⁷ In this respect, religion could become a means through which a nation expresses its identity, for it is a part of the common culture, common identity.¹⁰⁸

The principle of nationalism included resorting to religion as an integrative mechanism as well. But this time the religion resorted was not the “real religion” but “civil religion,” which was functional for the maintenance of the secular social order and which confined itself to political power. The concept of civil religion can be considered as an extension of the Republican virtue tradition, for which the problem is “how to harness the integrative power of religion without exposing itself to threat of theocracy.”¹⁰⁹ It was expected that civil religion would serve as a genuine vehicle for natural religious self-understanding. The concept of civil religion is based on the assumption that a substantial degree of moral and civil religious

¹⁰⁶ Liah Greenfeld, “Nationalism and Modernity,” *Social Research*, 63, 1 (1996): 3-40, 4, 8.

¹⁰⁷ Edward A. Tiryakiyan, “The Wild Cards of Modernity” *Daedalus*, 126, 2 (Spring, 1997): 147-181, 170.

¹⁰⁸ George Moyser, “Politics and Religion in the Modern World: An Overview” in *Religion and Politics in the Modern World*, ed., G. Moyser (London: Routledge, 1991), 4.

¹⁰⁹ The difference between Republican virtue tradition and the modern liberal political tradition will be shown below by comparing and contrasting each other. These differences will become of the main

consciousness is attainable. For example, R. N. Bellah, who popularized the term by using it for America, suggested that the relationship between religion and politics in America had been singularly smooth: churches opposed neither the revolution nor the establishment of democratic institutions. "The American civil religion was never anti-clerical or militantly secular ... it borrowed selectively from the religious tradition in such a way that the average American saw no conflict between the two. In this way, the civil religion was able ... to mobilize deep levels of personal motivation for the attainment of national goals.¹¹⁰ As such civil religion binds all members of society, tell them their duties and even moves them to fight for their society where necessary.

It could be suggested that there are two different definitions of civil religion. One of them is located at the level of society and therefore seems to be bottom-up. The other one is located at the level of state and seems to be top-down.¹¹¹ Sources of the first definition could be traced back to Durkeim. Sources of the other conceptualization could be traced back to Rousseau.¹¹²

analytical tools in analyzing the National Outlook Movement and the Republic in Turkey.

¹¹⁰ Robert N. Bellah *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditionalist World*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 180-181. See also Chris Park, *Sacred Worlds*, pp. 54-55.

¹¹¹ N. J. Demerath III, "The Moth and the Flame: Religion and Power in Comparative Blur", *Sociology of Religion*, 55, 2, (1994): 105-117, 113.

¹¹² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. Maurice Cranston (London: Penguin Books, 1968), book 4, chapter 8, pp. 176-187.

Rousseau was uneasy with a case in which there are two prevailing source of authority in a community, religious and civil. In this case, “men have never known whether they ought to obey the civil ruler or the priest.”¹¹³ That’s why he thought “Mahomet had very sound opinions, taking care to give unity to his political system, and for as long as the form of his government endured under the caliphs who succeeded him, the government was undivided and, to that extent good.”¹¹⁴ Christianity, Rousseau contemplates,

having no specific connexion with the body politic, leaves the law with only the force the law itself possesses, adding nothing to it; and hence one of the chief bonds necessary for holding any particular society together is lacking. ... far from attaching the hearts of the citizens to the state, this religion detaches them from it as from all other things of this world...¹¹⁵

Rousseau’s argument on civil religion in his *Social Contract* was based on the proposition that a true religion breeds bad politics and a good politics presupposes a false religion.¹¹⁶ He rejects the ideas that Christianity is the best support for body politics and that a state without religion is possible/preferable. He differentiated between natural religion (religion of men) and civil religion (religion of citizen) and discredited the former because it is universal and otherworldly. As such, natural religion fails to attach the hearts of the citizen to the state. Civil religion, on the other hand,

¹¹³ *ibid.*, 179.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, 182

was not subject to the defects of the natural religion because its dogmas and rites were specific requirements of faith for all who live within the boundaries of the state. Civil religion “is good in that it joins divine worship to a love of the law, and that in making the homeland the object of citizen’s adoration, it teaches them that the service of the state is the service of the tutelary God.”¹¹⁷ Yet, civil religion suffered from “the lies and errors compounded in its doctrines and the intolerance which stems from exclusiveness and contempt for other beliefs.”¹¹⁸ “[I]t deceives men, and makes them credulous and superstitious, it buries the true worship of God in empty ceremonials.”¹¹⁹

In sociology of religion, the Durkeimian-Parsonian and even Marxian approaches considered religion as an integrative element of modern societies. Durkeim, by heeding de Toqueville’s warning about the socially disintegrative effects of the decline in shared public virtues and increasing individualism, proposed that society is bound together “not by material relations but by the ties of ideas.” For Durkeim, organic society, composed of increasingly autonomous individuals, was still a moral order in which neither the commonly held beliefs and sentiments disappeared altogether,

¹¹⁶ Beiner, “Machieveli, Hobbes ..,” 637.

¹¹⁷ Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, 181-182.

¹¹⁸ L. J. Macfarlane, *Modern Political Theory* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970), 68.

nor did the contractual relations become amoral and are simply the result of self-interest. Religion was exceptionally important for Durkeim because he considered it as a mechanism which generated symbols that enabled all aspects of life to proceed in relative harmony.¹²⁰ Otherwise, there is the risk of anomie that would jeopardize society. Durkeim's position was based on the dubious assumption that religion had an integrative role in pre-modern societies. He extracted a new role from religion's pre-modern role. He proposed that religious institutions may decline but the functions they fulfill may not. For Durkeim, it is religion that makes society possible.

Parsons, following the Durkeimian logic, regarded religion as an indispensable factor of a stable social system as well, because he believed that stability is the product of value orientations. Value orientations, in turn, was a function of religion, which is the chief source of the meaning of life. The process of social differentiation, for Parsons, did not mean a decline in the role of religion, but a change enabling religion to fulfill its role better. He expected, in other words, a more efficient and effective performance from religion as a result of "the division of labour", i.e. differentiation. The performance expected from religion was in coping with the potentially adverse effects of differentiation. As will be seen below, dealing with the potentially adverse effects of differentiation/modernization is a task of politics, and "delegating" this task to religion reveals the underlying concept

¹¹⁹ Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, 182.

of “the political” as something moral, which is quite depoliticizing. This issue will be taken up below.

2.2.2. B) Religion as False Consciousness

The Marxian approach, which focused on the ability of religion to conceal or distort the real world by neglecting the fact that religion could also be a vehicle for challenging the prevailing social order, converges with the Durkeimian approach on the *function* of religion in contributing to a stable social order. Marx considered religion as false consciousness, necessary for masking exploitation. Since Marx recognized the relationship between the real world and religion, his “theory of secularization” did not expect a disappearance of religion until the eradication of exploitation and alienation, which is masked by religion. It could, therefore, be suggested that in the Marxian approach, too, religion acts as a factor of maintaining the social order, though through the numbing effect of social opium. Since for the Marxian approach religion was an illusion disguising the material interests of social classes, the function of religion was assessed negatively.¹²¹ Durkeim and Parsons, on the other hand, assessed the function of religion positively, as something compensating for the “divisive” effects of pluralism and differentiation. It was perhaps because of the revolutionary zeal of the

¹²⁰ Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, 28.

Marxism that a factor contributing to the maintenance of the capitalist order was not assessed positively. Consequently, the Marxian approach did not provide a basis for the concept of civil religion.

2.2.2. C) Religious Modernization

The Enlightenment by seeing rationality itself as the basis of legitimacy underplayed the issue of legitimization of rationality. This is an issue first brought up by Weber and taken up later by Bellah, Berger, Luckmann and Luhmann. These theorists accept the basic processes of modernization, differentiation, rationalization, privatization. But, they do not foresee any disappearance of religion in the modern world. Instead, they focus on the functions of an essentially privatized religion, which supplies ideas of orderliness, normative guidelines for actions and ultimate grounds for meaning. But, they neglect "the societal forces which shape and constrain the social construction of meaning."¹²²

Weber expected that self-legitimized rationality would lead to charismatic forms of leadership, an irrational and therefore antipolitical form of leadership. Hence, it was, for example, Protestant ethic that made the

¹²¹ See Giddens, *Capitalism*, 220-221.

¹²² Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, 166. See also Asad, *Genealogies*, 44.

capitalist rationality meaningful, at the level of individual or inner-self, by justifying (or spiritualising) the seeking of the wealth for the sake of wealth. Weber's religion was thus a religion in harmony with the capitalist ethos and secular rationality which would leave the real business of running the society to rational bureaucracy. It actually was a religion contributing to the modernization/rationalization by giving it a meaning. Especially Bellah's *Meaning and Modernization* is strictly within the Weberian tradition.¹²³ The considerations of Islam as a religion that could not act as an agent of change because it cannot give a meaning to rationality can be situated in this line of thought.

According to Peter Berger, religion was a kind of "compensation" for the most destructive effects of modern society. Religious organizations, he suggested, overcome the problems created by impersonality of bureaucratic administration, the atomization of privatized experience and exploitativeness of political and economic ideologies.¹²⁴ As such, religion plays a psychological and/or emotional role by providing a shelter from the modern world. Thomas Luckmann's postulated that religion will loose its public functions, but will not inevitably decline/disappear in the modern world. Also, American conservative Daniel Bell could be situated within this

¹²³ Bellah's "Meaning and Modernization" first published in *Religious Studies*, 4, 1 (October, 1968) and reprinted as chapter four in Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief*.

¹²⁴ See Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, 106-107.

perspective as well. Bell argued that religion provides coherent answers to solemn questions that every individual confronts in post-industrial society. Consequently, religion is seen as essential to solve 'the meaning' problem (wo)men faces in a post-industrial society. In all these approaches, the function of religion was to enable the smooth proceeding of modern/industrial society.

3. AN ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK: THE PRIMACY OF POLITICS

The discussion in the previous sections meant to prepare a ground for suggesting an alternative framework for studying Islamism that will enable us to study Islamism in a different way than the studies emphasizing features of Islam as a religion and studies focusing on aspects of modernization. The alternative framework, suggested in this study, *focuses on the political sphere*. Below, to illustrate the importance of political sphere, an attempt will be made to show the primacy of politics in holding the societies together.

As the concept of civil religion and the views of the founding fathers of sociology on religion illustrates, the separation of the state and church does not mean separation of religion and politics. Neither does it mean a decline in the social significance of religion, i.e., secularization. Even if the "ideology" of secularization allocated only the private sphere for religion,

religion still has a societal role appropriate to modern circumstances.¹²⁵ Hence, secularization, in reality, was not a matter of total eradication of sacred or undebateable triumph of secular-profane.¹²⁶ This is a fact illustrated by the functional definitions of religion; by attributing a constant function to religion, functional definitions of religion foreclose the possibility of decline in the social significance of religion.¹²⁷ For example, people will always have ultimate questions that religions answer and if religion is seen as an answer to them, decline of religion may signal a social crisis and may become a threat to social integration. In effect, functional definitions suggest that it is impossible for a modern society to operate without religion. Be that as it may, but, on the other hand, functional definitions equate (the indispensable) religion with the functions it fulfills rather than with belief in supernatural, religious practices and dogmas. Therefore, similarly functioning "ideologies" of order/meaning could be considered as religious and vice versa. It is at this point that we enter into the sphere of politics, because ideologies are subject to political construction, political questionings and challenges and so is the functionalized religion. In itself, this fact is a sufficient ground for asserting the primacy of politics in the definitions of the roles of religion.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, 116.

¹²⁶ Kenneth Thompson, "Religion, Values and Ideology" in *Social and Cultural Forms of Modernity*, eds., Robert Boccock and Kenneth Thompson (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1992), 324.

It seems that the issue concerning the role of religion in modern society, boils down to two crucial questions. First, concerning the supposedly supportive role of religion in the maintenance of society and in giving a meaning to modernization, to what extent and in what circumstances religion can play such a supportive role? Second, whether religious or not, are common values and a common culture essential for the social integration and the maintenance of society?

With regard to the first question, it could be suggested that perceiving religion as making a positive contribution to the sustaining of social solidarity and social integration associates meaning, order and community implicitly with religion. This association, in fact, conflates historical contingency with categorical necessity by taking it for granted that since religion in once stable communities was inseparable from social life, the decline of religion must mean the decline of community, or decline of community must mean the decline of the real religion.¹²⁸ If the decline of

¹²⁷ See Steve Bruce, *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 7.

¹²⁸ Turner, *Religion and Social Theory*, 145-146. The idea that religion had played a major role in providing stable communities in pre-modern times is disputable itself. It neglects the fact that, the mass of population was indifferent to religion in pre-modern times, and that secularization actually meant the loss of social significance of religion only from the cultural orbit of the dominant class. In other words, religious structures in pre-modern times does not tell much about individual religiosity of the people. The discussion of secularization or religious revival in terms of piety, Church attendance etc. is not very explanatory in this sense.

community is viewed as something negative, as loss of authenticity and as a sign of disintegration rather than gain in personal freedom and autonomy, a return to religion to restore the community is aimed.¹²⁹ As such, this perspective underplays the importance of material factors such as economic coercion, economic dependency, and legal compulsion in holding society together.

Although secularization does not necessarily mean a decline in the social significance of religion, persistence of religion is not an intrinsic contribution to the maintenance of social order. It can also be a destabilizing factor in modern societies. For example, in his study of Western European experience, John Madeley found that religion has “failed to provide the social glue or cement which Durkeim and others regarded as its prime social function.”¹³⁰ Religion, in the maintenance of social order, “may act as the vehicle of change, challenge or conservation.”¹³¹ Hence, to the extent that cultural homogeneity and common values are essential for the maintenance of modern society, the role of religion in providing them depends on creating a political consensus on the meaning and function of religion. It is,

¹²⁹ Turner, *Religion and Social Theory*, 135.

¹³⁰ John Madeley, “Politics and Religion in Western Europe” in *Religion and Politics in the Modern World*, ed., G. Moyser (London: Routledge, 1991), 62.

¹³¹ Beckford, *Religion and Advanced Industrial Society*, 110, 170. See also George Moyser, “Politics and Religion in the Modern World: An

therefore, the activity of politics that makes religion a positive contribution to maintenance of society. In this context, those who argue that religion is a positive contribution to the maintenance of order, social integration and modernization assumes that a substantial degree of political consensus on questions concerning the function/role/meaning of religion has either already been attained or is attainable when needed. But, even so, once the political nature of this "moral" consensus is recognized, it becomes open to political questionings and challenges. Hence, 'secularization' does not necessarily mean an inevitable loss of moral consensus or shared cultural basis, it rather implies a need for the political construction and politicization of such a moral consensus, that is the role attributed to religion by a political consensus is never secure and has to be reproduced continually. Depending on one's position towards radical change as well as ones concept of "the political," this contingency or insecurity of social/political/moral consensus is either a matter of concern or a reason for rejoicing.

Concerning the second question posed above, drawing from Bryan S. Turner it could be suggested that "the existence of shared values or a common culture does not appear to be empirically a necessary requirement of the existence or continuity of actual societies ...common values or a dominant ideology are not necessary conditions of order."¹³² What is suggested here,¹³³

Overview," 2, . C. C. Park, *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion*, 48.

however, is not the lack of but the political nature of foundations of a society/polity and questionability of them.¹³⁴ The theoretical premise of this study is that modern societies do not need common culture and common values to survive in order to allow for the possibility of reproduction, reexamination of the "political center" that holds the societies together. In other words, this study proposes that the very possibilities of reproduction of modern society is dependent on the belief that society does not need reproduction in terms of upholding some fixed/timeless common values of which religion is one. Because modern societies are plural societies as far as the values of the members are concerned, politics is the mechanism that unites the "pluralities" in a meaningful but contingent "oneness." The very idea that common values/common good as something above and beyond politics is an impediment to politics because it restricts the legitimate sphere of politics to a certain range of issues. To put it differently, the center of the

¹³² Bryan S. Turner, "Conclusion: Peroration on Ideology" in *Dominant Ideologies* eds., Abercombie et al. (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 242. There is a good deal of social research that does not link the reproduction of social order on consensus on collective values, but rather upon cultural fragmentation and tensions. See Anthony Elliott, *Social Theory and Psychoanalysis in Transition: Self and Society from Freud to Kristeva*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 79. See also John McGowan, *Postmodernism and Its Critics*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991).

¹³³ Below discussion is informed mainly by liberal intellectual tradition, but the discussion eventually goes beyond this tradition by introducing the shortcomings of this tradition. To introduce the shortcomings I mainly draw from Chantal Mouffe's criticisms of liberalism from a radical democracy perspective. I also compare and contrast liberalism with the republicanist intellectual tradition.

society is a political construction and giving the center of a society a moral status is a restriction of the possibilities of the reproduction of the center/society (in a meaningful/democratic way).*

In reality, politics is not about rationality and reason but about the very definitions of them. Neither is the starting point of politics is common values or acceptance of a collective good by all actors. As, Bernard Crick, in his *In Defense Of Politics*, noted

it is often thought that for this 'masterscience' [politics] to function, there must be already in existence some shared idea of a 'common good,' some 'consensus' or *consensus juris*. But this common good is itself the process of practical reconciliation it is not some external and intangible spiritual adhesive, or some allegedly objective 'general will' or 'public interest.' These are misleading and pretentious explanations of how a community holds together; worse, they can even be justifications for the sudden destruction of some elements of community in favour of others -there is no right to obstruct the general will, it is said. But diverse groups hold together because they practice politics -not because they agree about 'fundamentals' The moral consensus of a free state is not something mysteriously prior to or above politics: it is the activity (the civilizing activity) of politics itself.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Chantal Mouffe, "Democracy, Power and the 'Political'," in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting Boundaries of the Political*, ed. Seyla Benhabib (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 250.

* If we assume that social reproduction is a matter of consent-generation, consent can be generated without recognizing the political nature of the center, that is by claiming that (for example, Kemalist) center is above and beyond politics. The above discussion is meant to differentiate between ways of reproducing social orders -democratic and not-so-democratic.

¹³⁵ Bernard Crick, *In Defense of Politics*, (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1973), 24.

Pluralist concept of society is contrary to the imagination of society as culturally homogeneous with a central value system. It is not founded upon any particular conception of goodness and truth eternally which would exclude certain issues from the legitimate sphere of politics. It is pluralistic in the sense that it lacks a substantive idea of good life and it allows for the possibility of challenging the institutionalized conception of good life at any given moment.¹³⁶ The basis of the legitimacy of the state in a pluralist society rest not in promotion of any particular way of life but “showing equal concern and respect for each person’s pursuit of whatever way of life he or she may choose.”¹³⁷ This is because conflicts among value systems and visions of the good cannot be resolved by reestablishing “a strong unified moral and religious code without forsaking fundamental liberties in a value-pluralist society.”¹³⁸ In this respect, to the extent that Kemalism denied the conflicts within the society and tried to homogenize society around Kemalist values of the “center,” it did so at the expense of fundamental liberties. Relatedly, we could also suggest that consensus on the role and place of religion may not be attainable. Indeed, the functionalist postulation that modern societies “need” a civil religion could both be untenable

¹³⁶ Mouffe, “Democracy, Power and the ‘Political’”, 246.

¹³⁷ Richard Bellamy, “Introduction: The Demise and Rise of Political Theory” in idem ed., *Theories and Concepts of Politics: An Introduction*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 7-8.

¹³⁸ Seyla Benhabib, “Towards a Deliberative Model of Democratic Legitimacy” in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting Boundaries of the*

theoretically and undesirable normatively.¹³⁹ In fact, a declared foundation on a civil religion, on moral appeal to individuals and value based nature of legitimacy could be considered as a decisive weakness in the constitution of societies.¹⁴⁰ The legitimacy of a social order, therefore, should be conceived of being dependent on the ability of it to provide procedures that makes daily interchanges unproblematic or in providing a shared life-world that social members ratify each day in their routine activities.¹⁴¹ It is perhaps for this reason that the procedures of democracy, rather than substantive beliefs, must have some extra-constitutional cultural basis if democracy is to survive.¹⁴²

Having said these, it must be noted that this study adopts the orientation towards the common good of society. There must be a kind of politics of common good so that meaningful politics can be possible, because politics is primarily about the substantive moral purposes that decision makers ought to pursue by conciliation as well as coercion. Otherwise the concept of

Political, ed., Seyla Benhabib, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996), 73.

¹³⁹ Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, 61.

¹⁴⁰ Werner Meihofer, "The Ethos of the Republic and the Reality of Politics" in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, eds. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 289.

¹⁴¹ McGowan, *Postmodernism and Its Critics*, 241.

¹⁴² *ibid.*, 235, and Benhabib "Towards a Deliberative Model of Democratic Legitimacy," 73.

political vanishes.¹⁴³ What is needed is, therefore, a substance that would be embedded in the procedures or structuration of politics and that would not restrict the fundamental liberties, i.e. "the substantive must not be political in nature."¹⁴⁴ Agnes Heller suggests that "the practical realization of the universal value of freedom in the public domain is the modern concept of political."¹⁴⁵ Hence, substantive dimension of politics, the value of freedom, is not something concrete and any idea of common good apart from the "morality of freedom" is subject to political questioning and revision provided that it results in further expansion of freedom for all.¹⁴⁶ This basis - the ground on which of political questionings has to take place- forecloses the "anything goes" option while recognizing the possibility of challenge to

¹⁴³ Agnes Heller, "The Concept of the Political Revisited," in David Held, ed., *Political Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 337.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 337.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 340.

¹⁴⁶ This definition of politics could be considered as compatible with that of Kant and liberalism. According to Bielefeldt liberalism has a political purpose of expansion of freedom and autonomy which will be realized through politics. See Heiner Bielefeldt, "Autonomy and Republicanism: Immanuel Kant's Philosophy of Freedom," *Political Theory*, 25, 4 (August, 1997): 524-558. The idea of expansion of freedom and autonomy could also be taken as a regulative idea in Kantian sense. Kant saw social contract as a regulative idea, as a norm, rather than as a fact. As such, social contract is a target which could be reached by maximizing consensus and realizing equal freedom at the same time. See Karl-Otto Apel, "Normative Ethic and Strategic Rationality: The Philosophical Problem of a Political Ethics" 117, 127 and Manfred Reidel, "Transcendental Politics? Political Legitimacy and the Concept of Civil Society in Kant" 33, 40 both in *The Public Realm: Essays on Discursive Types in Political Philosophy*, ed. Reiner Shürmann (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), See also Jones, "Kant, The French Revolution and the Definition of the Republic," 170.

the already-existing foundations of truth and justice. The possibility of challenge to the already established values, in turn, depends on the establishment of basic rights and liberties and equality of status among all citizens which are essential preconditions for establishment of a democratic society.¹⁴⁷

Democracy, indeed, is not simply a form, i.e. decisions reached through certain pre-defined procedures does not necessarily make the outcome democratic. Democracy is a norm as well. More accurately, democracy is “an ideology” which allows diverse opinions about what should be done.¹⁴⁸ And, such an “ideology” is possible only when the question of what should be done for the good of society is a subject of politics. In this study, Islamism and Kemalism will be studied in the light of this discussion of the primacy of politics which is informed by liberal intellectual tradition. In a way, above discussion is an outline of the alternative framework of analysis suggested in this study.

¹⁴⁷ Heller, “The Concept....,” 338 and McGowan, *Postmodernism and Its Critics*, 213.

¹⁴⁸ W. J. Stankiewicz, *In Search of a Political Philosophy: Ideologies at the Close of the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 1993), 416.

4. DEMOCRACY AS A STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP

Thus far, it has been suggested that under modernity politics took over the (integrative) function of religion, which is fragmented via secularization. To the extent that religion plays a positive role in the maintenance of social order and political community, it has been suggested, such a role is politically determined and defined. Also an attempt has been made to show that the idea that modern societies are in need of a common good, a single public orthodoxy/philosophy/morality in order to endure, is itself an impediment to politics, which, as this study postulated, is essential for the maintenance of society in a democratic way. This is because, public morality functions as a restraint on the legitimate sphere of politics. Yet, this does not mean that there is a need to build a center as a center of social gravity, but to assert that building a center is a political task and the substance/nature of the center is not cultural or religious. Only when the political nature of the center is recognized can (a) politics -dealing with the questions of what is good life and how it could be achieved- be possible. This is because as Machievelli long ago remarked there is no such thing as perfect solution in politics, to which all individuals and groups shall subscribe.¹⁴⁹ The point is: the possibilities of re-examination, re-definition of the already given concept of common good should not be foreclosed by an assertion of the finality of

¹⁴⁹ Nicolo Machievelli's *Discorsi* book 1, chapter 6 cited in Maurizio Viroli, "Machievelli and the Republican Idea of Politics" in *Machievelli and*

the given common good. Only then, a political set up that does not sacrifice individual rights and liberties, which include the right/liberty of challenging the common good, can be arranged. From a normative perspective, neither a concern for the common good of the society nor a concern for the protection and development of individual rights and liberties should be left out of the political agenda.

The possibilities of reestablishing, reexamining and reconstituting the political jurisdiction and political center of society is determined by the mode of integration of the society as reflected in the "ideology" of the state. The mode of integration determines the institutional structures of politics, range of political options, the possibilities of political regeneration and reconstruction of "the center" that holds the society together, and the form of relationship between state and society. If democracy is about state-society relations, the mode of integration is of extreme significance and it is better to approach the question of democracy, or democraticness of a regime or of an Islamist movement, from this perspective. Otherwise, we run the risk of associating democracy with its indicators such as elections or non-violent transfer of power. What if a particular conception "democracy" allows elections, includes non-violent transfer of power, but "forbids" different opinions about what should be done? What if elections has no effect on arbitration and choice or was not expected to bring social diversity into

Republicanism eds. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 159.

political arena as in France in 1848?¹⁵⁰ The mode of integration also reveals whether social contract is the goal and/or norm of the state/politics or a historical event.¹⁵¹ There are kinds of politics that take social contract as a norm and there are kinds of politics that take it as a once and for all historical event.

The idea that the number of possible political theories concerning the state-society relationship is infinite is an illusion: "there are political theories that aim at the elimination of society in the state, the elimination of state in the society, or reciprocal limitation of the two terms."¹⁵² This "categorization" corresponds to types of state-society relationship mentioned by Reinhard Bendix: society is an object of state-craft, politics and government are products of society, and society and government are partly interdependent and partly autonomous spheres of social life.¹⁵³ Sources of the first idea is traced back to the medieval tracts containing "advice to princes," and it is

¹⁵⁰ Pierre Rosanvallon, "The Republic of Universal Suffrage" in Fontana Biancamaria, ed., *The Invention of the Modern Republic*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 204.

¹⁵¹ I borrow the idea of social contract as a norm from Kant, or more accurately, from Gareth S. Jones' interpretation of Kant. See Jones, "Kant, The French Revolution and the Definition of the Republic", 170. See also footnote 146.

¹⁵² Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, "Kant and Fichte," in *New French Thought: Political Philosophy*, ed., Mark Lilla (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994), 80.

¹⁵³ Reinhard Bendix, *Embettled Reason: Essays on Social Knowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 223-224.

closely related to the rise of absolutism. The masses are excluded from all participation and seen as a source of tax revenue. The second idea “come to the fore in the attacks of the Enlightenment philosophers on the established privileges of the church and the aristocracy.” This orientation tended to sociologize politics by attempting to develop a scientific study of political community and human nature. But its application to the past politicized history, narrated as a story of ever-changing conflicts among vested interests. It was thus suggested that all governments are mere product of contemporary partisanship. The third perspective “reflects (and provides insight into) the structural transformation of Western societies.”¹⁵⁴ The question of democracy as a form of state-society relationship could best be located in this third perspective. In a way, the first two theories of state-society relationship are two sides of the same coin. They both lack and/or distort the concept of democracy as a relation between the two interrelated spheres. Both of them are prone to totalize and homogenize the social reality and shape politics accordingly. In other words, as far as the type of relation between state and society concerned, it does not make a significant difference whether the state is conceptualized as a product of society or society as an object of government. For example, elections may be conceived as a mechanism of legitimizing the consideration of “society as an object of government” by depicting “government as a product of society.” It is in this

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*, 225.

respect that the perception/conceptualization of social contract, i.e. mode of integration is significant.

5. MODES OF INTEGRATION AND THE CONCEPTS OF THE POLITICAL

It could be suggested that there are basically two traditions of political thought whose idea(l)s inform a social integration/contract: liberalism and republicanism.¹⁵⁵ Both traditions of political thought deal with the issue of constructing and maintaining a good community and civic life. Both the

¹⁵⁵ These two idea(l)s correspond to the typologies of both Noel O'Sullivan and Claus Offe and Ulrich K. Preuss. O'Sullivan differentiates between civil association and social politics, while Offe and Preuss identify French and American ways of integration. Contents of these types of integration matches with what will be described as republican and liberal models. Indeed, it could be suggested that social politics and French type of integration is actually republican types while civil association and American type of integration are liberal. See Noel O'Sullivan, "The New Right: The Quest for a Civil Philosophy in Europe and America" in *The Nature of the Right: European and American Politics and Political Thought since 1789*, ed. Roger Eatwell and Noel O'Sullivan, (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989) and Claus Offe and Ulrich K. Preuss, "Democratic Institutions and Moral Resources" in *Political Theory Today*, ed. David Held (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press, 1991). Similarly, David Held identifies two emerging traditions of political thought during/after Renaissance: classical republican or civic humanist tradition. Against these stands the liberal tradition. The former maintains a firm foot in the political theory of ancient world, while the latter is more concerned about the problem of protecting the collectivity from despotism in the face of emerging modern states. These two traditions, in Held's study, have been evolved into protective and developmental models of democracy. Nicollo Machievelli (1469-1527) could be considered as the representative of the classical republican thought while, for example, Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and John Locke (1632-1704) are the representatives of the liberal tradition. See David Held, *Models of Democracy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 41.

republican and liberal enlightenment models limit the legitimate sphere of politics in their own ways. Both take the idea of social contract as a historical event. But, liberal and republican models have different conceptions of common good and “the political.” Both have positive and negative aspects.

Below, these two different modes of integration that determine the political configuration or political infrastructure will be examined. Although there are many varieties and mixtures of both liberalism and republicanism, this study by abstracting and reducing these mixtures and varieties into two “ideal” models intends to demonstrate better the political set up of Turkish Republic. One might think that republicanism is a too broad category to study a specific case, for the range of republican regimes varies from fascism to parliamentary democracy. But, as will be seen, there are certain political things, or more accurately a risk -of smothering politics, that could only be faced under a republican regime. It is for this reason that a distinction between broad liberalism and a broad republicanism would suffice for the purposes of this study. It must be borne in mind that what is suggested in this study is that politics is central to the maintenance of societies and production of the “center” that holds the society together and in which the idea of social contract is perceived as a normative goal.

5. 1. Liberal Mode of Integration

In liberal model social integration is on the basis of self interest of free individuals. Individuals are expected to maintain this contract as long as their representatives maintain the original contract and its covenants "life, liberty and estate." However, liberalism assumes that social stability rests upon shared norms, beliefs and values. The endurance of social contract, which was initially based on self-interest of free individuals only, is explained in terms of liberal morality.¹⁵⁶ What is moral, in liberal view, is the ground rules or procedures (of the pursuit of self-interest) that provide the basic principles of political association and that every reasonable member of society is expected to subscribe.¹⁵⁷ The liberal core morality is identified with a set of basic rights and entitlements capable of ensuring maximum equality for all.

In liberalism, those who challenge to security of property or market society threatens the realization of common good which will be possible through these mechanisms. Thus, the constitutional state, whose power is restrained by the liberal principles, is strongly committed to intervene to uphold liberal principles/mechanism. What is absent in liberalism is a substantive idea of common good to be pursued politically. The moral purpose in liberalism is

¹⁵⁶ Offe and Preuss, "Democratic Institutions ...," 156.

refrainment from pursuing a political purpose for the fear that this would lead to trespassing of individual's moral autonomy.¹⁵⁸ The liberal model, therefore, does not impose any aim or purpose on citizens, for it does not have an intrinsic or substantive purpose.¹⁵⁹ It recognizes the pursuit of individual interests as legitimate. Liberal understanding of rationality/legitimacy is therefore formal/procedural. Such an understanding, however, may conceal a substantive irrationality. To the extent that politics is about the substantive issues, liberalism privatizes politics and denies the social dimension of it by reducing politics to pursuit of self-interest in the private sphere. Liberalism believes that an invisible hand will turn the enlightened self-interest to the greatest common good of all.

As such, liberal position could be considered as a profoundly antipolitical position as the Enlightenment. The possibilities of politics and/or challenging what is regarded as truth and justice are foreclosed in liberalism by the elevation of consensus to a moral/reasonable level.¹⁶⁰ Henceforth, the

¹⁵⁷ Chantal Mouffe, "Democracy, Power and 'the Political,'" 249.

¹⁵⁸ See Heiner Bielefeldt, "Autonomy and Republicanism..." 524-525.

¹⁵⁹ O'Sullivan, "The Quest for ."167-168.

¹⁶⁰ Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 233. See also Seyla Benhabib, "Models of Public Space: Hannah Arendt, Liberal Tradition and Jurgen Habermas" in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed., Craig Colhoun, (Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 1992), 82 for a critique of the "exclusive" characteristics of

questionings of the “core morality” are either immoral or unreasonable. As such, the Enlightenment stance encourages the end of ideology and emphasizes satisfaction or delivery of goods, i.e. efficiency, as the basis of legitimacy. It, thereby, denies the relevance of political philosophy and moral criticism to politics, which is an essentially antipolitical position. Disagreements with the liberal core morality, therefore, could be coercively met and this may not be considered as an oppression. Yet, first, politics is not a positive science and political problems could not be solved as simply as questions of hygiene.¹⁶¹ Second, questions of what sort of world we would like to live and what should be the common good that the state should provide are vital parts of politics that could not be excluded from political agenda legitimately.¹⁶²

However, the liberal-Enlightenment tradition focuses on the modern criterion of liberty rather than ancient criterion of virtue. Kant, for example, was unsentimental about “honour” and “virtue.” For him, the state’s role was not to organize happiness (the affluence of the citizens) and virtue. Similarly, *The Spirit of Laws* substituted the modern criterion of liberty with the ancient criterion of virtue.¹⁶³ In liberalism citizens are expected to pursue

political liberalism see also Mouffe “Democracy, Power and the ‘Political’”, 249.

¹⁶¹ Reinhard Bendix, *Embettled Reason*, 225.

¹⁶² Richard Bellamy, *Liberalism and Modern Society: An Historical Argument*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 256.

their self-interest by complying with the ground rules. The liberal view of negative liberties guarantees freedom from external compulsion but not the *possibility* of participation in a common praxis. Their active participation in the deliberation of common good is not sought.

The legitimacy of political power is based on the compliance with constitutional forms. The essence of liberalism is hostility to arbitrary power and unlimited politics. It aims to promote human freedom and dignity by eliminating arbitrary power. The state is expected to prevent violence and maintain peace when individuals are pursuing their own interests. In this mode of social integration the bond which holds the society together is not a common purpose but a common peace. The liberal-Enlightenment line, therefore, allows a larger sphere for freedom, and favours a limited state, though it, too, removes certain issues from the political sphere and restricts the legitimate politics to certain issues. But more importantly, it could be suggested that, liberalism actually privatizes politics by lacking a concern for a substantive idea of a common good and by assuming that pursuit of individual self-interest will result in the greatest common good for all. It empties the political life of substantive argument. In liberalism the task of politics is to protect an already-established order of justice.

¹⁶³ Pierre Manet, "The Modern State" in Mark Lilla, ed., *New French Thought: Political Philosophy* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994) 123. Judith N. Shklar, "Montesquieu and the new republicanism" in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, eds., Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 266.

The liberal view, in sum, conceives politics as founded upon self-interest and as the pursuit of power.¹⁶⁴ The primary concern of liberal view is not realization of a common good but restriction of the powers of the state so as to allow a larger space for society free from state intervention. It is on the basis of this motivation that liberalism tries to define a “private sphere” independent of political interference. Liberalism, in all of its variants, therefore, united around the advocacy of a constitutional state - constitution being the mechanism of curbing the powers of the state. The task of state in liberalism is protection of the rights and liberties of individuals who are ultimately the best judges of their interests, but not pursuing a substantive idea of common good. Political activity secures the conditions of freedom so that individual ends might be met in civil society.

5. 2. Republican Mode of Integration

The republican mode of integration, too, takes social contract as an historical event and still focuses on the ancient criterion of virtue. It could be claimed that modern republicanism represent a continuum with the classical republicanism of the ancient Greece, because the classical view of politics as the art of establishing and preserving good community and/or as debates

¹⁶⁴ Here I draw mainly from Held, *Models of Democracy*, pp. 42-54, 67-68.

about the nature of good life endures in modern republicanism. Rather than “deserting” (or shying away from) politics, this model tends to smother politics of common good. This is because, republicanism does not leave the issue of common good to the invisible hand of market. The essence of republican politics is, therefore, a concern for or an orientation towards the good life of the community, which is conceived as the highest good. As such, republican view of politics stands in contrast to the liberal view of politics. Unlike the latter, in the republican view politics, by virtue of being concerned with the substantive issues of collective welfare and having an encompassing vision of common good, is moral politics. The task of state is to uphold the idea of common good and realize it.

The task of politics in republicanism is to bring about an order of justice. In this sense, there is no natural or God-given rights and framework of politics. It is through political association that liberties are brought about. Liberties, therefore, do not precede the political association. One could only be free within a political association. Republican view of liberty requires participation of citizens so as to count them as free. To this end, participation considered to be a public obligation. This prevents the transfer of responsibility to the rulers for the well being of a community. Every member of society is held responsible for the good of community. This is because of the assumption “that unless we place our duties before our rights, we must

expect to find our rights themselves undermined."¹⁶⁵ In this sense, ideally, republican view of politics does not presuppose an already-given concept of common good to be pursued by "free" citizens.¹⁶⁶ By placing an emphasis on the necessity of participation for the upholding of freedoms, republicanism recognizes the fact that civil liberties are not ahistorical natural rights but products of complex political and historical processes. It thereby asserts morality of emancipation rather than morality of (already established) rights. This is because moralizing of an already established set of rights could suffocate the explanatory enterprise which is essential for furthering freedoms.¹⁶⁷ Republicanism, therefore, "conceives the citizen as someone

¹⁶⁵ Quentin Skinner, "The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty," in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, eds., Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 309.

¹⁶⁶ Quentin Skinner, "The Republican Ideal of Political Liberty," emphasizes the importance of individual rights and plurality of goods, which might be considered as a liberal injection to republicanism indeed, while still keeping the republican ideal of political participation. This is contrary to the widely held belief that republican ideal of political liberty implies that there are certain specific goals to be pursued in order for citizens to be counted as being fully in possession of their liberty. The republican view of liberty, Skinner suggests, emphasizes that there are different classes of people with varying dispositions who will value their liberty as a means to attain varying ends. See also Chantal Mouffe, *Return of the Political* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 35-38 for a positive assessment of Skinner's conceptualization of "republican" liberty. Allan Patten regards Skinner's position as "instrumental republicanism" which values active citizenship not because it is good in itself but because it contributes to the maintenance of free society. Patten argues that instrumental republicanism has "no interesting disagreement" with liberalism, and therefore the critique of liberalism implied by Skinner fails. See Allan Patten, "The Republican Critique of Liberalism," *British Journal of Political Science*, 26 (1996): 25-44, 25, 26, 30-36.

who plays an active role in shaping the future direction of his or her society through political debate and decision-making."¹⁶⁸ In the republican view "a citizen must be someone who identifies with the political community to which he or she belongs, and is committed to promoting its common good through active participation in its political life."¹⁶⁹

To the extent that politics is primarily about the substantive issues such as freedom, justice, distribution and so on, republican view of politics prevents the vanishing of the concept of political. This is because, it recognizes the fact that there is no invisible hand turning the pursuit of enlightened self-interest to the greatest good for all. It also recognizes that politics is neither about the provision of the optimum amounts of welfare nor about the rational administration of societies, both of which are often considered as the sources of legitimacy. What republican view of politics brings to the fore, by plunging into substantive issues, is the very basis of legitimacy and the concepts of rationality, welfare, freedom etc. It focuses on the very ends that the community and/or state should pursue rather than on a pre-given concept of the common good.

¹⁶⁷ Steven Lukes, *Marxism and Morality*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988 [1985]), 26.

¹⁶⁸ David Miller, "Citizenship and Pluralism" *Political Studies*, XLIII, (1995): 432-450, 444.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*, 444.

5. 3. The Republican Trap

However, the republican idea(l) of politics runs a crucial risk mainly because its understanding of politics is oriented towards the common good of the whole society. This risk could be called as “the republican trap.” It is the trap of smothering politics by moralizing the common good, and thereby, by removing it from the legitimate sphere of politics. In this case, republicanism falls short of its ideals and tends to be authoritarian.

In the republicans’ ideal orientation towards the common good of society, by actively participating citizenship means that the idea of common good is subject to political re-examination and re-definition by citizens. When an idea of common good is elevated to a level above and beyond politics by its moralization, subscription to this “moral consensus” becomes a precondition of politics and participation. In addition, concept of actively participating citizenship may result in lack of distinction between public and private spheres.¹⁷⁰ In a context where liberties are only defined in terms of positive liberties, if the concept of common good is moralized, liberty might turn out to mean active subscription to it only. Hence, in the absence of negative liberties, no right to refrain from a given common good is recognized. It is

¹⁷⁰ Patricia Springborg, *Western Republicanism and the Oriental Prince*, (Cambridge: Oxford: Polity Press, 1992), 239.

for this reason that the problematique of republicanism is to construct citizenship without the loss of private realm.¹⁷¹

As Jurgen Habermas points out, on this reading of the republican tradition, “the democratic process is dependent on the virtues of citizens devoted to public weal.”¹⁷² The issue, therefore, can be enabling citizens to be “good citizens,” i.e. citizens committed to common good, which will be produced through elite-supervised civic education.¹⁷³ It is one of the stipulations of republicanism that republic is possible only if citizens are virtuous, i.e. capable of serving the common good. Hence becomes the precondition of republican government. As such, this model secures the outcome of the democratic deliberation process in advance, because the comprehension of the pre-given common good is the precondition of participation. Participation refers to capacity of the citizens to transcend personal or group interests, comprehend the given concept of common good and act in the name of it. Public realm is the realm of virtuous citizens.

¹⁷¹ Faruk Birttek, “Bir Cagdaslasma/Cagdaslasmama Projesi: Bir Deneme” *Cogito*, 15, (Yaz, 1998): 170-185, 175.

¹⁷² Jurgen Habermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy” in *Democracy and Difference: Constesting Boundaries of the Political*, ed. Seyla Benhabib (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 24.

¹⁷³ Offe and Ulrich, “Democratic Institutions and Moral Resources,” 155.

Virtuous citizenry is complemented by a state-centered understanding of politics in which state, rather than citizens, acts for the good of the whole society. In this respect, state is by no means a neutral state but is seen as an instrument of implementing the social purpose for which society is integrated. The constitution, which according to Sheldon Wolin determines the amount of democracy to be let in,¹⁷⁴ is seen as a machinery promoting the encompassing vision of common good. Political association is not the association of all under law, and equality before law but of those who have something in common.

In this model, then, social integration is on the basis of adoption of a shared vision of happiness and welfare, and a shared purpose, i.e. ideology, to which everyone and everything within the state is subordinated. Moreover, since the state has a morality, this morality functions as a criterion of evaluating different life styles. The denial of a political status to the given concept of common good, in effect, results in delegitimization of opposition to it. Moreover, it legitimizes coercion which is depicted as something done for the good of the society but not as oppression.¹⁷⁵ It is not

¹⁷⁴ Sheldon Wolin, "Fugitive Democracy" in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting Boundaries of the Political*, ed., Seyla Benhabib (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996), 39.

¹⁷⁵ Jane Mainsbridge, "Using Power/Fighting Power: The Polity" in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting Boundaries of the Political*, ed., Seyla Benhabib (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996) identifies three different ways of justification of coercion. In the first one, justification is made through a hypothetical consent: clean-air is a desired by everyone

the common good that would adjust to the will of people, but the people who will adjust to the given concept of common good. Politics, then, turns out to be about what must be rationally (or conformingly) be willed by all, i.e. about transforming the will of people. Therefore plurality of interests and moralities is seen as divisive, as a threat to the substantive idea of "common good," around which the community is supposedly integrated.¹⁷⁶ Autonomy, participation and freedom of citizens are subordinated to the realization of the "common good." Since the goal is construction of a particular kind of society, politics revolves around the division of community into those who support the desirable society and those who do not. In this respect, republican politics is a struggle between friend(s) and foe(s) of the republican regime and the moralized common good.

It is one of the presumptions of this (republican) state that people make mistakes about what is good for them. Pluralism in the conceptions of common good is unthinkable, the ideal society is without class, without personal conflict. Politics involves not aggregation or reconciliation of the empirical will(s) but a rational cognitive process, which determines what must be rationally willed by all. Democracy turns out to be about the

so coercing precautions is justified. Second way of justifying coercion is through an appeal to substantive justice as in the republican model, and the third one is through majority rule.

¹⁷⁶ See Pierre Rosanvallon, "The Republic of Universal Suffrage," 203-204 for a similar understanding of pluralism in France.

transformation of the will of people until which vanguards would rule. Indeed, republicanism since the Greek political thought, emphasized/assessed the merits of rule by virtuous people.¹⁷⁷ Its conception of democracy is, therefore, a state-centered one which equates democratic citizens with unqualified loyalty and faithfulness to existing arrangements. Law is an instrument of “making” people loyal to those arrangements, which predetermine the range of political options and/or limits of politics. Since politics is only possible in the absence of truth, the structuration of politics according to a particular vision of truth acts as an impediment to politics.

The source of authority of the state in the republican model turns out to be achieving the common purpose for which the society has been integrated.¹⁷⁸ Citizens are expected to evaluate the efforts of the state in terms of the common good.¹⁷⁹ The focus is on the effective use of political power and not on public debate which is seen as blasphemous. Since the social integration is a goal-based one, *efficacy* is the concern, legitimacy is based solely on the delivery of goods and the most effective way of using power by approved groups and individuals is searched. This does not necessarily imply a

¹⁷⁷ Patricia Springborg, *Western Republicanism and the Oriental Prince*, 186-196, 239, 246.

¹⁷⁸ O’Sullivan, “The New Right....,” 167-168.

¹⁷⁹ Habermas, “Three Normative Models ...” 27.

totalitarian state but lack of differentiation between public and private, and state and civil society.

The implication of the presence of a non-neutral state and the lack of negative liberties is insecure survival -even oppression- of deviant identities and conceptions of common good. It results in the non-recognition of, for example, Islamic identity as a legitimate identity, if a particular concept of secularism is moralized as the common good of the society in question. This, in turn, results in the portrayal of Islamism as an enemy of the common good of the society and conceiving politics in terms of war between friends and enemies of the moralized common good. Such portrayal is supposedly essential for the maintenance of the common good, but it is also prone to polarization of polity on a certain axis. Under polarization, certain political options/issues will be left out of political agenda and political alternatives will be defined in terms of what they are against but not in terms of their policy alternatives. Hence, for example, little opportunity would exist to decipher what the Islamist and Kemalist alternatives involve apart from their opposition to each other. But, more importantly, portrayal of, say, Islamism would not be based on an analysis of the dynamics behind an Islamic movement. Indeed, it could be suggested that a concern for "understanding" those movements that deviate from the given concept of common good is lacked. Islamism, in this case, is approached to in a non-accommodating way and no political outlet is given to it within a democratic

pluralistic system. Politics of deviant movements, in our case politics of Islamism, in turn, may be shaped by the way it has been dealt with.

Hence, an orientation towards common good, a substantive idea of good life is indispensable for a sound politics, but as seen above, it could also become a barrier to politics if it is moralized and/or elevated to an above politics level. The republican trap, therefore, could be avoided only when social integration is informed by both liberal and republican ideals, which, as noted above, is done by Skinner in his description of republican ideal of liberty. A pure liberalism, as noted, avoids the risk of smothering politics, but by emptying the political life of substantive argument, i.e., at the expense of politics. Yet, the liberal ideals protects the individual rights *vis a vis* the state pursuing a substantive common good and allows the possibility of recognition of its political nature. What is needed therefore is an orientation towards common good but in a liberal way, i.e. by securing individual rights and liberties and by recognizing the political nature of the common good.

These two mode(l)s of integration are also two different frameworks of politics. Islamism and Kemalism could be assessed in terms of these two models of integration, frameworks of politics and concepts of political. Only then we could observe the substantive differences and formal or grammatical similarities between the Islamist and secularist alternatives in Turkey.

CHAPTER THREE

THE KEMALIST CONTEXT AS REPUBLICANISM

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONTEXT

The foregoing chapters have attempted to define what Islamism is and tentatively suggested an alternative framework for approaching and analyzing *the politics* of Islamism by critically reviewing the already-existing accounts of Islamism. It has been suggested that Islamism should not be assessed in terms of either some “essence” of Islam or some arguable “failures” of modernization, but in terms of politics so that what gave shape to Islamism’s political aspects, characteristics and political discourse could better be comprehended. An attempt has also been made to assert the primacy of politics in holding the societies together in the modern world by studying the relation between modernity, secularization and politics. Without denying the importance of the penetrating effects of a particular understanding of modernization/Westernization on Islamic identity, it has been suggested that the deep and complex relations between modernity and

Islam does not really enable us to decipher the political aspects of Islamism.¹ Modernity of Islamism, for example, tells us little about the vision(s) of state-society relations of the Islamist movement in question here, simply because, politically speaking, modernity is not all about democracy and pluralism and modern self is not necessarily congruous with the liberal-democratic identity.

The standpoint in this study is that the politics of Islamism could best be comprehended in relation to its immediate political context, within which it emerges. An analysis of the Republican context of Islamism in Turkey is indispensable from this standpoint. By analyzing the Republican context in Turkey one could see the general structuration of Turkish politics. The analysis of this general structuration will enable us to see Islamism's position *vis a vis* the political structures. It is an analysis of Islamism in terms of this positioning that would enable us to assess Islamism in more solid grounds than Islam/conservatism or modernity. This is because, once the various aspects of the infrastructure of Turkish politics identified, we could, then, discriminate between reproducing, reforming and revolutionary character of the Islamist movement in question. In other words, we could see the aspects that Islamism challenges the regime as well as the grounds on which this challenge takes place and the potential it carries for a

¹ For such a sociological approach focusing on the relations between Islamic self and modernity see Nilufer Gole, "The Quest for the Islamic Self within the Context of Modernity" in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in*

transformation, democratic or not. In this way, from a normative-democratic perspective, defects of both Islamism and the secular-republican state it challenges could be revealed. If we accept the argument, for example, that the regime it challenges is predominantly illiberal and hinders further democratization due to its particular flawed understanding of modernization,² then, we can not associate any challenge to this Westernizing regime with antiliberal tradition. If this is the case, one is compelled, in principle, to recognize the potential democratizing effects of an opposition to an illiberal Westernizing regime even if it is made on Islamic grounds. But, what if we accept, for example, that Islamism in its challenge reproduces the same illiberal political features that were institutionalized by the secular-republican state and that gave rise to bottlenecks in democratic politics? What if Islamism is close to secular state on questions crucial for pluralisation and democratization?

An analysis of the Republican context and its approach to and the *ways* of dealing with Islamism is vital also because political fortunes of the movement is determined to a large extent by the way the "secular" state structured politics and set the parameters of approaching it. Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, in his study of the Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan, argued the

Turkey, eds., Sibel Bozdogan and Resat Kasaba (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997) 81-94.

² On the flawed understanding of modernization in Turkey, see Caglar Keyder, "Whither the Project of Modernity? Turkey in the 1990s" in

potential success of Islamism can directly be correlated with the way state reacts to it and ultimately democracy serves as the best check to the rise of Islamism.³ Also, not only the rise but also the radical character of Islamist movements that emerge could be a product of the non-democratic context they live in.⁴

Emphasizing the importance of the context in such a determinist way, however, depicts Islamism/Islamists as the passive agents of the context they live in. It, therefore, may rid Islamism of any responsibility for producing alternative/democratic policy alternatives. To the extent that this argument sees Islamism as reproducing the same non-democratic context by simply reacting to it, it does not place any responsibility on the Islamists as relatively autonomous actors. The emphasis put on the context, therefore, runs the risk of underplaying the importance of actors/action by overemphasizing structures and renders political actors as mere puppets-of-the-system. Hence, whatever the guilts and sins of Islamist movements are the blame is put on their political context. It is precisely this risk run by the studies emphasizing the relationality, rather than essentiality, of political

Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey, eds., Sibel Bozdogan and Resat Kasaba (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997).

³ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan* (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1994), 218-220.

⁴ For such an argument see for example Ahmed S. Moussalli, "Modern Islamic Fundamentalist Discourses on Civil Society, Pluralism, and Democracy" in *Civil Society in Middle East*, Vol. 1 ed., A. R. Norton (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).

identities.⁵ Islamist identity should not be linked to Islam. But, it should not be linked to outsider elements either, because, otherwise, the space available for the discretion and initiative to Islamist actors in advancing their political claims may be ignored. Thereby, the Islamist vision of state-society relations tends to be linked to Kemalism, to which Islamism could only react in a manner reproducing the same Kemalist vision. It must be borne in mind that when we are studying Islamism we are not studying an autonomous Islamic political theory, but the attempts by Islamist to devise a political solution to the current problems we face. One cannot, of course, propose that a movement can be democratic just because it has an oppositional character. But more importantly, the character of the Islamist movement in Turkey should not be analyzed on the basis of the “religiosity” of the movement, nor solely on the basis of the context within which it emerges. In other words, Islamism cannot be considered as liberal by virtue of being in opposition to the illiberal context within which it emerges. Nonetheless, Islamism should be located to the political context with which it emerges in a non-deterministic way. It is on the basis of these concerns that this study now turns to study the context within which Islamism has emerged as a significant political force, namely the political structure of the Turkish Republic.

⁵ See for example Bobby Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1997) for a view that does not link Islamism to Islam but to the erosion of Kemalism. In this non-essentialist account Islamism, Islamist identity is a construction of Kemalism.

One of the aims of studying the political nature/structure of the Republican regime is to examine critically the often repeated thesis in the studies of Islam(ism) in Turkey which is that "the republic had not been able to propagate a social ethic that was sufficiently meaningful to the rural masses to enable them to react positively to its modernization drive" because of its cultural alienation from the society.⁶ As will be seen below, this argument implies that the defect of the Republican regime was its lack of a successful public morality. If extended, this argument also implies that it was this defect that led to the arguable failure of modernization.

This chapter aims to show that it is not cultural, but *political* alienation of the Republican regime from the (Muslim) society and that *it is not the lack but the presence of a public morality along Republican political philosophy* that lies at the heart of the problematic of the rise of Islamism. Once this will be shown, it will also become apparent that it is not the failures of modernization in delivering its promised goods, but the *limited and*

⁶ For the inability of the Republican mentality to be a substitute for Islam and to provide a social ethos see Serif Mardin, "Religion and Politics in Turkey," in *Islam in the Political Processes*, ed., James Piscatori (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), 156 and "Islam in Mass Society" in *Politics in the Third Turkish Republic*, eds., Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), 163, and "Religion and Secularism in Turkey" in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, eds., Ali Kazancigil and Ergun Ozbudun (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1981). See also Metin Heper, "A Weltanschauung-Turned-Partial Ideology and Normative Ethics: Atatürkism in Turkey," *Orient*, 25 (1984): 83-94, 93.

*limiting*⁷ nature of modernization with its concomitant concept of “the political” that foreclosed the possibilities of political accommodation and the regeneration of politics. It was, perhaps, this foreclosure that increased the electoral fortunes of Islamism rather than the failures of modernization, religious revival of a Muslim society or dislocating economic and social effects of globalization.

Although the mark left by the state tradition, inherited from the Ottoman Empire, on this particular modernization project is recognized, it will be argued - on the basis of the assumption that endurance of institutions needs nurturing- that it is the limited character of this modernization project that reproduces the state tradition in Turkey, which is conceived as the main reason for the democratic bottlenecks by some students of Turkish politics.⁸ An analysis of the Republican public morality will enable us to understand why, for example, political language in Turkey still remains communitarian despite the fact that modernization implies a transition from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft*. Similarly, it will be possible to understand why Turkey is claimed not to fulfill basic standards of democracy despite the elite commitment to it and why the quasi-authoritarian features of Kemalism

⁷ I borrow the notion “limited and limiting” from Talal Asad. Limiting is used in the sense that there are certain choices it would not allow, and limited is used in the sense that there are certain things it will not criticize. See Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 232.

were not restricted to the period of the consolidation of the Republican regime.

It must be noted that this study does not primarily aim to evaluate Kemalism. However, as noted above, an analysis of the Kemalist structuration of the political sphere is necessary for a better comprehension of the Islamist National Outlook Movement. It must also be noted that Kemalism in this study is taken neither as an ideology nor as a mentality but as a particular structuration of the political sphere along the republican lines. Since the focus of attention of is the structuration of the sphere of politics, this dissertation does not study the changes in the substance of Kemalism but emphasizes the continuity in the way of achieving the “substantive” changes. For example, the integration of Islam into the secular national identity in the 1980s is mentioned but not studied in detail, because the primary focus in this study is not the substance but the form of Kemalism, which to a large extent is determined by the republican mode of integration and which tends to see society as an object of government.

Bearing in mind the discussion made in the previous chapter, for the purposes of consistency, the analysis of the Turkish Republic should start by posing the question whether the Republic had a public morality, that is, a single public orthodoxy, an idea of common good around which the society was integrated. If so, how this public morality and concerns about protecting

⁸ See for example Keyder, “Whither...”

it structured politics and to which cleavages it gave rise to? An analysis of the political structure of Turkish Republic could best be made by locating it in the general context of republicanism. An attempt will be made below to argue that considering Kemalism in terms of republicanism will enable us to comprehend better both the nature of Kemalist regime and the current situation/structuration of Turkish politics.

2. KEMALIST SOCIAL INTEGRATION AS REPUBLICANISM

The crucial question is whether the republic's institutional structure and the principles of democratic politics are ultimately compatible.⁹

the question of what activities are open to the political jurisdiction of society as a whole is clearly a fundamental determination of legitimate action that must continually be established, reexamined, and reconstituted.¹⁰

2.1. Kemalism as Republicanism

Kemalism is republicanist not just because it represents a political stance against the Sultanate of the Ottoman Empire. Kemalism could be considered as a republican mode of integration by a historical fact, because modern Turkish society it has constituted represents a rupture from the past in terms of creating a non-existent society. As Serif Mardin pointed out:

“Mustafa Kemal [Ataturk] took up a non-existent, hypothetical entity, the Turkish nation, and breathed life into it. ... Neither the Turkish nation as the fountain head of a “general will” nor the Turkish nation as a source of identity existed at the time he set out on this task.”¹¹

⁹ Faruk Birtek, “Prospects for a New Center or the Rise of the Peripheral *Asabiyah?*” in *Politics in the Third Turkish Republic*, Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, eds., (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 223.

¹⁰ John McGowan, *Postmodernism and Its Critics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 213, fn. 2.

¹¹ Serif Mardin, “Religion and Secularism in Turkey,” 208.

Turkish Republic, thus, held itself responsible for constructing a modern society. Bearing such a responsibility was a general feature of republicanism to which the Enlightenment was linked.¹² Hence, the status of citizenship and liberties were granted by the revolution to the former subjects of the sultan. It was a political will that turned the subjects into citizens of a modern state/society. Rights and liberties, therefore, did not precede the constitution of the Republic and the Republic was associated with the emancipation of people. This could be considered as a step toward the recognition of the primacy of politics in holding the societies together and in the recognition of the political nature of rights and liberties, mentioned in the previous chapter. However, the idea that modern Turkish society owes its inception to Kemalist revolution meant the moralization of Kemalism as the *raison d'être* of society by its guardians. Henceforth, Kemalism, to which "[t]he political, social, and cultural development of modern Turkey since the early 1920s rests upon"¹³ has become the moralized common good of society.

Kemalism had a republican view of politics also in the sense that it conceived politics as the establishment and maintenance of a "good society." It did not leave the issue of deciding what the common good of the society

¹² See Steven B. Smith, *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism*, (London and Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989), 59-60 and Faruk Birtek, "Bir Cagdaslasma/Cagdaslasmama Projesi..." 175.

¹³ Dankwart A. Rustow, "Kemalism" in *Turkei: Sudosteropa Handbuch Vol 4*, eds. Kalus-Detleu Grothusen, (Gottingen: Vondenhoeck and Rupert, 1985), 237.

was to the individual interactions in public sphere with minimal state interference. For Kemalism, politics was a means of discovering and realizing what was good for the entire society. It is for this reason Kemalism sought collective salvation of society. According to republican principles, however, the collective idea/common good of the society was to be defined through the participation of people/citizens, which also meant that the common good is also a political construction but not a moral one. This has not been the case in the case of Kemalist integration of society. On the basis of their self-claimed rationality, the Kemalist ruling elite defined what is good for the whole society. Ordinary people, it was believed, do not know what is good for them, at least for the time being. It is in this respect that Kemalism fell into the republican trap. In effect, Kemalist Westernizing elite doubled the Platonist philosopher-king who knows what is good for the whole society. Indeed, Ataturk stated once that

every society has a collective idea. If it is not always expressed and explained, it should not be concluded that it does not exist. ... True revolutionaries are those who know how to discover the real preferences in the spirits and consciousness of people whom they want to lead into revolution of progress and renovation.¹⁴

Such a Platonist elitism was possible thanks to Ottoman modernization.

Indeed, the actors of the revolution were both products and executors of the

¹⁴ Ataturk cited in Ergun Ozbudun, "State Elites and Democratic Political Culture in Turkey" in *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, ed., Larry Diamond, (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1994), 194.

Ottoman modernizing offensives.¹⁵ The political philosophy inherited from the Empire was somewhat Platonic, for it posited that harmony in society, that is, keeping each individual in his proper place, is achieved by statecraft only, and therefore ruler should have the absolute power to determine the place of man in the social scheme.¹⁶ The society was, therefore, seen as an object of government. This basic philosophy gave way to the idea of a totally autonomous state as well as to the idea of the priority of the reason of state, i.e., *hikmet-i hükümet*. It could also be suggested that the sources of the emphasis put on justice could be traced back to this basic philosophy, which also underlies the peculiar concept of justice as keeping each individual in his proper place. The ancient ideal of preservation of state and the perception of society as an object of government, so as to secure social harmony, was apparent in Republicans as well. But, with the Kemalist revolution, the society was an object of a different government, thanks again

¹⁵ On the continuity between the Ottoman and Kemalist modernization see Eric J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), part 2. I have deliberately used the word offensive to avoid the neutralizing effects of process and to emphasize the aspect of consciousness in the modernization policies.

¹⁶ Halil Inalcik, "The Nature of Traditional Society: Turkey" in *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*, eds., Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964). See also Serif Mardin, "Projects as Methodology: Some Thoughts on Modern Turkish Social Science" in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, ed., Sibel Bozdoğan and Resat Kasaba (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 68. According to Serif Mardin, the principle of the priority of the state explains why *Tanzimat* reformers fancied cameralism, which "represented the theoretical version of enlightened despotism and had little sympathy for democracy or representative institutions" and which saw

to Ottoman modernization. Although the Ottoman modernization was based on the "diagnosis" that linked the decline of the Empire to the degeneration of the institutions of the state and was restricted to the modernization of the institutions to regenerate the state, instilling skills to the bureaucrats primarily through education turned out to be paradoxical for it was changing the very basis of justice by injecting such new Western ideas as nationalism, constitutionalism and parliamentary democracy, to the future servants of the Sultan.¹⁷ Education also enabled the student-cum-bureaucrats to think/talk about the social reality in terms of a future design and of an abstract societal model. Later on, this process culminated in a social engineering framework on the basis of the ideas of August Comte, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Emile Durkeim.¹⁸

The fact that vanguards, and indeed the only actors, of Turkish revolution were bureaucrats implied that it was a revolution that took place at some level above society -a revolution from above. Thanks to Ottoman modernization, it first involved change in the culture of the elite and a change on the basis of their/state's legitimacy with the long term aim of changing the culture of the society on the basis of an utopia. In other words, *the revolution first took place in the minds of the ruling elite and in the*

government "as a science of state to be applied by technicians and managers."

¹⁷ Kemal Karpat, "The Transitions of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 3, (1972): 243-281.

ideology they attributed to the state, while their idea of state remained the same. However, Ottoman modernization was indecisive with regard to the definition of modernization, that is, whether modernization is possible by retaining the indigenous, Islamic, culture or not. The Republic is distinguished by its conclusive answer to that question. It affirmed that adoption of Western technology and rejection of Western mores is not really a modernization. Civilization was associated with the West.¹⁹ It proposed a civilizational shift from "Islamic East" to "scientific-rational West" so as to achieve social progress. Henceforth, modernization included the transformation of culture and Westernization have become a more appropriate term in referring to it. This was perhaps the most striking revolutionary aspect of the Turkish Republic that represented a change from the past. Henceforth, secularism and nationalism became the basis of the Republic and Islam was denied of the role it had hitherto played. But replaced it with Kemalism. As Ernest Gellner rightly put, "the spirit in which Kemalism was formulated and upheld was ... a kind of perpetuation of High Islam. The content was new, but the form and spirit were not."²⁰ The revolution, therefore, was not a social revolution changing the

¹⁸ Serif Mardin, *Turkiye'de Din ve Siyaset*, (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1993).

¹⁹ Nilufer Gole, "Authoritarian Secularism and Islamist Politics: The Case of Turkey" in *Civil Society in Middle East*, vol. 2 ed., Augustus R. Norton (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 22.

²⁰ Ernest Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 86. See also Ilter Turan, "Religion and Political Culture in Turkey" in *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State*, ed., Richard Tapper (London and New York: I. B Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1991), 50-51.

distribution of power, but a cultural “revolution” at the level of state aiming to change the culture of society gradually as proposed by Kemalism.²¹ If the distribution of political power can be regarded as the form, i.e. the way of getting things done, then the continuity in the Turkish revolution is in terms of form. The change, on the other hand, was in the substance of the state, i.e. what the state wanted to get done.

Accordingly, modern Turkish society was integrated around a common good, which was defined by the elite. In this respect, modern Turkish society was not a “wandering” society it had a clear-cut political purpose around which it has been -supposedly- integrated. This purpose was the catching up with the West and Westernization was the means to achieve it. Hence, Westernization became the common good of the society. In reality, it was to diffuse society gradually through imposition from above downwards. In this respect Kemalism could be defined as a public morality modeled upon republican, rather than liberal, ideals. This is because, unlike the liberal model, it did not offer a thin theory of common good so as to leave a large sphere for the pursuit of individuals’ self-interest. It rather adopted a substantive idea of common good which entailed a certain life style and which could be summed under the heading of Westernization and secularization. By defining Kemalism as a republican public morality, it will be argued that Kemalism does not equal a Westernization project but

something more than that. Kemalism, in reality, is a particular way of Westernization that determines the institutional arrangements, range of political options and the legitimate sphere of politics. This is because, morality, as Steven Lukes points out, concerns

the domain of right and good, and questions of obligation, duty, fairness, virtue, character, the nature of good life and good society, and behind these assumptions about the nature of man, the preconditions for social life, the limits of possible transformation, and grounds of political judgment.²²

Also, the endurance of state tradition inherited from the Ottoman Empire could be explained in terms of Kemalist republicanism. Kemalist republicanism by equating the elite-defined common good with the collective will of people radicalized the idea of primacy of the state because the state, which saw the society as its object of government, could then be depicted as the product of society at the same time.²³ Hence, the Republican state, which unlike the Ottoman state, had the task of educating people, is depicted as representing the society as a whole and acting on behalf of it and for the good of it.

It is this moralization of Kemalism as the founding principle that determined the perceptions and "categorization" of Islamism not as a political

²¹ Serif Mardin, "Ideology and Religion in the Turkish Revolution," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2, (1971): 197-211, 202.

²² Steven Lukes, *Marxism and Morality*, 2.

²³ Serif Mardin "Projects...." 69.

movement representing certain demands and grievances of the society but as a reactionary and regressive movement created artificially by politicians abusing the religion for their own political purposes. Also, it is this moralization of Kemalism that resulted in the necessity, on the part of politicians, to reach a consensus on certain key issues such as secularism not between themselves but with the non-political guardians of Kemalism, i.e. the state elites. As Metin Heper pointed out, "anything relating to legitimacy was "high politics" - a matter pertaining to the state and thus the concern of neither the man in the street nor his representative."²⁴

2.2. The Substance of Kemalism: Westernization

Kemalist ruling elite justified its cultural Westernization project on the basis of its scientific rationality. The emphasis put on the primacy of "culture shift" was based on the assumption that "the reasons behind the Western advancement could be located precisely in the Western practices."²⁵ This was because Kemalism believed that Western society was scientifically rational. This property of Western society, in turn, was linked to its culture. And,

²⁴ Metin Heper, "Strong State and Democracy: The Turkish Case in Comparative and Historical Perspective," in *Democracy and Modernity*, ed., S. N. Eisenstadt, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 160.

²⁵ Bobby Sayyid, "Sign O'Times: Kaffirs and Infidels Fighting the Ninth Crusade," in *Making of Political Identities* ed., Ernesto Laclau (London: Verso, 1994), 269.

since what is scientifically rational is also universal and applicable everywhere and at any time, Western social organization was universally applicable too. The underlying assumption of the Westernization reforms was the positivist belief that science is a tool of ordering society and inducing change.²⁶ As such, Kemalism was in line with the Enlightenment thought which prescribed science and rationality as the way to progress and freedom and which hoped to replace all local and customary moralities with rational morality as the basis of universal civilization. In this respect, Kemalism, long before modernization school, associated science and rationality with the Western culture, the substance of Kemalism was a cultural change along the Western lines. Thus, the rational reorganization of society was also Westernization of it.

All links were severed with the past on the basis of the assumption that progress is impossible for “a nation that insists on preserving a host of traditions and beliefs that rest on no logical proof.”²⁷ As such, until the principle of nationalism was made an integral part component of Kemalism, Kemalist Westernization was in line with the Enlightenment which “requires societies to forego their claims to exclusivity and open their doors to

²⁶ Resat Kasaba, “Kemalist Certainties and Modern Ambiguities,” in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, eds., Sibel Bozdogan and Resat Kasaba (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 26.

²⁷ Ataturk as cited in cited in Ahmet Davutoglu, *Alternative Paradigms: The Impact of Islamic and Western Weltanschauungs on Political Theory* (Lanham, New York: University Press of America, 1994), 7.

potentially beneficial effects of science."²⁸ Indeed, in one of his speeches

Ataturk, himself, stated that:

we shall take science and knowledge from wherever they may be, and put them in the mind of every member of the nation. For science and knowledge, there are no restrictions and no conditions.²⁹

Hence, associated with science and rationality Westernization has become the common good of the whole society.³⁰ This resulted in the removal of the question of what is good for society from the legitimate sphere of politics. It was pre-defined by the Kemalist elite who took science as the truest guide for inducing change.

The complementary to this positivist assertion of scientific rationality, which in the case of Kemalism was associated with the Western society, was the French positivist motto of "order and progress."³¹ This motto, in turn, necessitated the institutionalization of the "scientific rationality" so that it could be implemented in an orderly fashion for the sake of progress. Hence, the state, as Metin Heper pointed out, has become the agent of rationality, and this was in line with the tradition of holding the state responsible for

²⁸ Steven B. Smith, *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism* 59-60.

²⁹ Cited in Ahmet Davutoglu, *Alternative Paradigms* 7.

³⁰ See for example Mahmut Esat Bozkurt's speech in Grand National Assembly for the enactment of civil law which equated Westernization with the will of people: "if the laws are based on religion, if people insist on keeping their religious traditions, the will of the nation cannot be realized." The speech is reprinted in *Cumhuriyet*, 21.2.1997.

providing welfare and maintaining balance within the society.³² On the basis of the assumption that society could be improved by the actions of rational men, people turned into the objects of the state elite's project who represented themselves as the sole bearers of progress.³³

Accordingly, policies were implemented to dismantle the inherited Ottoman institutions and to make the physical environment similar to their European counterparts on the basis of the assumption "that once the environment was altered, the behaviour of individuals could be easily moulded and made to fit the requirements of the newly created circumstances."³⁴ Hence, Turkish Westernization involved primarily changes at the level of symbols that would later on culminate in qualitative changes in the behaviours of the people. It is this transformation of symbols that led the students of Turkish politics to the observation that Turkish modernization is a wholesale Westernization. However, as such, Turkish Westernization was rather a simulation without a semblance of traditional anchors of Western society. On the this basis, it could be suggested that "transformation" is a better word than revolution in describing the Republic.³⁵

³¹ See Gole, "The Quest...", 84.

³² Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey* (Lexington: Eothen Press, 1985), 50-51.

³³ Resat Kasaba, "Kemalist Certainties and Modern Ambiguities," 24.

³⁴ *ibid.*, 24.

2.2.1. "Secularization" as Westernization.

The primary Westernizing reform was secularization reforms, which aimed to change the predominantly Islamic identity to a secular-nationalist one. Underlying the secularization policies was the assumption that Islam and scientific/rational Western civilization were incompatible. The traces of the Orientalist depiction of Islam as a hindrance to progress is apparent in this assumption. Hence, Westernization policies were directed at the Islamic value system so that the old surface of society could be erased for the new inscriptions by the "rational" Republican elite so as to improve society. The secularization policies implemented to this end included symbolic, institutional, legal and functional aspects, all altering the environment to which people were to adopt.³⁶

Symbolic secularization included abolition of Caliphate which has been the symbol of Muslimness, and a number of adoptions such as Western style dressing, Gregorian calendar, European numerals, metric system and family names. The weekly holiday was shifted from Friday to Sunday as well. But more importantly, a language reform that sharply left whole society officially illiterate for some time was carried out. The Arabic script was replaced with the Latin script and attempts were made to "purify" Turkish.

³⁵ G. H. Jansen, "Turkey: The Need for Roots" *Middle East Forum*, 37, 9 (November, 1961):13-17, 41-45, 16.

Legal secularization had actually started by the Tanzimat reforms. Some secular laws were enacted while the Islamic law was being codified during the Tanzimat period. Legal secularization in the Republic included secularization of civil, commercial and criminal laws by replacing the already existing Islamic laws with corresponding laws of some European countries. Swiss civil code, for example, was translated into Turkish and enacted as the Turkish civil code. Functional secularization was a complementary to both legal and institutional secularization. Since there were new secular laws enacted, there was no function left for the *Sharia* (religious law) Courts. So, these courts were abolished in 1924. Educational functions of religious institutions were transferred to new secular institutions as well. The *medreses* (religious schools), which were under the control of Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations were closed. Prayer Leader and Preacher Schools were established to train religious personnel. Ministry of Education was held responsible for all education.

As for the institutional secularization, in addition to the abolition of Caliphate, both the Office of *Shayk-al Islam* and the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations were abolished. These three institutions, Toprak points out, had traditionally provided the institutional basis of the *din u devlet* concept, which might be translated literally as the religious state in which source of legitimacy partly derives from religion. The new

³⁶ See Binnaz Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), ch. 3 for a detailed description of the secularization policies.

Republican state was to derive its legitimacy from a secular source, the national sovereignty. In accordance, the act declaring Islam as the religion of state in the Constitution of 1924 was annulled in 1928. This severance of the links between the state and religion was a step forward to separation of religion and state. This, however, was followed by a step backward to reestablish *din u devlet* on a new (Westernist) basis, which is the establishment of a body with authority in religious matters and affiliated to the Office of Prime Minister, the Directorate of Religious Affairs. Through this newly established institution, the links between state and religion continued and the state attempted to control religion. This administrative control over religion continues to-day and it is "the unique" feature of Turkish secularism.³⁷ Control of religion -primarily through education and institutional arrangements- was to forestall the possibility of a potential opposition to the new regime. Since the old religious establishment was disestablished, Islam was no longer a source of state legitimacy of the state. But, liberating religion from the reign of state could also give religion an opportunity of opposition. It is for this reason that religion was to be controlled even if it contradicted with the classical concept of secularization as separation between religion and state. Secularization meant the politicization of religion for the sake of order -and progress.

³⁷ Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, "Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey" *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 28, (1996): 231-251.

The control of religion by the Republican state should not be confused with the primacy of the state over religion during the Ottoman Empire nor with the primacy of politics over religion under modernity.³⁸ Ottoman state left the religion as it was at the level of society and did not interfere as long as the exigencies of the reason of the state required it to do so. The Republican state, on the other hand, controlled religion administratively and by virtue of being a Westernizing state, which perceived the prevailing Islam as an impediment to progress, it attempted to inject a new interpretation of religion so as to construct a uniform interpretation of religion which would ease the construction of a homogenous national community. Religion was treated as a resource that might be mobilized for the “purposes of state.”³⁹ Westernization provided the tone of the official interpretation of religion. According to this official interpretation, Islam was defined as the most reasonable and rational religion. As Paul Dumont pointed out:

the endeavor [was] to modernize religion and submit it to a vast range of reforms, transforming not only the exterior aspects of Islamic practice but even the contents of the message that clerics were to impart, so as to put Islam at the service of the new ideas that Kemalist revolution wanted to implant.⁴⁰

³⁸ Binnaz Toprak argues that lack of separation between state and Islam was “very much in line with Islamic theology as well as Ottoman practice.” It seem, Toprak confuses *formal* continuity with *substantive* difference. Modern Turkish state in maintaining the link between religion and state not only controlled a potential rival but also aimed to introduce and popularize a new interpretation of religion as well. This has not been the case before. See Binnaz Toprak “The Religious Right” in *Turkey in Transition: New Perspectives*, eds., Irvin C. Schick and Ahmet. E. Tonak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 220.

³⁹ Turan, “Religion and Political Culture in Turkey,” 42.

Thereby, according to official interpretation, rational, scientific Westernization/secularization reforms were entirely in conformity with “the true Islam” as defined by the state.⁴¹

Secularism, indeed, was a tool for construction of new Turkish national identity. By severing all the links with the past and Islam, and by controlling and redefining Islam, secularism turned out to be a tool for the construction of the model man that the Republic wanted to construct. As Kemal Karpat pointed out, the Republican regime wanted to bring-out a nationalist, anti-traditionalist, anti-clerical “*model man*” who would approach all matters intellectually and objectively. Secularization played an important role in carrying out these reforms, because it was believed that the fundamental change can not just be achieved by separation of religion from the state. Secularization “had to penetrate deeper in order to extirpate the regressive influences of Islam from the society’s and individuals’ cultural, economic,

⁴⁰ Paul Dumont, “Islam As a Factor of Change and Revival in Modern Turkey” *Turkic Culture: Continuity and Change* ed., Sabri Akural (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Turkish Studies 6, 1987), 2.

⁴¹ For a speech by Atatürk illustrating the point see *Atatürk, Din ve Laiklik*, Belgelerle Turk Tarihi Dergisi, Özel Yayın No. 2, (Istanbul, Mentese, 1968). See also, Sadi Borak ed., *Atatürk ve Din* [Atatürk and Religion] (Burhan Anil: Istanbul, 1997 [1962]), esp. p.36 “hafta tatili dine aykırıdır” gibi hayırlı, akla ve dine uygun meseleler hakkında sizi kandirmaya çalışan alçaklara ilgi göstermeyiniz. ... bizim dinimiz için herkesin elinde bir ölçü vardır. Bu ölçüye göre hangi şeyin dine uyup uymadığını kolayca takdir edebilirsiniz. Hangi şey ki akla, mantığa, halkın menfaatine uygundur; biliniz ki o bizim dinimize de uygundur.”

and social outlook."⁴² Hence, in addition to disestablishment of old religious institutions, at the level of society, all religious sects were banned and this was done for the purposes of redefinition of Islam in accordance with the official ideology of the state. By banning all religious sects, the state created a monopoly over the ability to define what Islam meant here and now. The attempts to redefine Islam, primarily through education, was an addition to the administrative control of religion. Education was to diffuse the Kemalist ideology/morality of state to society with its particular understanding of progress, secularism and national identity. Thereby, any interpretation diverged from that of the state has become illegitimate. Hence, after the abolition of the "old order," central to the process of constructing an official Islam, and more importantly to the construction of non-existent national identity, was the state-controlled secular education.

Needless to say, cultivation of model men in the schools was a long-term project, if not ever lasting, that necessitated the withholding of political power from those who put the success of project at risk, i.e. from non-Kemalist elements. However, contrary to the conventional wisdom, Turkish nationalism has never denied Islam as being one of its components.⁴³ It is

⁴² Kemal H. Karpat, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1959), 54.

⁴³ Cf. David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism: 1876-1908* (London: Frank Cass, 1977), 102. which argues that Islam was no longer seen as being part of a Turk's identity and of Turkish culture. See also S. A. Salamone, "The Dialectics of Turkish National Identity: Ethnic Boundary Maintenance

true that language and culture were the bases of the new Turkish identity, but Islam was still part of the culture, though only in the way that the state redefined. Accordingly, the devout Muslim was also the Westernized model citizen. As Sencer Ayata pointed out, the Kemalist ruling elite of the modern Turkish Republic,

saw in Islam both positive and negative aspects. They clearly recognized that Islam was a significant part of Turkish society, that religious faith was important for national unity and mobilization, and that it could contribute to social and moral welfare. On the other hand, they also saw Islam as a traditional force and a source of conservative influence, superstition, false ideas, and dogmas that they felt were responsible for Turkey's backwardness and were obstacles to the achievement of national ideals. ... Their aim was to enforce a secularization program and make Islam compatible with the modern nation-state. ... The government not only tried to contain the role of Islam in society, but also took steps to reform Islam according to its vision. ... This required that Islamic teaching be rendered compatible with Western values and institutions to assist the government to develop intelligent, cooperative, patriotic, and moral citizens.⁴⁴

It could be suggested that Kemalism's repudiation of the then prevailing Islam is somewhat similar to the nineteenth century Islamists' stance towards Islam. Islamist reformists of the nineteenth century, linking the cause of backwardness to deviance of society and state from the true Islam, repudiated the prevailing Islam as false and sought after the true Islam by re-interpreting it in terms of Western categories. The Republic's re-

and State Ideology" *East European Quarterly*, XXIII, 2, (1989): 225-248, 239. Salamone suggests that argues that "Ataturk's reforms to homogenize Turkey has failed" because "new national identity was based on majority language and Western ideals," whereas "for the vast majority of people religion is inseparable from national identity."

⁴⁴ Sencer Ayata, "Patronage, Party, and State: The Politicization of Islam in Turkey," *Middle East Journal*, 50, 1, (Winter, 1996): 40-56, 41, 42.

interpretation, however, sounded much more radical because it was done for the sake of shift to Western civilization, rather than for the sake of regeneration of Islamic civilization. Perhaps it was this motive behind the re-interpretation rather than the re-interpretation itself that caused to a deficit in the legitimacy of the new interpretation that was to be redressed when the culture of society was successfully altered on the long run.⁴⁵

Secularism, as Gole suggested, was considered to be “the prerequisite of Westernization.”⁴⁶ The hub of the Westernization was thus secularization and the hub of secularization was the re-definition of Islam in accordance with the new purposes of the state. This newly re-defined Islam was to lend support and give legitimacy to the Westernizing “offensives” of the state. In this picture, there are two dimensions of the Republic’s stance towards Islam: Orientalist repudiation of the prevailing Islam as regressive and as the cause of backwardness and an official interpretation of Islam which depicted Islam as the most reason-prone and rational religion in the world that could not be in conflict with any of the Westernizing reforms, which were by definition scientific. The controlling of religion for the re-interpretation could best be understood as an attempt to construct a civil religion along the lines of Rousseau’s civil religion mentioned in the previous chapter.

⁴⁵ In the meantime distribution of the gains of economic development through a populist rhetoric was a means to extent the legitimacy of the state to society. See Keyder, “Whither...,” 41.

2.3. The Political Implications of Kemalist Westernization

1. Drawing from Bobby Sayyid, it could be suggested that, one of the implications of Westernization was that it paradoxically led to Orientalization of society. This is so because the identity of the West had been constituted *vis a vis* the Orient, and by embarking a project of Westernization, Kemalism “necessarily (re)produced an Oriental subject.”⁴⁷ Hence, Kemalism first divided and rendered the society into a mutually exclusive dichotomy, traditional and modern. Then, it tried to overcome this division. Since it was this division that constituted Kemalism, i.e. since Kemalism was defined in opposition to traditional and/or Islam(ic), the division could not be overcome lest the foundation of Kemalism crumbles. This meant if Kemalism was to survive, its “the other,” Islam, has to survive as well. As a corollary, it also meant that politics would revolve around the friends and enemies of Kemalism. Consequently, Kemalism is defined by what it is not, because Kemalist identity, as Sayyid states, “could only be fixed by reference to what opposed and undermined its unity.”⁴⁸ This analysis of Kemalism reveals the internal contradiction of Kemalism: the aim of overcoming the division between Westernized and Islamic, while its very survival dependent upon the existence of such division. It cannot explain,

⁴⁶ Nilufer Gole, “Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: The Making of Elites and Counter-Elites,” *Middle East Journal*, 51, 1 (1997): 46-58, 49.

⁴⁷ Sayyid, “Sign O’Times..,” 270-1.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 271.

however, *why* Kemalism has to survive. It only shows that Kemalism needs its “the other” *if* it has to survive. Below, an attempt will be made to explain why Kemalism had to endure by suggesting that Kemalist goals have been the *raison d’être* of society. Also, as noted in the first chapter, it seems wrong to suggest that Islamic identity is solely shaped by Kemalism. Yet, current Islamism in Turkey, as represented by the Welfare/Virtue Party, could be located in the binary logic created by Kemalism with a reservation, i.e. by bearing in mind that political parties are not epiphenomena reflecting the cleavages in society.⁴⁹ In other words, while the role of Kemalism in constructing a certain portrayal of Islam(ism), the role of Islamists in constructing “the Islamist alternative” should be heeded as well.

2. Another political impact of Westernization in Turkish politics concerns the de-linking of center and periphery and the cultural alienation of the state from society. In this picture, painted mainly by Serif Mardin, by disestablishing the religion at the level of state Kemalism removed the link between center and periphery, because religion provided the link between center and periphery and legitimated little men’s religion in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁰ Kemalist disestablishment of religion meant insecurity for the survival of the religion at the level of society. Also, Kemalist mentality, by virtue of ignoring the role Islam played in the society, could not replace the

⁴⁹ Alan Ware, *Citizens, Parties and the State: A Reappraisal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 129.

patterns of association and solidarity provided by Islam. To the extent that, an “ideological argument becomes authoritative when it is partly determined by the values its potential adherents hold,”⁵¹ Kemalism was “ideologically disabled” by virtue of being a project aiming to change the culture of its potential adherents.⁵² Consequently, the implication is that not only the center and periphery was de-linked but also the Republic became unable to integrate masses into its modernization drive. This is because Kemalist public morality or vision of common good was not appealing to people, for it rejected the prevailing values of the society with a long term aim to transform them. Hence, Kemalism created an “ethical vacuum in a society where religious and ethical commands had been important. The inability of Kemalism to provide a social ethos that appealed to hearth as well as to the mind was more disorienting than would appear in the first sight.”⁵³

What is eventually problematized in the cultural alienation thesis is, in fact, the lack of a popularized public morality in Kemalist regime that would

⁵⁰ See Mardin, “Ideology..” 204.

⁵¹ David Manning and Ysanne Carlisle, “The Ideologies of Modern Politics” *Political Studies*, XLIII, 3 (1995): 482-496, 495.

⁵² Whether Kemalism lacked a concern for establishing a public morality or it was concerned but unable to do because of the contents of its alternative morality is another question. But suffice it to say that the latter is the implication of previous studies of Serif Mardin, while the former is a position taken by him in a recent study: “The reform movement had no identifiable philosophical foundation.” See Mardin, “Projects..,” 65.

enable individuals to differentiate between good and evil. The thesis of cultural isolation assumes that societies are held together by common values and stability depends on value consensus. While not denying the fact that the contents of Kemalist morality diverged from that of society, it is the view that sees value-consensus as essential for holding the societies together and for a functioning democracy that has been and will be questioned in this study. This assumption could not only be misleading but also undesirable from a normative perspective, because such a value consensus is not possible without oppressing and marginalizing other values to the benefit of the preferred one. Moreover, consensus on "common" values is itself a political activity. If this is the case, then the ground of problematizing Kemalism on the basis of its cultural alienation would be erroneous, because upholding of any set of values as common values would mean the political marginalization of certain other values in a society where value pluralism prevails.

When viewed from this angle, whether Islamic or Kemalist, the contents of the value consensus promoted by the state makes little difference. This is the most important point missed by the cultural alienation thesis. The practical political implication of cultural alienation thesis is "cultural unification." The goal of cultural unification is not only the political alternative of Islamism but also what Kemalism has been pursuing since the beginning of the Republic. But as previously noted the very idea of culturally unified society

⁵³ Serif Mardin, "Religion and Politics in Modern Turkey," 156.

is a hindrance to political activity, which is the activity that holds the societies together. As such cultural alienation thesis is an inappropriate approach for a sound analysis of Islamism in Turkey, or any other political movement for that matter. Moreover, cultural alienation implies that Islamist movement in Turkey as represented by the Welfare Party is a grass-roots movement, representing the Muslim society. Cultural alienation thesis also runs the risk of taking for granted the Islamists' claim that they themselves are the true representatives of the people. It, therefore, neglects the relation between the party/organization and the people it represents. It may well be true that the cleavage is between the state and society, but this cleavage may not necessarily be a cultural one, but a political one. In this case, non-participatory dimensions of the state -and the party- should be taken into account. In addition, the ground on which cultural alienation thesis problematize Kemalism could be misleading also when we bear in mind the fact that the political problems endured/aggravated during the post-1980 period, when the Kemalist state tried to strike a deal with Islam. That is, when the state employed a religious language and promoted Islam so as to maintain the community. Last but not least, cultural alienation thesis suggests that modernization has failed due to cultural alienation. But, this may not necessarily be the case. It may be the flawed understanding of modernization rather than cultural alienation that led to the arguable failure of modernization.

3. There is also another approach to the political implications of Kemalist Westernization that emphasizes the goals and intentions of Kemalism. This approach generally takes for granted the cultural alienation thesis and suggests it as the rationale for the illiberal practices of Kemalism. By focusing on the substance of Kemalism, i.e. Westernization, which among other things imply democracy, this approach explains the non-liberal practices of Kemalism by exigencies of modernization and consolidation of the regime. In this perspective,

Extraordinary measures were justified by temporary needs to protect the state and the regime against the counterrevolutionaries. ... liberal democracy remained the ideal, authoritarianism was justified only as a temporary measure arising out of the need to defend the Kemalist revolution against the counterrevolutionaries. Kemalism as a doctrine was much closer to nineteenth century liberalism than to the authoritarian and totalitarian philosophies of the twentieth century.⁵⁴

Cultural alienation, rather than doctrinal repudiation of liberal democracy and liberal values, explains why the retainment of power by the ruling elite was essential for the consolidation of the Republic. It was necessary to protect the purity of reforms and altered environment for the good of the society and for a successful Westernization. It was only to train people with the appropriate culture that power was retained. The aim was to educate elite and then people for democracy.⁵⁵ And, in order to retain power

⁵⁴ Ergun Ozbudun, "Development of Democratic Government in Turkey: Crises, Interruptions and Reequilibrations," in *Perspectives on Democracy in Turkey* ed., idem (Ankara: Turkish Political Science Association, 1988), 12, 15.

⁵⁵ Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey*, 154.

Kemalism had to be non-mobilizational and anti-participatory, lest the culturally backward masses might infiltrate the central mechanisms of political control. Hence, retainment of political power was not something ideological but pragmatic, not ever-lasting but transitory.

This approach to Kemalism is in terms of its goals and intentions and it implicitly equates Kemalism with its substance, Westernization. Yet, if the purity of intent is the criterion, the outcome of deeds is downplayed and/or neglected. It must be borne in mind that the intentions are not the only source of the legitimacy. Moreover, equating Kemalism with Westernization fully may lead us to neglect the fact that Kemalism has often been “selective” in what and how to borrow from the West and cautious about when to borrow.⁵⁶ It must be reminded that the Westernizing elite may not necessarily be committed to all aspects of modernity, simply because, as agents of Westernization, they have their own interests, protection of which might be endangered as a result of further modernization.⁵⁷ Indeed, the full commitment to Westernization was intermixed with the goal of controlling the polity.⁵⁸ In other words, emphasis should be put on “Kemalist way of Westernization” rather than “Westernization as Kemalism’s way.”

⁵⁶ See Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, “National Identity vs. Integration with the West: The Case of Turkish Nationalism” *unpublished mimeo*, nd.

⁵⁷ Keyder, “Whither...,” 39.

⁵⁸ See Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, “National Identity vs. Integration with the West...”

Conceptualization of Kemalism in such a way will enable us to recognize the limited and limiting nature of Kemalist Westernization. Only in this way we will be able to understand why “the reforming elite has *always* been deeply suspicious of ... ideas and institutions that originated outside the ruling elite.”⁵⁹ The adjective “always,” surely, goes against the descriptions of Kemalism as transitory. As noted above, repression of opposition -even when it converged with the Kemalist elite on key issues and provided a potential for a genuinely liberal democratic regime⁶⁰- is often explained on the basis of the exigencies of the consolidation of the Republic. This explanation, to state it again, could only be plausible when one focuses solely on the substance/intentions of Kemalism. This dissertation, on the other hand, focuses on the Kemalist structuration of politics as a type of republican structuration of politics.

An analysis of Kemalism with regards to the ideals informing its mode of integration of society will enable us to shift the focus from such intentions of Kemalism as liberal democracy to the Kemalist structuration of politics and to the Kemalism’s concept of the political. In this respect, whether Kemalism has been an ideology or mentality has little relevance, because the focus is on the Kemalist concept of the political. It may well be true that Kemalism has

⁵⁹ Kasaba, “Kemalist....,” 29, emphasis added.

⁶⁰ See for example Ahmet Demirel, *Birinci Mecliste Muhalefet: Ikinci Grup*, [Opposition in the First Assembly: The Second Group] (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1994), 611-613.

not been an ideology in the sense of an intellectually elaborated system of thought but a mentality -emotional way of thinking and feeling that provide non-codified ways of reacting the situations.⁶¹ Realism, flexibility and adaptation to circumstances were all qualities of Kemalism and that Kemalist principles have emerged as it went along.⁶² That Kemalism has not been an ideology is often praised as a positive aspect for the purposes of (future) democratization(s). Yet, it could be the very fact of being mentality may enable Kemalism to endure as a permanent non-doctrinal, flexible impediment to liberal democracy and pluralism while aiming at liberal democracy on the long run. It may well be true that Kemalism had not been an ideology. Yet, Kemalism can be a moralized substantive common good leading to a certain illiberal mentality and structuration of politics.

Once seen from this perspective, Islamism could not be associated automatically with traditionalism and authoritarianism, but it may well be a form of "identity politics" seeking the recognition of Islamic identity in the public sphere. To the extent that struggles for the recognition of identities in the public sphere are the struggles for justice, Islamism may well be seen as a struggle for justice. In this respect, it might have a liberalizing potential.

⁶¹ See Ergun Ozbudun, "The Nature of Kemalist Regime" in *Ataturk: Founder of a Modern State*, (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1981). See also Dankwart A. Rustow, "Kemalism" and Eric Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*. Rustow regards Kemalism as an ideology but in reality his description of Kemalist "ideology" corresponds to Ozbudun's description of Kemalism as a mentality.

But, what Islamism represents cannot just be seen through Kemalism's stance towards Islamic identity, what the Islamist alternative involves should be studied as well, especially in its relation to Kemalism. In other words, the fact that Kemalism's illiberalism provides an opportunity for a liberal opening does not necessarily mean that this opportunity is taken up by Islamism. But what is for sure is that we cannot depict Islamism as undemocratic, authoritarian, anti-modern solely on the basis of its opposition to Kemalism. In order to illustrate this point further, how Kemalism acts as an impediment to democratic politics and why Kemalism is not just a Westernization project should be explained by returning to moralization of Kemalism.

2.4. Kemalism as a Permanent Moral Consensus

It was noted above that modern Turkish society was constituted through Kemalist revolution and in this sense it has a republican character because the status of citizenship, rights and liberties were granted by the Kemalist revolution to the former subjects of sultan. It was, in other words, the Kemalist revolution that made the Turkish society possible and the rights and liberties of citizens did not precede the formation of the Turkish Republic. It was also noted that Kemalism as the founding principle has a republican concept of the political in the sense of orientation towards the

⁶² Dankwart A. Rustow, "Kemalism" 238, Ozbudun, "The Nature..." 87.

common good of society -an orientation that prevents the vanishing of the political. Also the famous Kemalist dictum, "reaching the level of contemporary civilization," could be considered as a positive aspect of Kemalism, for it implied, *inter alia*, democracy, pluralisation and liberalization. In this context, the key to understanding why Kemalism is not solely a Westernization programme and why it functioned as an impediment to political activity is an analysis of Kemalism as a grammar of politics and as the permanent moral consensus of society which determines the legitimate sphere of politics.

Kemalism, it could be suggested, is not simply a goal oriented Westernization project that would fold up with the realization of its goals, be those the consolidation of regime or construction of the new Turks. This is because the Kemalist idea that modern Turkish society owes its existence to Kemalism and is integrated around the elite-defined Kemalist goals of Westernization and secularism as its common good implied that if the goals of Kemalism is completed the society would lack a direction and would eventually disintegrate. Society, or more accurately community, was integrated solely for the realization of goals, and this is a feature of republicanism in general. In this respect, it could be suggested that Kemalism has been the *raison d'être* of society. Even when defined as a solely goal-based project, a full realization of Kemalist goals were impossible due to the uneven nature of development. Hence there will always be a need to maintain the moral consensus that Kemalism upholds. The correlation of

the maintenance of society with the maintenance of Kemalism meant that Kemalism's "the others" has to be reproduced as well. The Kemalist elite's idea that Turkey owes its existence to Kemalist revolution, and therefore Kemalism has to be protected meant in effect perceiving the society as ontologically insecure. Hence, a preconceived concern about the indivisible integrity of the nation is followed.

The republican idea that society, rights and liberties have become possible with the foundation of the Republic meant that Kemalism as the founding principle is installed into the regime. This in turn meant that there has been an ideology of the state in the sense of "fundamental principles which organize behaviour, frame of choices, constitute a world view and are considered to be the means of achieving that rare commodity which is the goal."⁶³ This ideology, in turn, foreclosed the possibilities of politics in the sense of consensus or *modus vivendi* between different life styles and political perspectives because the state could not be impartial to different life styles and ideologies. Hence, society was divided into those who supporting Kemalist values of the centre and those who do not. This is because, the ideology of the state was not a democratic ideology in the sense of allowing different opinions about what should be done.⁶⁴ Rather, it entailed a

⁶³ See John Clammer, *Difference and Modernity: Social Theory and Contemporary Japanese Society* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1995), 12. Note that this conception of ideology is somewhat similar to the concept of morality as defined above.

substantive idea of common good and promoted a certain life-style, described above as the model man who was Westernized and secular.

Of the six principles⁶⁵ of Kemalism, “populism” was often used as a synonym of democracy.⁶⁶ However, populism/democracy denied the presence of different classes and clashing interests and values within the society. Kemalist democracy aspired to an ideal society without class, without personal conflict and freed from all attachment to past. Democracy was actually about the transformation of the empirical will of the people along rational lines as defined by the elite. In effect, this conceptualization of democracy made it compatible with a quasi-authoritarian logic. The commitment to democracy referred actually to elections and democracy is equated with plurality of parties competing one another in free elections. It has been defined neither in terms of individual rights of citizens nor in terms of a value in itself. Democratic procedures were expected to result in the maintenance of Kemalist values around which society was supposedly integrated.

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⁶⁴ W. J. Stankiewicz, *In Search of a Political Philosophy: Ideologies at the Close of Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 1993), 416.

⁶⁵ Nationalism, Secularism, Reformism, Etatism, Populism, and Republicanism.

⁶⁶ Ergun Ozbudun, “Ataturk ve Demokrasi” *Ataturk Arastirma Merkezi Dergisi*, V, 14, (Mart, 1989): 285-295, 285.

As in the republican ideal, Kemalism too had a concept of active citizenship. But, since the common good was already given, actively participating citizen meant a citizen subscribing to Kemalist idea(l)s. Its understanding of democracy, therefore, required democratic citizens to be loyal to the prevailing arrangements without any reservation, and participation was dependent upon the precondition that citizens should first be virtuous. As in the republican mode of integration, discussed in previous chapter, one criterion of rationality/virtue was in turn the acknowledgment of the rationality of Kemalism/existing political arrangements. In this respect, it could be suggested that Kemalism was aiming to secure the outcome of democratic deliberation process in advance. As in republicanism possibility of participation in the common praxis was recognized, but the common praxis meant not the political deliberation of the common good, but the realization of a pre-defined common good.

As people were not considered virtuous in the early years, there were no elections. It was for this reason that Kemalist democracy first wanted to construct people “rational” enough to participate. Virtuous people were to be trained/cultivated gradually through schools, Public Houses and Village Institutes. But, once trained with the appropriate virtue, people would discover the rationality of Kemalism and keep subscribing to it. Until then rule by the vanguards of the revolution was essential to protect the rational-scientific Kemalist goal of Westernization and to educate people for democracy. Hence, bureaucrats “saw it as their duty to protect ‘public

interest' against 'incompetent and unprincipled' politicians elected by and 'ignorant' majority."⁶⁷ Popular government was legitimate only when it subscribed to Kemalist morality and acted within the parameters set by the bureaucratic guardians, who also "checked and balanced" politics of the political elites. Limitation of the powers of the state was not on the agenda however. What Kemalism meant here and now could only be known by its guardians.⁶⁸ It was these guardians who could, as conditions require, consider politicians unfit to rule.⁶⁹ The legitimate sphere of politics was, thereby, set by them. Democracy was also the best form of government "provided that democratic competition does not endanger Ataturk's principles."⁷⁰ Hence, the great elite commitment to democracy is demonstrated by so-often restoration of it by the elite.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Ozbudun, "State Elites...", 198.

⁶⁸ It must be noted that the stance of these guardians has changed within a broad parameters of secularism from repression to accommodation. Both of these trends were apparent in the secularization policies of the early republic. Post-1980 "deal" with Islam could be considered as a kind of accommodation of Islam for the purposes of the maintenance of the community.

⁶⁹ To this end every constitution secured a significant role for the military, the ultimate guardians of Kemalist principles, through the National Security Council. Civil bureaucracy, too, played the role of guarding Kemalism *vis a vis* the politicians until it was fragmented and infiltrated by "political" elements. Thus, military had little trust to bureaucracy after 1970.

⁷⁰ Ozbudun, "State Elites...", 204.

⁷¹ Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism*, 82.

Hence, after the transition to multi-party regime bureaucracy and military functioned as check and balance mechanisms on popular government. This is because, a majority of population is seen as unenlightened about “the national interest” and therefore liable to deception by politicians who give priority to their own personal or partisan-ideological interests over national interest.⁷² Even after transition to multi-party regime, certain key political issues were a prerogative of the guardians of Kemalism and political accommodations were to be reached with them.⁷³ Yet, because politics inevitably involves such divisive “positionings” as Islamist or leftist questioning or interpretations of Kemalist morality, guardians conceive politics as a threat to the unity and integrity of society. Politics, by definition, is divisive and therefore it is necessary to make “administrative” “unifying” interventions to “tame” it.⁷⁴ Elections were held and they were “the only proof of system’s allegiance to democracy,”⁷⁵ but the function of them was

⁷² Ozbudun, “State Elites...,” 203.

⁷³ In this respect the fact that Kemalism has open to different interpretation, i.e. flexibility of Kemalism, has little practical political relevance, for the (re)interpretation of Kemalism was a prerogative of a privileged elite rather than a matter of political deliberation. For the openness of Kemalism to different interpretations see Ozbudun, “State Elites...,” 203.

⁷⁴ The similarity with the French Republic in the mid 1800s should be mentioned here. For the French republic, too, pluralism was unthinkable without a suspension of founding principle “otherwise, it can only be included within the categories of misunderstanding or the outright conflict of personal ambitions” see Pierre Rosanvallon, “The Republic of the Universal Suffrage” in *The Invention of the Modern Republic*, ed., Fontana Biancamaria (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 203-204.

not to bring the existing social diversity into political sphere. Elections were rather a gesture of adherence, a symbolic expression of membership to collectivity.

In this context, Kemalism endured in a way to set the limits to “rational” politics. What is expected from politics is a dedication to Kemalist goals and reflection of Kemalist ethical life. Hence, all those rejecting the Kemalist common good are depicted as irrational, which foreclosed the possibilities of legitimate dissent in the public sphere. This is because the removal of the issue of common good by moralizing the elite-defined Westernization and secularization depoliticized what actually were political questions. The issue of secularization, henceforth, could not be on the agenda of legitimate politics. It was impossible to redefine, reexamine it in through politics. The idea of common good was a given of politics and politics/politicians were expected to dedicate themselves to it. The practical effect was reduction of politics to a limited activity. It was in this sense that Kemalism reduced politics to “administration.” Political rights therefore included the right to participate in the “common” Kemalist project but not to refrain from it while at the same time remaining in the public sphere.

Kemalist republicanism consequently resulted in a state-centered polity with little focus on society. It was the state who acted for the whole society and

⁷⁵ Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, “Historicizing the Present and Problematizing the Future of the Kurdish Problem: A Critique of the TOBB Report on the

who displayed a *clear distaste for politics and politicians*. The implication was the shift of focus from input, i.e. genuine participation to the output, i.e. policies of the state. Since the state identified itself with a substantive purpose, the source of its legitimacy was that substantive purpose as well. Effective use of power by certain groups located in the state, i.e. bureaucracy, mattered more than the limitation of state power. Since the source of legitimacy was substantive, procedures, as another source of legitimacy, were neglected. Effectiveness became the basis of legitimacy. The 1921 and 1924 constitutions which set the framework of politics did not organize rights and liberties but emphasized the duties that the citizens owed to the state. Decreasing effectiveness of the state and its concomitant decrease in the legitimacy of the state may well be beneficial for the claims of Islamism. But, it must first be recognized that it was the Kemalist state that based its legitimacy on effectiveness/delivery by ignoring other, procedural, sources of legitimacy. It is this point that has been ignored by the studies linking the rise of Islamism to the “economic failures of modernization,” mentioned in the first chapter. It is for this reason that an analysis of the political context of Islamism was essential.

Consequently, there emerged an illiberal republican picture in which society is seen as a moral community united around Kemalist values and as an object of government for the Kemalist state. What is lacking was a vision of society as a composition of different identities and interests. Hence,

Eastern Question” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 14 (Spring, 1996): 1-22, 11.

participation is restricted only to members of community, i.e. those who subscribe to Kemalist values, and not to the members of society.

Democracy/politics was to function to demonstrate the unity of the community, but not to enable prevailing differences to cohabit. Differences were rejected and politics expressing differences were seen essentially divisive. The ideal politics for the Kemalist elite was actually administration for the realization of the common goals as defined by Kemalist elite, but not the deliberation of what the common good of society is. For this reason, Kemalist elite supervised politics and politicians and left them a restricted legitimate sphere of politics by asserting their prerogative on certain key issues such as secularism. To the extent that "we are free when we have a role in determining the character of our communities,"⁷⁶ the primary concern of Kemalism was not realization of freedom, but construction of the ideal political community.

The idea that Kemalism is the moral consensus of society together has proved counter-effective because modern societies are held together not by pre-defined common values or common religion but the very activity of politics. The predicament with Kemalism was not that it conceived politics as discovering what is good for the entire society rather than accommodation and aggregating diverse demand. The difficulty with Kemalism is the rejection of political activity by reducing it to administration

for the purposes of realization of an already-given concept of common good and by assuming that society is not a composition of different identities and interest but a moral community united around Kemalist values.

As such the task of politics is not to further rights and liberties, but to protect of rights and liberties that were granted with the constitution of the republic.

Kemalist republicanism, in this respect, asserts the morality of the already given rights but not of emancipation by furthering rights and liberties.

Kemalist stance could therefore could be considered as a conservative stance in the sense of being concerned only with the protection of the *status* of citizenship that was granted by the Republic, and in the sense of disclaiming the *activity* of citizenship. Such an administrative conception of politics is also, it could be claimed, is anti-enlightenment because it narrows the concept of progress. The normative ideal of Kemalism is moral unity of community around the Kemalist values, i.e. extension of Kemalism to the society, but not realization of freedom in the public sphere. Islamism in this context cannot be depicted as anti-enlightenment by virtue of being a religious movement and/or by virtue of being in opposition to a Westernizing regime. Also, with such an administrative concept of politics, we lack liberal tools to confront the illiberalism of Islamism. This is not only because Kemalist view of politics is illiberal but also Kemalist structuration of politics is illiberal -and therefore forecloses the possibilities of liberal

⁷⁶ Richard Bellamy, *Liberalism and Modern Society: A Historical Argument*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 258.

questionings of Islamism- as well. This is so because Kemalism links political stability to moral consensus (on Kemalism) and thereby associates every reexamination of the political system with a revolutionary challenge. In this respect, contrary to the Kemalist depiction of it, Islamism may not necessarily be a revolutionary or anti-systemic challenge to the Kemalist political system. Moreover, Islamism could even be associated with a struggle for justice, if struggle for recognition of identities could be considered as struggles for justice. Most importantly, we might speculate that Islamism seeks to gain the power of state not because Islam is a religion which unites state and religion, but because in Turkey it is impossible for Islamic identity (or any other identity) to appear in the public sphere without having the power of the state. In other words, "is there any democratic outlet for different identities to appear in the public sphere without recouring the power of state" is a meaningful question.

As such Kemalism paradoxically/ironically could be considered as republicanism plus liberal conception of politics. This is because the task of politics is to protect an already-established order in liberalism. Kemalism tried to do the same. But, like in republicanism, the already-established order was substantive in nature, that is, it proposed a certain life-style. Hence, Kemalism is republican conception of politics minus the activity of politics, i.e. vanishing of the concept of the political. The rise of Islamism could be located precisely in this context in which politics, in the sense of debate over the nature of good life, is absent. This is so because Islamism

seems to offer an alternative vision of good life in the absence of any other alternative vision of good life. Also, if Islamism could be associated with a culture conflict, in a context where basis of political divisions is not the fundamental (functional) cleavages, the stage is left to cultural divisions.

In sum, it could be suggested that if modern republicanism is a political structuration in which modern liberal ideals, and especially individual freedom, injected into a classical/ancient republicanism, then Kemalist structuration of politics has not been along the lines of modern republicanism, but pre-modern republicanism. Indeed, Kemalist republic, it might be claimed, has been a Platonist-Rousseauist republic in the sense of having an “objective” definition of common good, seeing the society as an object of government and freedom in terms of one’s ability to fulfill his/her role in the realization of common good, and in depicting divergences from Kemalist good as either “false consciousness” or self(ish)-interest.

It is against this political background that we could analyze the politics of Islamism. It may well be true that Islamism is an illiberal political movement, but this is not because of its opposition to a “Westernizing” regime. Islamism should be assessed in terms of its own vision of the political and social integration. It is for this reason that this study introduced republicanism as a non-essentialist and universal tool of analysis of the politics of Islamism. As will be seen in the following chapter, Islamism

is close to its adversary in terms of its alternative political structuration. But this is not because it is *Islamic* but because it is republican, like Kemalism.

CHAPTER FOUR

KEMALISM OF THE NATIONAL OUTLOOK MOVEMENT

1. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

It was noted in the first chapter that Islamism as an alternative nationalism and as an alternative legitimation of capitalist rationality has its own alternative model of society, mode of social integration and type of state-society relationship. It was also suggested that if Islamism is to be assessed, it is more accurate and legitimate to do it in terms of its own definition of political community and (the legitimate sphere of) "the political." This is because Islamism is not a movement about the fundamentals of religion, but about the fundamentals of society. Islamism insists that religious morality, which is the precondition of a virtuous men/society, is indispensable for a stable social order and for enabling individuals to make out what is right and wrong. For Islamism society is a homogenous entity with a set of Islamic values at its "center." It is in this respect that Islamism is a political movement because what are the fundamentals of society is a political question. Islamists come to politics with their (supposedly superior) moral

ideas and they are concerned with continuity with the past, community and order. Islamists believe that politics can transfigure life and they enter into political sphere for “rescuing” the society which is deemed to be in crisis. Islamic principles, in this context, expresses the identity of the Islamism/Islamists. The principles are interpreted in the light of modern experience.

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to approach the Islamist National Outlook Movement (*Milli Gorus Hareketi*) from the perspective of studying its conduct of politics, its concept of “the political,” its definition of the political community and its vision of state-society relations, all of which are informed by an underlying ideal of society and its mode of integration. The aim, by approaching the National Outlook Movement (henceforth NOM) from this perspective, is to emphasize its similarities with, rather than differences from Kemalism so as to provide an opportunity to go beyond the dominant/determining dichotomy of either Islamism or Kemalism. Indeed, behind the often emphasized conflict between the Islamist NOM and the Kemalist Westernizing regime, there are many convergences and resemblances between them that makes such dichotomy less meaningful than it appears at first sight. It will be suggested that, as far as the relationship between the movement and the society -as well as its constituency- is concerned, the NOM’s opposition to the Kemalist regime is coloured by illiberal Kemalist elements. By showing these illiberal Kemalist aspects of the NOM, we could confront the claim that it is gaining a

democratic political culture as it opposes an oppressive and undemocratic regime.¹ To the extent that representation of different identities are a sign of democracy, the NOM could be considered as a democratizing movement for it seeks a space for Islamic identity in the public sphere. But, it should be borne in mind that, there are concerns about that the NOM may go beyond this by claiming to Islamize the public sphere and by monopolizing the representation of identity and by associating being a Muslim with voting for its parties.

In emphasizing the similarities between Kemalism and Islamism, what is meant by Kemalism is crucial. As noted in the previous chapter, this study takes Kemalism not in terms of its substance, Westernization, but in terms of its form, i.e. structuration of politics and concept of “the political.”

Therefore, these convergences will be sought in the concept of the political and relatedly in the definitions of political community regardless of the substance/basis of the community/politics in question. For example, both Kemalism and Islamism hold that a societies are homogenous entities integrated around common values/good, though their deemed common values are different. That the common good in the former is Westernization and in the latter it is Islamization makes little difference as far as the political implications of a moralized idea of common good on democracy and pluralism is concerned.

¹ Cf. Ali Bulac, “Islamda Secim Vardir” *Milli Gazete*, 4.5.1997.

It will be claimed that Islamism of the NOM converges with Kemalism on two crucial points. The first convergence concerns the non-recognition of the prevailing society as it is and, its concomitant, the alternative social engineering project. Second convergence is more enduring in the sense that it lasts longer than completing a (social engineering) project because it concerns a certain *mentality* with regard to legitimate sphere of politics, that is the Islamist concept of “the political.” When studied in detail these two convergences can expand to cover a few more similarities, namely, the primacy of culture in modernization/development, the view of democracy as an instrument of establishing ideal (Islamic or Kemalist) order, the concept of populism as denial of differentiated structure of society, state-centredness, and quasi-authoritarianism. These “correspondent aspects” of Islamism will be revealed by critically studying the issues problematized and alternatives offered by the NOM.

As such this study is limited to aim of revealing the “political logic” or the “political mind” of the NOM that persisted in all parties of the movement. There are, of course, differences between Islamism and Kemalism. For instance, the latter is a state-ideology while the former is the ideology of an opposition movement which springs from the cleavage created by the latter. Also, Islamism of the NOM could be considered as a social movement, which nonetheless is turning into an elite movement, while Kemalism was originally a movement of cadres, which gradually gained a foothold in

society. Dissimilarities between Kemalism and Islamism are missing in this study. Also, the similarities between the NOM and other political parties, such as the misreading(s) of society and incomprehensive stance with regard to secularism, are missing due to time limitations.

The term "National Outlook" (*Milli Gorus*) is used in two different senses. First in the sense of an Islamic/indigenous world-view/ideology and, second, in the sense of a movement structured around this world-view/ideology and organized under three different political parties. Below, the former (ideological) aspect will be referred to as "the National Outlook" and, as in previous chapter, ideology will be taken as "fundamental principles which organize behaviour, frame of choices, constitute a world view and are considered to be the means of achieving that rare commodity which is the goal."² The organizational/movement aspect will be referred to as the National Outlook Movement (NOM). Instead of talking about political parties of the movement, this study will employ National Outlook and the NOM in order to emphasize the continuity between the three parties of the movement primarily in terms of "ideology" and the leading cadres, which, at times, is depicted as the "leading oligarchy."³ Indeed, the ideology of

² See John Clammer, *Difference and Modernity: Social Theory and Contemporary Japanese Society* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1995), 12.

³ Also called founding elders, this elite of the movement include Oguzhan Asilturk, Sevket Kazan, Recai Kutan, Fehim Adak, Suleyman Arif Emre, Ahmet Tekdal.

National Outlook, which as will be seen below, is predominantly a culturalist stance, has been maintained as the founding principle of all three parties that have existed since 1970 as the carriers of this ideology, while the pressing social issues of the time (functional cleavages) have been integrated into this basic culturalist stance.⁴ This culturalist stance indicates a self-consciousness about identity, culture, heritage and articulates the prevailing issues in terms of culture and morality. It thereby sees politics and economy as functions of culture. The National Outlook does not emphasize an ethnic substance but a religious one. An analysis of the politics of the NOM could start from its standpoint *vis a vis* the Kemalist (Westernizing) republic. But first a brief historical review of the parties of the movement is in order.

2. THE PARTIES OF THE NATIONAL OUTLOOK MOVEMENT

The first political party with an explicit claim to be Islamic/Islamist, the National Order Party, was founded on January 26, 1970 under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan. The National Order Party (NOP) also marked the beginning of the movement. It was closed on January 14, 1972 on the

⁴ See for example, Necmettin Erbakan, *Türkiye'nin Meseleleri ve Çözümleri* (Ankara, np. 1991), 6, and Hasan Huseyin Ceylan, ed., *Erbakan ve Türkiye'nin Meseleleri*, (Ankara: Rehber Yayıncılık, 1996), 211. See also Ahmet Yıldız, "The Evolution of Islamic Politics in Turkey Along the NSP-PP Line: Change or Continuity?," Unpublished MA thesis. (Ankara: Bilkent University, 1991) for the continuity of culturalism as it is called in this study.

grounds that it sought to establish a theocratic order in Turkey. The verdict was actually reached on May 21, 1971, but its publication in the Official Gazette, necessary for the enforcement of the decision, was in January 14, 1972. The declaration issued for the foundation of the NOP asserted that it was the revival of the same National spirit that scattered (drove away) the crusaders, that conquered Istanbul and that defended the country during the war of Independence which led to foundation the Party.⁵ The parties of the NOM differed from other center-right political parties in claiming the relevance of Islam to economic and political development and in seeking a space for Islamic identity in the public sphere. The basic aims of the National Order Party were realization of “the potential of the Turkish nation for morals and virtue, bringing order, freedom from anxiety and social justice, happiness and peace to all Turks, and moral recovery.”⁶ The National Order Party also called for “moral and material progress ... to bring about prosperity and happiness, together with civilization that would serve as a model for the world.”⁷ The party opposed to any interpretation of secularism that is hostile to religion and to increasing ties with, the then,

⁵ See Rusen Çakir, *Ne Seriat Ne Demokrasi: Refah Partisini Anlamak* [Neither Sharia Nor Democracy: Understanding the Welfare Party] (Istanbul: Metis, 1994), 20. “... Milli ruh yeniden sahlaniyor, cosuyor ve Milli Nizam Partisini kuruyor...” see also 4.9.1995 *Sabah*, for Erbakan stressing that Fatih, the conqueror, was a the National Outlookist.

⁶ Jacob M. Landau, *Radical Politics in Turkey* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), 190. See also Ali Yasar Saribay, *Turkiye’de Modernlesme, Parti ve Din Politikasi: MSP Ornek Olayi*, [Modernization, Religion and Party Politics in Turkey: The Case of National Salvation Party] (Istanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1985), 100.

⁷ Landau, *Radical Politics in Turkey*, 190.

European Economic Community. The charismatic leader of the party, Erbakan, in his "Declaration to the Religious Turk" stated that

Thus the European, by making us copy him blindly and without any understanding, trapped us in this monkey's cage and, as a result, forced us to abandon our personality and nobility. That is to say, he was successful in this because he used agents recruited from within, who felt [inferior and] disgusted with themselves, bringing to his knees the Turk who for centuries could not be defeated by the crusades and external blows.⁸

The second party of the National Outlook Movement, the National Salvation Party, was founded on October 11, 1972. The National Salvation Party (NSP) was, too, closed by the military government on October 16, 1983 along with all other political parties. The ideology of the NSP was the same with that of NSP. The primacy of moral and cultural development was reasserted. To this end, education based on modesty, morals, virtue, and religion was emphasized. The glorious Ottoman Past and the loss of power and strength linked to the degenerating influence of Western culture were stressed. The NSP regarded other parties as "imitators of the West" and claimed that it was the only party based on Turkish national values and national heritage that could deliver material progress.⁹

⁸ Erbakan's "Mukaddesatci Turke Beyanname" in *Salname 1390*, (Istanbul, 1971) cited in Feroz Ahmad, "Politics and Islam in Turkey" *Middle Eastern Studies*, 27, 1 (1991), 3-21, 14-15.

⁹ See Ergun Ozbudun, "Islam and Politics in Modern Turkey: The Case of the National Salvation Party" in *The Islamic Impulse*, ed. Barbara Stowasser, (Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Gerogetown University, Washington: Croom Helm, 1987). See also Turker Alkan, "The National Salvation Party in Turkey" in *Islam and Politics in the Middle East*, eds. Metin Heper and Raphael Israeli, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984).

In the election of 1973, the National Salvation received 11.8 per cent of the vote and 48 seats in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. As such, it was the third largest party after the center-left Republican Peoples Party (RPP) and the center-right Justice Party (JP) with 186 and 150 seats respectively. The National Salvation formed a coalition with the RPP which lasted from February 1974 to September 1974. This coalition was followed by participation in the so-called National Front coalitions formed by the JP, the ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (NAP), the Republicanist Reliance Party and the NSP between March 1975 and December 1977. Although the absolute number of votes cast for the National Salvation remained around 1.25 million, it received 8.56 per cent of the votes and 24 seats in the elections of June 1977. After this election, a second National Front government was formed by the JP, the NAP and the NSP, but this was short-lived.

The Welfare Party was founded on July 19, 1983. It maintained the basic culturalist stance by emphasizing the glorious Ottoman past, degenerating effects of Westernization, moral development as a precondition of material development and opposition to increasing ties with the European Community. The National Outlook Movement reached its zenith during the Welfare Party period by steadily increasing its votes and finally by forming a coalition under the prime ministry of its leader, Necmettin Erbakan, with the True Path Party on June 28, 1996. In the local elections of 1984, it received 4.4 percent of the total votes. In 1987 general elections, its votes slightly

increased to 7.16 percent. In 1989 local elections its votes increased by 2.6 percent to 9.8 percent. In the 1990s, the Party was no longer a fringe party. In the 1991 general elections, the Welfare Party in alliance with two other parties, received 16.9 percent of the votes, which allowed Welfare Party to be represented by 38 deputies in the Grand National Assembly. A catch-all strategy, adopted after the 4th Congress of the WP in 1993, proved to be effective and in the local elections of 1994, the party received 19.1 percent of the votes. Its candidates were elected as the mayors of Istanbul and Ankara metropolitan municipalities among many others. Finally, the party emerged as the largest party from the December 1995 general elections by receiving 21.38 percent of the votes and 158 seats in the Grand National Assembly which eventually allowed it to form a majority coalition with the True Path Party. It should be briefly mentioned here that the WP's ability to exploit the political opportunities available through dynamic/effective organizational penetration into society and tailored electoral campaigns have played an important role in the rise of the WP.

After the 1995 elections, an attempt was made to keep the Welfare Party out of office through a "stimulated"¹⁰ minority coalition between the True Path Party and the Motherland Party, both center-right. This coalition was short-lived and the WP formed a majority coalition government with the True Path Party on June 28, 1996 that lasted almost a year. This coalition made an

Islamist leader the prime minister for the first time in the history of Turkish Republic, and according to some Islamic circles, it symbolized the bankruptcy of the Westernization ideology of the Republic¹¹ as well as the end of a taboo¹² that an Islamist leader cannot become a prime minister of the secular Republic. Some other Islamist groups, on the other hand, registered their doubts about the co-optation of the Party into the system.¹³ It seems reasonable to say that the WP's access to the office was, at least tacitly, accepted and a credit was given to WP to show its ability for "performance."¹⁴ It could also be suggested that performance expected from WP in government was not progress in Islamisation, for example abolition of interest or confrontation with the West, but in terms of its concrete deliveries through a better administration.

In this context, if, as Aydin Menderes suggested, this government was a case testing the ability of the WP to run the state (*devleti idare etmek*) rather than

¹⁰ For the role played by the military in forming the MP-TPP coalition see Yavuz Donat, "28 Subat Dosyasi," *Milliyet*, 27.2.1998.

¹¹ Davut Dursun, "Sayin Basbakan N. Erbakan," *Yeni Safak*, 6.7.1996, and Ali Bulac, "Erbakan Basbakan, RP Iktidar" *Yeni Safak*, 10.7.1996.

¹² The Islamist-fascist daily Akit's headline, which stretched over eight columns was *Bir Tabu Yikildi*. See *Akit*, 9.7.1996.

¹³ See editorials of *Hak Soz*, 63 (Haziran, 1996) and 57 (Aralik, 1996).

¹⁴ See for example Atalay Sahinoglu's statement that the failures of center-right parties is making them accept the WP government tacitly (*ister istemez*), *Yeni Yuzyil*, 16.6.1996. See also Bayram Meral's statement that a chance should be given to the stance of National Outlook for a year. *Yeni Yuzyil*, 3.1.1996.

its loyalty to the secular system,¹⁵ then it can be suggested that the WP failed in this test since Erbakan, as the prime minister, resigned on June 18, 1997 as a result of what is often called a “soft coup.” The coalition could not survive the tension initiated by the military and increased by the civil societal organizations as well as within the ranks of the WP itself. The WP lacked a consensual approach in government and took some “politically incorrect” actions such as portrayal of constructing a mosque in Taksim square as reconquest of Istanbul. It totally ignored the increasing tension by considering it as an artificial agenda, and turned a blind eye to the main source of the tension, the military, by claiming that the tension was generated by the mass media in alliance with Zionism. Due to its lack of consensual approach, it was at loggers head not only with the military but also with a large section of society, even with its own constituency, as well. On the other hand, the WP retreated by remaining silent on certain issues, such as the increasing ties with Israel, that it opposed harshly during its opposition years. During its tenure in office, the military declared “reactionary” movements, associated with the WP, as internal enemies of the secular republic. As a result, a closure case was filed against the WP by the Chief Prosecutor of the High Courts of Appeal on the basis of its anti-secular activities, and the party was closed by the Constitutional Court on January 16, 1998. With the verdict closing the party, the charismatic leader of the National Outlook Movement and the Welfare Party, Necmettin Erbakan,

¹⁵ *Milliyet*, 19.8.1997.

along with some other top figures, was banned from political activity for five years. This was on the basis of the Article 69 of the constitution which stipulated that “the members, including the founders, of a party, whose speeches and actions have led to the closure of the party, cannot be a founder, member, administrator or inspector of another party for five years... .”

It must be noted here that, the last party of the NOM, the Virtue Party (f. December, 17, 1997), is not included in this study. Although the Virtue Party (VP) represents a continuity with the Welfare Party in terms of its leading cadres except the charismatic leader of the movement, Necmettin Erbakan, it is dubious whether the VP will follow the stance of its predecessor. This follows the decision of the Constitutional Court which not only closed the party but stated the legal limits of Islamist politics by interpreting secularism in a rigid way. The Court, for example, considered opposition to the ban on wearing headscarf at the Universities as an divisive anti-secular activity. Bearing in mind that what the Constitution stipulates -a permanently closed party cannot be founded under another name- the VP's possible opposition to ban on headscarf will not only be an anti-secular activity but it will also represent a continuity with the WP, both of which can be regarded as reasons for the closure of the VP. Also, in response to the WP's demand that secularism should be interpreted in Turkey as it is interpreted in the West, the Court took a culturally relativist stance and stated that secularism in Turkey cannot be defined as simply separation of the affairs of the state from

the affairs of religion. The legal grounds for the verdict stated that due to differences between Islam and Christianity, we cannot expect the principle of secularism to be exercised in a similar way.¹⁶

There are other reasons why judging the future profile of the VP is difficult.

The failure of the Welfare Party in government seems to have triggered a process of self-criticism and self-evaluation that might possibly lead to a change in the overall political conduct and “ideology” of the movement.¹⁷

While there are signs of change, there are also indications of the maintenance of the original stance. Erbakan, whose influence over the party is inevitable, himself, stated that the ideals would not change and the mission of the WP will continue.¹⁸ But, Erbakan’s absence could also provide an opportunity for changes in the understanding of internal democracy as well. It seems that the Virtue Party has chosen for a low-profile position and as such it is difficult to locate where the party stands. The Party can make

¹⁶ The Courts verdict with reasoning was published in *Resmi Gazete* on 22.2.1998.

¹⁷ See for example, Abdullah Gul, “confessing” that they lacked dialog and consensus-seeking when in government, for they thought it is the “national will” that governs 30.10.1998 *Zaman*. See also interviews with Bulent Arinc in *Radikal*, 25.5.1998, *Milliyet*, 22.2.1998, and *ArtiHaber*, No. 27, 20-26. 6.1998, interview with Aydin Menderes, *Milliyet*, 19.8.1997, and interview with Bahri Zengin, *Milli Gazete*, 24.8.1997.

¹⁸ *Milli Gazete*, 16.2.1998, *Milliyet*, 17.1.1998. The very name of the party is indicative of the continuity of the basic stance of the NOM, which sees virtue, linked to piety, as an indispensable ingredient of a stable social order and political liberty. See for example, Saribay, *Turkiye’de Modernlesme*,

moves to become a center-party if it employs a new political approach that appeals to all sections of the society and injects hope to society on the basis of a more realistic analysis of the current deadlock in Turkish politics, as opposed to the "reform populism"¹⁹ of the WP. It must be borne in mind that complying with the legal limits of politics is not sufficient for becoming a center party. The VP can be expected to emphasize "democracy, freedom and human rights"²⁰ instead of harping on "imitating mentality" in Turkish politics. But neither a mere emphasis on these issues, nor the claim to follow the line of Democrat Party and Turgut Ozal may suffice for "the occupation of center." Indeed, the same themes was expressed by Erbakan in the speech he made in the Fifth General Congress of the Welfare Party. To do so, the VP is expected to show, for example, that it means something more than rule of "national will" by democracy.²¹

Parti ve Din Politikasi, 111 for an emphasis on virtuous people as a precondition of "meaningful" democracy.

¹⁹ I borrow this term from Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, see interview by Nese Duzel, *Yeni Yuzyil*, 26.1.1998.

²⁰ Erbakan, "Turkiye'nin temel meselesi demokrasi, insan haklari ve ozgurluktur." 15.10.1997, *Milli Gazete*. See also interview with Bahri Zengin in *Milli Gazete*, 24.8.1997 where he states that previously they thought that economic problems were prior and that they could be solved by a skillful administration (*iyi yonetim*). Now, in the light of the experience they had in government, the primary issue in Turkey is realization of democracy and human rights.

²¹ At this stage if a comment is to be made about the programme of the VP, it could be suggested that it is a programme in which the National Outlook is diluted and hidden. Need for a totally new order, glorious history, democracy as the rule of national will, moral/religious education, virtuous people are still the themes expressed.

3. WHAT IS THE NATIONAL OUTLOOK?

3.1. Civilizational Shift as the disease and the cure

As noted in the first chapter, Islamism is an essentially this-worldly and alternative modernization movement. However, the fact that it is this worldly does not make it less religious/Islamic. This is because, Islamists, by retrieving the principle of *tevhid*, argue that Islam covers all aspects of life. Therefore, as long as one is aware of the Islamic principles that regulate all spheres of our lives, this-worldliness does not imply going profane or “secularization.” What counts is consciousness of being a Muslim. Islamism, in reality, calls for this consciousness in being this-worldly. It attempts to legitimize their involvement in politics in the name of rescuing society and for enabling Muslims to practice their religion. It attempts to give a meaning, for example, to capitalist rationality by seeking capitalist development for the sake of revitalization of Islamic civilization. It instrumentalizes Islam for the purposes of authentic development. And to this end, it refers to history to validate the superiority of Islam.

History, according to the NOM, is about the rise and decline of two kinds of civilizations; religious and secular, or more accurately, those which assert the superiority of the “might” and those which assert the superiority of the “*hak*,” which could mean all rights-possessed, God, and as will be seen

below, "the absolute truth." All of the civilizations based on superiority of *hak* are founded by Prophets, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed. All of them are Just Orders, because only those civilizations based on the superiority of the *hak* are the ones which respect the rights of human beings.²² Contemporary Western civilization, according to the NOM, has no religious morality but secular principles at its foundation. Since it is a man-made (*beseeri*) system, like all such systems, it too is founded upon blood, tears and might.²³ It cannot be "just" and respectful of human rights because its basic principle is "might is right."²⁴ Western civilization, therefore, is a "dark Order of Oppression."

According to the National Outlook, "the glorious" Ottoman Empire was a Just Order, superior to and stronger than the West because it was Islamic, or more accurately it was not secular.²⁵ Ottoman Empire declined due to morally degenerating effects of Westernization that started off with the *Tanzimat* reforms. Westernization since *Tanzimat* resulted in moral and material backwardness that was enough to destroy the Great Empire. By removing the tax-liability of the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire, *Tanzimat* made it impossible for the Ottoman state to finance its defense

²² Necmettin Erbakan, *Adil Ekonomik Duzen*, (Ankara: np, 1991), 72-74.

²³ Ahmet Tekdal, *Milli Gazete* 14.12.1994.

²⁴ Veyis Ersoz, "Koku Zulme Dayali Sistemler," *Milli Gazete*, 20.10.1994.

expenses. Thereby, the state had to borrow, which in effect meant that the loss of economic and political independence, i.e. colonization. Hence, Westernization also meant the colonization of the Muslim lands.²⁶ The pious Muslim people, or the National Outlook spirit, reacted to the colonization/Westernization of Muslim lands by waging the Independence War, and founded the Turkish Republic as a fully independent state.²⁷

²⁵ See for example, Ferhat Koc, "Laiklik Uzerine" 4.8.1994, Abdullah Altay, "Grosman: Turkiye Laik Kalacak" 25.9.1994 both in *Milli Gazete*

²⁶ *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 81, 204-205. Suleyman Arif Emre, "Ahlak Reformundan Sozeden Yok" *Milli Gazete*, 4.4.1997, Ismet Ozel, "Carpiklik Tanzimatla Basladi," *Milli Gazete*, 3.11.1994, Ibrahim Kara, "Batililasma Seruveninin Acikli Serencami," *Milli Gazete*, 9.8.1997, Ismail Hasbal, "Yikim Politikalari ve RP Misyonu," *Milli Gazete*, 20.8.1997. See also Saribay, *Turkiye'de Modernlesme, Parti ve Din Politikasi*, 100 for the same theme in the foundation of the NOP.

²⁷ Nazir Ozsoz, "Bu Cumhuriyeti Kim Kurdu," *Milli Gazete*, 30.10.1994, Sadik Albayrak, "Sakarya Zaferi ve Seriat," *Milli Gazete*, 31.5.1995 That the Republic has been founded by the National Outlookist people is a claim made by Necmettin Erbakan as well. Such a speech was made by him, for example, in the Fifth General Congress of the Welfare Party, Ankara, 13.10.1996. Needless to say, in this case, the founder of the secular Republic, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, unconvincingly turns out to be a National Outlookist as well. At the same time the National Outlook turns out to be true Ataturkist, though the principles of Ataturkism are quite different than the ones taught to the Turkish nation. In this speech Erbakan counted the principles of Ataturk as "rationalism," "independence," "self-reliant development," "industrialization," "assertive foreign policy" and "going beyond the contemporary civilizations." See also Erbakan's declaration for the death anniversary of Ataturk in 10.11.1996 *Milli Gazete* and 12.11.1994 *Aksam*. In this way Westernization project and rigid secularism policies is not associated with Ataturk. See for example Ali Gunvar, "Mustafa Kemal Dinin Kurallarına Uygun Davranmaya Belki Pek Dikkat Etmezdi Ama...", *Milli Gazete*, 23.6.1998 for a claim that Ataturk did not consider "secularism" as a *sine qua non* of the Republic. For a claim that those who ruled after Ataturk did not really understand what Ataturk meant by "contemporary civilization" and did exactly the opposite of the things that Ataturk had done, see Erbakan in *Aksam*, 14.7.1995 and the editorial "Ataturk'un Hedefi Milli Idi," *Milli Gazete*, 12.6.1997. Once Ataturk is

Although founded by pious Muslim people, who are represented by the NOM today, the Republic has actually been an extension of colonialism and an "Order of Oppression."²⁸

Therefore, it has to be replaced with the Just Order of the NOM, which is informed by divine commandments. It has been an "order of oppression" because, the ruling elite, which captured/seized the state ever since the inception of the republic, has plunged into a Westernization project. For this reason, they have an "imitating mentality" (*taklitci zihniyet*), which prevents the development of creativity and motivation needed for the re-construction of "Great Turkey Once Again."²⁹ Westernizing elite/state actually opened a battle against the culture, history and religion of the Muslim people. Westernizing elite/state morally degenerated Turkish society, and made Turkey a satellite country that lacks independence, identity and self-

associated with the National Outlook, there are only fascists and communists abusing the legacy of Ataturk, see for example, 5.1.1995, 8.1.1995 and 15.11.1996 all *Milli Gazete*. Whatever the guilt of the Republic, the blame is put on post-Ataturk period and it is claimed that the things Ataturk has done is in concert with the National Outlook. In addition to Erbakan's speech see, for example, Burhan Bozgeyik, "Kemalizmi Kim Icat Etti," *Milli Gazete*, 26.4 1995 for a claim that the Republic that Ataturk founded was a religious/Islamic republic and that "Kemalism" was invented as a religion by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoglu!. Or, it is claimed that it was Moiz Kohen, a Jewish, who turned Kemalism into an ideology/doctrine. Mehmet Sevket Eygi, *Milli Gazete*, 5.8.1994.

²⁸ See for example, Bahri Zengin, "Kurtulus Savaslari Yeniden Yazilmali," *Aksam*, 5.11.1994.

²⁹ Necmettin Erbakan, *Turkiyenin Meseleleri ve Cozumleri* (Ankara: np. 1991), 60.

confidence.³⁰ Estranged from “the people” this ruling elite/state lacked a genuine concern for the well being of people, wasted money by preferring to invest in Opera and Bale rather than to building a dam, and oppressed “the people” both materially and physically so as to maintain their own ruling position.³¹ It is, therefore, the wrong policies of this imitating mentality which is the fundamental cause of Turkey’s (all of the) current problems.³² It was this mentality that left Turkey, one of the richest countries in the world, behind such countries as Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Germany.³³ The poor conditions of hospitals, unemployment, inflation and even lack of a Turkish novelist with a Nobel prize is linked to this imitating mentality and emphasized so as to delegitimize the current “order of oppression.” It must be noticed that what is called as the “order of oppression” is not actually an “order” but certain people who form a political class or a power cartel. In other words, the system is actually equated with an invented political class.

Depicted as a “handful of happy minority” (*bir avuc mutlu azinlik*), all political actors except the cadres of the NOM forms a political class, and the political competition between them is fake.³⁴ They are in reality colluding

³⁰ *ibid.*, 13, 31.

³¹ Zeki Ceyhan, “71. Yil Dondumu” *Milli Gazete*, 30.10.1994.

³² Erbakan, *Turkiyenin Meseleleri ve Cozumleri*, 7, 11-15. “Turkiye’nin meselelerinin asil sebebi taklitci zihniyetlerin yanlis politikalaridir.”

³³ *Refah Partisi Secim Beyannamesi: 24 Aralik 1995.*

against the NOM and thereby against the people. This political class is portrayed as corrupt, unaccountable, unresponsive, incompetent and selfish. They are the “discotheque boys” who want Turkey to sever its links with Islam like those who wanted Turkey to be ruled by an American mandatory during the War of Independence.³⁵ In reality, there are only two alternatives: the National Outlook and the imitating others.³⁶ Even other Islamic groups, as will be seen below, at times play right into hands of this political class just by criticizing the NOM. In alliance with imperialist Christian West and Zionism, all other parties (and the mass media), as sub-constructors of Western imperialism,³⁷ are actually *preventing the people from realizing what their own true idea is*, the National Outlook.³⁸ Those who do not want WP to govern are either the rentier class or the ones who oppress people in the name of secularism.³⁹ Because the ideas that spring from Western civilization does not bring peace to Turkey,⁴⁰ and because all other parties or

³⁴ See *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 153, 231.

³⁵ Erbakan, *Turkiye*, 21.12.1995.

³⁶ Erbakan, *Turkiyenin Meseleleri ve Cozumleri*, 6. It must be noted that before the collapse of communist block, there were three main political views, leftist, liberal, and national (outlook). Both leftist and liberal views, represented by Republican Peoples Party and, the then, Justice Party respectively, were illegitimate for they belonged to Western club. See *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 120, and Saribay, *Turkiye'de Modernlesme, Parti ve Din Politikasi*, 110.

³⁷ Abbas Pirimoglu, *Milli Gazete*, 14.6.1995.

³⁸ *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 121.

³⁹ Abdullah Gul, *Milliyet*, 28.2.1996.

political views belong to Western club, they are hindering the development of Turkey, which is possible only under the rule of the NOM. They lack motivation and mission to serve people, instead they are in the service of international finance, IMF. As such, they are not adversaries whose right has to be respected and protected, rather they -and their supporters- are (internal !) enemies to be destroyed.

3.2. Culturalism as Kemalism

Such a narration of history, and its concomitant diagnosis of the causes of the current problems points to a number of things. First, the issues expressed as problems are mostly the functional issues of underdevelopment, unemployment and so on. It is in this sense that the Islamist NOM is not a revolt against modernization, but a reaction to uneven modernization which if corrected will deliver more material benefits as well as identity.⁴¹ In the meantime, also the Islamic civilization will be revitalized by re-constructing "Great Turkey Once Again" (*Yeniden Buyuk Turkiye*) which will lead the Islamic world that was fragmented into nation-states after the dismantling of

⁴⁰ Oguzhan Asilturk, *Yeni Yuzyil*, 12.11.1997.

⁴¹ See for example, *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 103, where Erbakan asserts that under WP government incomes/earnings will increase by five to ten times. See also his speech to the members of Istanbul Chambers of Commerce. *Yeni Yuzyil*, 13.10.1995.

the Ottoman Empire.⁴² As a corollary of this civilizational perspective, the NOM is not eager to develop relations with the European Community (EC). Indeed, the NOM regards Turkey's membership to EC as invasion of Turkey by Zionist/colonialist forces without resorting to war.⁴³

Second, these problems are seen as a symptom of an underlying fundamental problem, which is the alienation of state/ruling elite from the society as a result of their imitating mentality. The solution, therefore, is the elimination of the imitating mentality and instead cultural unification of state and society (*devlet millet kaynasmasi*) which will be possible under the rule of the cadres of the National Outlook. What is really diagnosed as the cause of the problems is the presence of a culturally alienated state/elite which promoted a certain life style and barred Islamic identity from the public sphere. As such, the NOM could be considered within the framework of center-periphery cleavage in which the main cultural is cultural. Indeed, the NOM claims to represent the culturally peripheralized *vis a vis* the culturally alienated state/elite. However, it could be suggested that center-periphery framework is not a very useful framework for analyzing the NOM. First of all, as suggested in chapter two there is no such thing as a culturally homogenous center or culturally homogenous periphery. Second, by sharing this misleading assumption, the NOM claims to represent

⁴² Ahmet Kucukaga, *Milli Gazete*, 13.9.1995.

⁴³ *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 100-101.

periphery, “the people” *vis a vis* the state. To falsify this claim we have to recognize/introduce the differentiated nature of the society. Only then, it could become clear that there is no such thing as a political class alienated from people but representing a segment of society. And, since the society is differentiated neither the NOM nor any other political stance could be the single representative of the whole society. Indeed, as will be seen below, the NOM is not the sole political representative of the Islamic social movement in Turkey. In this way, one could avoid the risk of facing the either Kemalism or Islamism dichotomy.

What the identification of imitating mentality as the fundamental problem shows is that the stance of the NOM is a culturalist stance, for it links the question of development to presence of appropriate culture. Indeed, cultural unification of the state and society is necessary because it is believed that moral progress is the precondition of material progress.⁴⁴ Japan, according to Erbakan, progressed because it has remained loyal to its culture/religion.⁴⁵ The Westernizing state/elite is not in harmony with the culture/religion of society, and therefore, unable to achieve moral regeneration essential for material progress. Thus, a cultural-turn to Islam, i.e. going native, is the

⁴⁴ *Maddi kalkınmanın temeli manevi kalkınmadır.* This is a motto of the NOM mentioned in almost every publication of the parties of the movement. See for example, *Türkiyenin Meseleleri ve Çözümleri*, and *Refah Partisi Seçim Beyannamesi: 24 Aralık 1995*. See also Sarıbay, *Türkiye’de Modernleşme, Parti ve Din Politikası*, 113, 122-129, for the same themes of NOP/NSP.

solution to all of the problems Turkey face. As an alternative modernization project, the NOM, then, challenges the equation established between civilized and Westernized by asserting not only the possibility of an Islamic civilization,⁴⁶ but also the impossibility of a non-Islamic just civilization for Muslim Turks.

At this stage, one of the resemblances between Islamism and Kemalism becomes clear: Islamism resembles Kemalism in the emphasis it has put on the primacy of (appropriate) culture in development. Both Kemalism and Islamism of the NOM consider appropriate culture as the precondition of development. The fact that the appropriate culture for Kemalism was Western culture and for Islamism it is the indigenous Islamic culture does not exonerate this parallelism between them. Both rejection and assertion of Islam as the appropriate culture operates within the same paradigm. What this parallelism shows is that, in its opposition to Kemalist Westernization, Islamism reproduces the same logic/paradigm. It is in this sense that Islamism is the mirror image of Kemalism.

Furthermore, to the extent that the question of development was seen as a function of appropriate culture by Weberism, the convergence between

⁴⁵ *Milliyet*, 22.5.1995.

⁴⁶ Nilufer Gole, "Authoritarian Secularism and Islamist Politics: The Case of Turkey", in *Civil Society in Middle East*, Richard A. Norton, ed., (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 24. This equation is challenged, for example, by Recep

Kemalism and Islamism is actually a convergence on Weberism. But most importantly, it would be misleading to jump into conclusion that Islamism involves a *return* to our own indigenous culture as opposed to Kemalism which tried to *change* the culture. As will be seen below, Islamism too involves a social engineering project to mould society in accordance with the one it imagines. Islamist social engineering, is not really a publicized political action but a by-product of the assumption that the cadres of the NOM are the true representatives of the society which also implies that the replacement of the current political class with the cadres of the NOM is sufficient for cultural unification. As such the system, order of oppression, is equated with the political elite that occupies the state. Cultural unification turns out to be a social engineering project only when we look at the prevailing society. Overall, one could suggest that neither the diagnosis nor the solution of the NOM is a political one but a cultural/moral one which offers only rule by best/virtuous men as the solution. Virtue, in turn, is defined in terms of religiosity.

Tayyip Erdogan in an interview on Kanal 7 television channel on 13.10.1996. See also Mustafa Ozel, *Istikbal Koklerdedir* (Ankara: Iz Yayincilik, 1996).

3.3. Personalization: “we are the solution”

The first and foremost task, indeed *raison d'être* of the NOM is then to “cure the sickness of imitating West” through a cultural unification of state and society so as to solve all of the pressing social, economic and political issues. This “cure” is often called as the establishment of the Just Order. However, not only what the Just Order entails but also how the Just Order will be established is never explained. According to Erbakan, it takes a conference to explain how the transition will be achieved.⁴⁷ Yet, at one level, the cure involves the replacement of the political class, or the ruling “happy minority” with the cadres of the NOM, who are the true representatives of “the people.”

Against this ruling “happy minority,” the cadres of NOM portray themselves as unselfish and as having a genuine concern for the well-being of people.⁴⁸ They seek power not just for their self-interests but for morally superior purposes and for realizing a mission, rescuing Turkey. Theirs is not *politika* (politicking) which means doing all evil things for the sake of gaining political power, but *siyaset* (politics) which means administrating/running the state properly.⁴⁹ The cadres of the NOM are

⁴⁷ *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 116, and *Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, *passim*.

⁴⁸ Selami Guder, “Tarihte 26 Yil Once” *Milli Gazete* 16.10.1995.

beyond left and right, they represent the center, the true history, culture, spiritual and moral values of the society⁵⁰ that once brought salvation and felicity to humanity.⁵¹ They are, therefore, the vanguards of change as illustrated by one of the mottoes of the party: A New World (*Yeni Bir Dünya*). The cadres of NOM are pious, and since only those who surrender themselves to Allah could be a just ruler, they qualify for running the state in a just manner.⁵² Because they fear the judgment of Allah, what they offer to public is solely an "honest" (*durust*) government.⁵³

Hence, if National Outlook is the suggested solution to the pressing issues, this "solution" does not entail a coherent and comprehensive policy programme, not even a programme of Islamisation but a group of people that should be ruling. In the final analysis, what the NOM suggest as the solution, and for cultural unification, is only its pious cadres. In this respect the motto of the NOM is not "Islam is the solution" but "we are the solution." The NOM could stay away from any policy making because the

⁴⁹ Veyis Ersoz, "Islam ve Siyaset" *Milli Gazete*, 22.5.1995.

⁵⁰ Oguzhan Asilturk "RP olarak biz milleti, milletin tarihini, kulturunu, ahlaki ve manevi degerlerini temsil ettigimiz icin biz merkeziz. Çünkü, millet asildir. Bizim sagimizda ve solumuzda partiler olabilir." *Hurriyet*, 7.11.1997. For a similar statement by Erbakan see *Hurriyet*, 10.6.1996.

⁵¹ Hasan Aksay, "Milli Gorus: Aydinlik Bir Devrin Kapisinda" *Milli Gazete*, 16.10.1995.

⁵² Abdullah Sanlidag, "RP'nin Yukselisini Hazmedemeyenler" *Milli Gazete*, 17.10.1995.

⁵³ Recep Tayyip Erdogan, *Meydan*, 27.12.1993.

problems are created by incompetent rulers. Therefore, there is actually no need for policy making but only for just and virtuous administrators.

Obviously, as such the alternative of the NOM is not a political but a “personalistic” alternative in the sense that it “personalizes” political problems and solutions. As noted above, the system, “order of oppression,” is equated with the people inhabiting it and the target, in being “anti-systemic,” is them. With this personalistic aspect, the NOM represents a continuum with the classical republicanism which, emphasized moral/good rule by virtuous rulers. It could also be suggested that the emphasis of the NOM on virtuous rulers is in line with Islamic political theory which emphasized the importance of competent rulers. The most recent example of this line of thinking is Mawdudi’s -an Islamist thinker who founded the Jamaat-i Islami Movement in Pakistan- diagnosis that links problems to the “non-ideal” rulers. But as noted in chapter two, the emphasis on virtuous rulers in Islamic theory is less Islamic than Platonic/republican, for which the virtue is the essence of republic and the rule by virtuous men is the prime principle. Therefore, personalism of the NOM could better be traced back to republican tradition than to Islam. Since Kemalism has not been informed from Islamic political theory, it is through this republican tradition one could decipher the convergences between Kemalism and Islamism. As noted in the previous chapter, Kemalism as a variety of republicanism, has been elitist and emphasized rule by virtuous people for the effective use of power to achieve the already-given ends. In this respect, neither Kemalism

nor Islamism of the NOM problematizes the idea of virtuous rulers and both agrees on the merits of rule by “best man.” Surely, what virtue entails and who is the best man is different in each alternative.

In this context, if modern politics is about going beyond the Platonic principle of “rule by best men” and if the primary concern of modern politics is ideas, ideologies and policies, then we could suggest that politics of the NOM is pre-modern. Also, if democracy is about participation, plurality of views, public debate and most importantly non-charismatic leadership, then we could also suggest that “personalism” of the NOM is not democracy-friendly either. But, suggesting a personalistic alternative is not an exclusively pre-modern pre-modern practice either. In this personalistic aspect there is also a convergence with a new type of party that has emerged in Western Europe in the last decade. This new type of party is called New Populist Parties⁵⁴, Anti-Party Parties⁵⁵ or Anti-Political-Establishment Parties.⁵⁶ Like the NOM, these parties too lack an ideological package, claim to be beyond left and right, define themselves as the mainstream, equate the system with the people inhabiting it, and appear to be the agents of change. This recent rise of personalism in politics could best be understood if we

⁵⁴ Paul Taggart, “New Populist Parties in Western Europe” *West European Politics*, 18, 1 (1995): 34-51.

⁵⁵ Cas Mude, “The Paradox of the Anti-Party Party: Insights from Extreme Right” *Party Politics*, 2, 2 (1996): 265-276.

recognize the shift of the ground of politics from ideas/ideologies to “identities” of the politicians. When what is to be done is no longer a matter of political deliberation, but a given of politics, political competition tends to be over “who” will administer best.

When viewed from this personalistic perspective, one cannot know in advance, how the cadres of the movement will behave in government because there is neither an Islamisation programme nor an “ideology” based political programme that would be followed in government. Thus far, the only religious aspect of the party is its pious cadres and the only alternative of the party is virtuous rulers which is associated with piousness. This allows a large sphere of flexibility and pragmatism for the cadres of the NOM. Yet, the NOM, quite correctly, is associated with an Islamisation project. Below, an attempt will be made to explain why pragmatism does not hinder the possibilities of Islamisation programme. In the meantime it will become clear that an Islamisation programme is unconditionally associated with the cadres of the NOM. In other words, how the NOM remains a movement for Islamisation without making the substance of its ideology clear or how could the cadres of the movement be excessively pragmatic without losing the “ideological” disposition will be explained. In all these, resemblances with Kemalism will become apparent.

⁵⁶ Andreas Schelder, “Anti-Political-Establishment Parties” *Party Politics*, 2, 3 (1996): 291-312.

3.4. Islamist Concept of “the political” as Kemalism

Kemalism was studied in previous chapter primarily in terms of its vision of state-society relations, and in terms of its concept of the political, which are believed to be determined by the underlying mode of social integration, republicanism. It was noted that Kemalism as a republicanist mode of integration assumed that society is integrated around the Kemalist goals of Westernization as its common good. It was also noted this common good was substantive in nature because it implied promotion of a certain life style through a social engineering project. Moreover, it was suggested that the assumption of society as integrated around Kemalist goals of Westernization resulted in the necessity of the protection of Kemalism as the fundamental idea of modern Turks. Westernization was, as noted in the previous chapter, moralized and elevated to a level above and beyond politics and the society was considered to be an object of government with no participatory role in policy-making and deliberation of its common good. The common good of the society, under Kemalism was, therefore, not a question of politics but an objective phenomenon for both society and individuals.

As for Islamism of the NOM, this study thus far explained the opposition between “the political class” and the cadres of NOM, but not the type of relationship between Islamism and society, where we could observe the Kemalist, and therefore republicanist, aspects of the NOM. It was noted above the NOM is a pragmatic political movement seeking power by

personalizing what are actually political problems. Therefore, a political programme by which the consistency of the movement could be checked is lacking. Yet we could decipher the hints of the NOM's vision of state-society relationship by looking at the implications of the way the NOM differentiates itself from other political visions. These hints became the symptoms of an underlying logic in the last government experience of the WP. WP's above mentioned non-consensual attitude in government should be borne in mind.

The NOM could be considered as republicanist in its aim to bring an order of justice and construct a society united around a common good. But, the best starting point in showing the "Kemalism" of the NOM is the claim that the National Outlook is the *true collective idea of the people* and that the whole nation should subscribe to it.⁵⁷ It is in this respect that Islamism, like Kemalism, falls into the republican trap, mentioned in the previous chapter. It is this claim that gives way to a counter-social-engineering project in the name of democratic self-assertion and to a rigid structuration of the legitimate sphere of politics as in Kemalism. This claim is based on an imaginative reading of society, which in reality is a deliberate misleading based on the conclusion drawn from the fact that there is a cleavage between

⁵⁷ "Biz ikibin yilina kadar iktidarda olursak bas meselemiz taklitcilik hastaligini tedavi etmek, Bati taklitciligi zihniyeti yerine milletimize *kendi "Milli Gorus"*unu temel gorus olarak kazandirmaktir." "Milletce kurtulusumuz ... *butun milletimizin* Milli Gorus ve Adil Duzen bayragi

“the political class,” the NOM and “the people.” The conclusion drawn is that the NOM is the precise representative of the whole society *vis a vis* the political class just because both the NOM and the people oppose to the political class. By lumping all political views together and by associating them with “the system,” the NOM appears to be anti-systemic and claims to correct the errors of the system for the benefit of people. But whether the society is really as homogenous/religious as the NOM reads is an important question that has been not been answered by the NOM. The fact that there is a cleavage between the Westernizing state and society, and the indigenous NOM and the Westernizing state does not necessarily mean that the NOM is the exact representative of the whole society.

As such, there is no religious dimension in the claim of the NOM that it is the true representative of the people. But, as it is implied above, when describing the civilizational framework of the NOM, the idea that the National Outlook is the true idea of the people is not without a religious foundation. It must be remembered that only the civilizations based *hak* are just civilizations.

That the NOM is the true idea of “the people” could be seen in the way Erbakan differentiates the National Outlook from other political views/ideologies. As opposed to all other political views, the National

altında toplanmasıdır.” Necmettin Erbakan, *Turkiyenin Meseleleri ve Cozumleri* (Ankara, np. 1991) 15, 7, emphasis added.

Outlook differs from other political views in being *hak*, while all other political views are *batil*. In referring to the National Outlook one could have used *dogru* (right) instead of *hak*, but, Erbakan claimed that, it would not be the same thing, because rightness/correctness of something when it is *dogru* is temporal and relative whereas *hak* implies something true/right under all circumstances and conditions, which actually is absolute right. *Batil* is the exact opposite of *hak*, because something *batil*, according to Erbakan, is not just wrong but an absolute wrong. Erbakan maintained that, “what we say is correct/right under all conditions. What these (other parties) have done and their consequences are obvious, so is their absolute falseness.”⁵⁸ Hence, the National Outlook is absolutely the right “ideology” of people and as variations of *batil*, other “imitating” parties belong to the Western club and deserve to be destroyed. As such the National Outlook indicates the basic principles that have to be followed everytime and that are not subject to revision. The National Outlook has a mathematical (unerring) accuracy and certainty.

As such, like the Kemalist elite, the elite of the NOM, too, assumes that the question of common good of the society is not a matter of political deliberation. It is an objective phenomenon known by the cadres of the NOM and will be taught to people. Hence, the National Outlook is the

⁵⁸ In a television interview with Kanal 6 on 7.1.1996. See also *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 124, 180. See also Erbakan, *Adil Ekonomik Duzen*, 14-16.

collective idea of the whole society and the NOM is in complete harmony with society. Other political views are only the obstacles to the people's realization of their own true idea. As such, the supporters of other parties are at best "falsely conscious" people, waiting to be enlightened with their own true idea, the National Outlook. Since they are falsely conscious, their different political choices (other than that of the NOM) do not deserve any respect. But, if they insist on not supporting the National Outlook, they could also be the (internal) enemies to be destroyed. In both case, there is no need for the NOM to seek a consensus with other groups when ruling.

Politics, in this context, is not about accommodation of diverse interests prevailing in society. Indeed, like Kemalism, the NOM denies that there are conflicts of interests/identities in society. Just Order, it is claimed, is not an order of conflict but of harmony. The underlying republican assumption is society is united around the National Outlook as its common good. Indeed the political aim is to homogenize people along the lines of the National Outlook so as to unite them. Since the republican conception of politics is about the discovery of the collective idea/common good of the society and since Kemalism as a variety of republicanism conceived politics as a process of *discovering the collective idea* of the whole society and considered politics as a divisive activity, for it would involve questionings of the *already discovered* collective idea, then it could be suggested that the NOM is not very different from Kemalism in its approach to politics. This is because, for the NOM, too, the collective idea of society is already

discovered. Therefore, politics is not a *process of discovering* it, but perhaps a *process of realizing* and reproducing it smoothly. Politics is about drawing/gaining the support of people to the cause of the NOM and to the National Outlook as the fundamental idea of people by influencing/impressing people.⁵⁹ Therefore, the NOM aims first to teach people what is true and right in accordance with the divine commandments, and then it aims to implement/realize the truth by gaining the support of people, i.e. by making people aspiring to these goals.⁶⁰ The definition of politics, therefore, is centred around consciousness-raising, persuasion and mobilization of people for the purposes of the realization of a pre-defined conception of good. Participation is only participation to this common good, but not in its deliberation. As such, the legitimate sphere of politics “granted” by the NOM is as much restricted as the legitimate sphere of politics under Kemalism. This in effect is reduction of politics to proper administration. But, reduction of politics is not the same thing with being pre-political or apolitical. The NOM has high expectations of politics: it believes that society could be rescued through politics which is a means of transfiguring life. In order to transfigure life, the NOM does not need a new institutional set up for there is an already-existing institutional set up designed to promote a certain life style. Gaining the control of it will suffice.

⁵⁹ Rıza Ulucak, *Hürriyet*, 31.10.1997 “siyaset insanlar üzerinde etki yaparak kendi görüşüne çekmektir”

⁶⁰ Ahmet Akgül, “Seviyeli Siyaset” *Milli Gazete*, 25.6.1997.

3.5. Islamism as Counter-Kemalism: Islamist Jacobinism

If one of the implications of the National Outlook as the true idea of people is the restriction of state by removing the question of common good from the political arena, another one is the ideological-educational state protecting and promoting the already-given common good, which in this case is the National Outlook. This is because, instead of taking the current society as a given and conducting politics in accordance, the NOM takes its ideology, the National Outlook, as the absolute truth and aims to mould society so as to return to its own roots. The NOM sees itself as a corrective force to recover the lost unity, identity and community. The NOM is a vanguard movement for making people conscious (Muslims). As a corollary, it conceives the current differentiated society based on false consciousness. Like the Kemalist elite, the cadres of the NOM, too, assumes that ordinary people do not know what is good for them.

By not taking the society as a given, not unlike Kemalism, the NOM opens a battle against the prevailing society in the name of a “cultural unification of the state and society,” which is actually the cultural homogenization of society. The NOM thereby reproduces the Kemalist maxim it constantly criticizes: “for the people despite people.” It is for this reason that Islamism could be considered as counter-Kemalism. Its resemblance to *Kemalism* arises from its cultural design through a social engineering process, it is *counter* because the deemed culture is different. The NOM’s Islamist challenge to

Kemalist Westernization, in effect, turns out to be a challenge to the prevailing (differentiated) society by reproducing the same political logic with that of Kemalism. Hence, in order to correct the errors of Kemalism, the NOM repeats them. It was perhaps for this reason that surveys showed that a significant portion of society was firmly against the WP, even when it was the largest party.⁶¹

Hence, the NOM intends to construct an alternative society through a social engineering process carried out by an ideological state. The society to-be constructed is an alternative pious Muslim society in accordance with the Just Order. Thus, the Constitution which stipulates that "organization of state could not rest on religion" is considered to be too rigid, because it forbids the economically and socially useful Islamic principles.⁶² Rejecting the use of such useful (*iyi ve guzel*) principles of Islam is an act hostile to religion, not even to be considered as an act of atheism.⁶³ Islam, therefore, will be used for the purposes of maintaining the community against such

⁶¹ Riza Guneri cited in Nazli Ilicak, "Fazilet Yeniden Sekilleniyo" *Aksam*, 18.3.1998 "Kamuoyu arastirmalarinda RP en buyuk parti cikiyordu. Ama bu partiyi hic istemeyenlerin sayisi cok yuksekti."

⁶² Suleyman Arif Emre, "Nefrete Dayali Politika" *Milli Gazete*, 20.5.1995, Zeki Unal "Anayasal Hokkabazlik" *Milli Gazete* 21.6.1995, *Refah Partisi'nin Buyuk Zaferi: Prof. Dr. Necmettin Erbakan'in Basin Toplantisi*, 26.12.1995, (np., 1995) 41-42. It must be noted here that this criticism of the Constitution is accompanied by a praising of it as well. In this case, constitution is "perfect" but it is in the wrong hands.

⁶³ See Interview with Erbakan by Nilgun Cerrahoglu, *Milliyet*, 31.12.1996. See also Erbakan in *Milli Gazete*, 13.6.1995.

divisive forces as the Left and Kurdish nationalism, for the establishment of "just (economic) order" to realize material progress and for a fully independent foreign policy.

This does not necessarily mean a return to the *sharia* rule, but the promotion of a model man and society so as to achieve the cultural/moral regeneration on Islamic grounds which is needed for material development. In this respect, Erbakan's claim that state/society will be run according to principles of science (*ilim*), rationality and democracy⁶⁴ actually means that these three principles will be defined in accordance with the ideology of the state. Hence, for example, if the consumption of alcohol will be banned, it will be banned on the basis of scientific-rationality not on the basis of the fact that Islam prohibits its production, trade and consumption. The line of reasoning is as follows: alcohol is harmful for health, therefore its consumption should be banned for the well-being of people.⁶⁵ In addition, an Islamization programme to make people pious can also be rational once the ideology of the state is the National Outlook. In this case, religious education is rational, or more accurately functional for a stable/peaceful society, because it is assumed that pious people do not commit crime for they fear the punishment of Allah.⁶⁶ In a similar way, the solution for Kurdish and/or

⁶⁴ In a press conference held on 5.1.1996.

⁶⁵ See for example, the statement of the WP's mayor of Konya Halil Urun in *Radikal*, 23.4.1997.

Leftist terrorism is educating people Islamically. In this context, if modernity is about various functionalisations of religion, then the NOM surely belongs to the practice of modernity, but whether this makes it a democratic movement is another question, because such an ideological state will also divide the society into those who subscribing to its ideology and those who do not. Hence, it would be possible for the state to prevent those people who lack the fear of Allah from getting rich.⁶⁷ As society is united along a certain axis, at the same time, it will also be divided along the same axis.

In this context, the NOM's demand that secularism should be practiced in Turkey as it is practiced in the West requires a critical examination. In reality, the NOM opposed both the *principle* and the current Turkish *practice* of secularism. Depending on the circumstances, either the inadequacy of the principle of secularism or the hypocrisy of the current practice of secularism is emphasized. In both cases, the image of society as a Muslim community and the primacy of the community over individual rights and liberties is reproduced.

For the NOM, human rights and particularly the freedom of belief and conscience includes freedom to express and diffuse the belief/religion; freedom to teach and learn the belief/religion; freedom to be organized; and freedom to live in accordance with the requirements of one's own belief.

⁶⁶ Oguzhan Asilturk, *Milliyet*, 1.11.1996.

Therefore, a (secular) state that respects human rights should heed the beliefs of its citizens when enacting laws. In this respect, not just the Republican state but all secular-modern states violates the human rights, because the principle of secularism means that the state should rule without taking into account the beliefs of its citizens.⁶⁸ As opposed to this secular system, Just Order is an order that recognizes the human rights of all, is truly pluralist, and respectful of the tradition and customs of “the people.”

In the Just Order of the NOM, there is true freedom of conscience and belief. This is because the Just Order allows everyone to live in accordance with the requirements of his/her own belief through a multi-legal system which allows citizens to choose the legal system they want to live in. Just Order allows different religious groups to be governed by their own religious principles.⁶⁹ However, whether this multi-legal system is really a means to

⁶⁷ Mehmet Sevket Eygi, *Milli Gazete*, 17.7.1998.

⁶⁸ Bahri Zengin, “Turkiye Bir Din Develeti Mi?” *Aksam*, 30.10.1994 for example argues that all current political systems are in reality theocratic systems/states because they impose a system/life style against the will of individual.

⁶⁹ See *Refah Partisi'nin Anayasa Degisikligi Uzlasma Teklifi*, (nd, np), 4. See Oguzhan Asilturk's speech in Hak-Is's Constitution Congress held in National Library Conference Hall on 27-29. 2. 1992. *Hak-Is Anayasa Kurultayi* (Hak-Is Egitim Yayinlari, No. 15, 1992), 200-212. Originally introduced by Islamist intellectual Ali Bulac, the multi-legal system is modelled upon the Medina Document which is a document displaying the agreement made between the Prophet Muhammad and Jews, Christians and the pagans of Medina. The document, apparently, allows each party to live in accordance with their own religion. Bahri Zengin was influential in the integration of the multi-legal system into the discourse of the WP. See his

further freedom of conscience and belief is an important question that has to be answered.

3.6. Secularism, Democracy and the State in “the Just Order”

While it asserts the right of individuals to live in accordance with their own belief, the NOM does not say anything about the *freedom of individual* to have discretion over the requirements of his/her religion. In other words, if secularism is also about the plurality of the interpretations of a religion, multi-legal system does not say much about this. It only recognizes one’s right to choose his/her religion, but once chosen, one has to live in accordance with it. What if one does not fancy practicing Islam, but still wants to be called a Muslim? It only *seems* liberal to argue that those who believe will practice and those who do not will not. Elsewhere, it was also argued that multi-legal system is actually a kind of “end of politics.”⁷⁰ Dividing the society into islands of life-styles without a common public sphere between the islands is not prone to pluralism but multiplicity, in which a common thread that runs through different life-styles is missing,

Ozgurleserek Birlikte Yasamak: Hukuk Topluluklari Birliqi (Istanbul: Birlesik Yayincilik, 1995).

⁷⁰ See my “Cok Hukuklu Toplum: Kamusal Alana Veda Mi? Otantik Bir Kimlik Politikasi Mi? In *Kuresellesme, Sivil Toplum ve Islam*, eds. E. Fuat Keyman and Ali Yasar Saribay (Ankara: Vadi Yayinlari, 1997), 226-253.

because public realm is the realm where moments of commonality between different interests and identities could be discovered.

The multi-legal system has actually been an instrument for the NOM to oppose the current practice of secularism in Turkey, which is called “the old Republican Peoples Party-mentality.” The current practice of secularism is claimed to violate the freedom of belief. According to Erbakan, a definition of secularism that “imprisons” Islam to conscience is precisely how (George) Bush, (Ronald) Reagan and (Itzak) Shamir wants to see Islam.⁷¹ The aim -by imprisoning Islam to the conscience of people, by removing all the useful injunctions of Islam that would bring peace, justice and happiness in social life- is to remake Islam. In reality, it is suggested, Islam covers all aspects of life and should be practiced as such. Therefore, while the Republic recognized that Turkish society is 99 percent Muslim, it did not fulfill the requirements of this recognition. As a corollary, people do not know what being a Muslim entails.⁷² Current practice of secularism, therefore, aims to change and prohibit Islam. In other words, current practice of secularism is actually a practice of hostility to Islam and this is contrary to the principle of secularism.⁷³

⁷¹ *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 146.

⁷² Halk ben Muslumanim diyor ama o nedir bilmiyor.

⁷³ *Refah Partisi'nin Anayasa Degisikligi Uzlasma Teklifi*, 9-10, and *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 215.

Given the fact that secularism in Turkey has never been practiced in a way emphasizing the freedom of *individual* belief and *plurality* of interpretations of religion, the current practice of secularism could be subject to criticism from a pluralist democratic perspective. Indeed, informed by a communitarian logic, the practice of secularism was a means to promote a particular life-style through an official interpretation of religion. Turkish secularism never denied Islam as part of a Turkish identity. It barred the Islamic identity/visibility from the public sphere to keep the religion where it belongs, i.e. private sphere, so that religion would not be tainted by politics. When, in the 1980s, “radical” secularism was left behind and a limited amount of Islam was integrated to the Kemalist ideology of the state, it was to maintain the society as “community of believers” and thereby to relegate the conflicts of opposing interests and ideologies to a secondary place. What counted was unity around religious/moral values that was promoted by the state in a controlled manner.⁷⁴

Whether the NOM criticizes the Republican practice of secularism from a pluralist-democratic perspective is an important question that could not be

⁷⁴ For an excellent discussion of the communitarian logic of Kemalism see Faruk Birttek and Binnaz Toprak, “The Conflictual Agendas of Neo-Liberal Reconstruction and the Rise of Islamic Politics in Turkey: The Hazards of Rewriting Modernity” *Praxis International*, 13, 2 (July, 1993): 192-212. See Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, “Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 28, (1996), 231-251, 245.

answered without referring to the movements concept of democracy. In other words, the NOM's "real secularism" is linked to its concept of democracy. The Kemalist communitarian logic is apparent here as well. Indeed, the movement justifies its non-democratic and non-pluralist conception of secularism through a communitarian logic and through a conception of democracy as participation and rule by virtuous people.

The NOM asserts the primacy of community over individual rights and liberties and asserts that community has right to take the necessary precautions for the protection of moral/religious order of society.⁷⁵ This is because, the NOM sees religious morality, piousness, or more accurately, virtue as indispensable for a stable social order. Indeed, as noted above, the decline of Ottoman Empire was linked to its moral degeneration. For the NOM, virtue, associated with piousness, is a precondition of political liberty, because only virtuous people can use their political liberties to the general

⁷⁵ Oguzhan Asilturk's speech in Hak-Is's Constitution Congress held in National Library Conference Hall on 27-29. 2.1992. *Hak-Is Anayasa Kurultayi* (Hak-Is Egitim Yayinlari, No. 15, 1992), 209. See also Ahmet Kucukaga, "Devlet-Millet Kaynasmasi," *Milli Gazete*, 25.8.1995 which reads "Eger o [devlet] baba iyi babalik yapmassa, cocugunu kendine karsi saygili, durust, hurmetli ve ahlakli yetistirmesse, elbette o cocukta babasina karsi gelir. Demek ki isin espirisinde babanin cocugunu gerektigi sekilde yetistirmesi yatmaktadır.... devletin kendi cocuklarinin egitimini yapabilecegi o kadar buyuk imkanlar vardir ki, mecburi egitim, basin-yayin kuruluslari, her turlu haberlesme araclari devletin ya emrindedir, ya da resmi anlayisi empoze etmek icin sira beklesmektedir."

benefit of the society. Without virtuous people, democracy can lead to the rule by non-deserving people.⁷⁶

Hence, religious education of people is necessary to make people virtuous, and thus useful. Therefore, the NOM will educate the young generations as pious, or more accurately the National Outlookist by replacing the current textbooks that are based on imitating West with the ones written in accordance with true idea of people, the National Outlook.⁷⁷ The Just Moral Order, for example, will function like a factory producing useful-for-society people by meeting with the natural/intrinsic need of men for moral development so that they could fulfill their duties and obligations to public realm properly.⁷⁸ Denying this intrinsic need of man for moral development is not only impossible but also damaging (*zararli*) for the society. Thus the state is held responsible for the “production” of pious/virtuous/useful people. In the meantime, the unique feature of Republican secularism,

⁷⁶ See Saribay, *Turkiye’de Modernlesme, Parti ve Din Politikasi*, 100-101, Suleyman Arif Emre, “Ataturk’un Cizdigi Laiklik Cercevesi” *Milli Gazete*, 8.2.1997 and “Derin Devlet Olayi” *Milli Gazete* 20.10.1998 where Emre argues that “Toplumu ve yonetimi kirlenmekten kesin olarak kurtarmak icin, yeni nesillerimizi saglam durust, ak parayi, kara paradan veya helali haramdan ayird eden, harama el uzatmayan, vatanini milletini seven, devletine sadik, dininin icablarini hic bir irticai harekete, hic bir istismara kapilmayacak derecede iyi bilen kisiler olarak yetistirmemiz, Milli egitimimizi ayni zamanda Anayasada yer alan *manevi gelismimiz* icin de planlamamiz gerekmektedir.” (Emphasis original).

⁷⁷ Erbakan, *Turkiye’nin Meseleleri ve Cozumleri*, 53, 59, for the same view of the NOP, see Saribay, *Turkiye’de Modernlesme, Parti ve Din Politikasi*, 102.

⁷⁸ Erbakan, *Turkiye’nin Meseleleri ve Cozumleri*, 56.

Directorate of Religious Affairs, which enables the state to control religion and promote an official interpretation of religion, will be maintained to promote the NOM's own version of official Islam, which is more pious and has a privileged space in the public sphere. In effect, the challenge of the NOM to the current practice of secularism takes a "your Islam versus my Islam" colouring.

According to the NOM, such a production/education of "model man" is contrary to neither the principle of secularism nor democracy. What justifies such a conception of secularism is the NOM's concept of democracy. Indeed, the question of secularism, according to Erbakan, is related to the question of democracy and without democracy there is no secularism either.⁷⁹ In other words, as opposed to the conventional wisdom in Turkey, democracy is the precondition of secularism, not vice versa. But when there is democracy, there is construction of a pious Muslim community as well. This is because, the NOM's concept of democracy is based on, or more accurately restricted to the Republican maxim of "sovereignty belongs to people." Hence, there are no limits to what can "the people," or an elected government, do. If "the people" want the *sharia* laws no one can prevent it. This conception of democracy, which emphasizes the superiority of "national will" and which restricts democratic legitimacy to elections is actually in line with the general perception of democracy in Turkey⁸⁰ and with those approaches which

⁷⁹ *Erbakan ve Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, 109.

reduce democracy to non-violent transfer of power in accordance with the election results. The negligence of, for example, the rule of law and limited state is not a peculiarity of only the NOM.

However, for the NOM not all popularly elected governments are legitimate for they do not represent the “true idea” of people. They are extensions of Western colonialism and puppets of Zionist plot to rule the world. They prevent the people from realizing the truth of the NOM. They prolong the state of false consciousness. For the NOM, democracy is a means to express the will of the nation and since the will of nation is the National Outlook, democracy is expected to result in reproduction and revelation of the National Outlook. Hence, the NOM as the true representative of the people deserves to dominate, it does not need to seek consensus when in government through elections. In this way, democracy turns out to be a means through which state and society unification is to be reached. Indeed, democracy for the NOM is not a value in itself, but a means for establishing the “Order of Happiness” or “Order of Prosperity” (*Saadet Nizami*) through the rule of the NOM.⁸⁰ Alternatively, it is also a means of securing Turkey’s international reputation.⁸² Since other political parties are representatives of external forces, their election will (re)produce the “Order of Oppression.” If

⁸⁰ See Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, “Historicizing the Present and Problematizing the Future of the Kurdish Problem: A Critique of the TOBB Report on the Eastern Question” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 14, (Spring, 1996): 1-22.

⁸¹ Erbakan, *Turkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri ve Cozumleri*, 46.

democracy votes the NOM out, it is not really democracy but maintenance of an order of repression with the help of Zionists and colonialists. Majority, gained through elections, therefore is not a source of legitimacy if it is the majority of other parties. It is a source of legitimacy only for the NOM.

In a context, in which the modern Turkish society is imagined as a pious Muslim community, the NOM's solution to the Kurdish issue is the unification of Kurds and Turks through bond of Islam. Indeed, according to the NOM, the problem was created by the secular, materialist-racist policies of last seventy years. Hence, it is claimed that during the war of independence, no one talked about the composition of Turkish society as a mosaic because what united us was Islam.⁸³ "The hearts of the Kurds," Erbakan claimed, "goes out with the Islamic world and therefore, no resolution could be successful without taking into account the Islamic factor. The resolution lies in moving towards a new and non-racist larger unity" which, of necessity means Islamic unity.⁸⁴ Obviously such a solution involves, first, Islamisation of the current state so that the Kurds too can be attached to it. Therefore, recognition of the Kurdish identity is postponed until securing unity on Islamic grounds first. Without securing "our" unity, education and broadcasting in Kurdish, that were promised by Erbakan, will

⁸² Suleyman Arif Emre, *Yeni Safak*, 15.5.1997.

⁸³ *Milli Gazete*, 31.1.1997, editorial.

be dangerous. To secure our unity we must first get rid of terrorism which is created by external forces.⁸⁵ Although the Islamic solution to Kurdish issue can include granting the Kurds right to broadcast and publish even educate in Kurdish, it will also divide the Kurds/Turks into pious and not so pious ones.

⁸⁴ Erbakan's speech in the Fourth General Congress of the Welfare Party, 10.10.1993 cited in Selami Camci, "RP ve Kurt Sorunu" *Yeni Safak*, 12-16. 8.1996.

⁸⁵ Since the Kurdish issue, like secularism, was largely controlled by the military, the WP in government had to deny that there is a Kurdish issue. This was actually a retreat from the speech he made in the fourth general congress in which he identified three aspects of the issue, terrorism, underdevelopment and identity. What he meant by Kurdish issue was the identity aspect of it. Later on, the WP toed the line and reduced the Kurdish issue to an issue of underdevelopment and terrorism created by external forces. The solution to the former was more modernization of the Southeast region, and the latter was a security issue. See Burhanettin Duran, "Approaching the Kurdish Issue via *Adil Duzer*: An Islamist Formula of the Welfare Party For Ethnic Coexistence" *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 18, 1 (1998): 111-128 for a detailed review of the WP's approach to Kurdish issue and changes made in it in the course of government. For Erbakan's denial of the identity aspect of the issue see Fatih Cekirge, "Onemli Aciklamalar", *Sabah*, 25.1.1997, Fikret Bila, "Hocanın Beklentisi" *Milliyet*, 22.8.1996, Selahattin Onkibar, "Basbakan'dan Aciklamalar" *Turkiye*, 5.12.1995.

3.7 Systemic, anti-systemic or conservative?

National Outlook
Movement
(Millî Görüş
Hareketi)

Whether the NOM is an anti-systemic movement depends on what we mean by the system. If the system is associated with the substance/ideology that a political/institutional set up (state) pursues, then the NOM is an anti-systemic movement because its ideology implies “promotion” of a certain life style to construct a society that is different from that of Kemalism. If, on the other hand, the system is associated with a particular institutional set up of politics (state) constructed to promote a life style regardless of its contents, then we could suggest that the NOM is not anti-systemic. Indeed, the NOM never questions the current institutional set up of Turkish politics that was constructed to promote a certain life style. The movement considers the republican structures as fully legitimate, including the structures that enables the state to control religion so as to promote a single understanding of Islam and that deny the differentiated nature of society. Indeed, problems, for example, concerning secularism, Erbakan stated once, does not spring from the regime but from the implementation of the principles.⁸⁶ The NOM aims to maintain the current institutional set up so as to carry out its own Islamisation programme. There will, in other words, still be an ideology of state inducing a new life style, a new virtuous moral community. In the Just Political Order, for example, the duty of military will be the protection of the

⁸⁶ 15.2.1997, *Sabah*. 23.2.1997, *Hurriyet* “Türkiyede laiklik meselesi rejim meselesi degil, tatbikat meselesidir” for the same view of the NOP see Saribay, *Turkiye’de Modernlesme, Parti ve Din Politikasi*, 102.

country from those external threats to Just Order.⁸⁷ Since, other political views are regarded as extensions of colonialism, the military as the guardian of regime will also protect the regime from these internal enemies. What will change with the NOM is not the structures but the “ideology” that these structures functions to pursue, i.e. Islamisation rather than Westernization.

Consequently, if an Islamisation is to take place, it will take place without a rupture from the current institutional arrangements because what is problematized is the “ideology” of Westernization which is associated with a political class/ruling elite, but not the institutional set up of Turkish politics. For example, the republican concept of secularism made the state responsible for the delivery of the religious services so as to control religion. But, it also made the provision of religious services a duty of the state. Hence, if the ideology of National Outlook is in power, it can use the same mechanism and justify making the holy Friday a holiday as not an anti-secular activity but fulfillment of a duty.⁸⁸ In this way, the issues concerning secularism is not located within a framework of pluralism, democracy or Islamisation. It is in this respect that the NOM *pragmatically undermines* the current system by its apparent dedication to the to existing arrangements, but with a long term mission to change the contents of the current system. In

⁸⁷ Erbakan, *Türkiye'nin Meseleleri ve Çözümleri*, 49.

⁸⁸ Suleyman Arif Emre, “Ataturk’un Cizdigi Laiklik Cercevesi,” *Milli Gazete*, 8.2.1997. It was on the basis of the claim that satisfying the religious needs of

this way, the substance of the communitarian political set up can be turned inside out. In other words, the NOM reproduces Kemalism from a different angle while delegitimizing the substance of it. Hence the priority given to the exigencies of politics, or more accurately power-seeking, should not lead us to conclude that ideology is omitted and accommodation is democratic, because, according to the National Outlook, struggle (war) against the enemies necessitates deceiving.⁸⁹ Drawing from Gordon Smith, if working through institutions is a radical strategy and if confronting the institutions is a revolutionary strategy, then, we could suggest that the strategy of the NOM is radical.⁹⁰ From a different angle, the NOM could also be considered as conservative, for it aims to conserve the same institutional set up and the same type of state-society relationship. Hence, if the system is defined in terms of its substance, i.e. Westernization, the NOM is a “radical anti-systemic” movement, if the system is associated with the structures that pursue Westernization, the NOM is a conservative systemic movement.

people is a constitutional duty that Erbakan tried to justify construction of a mosque in Taksim Square, see *Milliyet*, 3.2.1997.

⁸⁹ Ahmet Akgul, “Seviyeli Siyaset” and “Siyaset Sanatında Hile Mumkündür.” 25.6.1997 and 7.11.1997 both in *Milli Gazete*.

⁹⁰ Gordon Smith, “Party and Protest: The Two Faces of Opposition in Western Europe” in *Opposition in Western Europe*, ed. E. Kolinsky (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 56.

3.8. Monopolization and Cultivation as Microcosmos

The above mentioned disregard for the differentiated society, its concomitant narrowing of the legitimate sphere of politics, antiparticipatoriness and elitism of the NOM could also be seen in the NOM's relations with other Islamic groups and with its constituency as well. In reality, the relations with other Islamic groups and with its own constituency could be considered as the nucleus/microcosmos of the NOM's relations with the society at large. Below, an attempt will be made to show that the leading cadres of the movement, instead of providing a platform to build a consensus between different Islamic groups in Turkey, try to homogenize and monopolize the definition of Islam and different Islamic concerns under its organization through a cultivation process. In the meantime it will become clear how the NOM remains Islamist without having a concrete Islamisation programme.

We could suggest that there is an Islamic *social* movement in Turkey, developed against the secularist policies of the Republic and consisting of different Islamic groups. Although all of them converge on the degenerating consequences of Westernization, criticize the Republican practice of secularism and seek Islamisation of state and society, Islamic groups in Turkey are divided on what Islamisation should entail and on the methods of Islamisation. There are different Sufi *tarikats*, there are "independent" Islamist intellectuals, and there are radical Islamist groups that emphasize

the armed struggle for establishing an Islamic order.⁹¹ However, the only *political* movement with an explicit claim to be Islamic is the National Outlook Movement and its parties. The NOM, therefore, is only a part of a broader Islamic social movement in Turkey, though it is the only politically organized one. It would be misleading to suggest that all Islamic groups approve the policies and support the parties of the NOM just because it is the only Islamic political option. Some of the *tarikats* (sufi orders), for example, support the center-right parties, but not the NOM. It is true that initially, i.e. during the foundation of the NOP and the NSP, *Naksibendi tarikat* and some *Nurcus*⁹² have been active.⁹³ *Nurcu* members resigned from the National Salvation Party prior to 1977 elections on the basis of the claim that the party ascribed Islam an instrumental role in the attainment of the political goals.⁹⁴ *Naksibendi's*, on the other hand, withdraw their support on

⁹¹ See Rusen Cakir, *Ayet ve Slogan: Turkiye'de Islami Olusumlar*, [Verse and Slogan: Islamic Movements in Turkey] (Istanbul: Metis, 1990).

⁹² As followers of Said-i Nursi, *Nurcus* could not be defined as a *tarikat* proper because they lack the sheik-dervish relationship and the customs and rules of good behaviour (*adab-erkan*) specific to that relationship. The *Nurcus* is considered as a community, *jamaat*, with a leader and his followers. The relationship between the leader and his followers is said to be more like teacher-student (?) relationship.

⁹³ Cakir, *Ayet ve Slogan*, 217. See also Binnaz Toprak, "The Religious Right" in *Turkey in Transition: New Perspectives*, eds., Irvin C. Schick and Ertugrul A. Tonak, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 230.

⁹⁴ See Ahmet Yildiz, "The Evolution of Islamic Politics in Turkey Along the NSP-PP Line..." 41. See also Ali Yasar Saribay, *Postmodernite, Sivil Toplum ve Islam*, [Postmodernity, Civil Society and Islam] (Istanbul: Iletisim, 1994), 67.

the basis of the co-optation of the party.⁹⁵ Therefore, that Islamic groups have a collective identity and that they can act in concert, for example, in getting rid of corrupting effects of Westernization, should not imply homogeneity.

But, lack of homogeneity does not necessarily mean lack of attempts to homogenize Islamic groups either. The NOM by virtue of being the only political organization of Islamic movement attempts to draw the support of other Islamic groups and homogenize them within its ranks. It does not tie itself to a particular Islamic group, rather it attempts to free the Islamic movement in the political arena from other Islamic groups so as to enable its top cadres to take full control of its constituency. It also claims to be the only party whose pious cadres are truly representing Islamic values (of the society). If other parties have pious cadres, sometimes drawn from the ex-members of the NOM, it is to hide their real political stance which has no relation with Islam by "using" pious people. Hence, those Islamic groups, for example, *Nurcus* which do not support any political enterprise that seek power in the name of Islam are invited to vote for those who serve the cause of religion, i.e. the NOM/WP.⁹⁶ In this respect, we could suggest that the

⁹⁵ See Cakir, *Ayet ve Slogan*, 223 and 48-54 for a speech by Naksibendi Sheik Esad Cosan heavily criticizing the Party and its leader Erbakan. See also Umit Cizre-Sakallioglu, "Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey," 241.

⁹⁶ See Metin Karabasoglu, "Ulkeyi Degil Ilkeyi Esas Almak" *Yeni Asya*, 30.4.1994 for a criticism of political enterprises that seek power, namely the NOM, because politics is based on philosophy which in turn is based on

NOM attempts to monopolize Islamic opposition, and the tension between the NOM and other Islamic groups can be explained on this basis.

In this context, the criticism -advanced by some other Islamic groups- that the NOM has not been loyal to Islamic principles/morality and uses Islam for political purposes is less effective than it appears to be at first sight. In reality, what the movement tries is to gain the monopoly of definition of what Islamic morality/principles means here and now. In this respect, Erbakan's assertion that "those who do not blend their allegiance to me must look for a new religion" could be read as an attempt to homogenize and take the full control of the constituency as well as the broad movement.⁹⁷

Needless to say, this is actually an assertion that links Muslimness to the allegiance to the NOM and its parties, which is worrying not only for those secular sections of the society, but also for Islamic groups.⁹⁸

If the semi-official daily of the National Outlook Movement, *Milli Gazete*, could be considered as one of the instruments of cultivation of the constituency, then there are many exemplary articles revealing the monopolizing logic of the NOM by asserting the importance of loyalty to the

might, whereas religion is based on *hak*. (Yeni Asya is a publication of a branch of the Nurcus). See also Ahmet Akgul, "Bediuzzaman ve Siyaset" *Milli Gazete*, 10.7.1995 for an argument that Nurcus should vote for the WP, which serves to the cause of Islam.

⁹⁷ Cakir, *Ayet ve Slogan*, 223-224.

hierarchy of organization (read political party) over loyalty to sufi *tarikats* and other Islamic organizations. Hence, while it is recognized that political party is a modern/Western invention, it is asserted that it is the only useful “weapon” to fight against the enemies. It is claimed that those religious groups who say that there is no place for a political party in Islamic struggle are traitors and a political party, in reality, is the most useful “weapon” to fight against the enemies. Therefore, those who want to practice their religion must gather together within the ranks of the Welfare Party.⁹⁹ Moreover, those who serve the National Outlook will not only strengthen the mission (*dava*) but also will have the privilege of saying “I have served for the National Outlook” in the hereafter.¹⁰⁰ Voting is described as a religious responsibility, and Muslims are not expected to waste their votes by voting for “the other” parties because each community will enter the presence of Allah behind the leader it has followed.¹⁰¹ Conscious Muslims are those who voted for the parties of the NOM. Belief (*inanç*) is something to be practiced in the life of the community and this could only be achieved by those who have a sense of organization. Otherwise, as disorganized believers they would remain impartial on the issues of practicing their belief

⁹⁸ For a critique of the NOM depiction of the elections as a “census of Muslims” see Kazim Gulecyuz, “RP ve Din” *Yeni Asya*, 9.6.1995.

⁹⁹ Nevzat Ozpelitoglu, “Onurlu Mucadele Kok Saldi” *Milli Gazete*, 16.5.1995.

¹⁰⁰ Zeki Ceyhan, “Milli Gorus Heyecani” *Milli Gazete*, 13.11.1995.

¹⁰¹ Mehmet Talu, “Musluman Liderini Iyi Secmelisin” *Milli Gazete*, 19.11.1994.

when their partiality is required by their belief.¹⁰² In this way, working/voting for the party is associated with religious prayer. The first duty of the conscious Muslims (read those who subscribe National Outlook Movement) is to warn their unconscious Muslim brothers rather than non-Muslims and to inject them “the real Islam” rather than the traditional one.¹⁰³ Accordingly, although it is not written in the *ilmihal* books (books teaching the elements of religion), Allah likes communal rather than individual prayers. Therefore, conscious Muslims are those who are aware of their political duties and those who are indifferent have no right to complain about the current state of society.¹⁰⁴

One of the logical aims of cultivating an Islamist constituency freed from ties to other Islamic groups is unconditional loyalty to the “organization” which is depicted as an educational institution and which represents the absolute truth. Hence, it is taught whatever one’s rank within the organization is, one has to respect the organizational hierarchy because otherwise there will be pluralism that would destroy the unity, and endanger and damage the future mission of the movement.¹⁰⁵ The constituency of the movement are,

¹⁰² Nedim Diyemli, “Teskilatci I” and “Teskilatci II” *Milli Gazete*, 3-4. 10.1995.

¹⁰³ Fethi Kozan, “Islam Davetçileri” *Milli Gazete*, 21.10.1994.

¹⁰⁴ Ahmet Kucukaga, “Sahihlerin Tembelligi Fasiklarin Iktidarini Hazirlar,” *Milli Gazete*, 15.9.1995.

¹⁰⁵ See Ihsan Kilic, “Siyasette Teskilatlarin Onemi” *Milli Gazete*, 12.10.1995.

therefore, not only supporters but also believers in the movement and/or army.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Erbakan claimed that the WP is a community of believers in the revitalization of “Great Turkey”, but not an interest-based association. Therefore it has not members but believers.¹⁰⁷ Participation, in this context, is an end itself. Participation only means the expression of the (Islamic) identity of the participant which is equated with subscribing to the NOM.

In the meantime, no role/function is attributed to the participants/constituency in policy making, let alone, getting the elected delegates represented in the party’s administration.¹⁰⁸ Any criticism of the leading elite is depicted as betrayal and those who criticize are humiliated as “physically long, mentally short” or “enemies in friend’s clothes.”¹⁰⁹ The NOM relies on the sentiments of people to mobilize them for its own cause, rather than their intellectual/rational capacities. One implication is the unresponsive, indifferent leadership oligarchy and a type of relationship

¹⁰⁶ Riza Ulucak, 3.9.1996, *Sabah*, see also Recep Tayyip Erdogan cited in Serdar Sen *Refah Partisinin Teori ve Pratigi: Refah Partisi, Adil Duzen ve Kapitalizm* [Theory and Practice of Welfare Party: Welfare Party, Just Order and Capitalism] (Istanbul: Sarmal Yayınevi, 1995), 84. As illustrated by “here is the army, here is the commander” (*iste ordu, iste komutan*).

¹⁰⁷ *Yeni Safak*, 22.9.1996.

¹⁰⁸ Riza Ulucak, *Hurriyet*, 10.9.1996. elections is a legal necessity and if the results put the headquarters under stress, we would not let it happen.

¹⁰⁹ See Oral Calışlar, *Refah Partisi: Nereden Nereye* [Welfare Party: From Where to Where] (Istanbul: Pencere Yayınları, 1995), 89-90 where a portrayal of Abdurrahman Dilipak as *boyu uzun, akli kısa* is cited. See also Zeki Ceyhan, “Dost Kilikli Dusmanlar” *Milli Gazete*, 22.10.1996.

with the constituency in which the constituency has no sphere of discretion but is an object of control, manipulation, mobilization. The sphere of control includes the NOM's members of parliament as well who are expected to submit the texts of their speeches to the headquarters before reading them in the parliament.¹¹⁰ If democracy is about an attitude that insures that people are well informed to make intelligent decisions, then, the NOM is not a democratic movement.

As Hakan Yavuz pointed out, Islamic identity is a mobilizational tool in the hands of party leadership and the newcomers are expected to accept the form of the party which also acts as a school to mould and shape individuals.¹¹¹ In such a context, one of the underlying reasons for the sufi order's support of the centre-right parties could be the fact that they can assert their distinct identity without the risk of assimilation only under center-right parties.¹¹² This is not to say that the party manipulates the religious feelings of people to achieve purely secular ends,¹¹³ otherwise we might neglect the fact that there is a genuine Islamic movement in Turkey.

¹¹⁰ *Sabah*, 1.4.1996. Also, for example, Oguzhan Asilturk asserted that all MP's should be disciplined and kept under control, and on certain delicate subjects only the authorized people should make statements. *Hurriyet*, 6.10.1996. See also Suleyman Arif Emre, "Cok Imamli Namaz Olmaz" *Milli Gazete*, 17.11.1996.

¹¹¹ Hakan Yavuz, "Political Islam and the Welfare (*Refah*) Party in Turkey" *Comparative Politics*, 30, 1, (October, 1997): 63-82, 75.

¹¹² Yildiz, "The Evolution of Islamic Politics in Turkey...", 44.

The expresses the grievances and represent the claims of Islamic identity in Turkey. What is pointed here is the type of relationship between the Islamic social movement and the NOM as illustrative of the party's relations with the society at large.

Contents of Islamisation will be defined by a privileged leading cadre with no participation of the Islamist constituency of the NOM.¹¹⁴ This understanding of participation the NOM shares with Kemalism. This is because, although different interpretations of Kemalism is possible, what Kemalism means here and now is a privileged position of the self-appointed guardians of the regime over the elected politicians.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Cf. Turker Alkan, "The NSP in Turkey", 98.

¹¹⁴ The circumscription of participation is justified on the basis of Islamic political principles. If the Islamic principle of *shura* is the equivalent of democratic participation in policy making, then those who are asking for the functionalization of it, Ahmet Akgul maintains, are actually divisive traitors. The leader is not obliged to consult all issues with the religious leaders (read sheiks of tarikats or Islamist intellectuals). He also has the right to choose his own consultants. And, those sheiks/people who think that they could lead the army of jihad and the cadres of state just because they could run a Dervish Convent (tekke) or publish a journal are mistaken, because fighting against the Zionist in many frontiers is not the same thing as delivering emotional speeches in the mosques or writing articles for a journal. Hence, everyone should serve/remain within his rank and participate in the realization of the cause as defined by the leading cadres. See Ahmet Akgul, *Dunya'nin Degisimi ve Erbakan Devrimi*, [Change of World and Erbakan-Revolution] (Istanbul: Dogus Yayinlari, 1995), 95-100.

¹¹⁵ Even after the failure of the WP in government those within WP who suggest that a restructuring is needed are depicted as extensions of the Pentagon-Zionism. *Milli Gazete*, 2.7.1998.

The monopolization of the right to define what Islamisation should entail could be explained on the basis of defending an Islamisation project in a context where there are restrictions on ordering the state on the basis of religion. It is true that the NOM has to be cautious to prolong the existence of its parties in the presence of legal prohibitions. In this case, Oguzhan Asilturk's explanation that the NOM's ideas are applied in a controlled manner because it is under the spot light of the regime might well be true.¹¹⁶ But, the tight control of the constituency and monopolization of mission by the leading cadres, as the above discussion suggests, cannot solely be explained in terms of legal necessities, because the dominant political mind in the NOM conceives the relation between ruled and ruler as the relationship between knowledgeable and ignorant. Hence, one of the well-known policy makers of the party, Abdullah Gul, could boldly state that the movement in government does not really represent the pledges they made to electorate.¹¹⁷

In the light of the foregoing discussion, it could be suggested that, the NOM has two aspects, personalistic/pragmatic and ideological. The former aspect gives rise to a political mission for acquiring power while the latter implies a sociological mission of uniting state and society through a social engineering

¹¹⁶ Interview with Oguzhan Asilturk by Mehmet Ali Birand for 32. Gun news program on Show TV television channel, 3.2.1997: *bizim fikirlerimizde bir yanlislik yok...ama okuzun altinda buzagi aranilan bir yerde bunlar dikkatlice dile getirilmeli.*

project. The NOM educates its constituency with the sociological mission which implies a social engineering process to achieve a cultural-turn. But the NOM wants its constituency to be dedicated to the organizational hierarchy not to the mission of cultural turn/unification and expects its constituency to believe that the leading cadres of movement stands for this mission.

Monopolization of the mission via cultivation of an unconditionally loyal constituency allows a large sphere of flexibility to the leading cadres of the NOM. Consequently, it becomes unclear if the movement is united around the mission of Islamisation of society or around a certain group of pious people claiming to Islamize society/state if opportunity is given. How could such a party that stands for an alternative social engineering without offering an ideology and while disregarding its constituency increase its electoral fortunes in the 1990s?

¹¹⁷ *Yeni Yuzyil*, 21.2.1997.

4. ACCOUNTING FOR THE RISE OF THE WELFARE PARTY

A number of factors are listed as causing the rise of Islamism in Turkey: the erosion of center right parties, failures of the Turkish modernization after 1980, increasing economic disparities, internal immigration to cities, softening of the secular state's approach to Islam, identity crisis, increasing legitimacy of the Islamic identity and Islamic modernization as a result of postmodern critiques of modernity and globalization. These accounts were critically reviewed in the first chapter. While accepting the role played by these factors on the rise of Islamism in Turkey, this study tries to approach the issue from a different perspective. What count as the reasons behind the rise of the NOM are usually the issues addressed by the NOM, but it would be misleading to explain the rise of Islamism in Turkey on the basis of the increasing economic disparities, identity crisis, failures of development. This is because the economic and social/sociological variables do not determine the political outcomes but provide the raw material of politics. It is up to political actors to take the pressing issues up or problematize certain facts. Therefore, the proper sphere of focus should be the political sphere where issues are diagnosed, expressed, and policies are developed to solve them.

In this respect, there seems to be two main reasons for the rise of Islamism in Turkey. First concerns the NOM itself, and the second concerns the other political actors in the political sphere. With regards to the NOM's own contribution to its success, it could be suggested that the Fourth General

Congress held in 1993 is a crucial turning point in the rise of the WP. After the fourth Congress the WP was the most-close-to-society party. In this Congress, the party's will to catch-all was publicized and efforts to change the traditional image of the NOM was started. The Welfare Party, since then, tried to assure that it is not an authoritarian party of religious fanatics that would suppress the freedoms and bring an Iranian type regime when in power and that it is not against secularism, democracy and liberal economic system. It also tried to make it clear that the military would not interfere and the West would not put an economic blockade if the WP governs.¹¹⁸ These were meant to assure the people that the WP is a mainstream party able to govern better than any other party. The election campaigns of the party emphasized the scandals of corruption, softened the discourse of anti-Westernism and emphasized the failures of the previous governments.

For the following elections a pragmatic electoral campaign addressing the immediate issues were carried out in accordance with this image-making. In a booklet published by the Party, entitled "General Strategies to be Followed during and after Elections," it was asserted that although election strategies are expected to emphasize long-term goals by addressing the contemporary political and social issues, short-term and regional strategies could be developed as well.¹¹⁹ The booklet wanted the party activists to refrain from

¹¹⁸ See Cakir, *Ne Seriat Ne Demokrasi*, 195-196.

abstract issues that do not relate to daily lives of people. Hence, only the ongoing domestic and international problems were to be taken up. In line with the above mentioned differentiation of the NOM from other political views, the activists were asked to emphasize the wrongness of the mentalities of the other parties in political debates rather than identifying certain parties/candidates. Also in line with the hegemonic concepts of the time, privatization and decentralization to local governments were to be defended by arguing that any reduction in the size of the state was increase in the freedom of the individual.

In big cities of Ankara and Istanbul, the WP tried to make it clear that it was not the party of only those who wear beard and headscarf. The activist of the party were urged to emphasize human rights issues and refrain from adopting a discourse which would seem reactionary. The headscarf issue was to be taken up as an issue of the liberty to dress. The candidates were asked to be all-embracing and, when needed, informal. In the southeast, the Republic was to be repudiated as racist/ethnicist and the theme of Islamic brotherhood (*Islami kardeslik*) during Ottoman Empire was to be emphasized. Cultural identity of the Kurds were to be respected. The grievances of those who were oppressed for reasons of security and the underdevelopment of the region as a result of the wrong policies of the state were to be emphasized. And the candidates were asked to develop close

¹¹⁹ *Secimde ve Secim Sonrasinda Izlenecek Genel Stratejiler'94* (Refah Partisi Tanitma Baskanligi, nd). This and the following paragraph draws from this

relations with such figures as *aghas*, *sheiks* and *hodjas*, who have the ability to influence/mobilize people.

Organizational penetration of the WP into society also played a significant role in its image-making and rise. Because of the unavailability of the mass media for the WP, the party developed face-to-face relations of trust with the electorate. Yet, lack of access to mass media did not prevent the party to realize its goal of catching votes from different segments of the population. Indeed, the party tried to catch all by plunging into a face-to-face relation/campaign of "persuasion" of the people even in pubs, brothels, discotheques. Activists of the party could participate in funerals and weddings, they could provide financial help for the physically handicapped and organize distribution of material benefits mostly in kind during the month of Ramadan.¹²⁰

The party appoints a representative for each neighbourhood, who in turn appoints street representatives to collect information about the profile of the inhabitants of each street. Street representatives report to neighbourhood representatives, who in turn report to city or town representatives. Every month the city committee meets and all appointed activists at the

booklet.

¹²⁰ See *Gazete Pazar*, 2.11.1997 for a description of the organizational structure by Bahri Zengin. See also, Yavuz, "Political Islam and the Welfare (*Refah*) Party in Turkey", 76-78, and Jenny B. White, "Islam and Democracy: The Turkish Experience" *Current History*, (January 1995): 7-12, 11-12.

neighbourhood and street level participate in this meeting. Also every month, city representatives and inspectors, members of parliament and related people from the headquarters meet in Ankara. In this way, everyone has a task to do and there is a non-stop activity, which keeps the constituency dynamic and ready for elections at any time. But also, in this way, the constituency activists of the party are educated and kept under the close supervision of the headquarters. As noted above, activists of the party are not actively participating in the policy-making, but vigorously “transmitting” the eternal message of the NOM, which is that the cadres of the NOM represent the absolute truth.

Closeness to the electorate, expression of the prevailing issues, and non-stop campaigning certainly contributed to the rise of the WP. Yet, the WP, while expressing these issues, did not have a comprehensive and consistent policy alternative, but presented themselves as the solution. The crux of the NOM’s alternative was, as noted above, that they themselves were the better administrators but not their ideas that would alter the basis of the administration. The Just Order of the WP was appealing but it was also loose. The Just Order discourse enabled the party to appear “out of range,” or perhaps anti-systemic at a time when the system was increasingly delegitimized.

The system was being delegitimized most importantly because politics as an activity that generates legitimation was restricted. This is so, for two reasons.

The first is the Kemalist structuration of politics. As noted above, by removing certain key issues from the legitimate sphere of politics, Kemalism set the boundaries of rational politics. And, all parties are expected to remain within the limits set by the "state" if they are to remain mainstream. Hence, the center-parties have deprived themselves of the initiative to take real issues up and thereby reproduced their "centrist" position. This hindered to possibilities of creating a dynamic consensus which would have prevented the eroding of the center. The real issues were taken up by the WP, and other parties in their competition associated the WP only with anti-Westernism. They thereby neglected the real issues that were taken up by the WP and restricted their strategy to a defense of Westernization.

Secondly, in the 1980s Westernization took a neo-liberal colouring and neo-modernization meant neo-liberalism. The overwhelming consensus of the mainstream parties on neo-liberalism was also an additional factor in the erosion of the center. Hence, for example, it has become a common stand for most centrist parties to take pride in the excess of foreign exchange reserves, while remaining silent on the issue of many people living below the poverty level. In this context, a mere expression of this social reality and the promise of heeding the basic needs of the people has become effective, even if it is informed more by an Islamic charity-mentality than an ideological policy alternative. This is because, politics was reduced to administration by both Kemalist structuration and by overwhelming consensus on neo-liberalism. If political competition is not over "what" should be done but "who" should do and if other parties are identifying the pressing issues as non-issues by

taking the policies-applied for granted, a mere expression of issues could be effective in increasing the electoral fortunes.

CONCLUSION

Into the hopeless Orientalist picture, which portrays Islamic culture as a “defensive” “preindustrial” culture, the modernization paradigm injects a hope that, “despite Islam,” Muslim societies can be modernized. However, it does so without altering the Orientalist portrayal of Islam. The question of modernization is still a question of appropriate culture and Islam is not appropriate for modernization. Hence, Muslim societies can be modernized only if Islam is tamed and replaced with rational-scientific Western culture. Therefore, secularization, as a precondition of modernization, does imply not a process, but rather policies to push Islam into the private sphere so as to enlarge the sphere of rationality. One reason for the politicization of Islam is not Islam itself, but secularization policies.

Throughout this study the aim has been to introduce an alternative framework that would enable us to study Islamism on “political” grounds. This is because existing explanatory frameworks for Islamism are based either on an essentialist conceptualization of Islam/Muslim society or on the modernization paradigm. Both of these accounts are informed by a culturally and politically essentialist conceptualization of Islam. These

approaches are based on the fundamental assumption that Islam is a religion to be curbed, submerged and, if possible, reformed by the modernizing states. Culturally, Islam is regarded as a religion that resists modernization and progress, and that it should therefore be made publicly invisible.

Politically, in this perspective, Islam is a political religion that unites religion and politics because of the principle of *tevhid*, by which Islam covers all aspects of life, including politics. Therefore, it is not only an “unsecularizable” religion but also a permanent potential political rival to secular modernizing regimes. Thus, if modernization and secularization are to be achieved, it could be achieved only by subjugating Islam.

Within this perspective, the relationship between Islam and politics/modernization is considered in zero-sum terms. Consequently, the political option available to a Muslim society is that *either* the modernizing regime controls religion, which in our case corresponds to the Republican regime which is built on Kemalism, *or* Islam that resurges/revives as a consequence of the failures of modernization. Here, an Islamic revival or Islamic resurgence are the terms employed for referring to Islamism. This either/or logic arises from the assumption that modernization in Muslim societies is, among other things, about the submergence of Islam. Failures of modernization are deduced by the “resurgence” of Islamism, which is often portrayed as the reassertion of society *vis a vis* the culturally alien(ated) state. By implication, the success in modernization is measured by the political insignificance of Islamism in the public and private spheres.

As such, by building a deterministic link between the political outcomes (rise of Islamism) and the economic and sociological variables (poverty, immigration, distributional failure, mobilization etc.), the autonomy of the political sphere is not made an object of study. The negative consequences of employing this either/or logic in studies on Islamism are the restriction of political antagonism(s) to a certain cultural axis; developing a polarized perspective along the lines of friends and enemies of modernization; not focusing on a democratic accommodation between "Islamic" and "secular" identities; and most importantly not using liberal political tools to confront Islamism from a democratic perspective. In the meantime, the either/or picture prevents one from studying Islamism and modern secular politics in terms of their politics, for example, in terms of their vision of state-society relationship. Dichotomic thinking, by focusing on the substances of each alternative, encourages one to emphasize the conflicting differences between the two alternatives, but not the similarities, if there are any.

Possible similarities between the two options cannot be discovered by emphasizing the modernity of Islamism either. This is because, considering Islamism as an alternative modernizing movement that seeks progress and material development for the revitalization of Islamic civilization *vis a vis* the West, tells us little about the political aspects of Islamism. The important point here is that being a modernizing alternative does not necessarily mean being democratic and pluralist.

Since studying Islamism in terms of its modern or oppositional aspects does not explain the political aspects, this study suggests an alternative framework that focuses on the political sphere for studying both the rise and the substance of the alternative vision of Islamism in terms of politics.

Islamism in this dissertation is not studied in terms of Islam or in terms of modernity. Islamism, as noted in the first chapter, is not just an alternative modernizing movement, but it is also primarily a political movement about the fundamentals of society. Islamism should better be grasped on political grounds rather than in terms of the substance of Islam, of Muslim society or of its relationship to modernity. The political grounds for studying Islamism, or for that matter any other political movement, hinge on an analysis of Islamism's concept of the political, its definition of political community and its vision of state-society relations.

Also, Islamism as a fundamentally political object of inquiry cannot be isolated from the analysis of the context within which it emerges. This is because, by studying the context we can see the similarities and differences of an Islamic movement from the regime it challenges and *understand* the alternative framework Islamism presents in relation to the dominant power relations in society. This could allow us to decipher what the Islamist opposition involves as far as the type of state-society relationship is concerned and how far it differs from the current practice.

Essentially, the approach which this dissertation adopts for studying Islamism on political grounds is analyzing its alternative mode of integration which determines the legitimate sphere of politics, possibilities of pluralism and the state-society relationship. This approach is based on the assumption that structuration of politics in any context is not about the substance that the structures promote, but about a political form, a grammar of politics or about a political logic that points at the way to achieve the substantive purpose.

Thereby, the focus on political sphere and structuration(s) of politics enables us to avoid taking positions only in terms of substances of the political alternatives. This is important because Islamism is not just about Islamisation as Kemalism is not just about Westernization. The emphasis on the mode of integration and the concomitant structuration of politics, enables one to decipher the “grammatical” or “logical” similarities between two substantively different alternatives such as Westernizing Kemalism and Islamising National Outlook. If, in other words, democracy is about state-society relationship which is an issue related to the structuration of politics, and if both alternatives share the same type of state-society relationship, then, for example, one could suggest that Islamist movements are not anti-systemic movements. But, if we fail to associate the system with democracy, neither being systemic nor being anti-systemic tells us much about the concern of this dissertation which inevitably problematizes the system

within which Islamism emerges. This is because, Islamism is problematized not in terms of its substance but in terms of its form or political logic and if in this respect there are convergences with the system it challenges, then one could not turn a blind eye to them.

This study identifies two basic modes of social integration that give way to two different structurations of the sphere of politics and concepts of “the political,” namely, liberal and republican modes of integration. Both liberal and republican models moralize common goods, but while the liberal common good is not substantive in the sense of promoting a certain life style, the republican common good is substantive. In both models, it is assumed that every member of society subscribes to the moral consensus. As for the concepts of “the political,” liberalism, it is suggested, tends to empty political life of substantive argument by conceiving politics as the pursuit of self interest. However, the liberal model guarantees the protection of individual rights and liberties. Republicanism, on the other hand, is concerned with the common good of society which ideally is subject to democratic political deliberation by actively participating citizens. Nevertheless, republicanism runs a crucial risk of smothering politics by moralizing a given conception of substantive idea of common good that promotes a life style. This is because moralization is also depoliticization of what is good for the whole society. In this case, subscription to a moral consensus becomes a precondition of political activity. This is a risk of smothering politics which is called the republican trap.

In this dissertation, the distinction between a republican and liberal ideal is made in the light of a fundamental assumption that modern societies are culturally differentiated and plural as far as values are concerned. They, therefore, are held together not by some pre-existing common values, common culture or a moral consensus, but by the very activity of politics. Politics is defined as the debate over the nature of good life. In this way, political nature of a given "moral" consensus is introduced. Therefore, the possibility of political questioning and reexamination of a moral consensus is recognized. This recognition is conceived as a precondition of modern democracy whose difference from the ancient democracy "resides in the acceptance of *pluralism* [in the sense of] the end of a substantive idea of good life."¹ Judged against this background, both Kemalism and Islamism of the National Outlook are located within a republican context.

By locating Kemalism within the general context of republicanism, this study tries to show that Kemalism should not only be conceived as the ideology of a Westernizing state, but as a particular structuration of the Turkish political space in which the legitimate sphere of politics is restricted to proper administration; politics revolves around friends and enemies; and the source of legitimacy is not procedural but substantive, i.e. moral. The

¹ Chantal Mouffe, "Democracy, Power, and the 'Political'" in *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, Seyla Benhabib, ed., (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 246 emphasis original.

most important reason for Kemalism's ability to structure the political sphere is a historical fact: modern Turkish society is constituted through a Kemalist revolution. Similarly, the status of citizenship was granted to the former subjects of the Sultan by the Kemalist revolution. In other words, Kemalism was a republican mode of integration of society. As in republicanism, society, rights and liberties did precede the foundation of the Republic.

Republicanism is influential in the structuration of politics as well. As in the republican mode of integration, modern Turkish society, too, was integrated around a substantive common good. It, therefore, had a "shared" vision of happiness and welfare and a "shared" purpose. As the collective idea of society, this shared vision was a source of legitimacy. Given the substantive nature of the collective idea, i.e. Westernisation that promoted a life style, it is suggested that moralization of politics by Kemalism has had restrictive consequences for conducting politics for a differentiated society. As in republicanism, what is good for the whole society is an objective phenomenon and is not subject to political deliberation. The task of the state was to bring about the good society. The legitimate sphere of politics is, therefore, structured for the reproduction and realization of the substantive principles of the collective idea that promotes a new way of life through secularism and education.

Since a substantive idea is inevitably questioned in a culturally differentiated society, politics is conceived by republicanism as an activity that has to be checked and balanced and even curbed by administrative mechanisms. A constant supervision of politics is also deemed to be necessary, for, in practice, the relations between rulers and the ruled is conceived, in a Platonic manner, as a relation between knowledgeable and ignorant. This is to protect people from deceitful politicians. It is true that the status of citizenship was granted to the former subjects of Sultan, but activity of citizenship was linked to the precondition of being rational first. Since Kemalist arrangements were portrayed as rational, being rational meant subscribing to Kemalist arrangements and questioning of them is equated with irrationality. Such an approach by "Republican" Kemalism is not really prone to an understanding of what Islamism represents and expresses. It is, rather, prone to a portrayal of Islamism as a force exploiting the religious feeling of people for selfish political purposes.

In a polity where there are only friends and enemies of Kemalist morality, we lack the tools to decipher what the Islamist alternative offers, apart from its opposition to Kemalist principle of secularism. This is because, mere opposition by utilizing a vague democratic discourse is enough to harvest votes. But when viewed from the alternative framework advanced in this study, the Islamism of the National Outlook Movement is close to the regime it opposes on a basic aspect, i.e. its perspective of politics. It is in this political realm rather than in Islamic principles of the movement that we can

search for answers to critical questions regarding the nature of objectives, vision and in intellectual instruments of the movement. This dissertation takes a further step and locates the answers to these questions in a zone where Kemalist ideology meets the National Outlook Movement (NOM): the intellectual tradition and political praxis of republicanism. The cadres of the National Outlook Movement moralizes the National Outlook as the collective idea of society and aims to structure politics so as to protect it. For the NOM, too, society is integrated around a substantive idea of common good which proposes an Islamic way of life to be followed by the whole society. The National Outlook as the moral consensus of the society is not subject to political reexamination, questioning and deliberation. This is because the NOM represents the absolute truth. It is a given for politics and for the people and those who do not subscribe to it are people with false consciousness.

Therefore, the National Outlook Movement does not conceive society as pluralist, but rather, as a homogenous entity united around the idea of National Outlook. Although it depicts itself as the self-assertion of the society, given the differentiated nature of the society, the National Outlook Movement proposes an alternative social engineering project that will be carried out by a state whose main task is to educate and socialize citizens along the republican political axiom. Thus, to correct the errors of Kemalist Westernization, the National Outlook repeats them. The final goal of the National Outlook is to bring about a pious and therefore virtuous society

that is in accordance with the idea of the National Outlook. Its Islamism does not necessarily point to a return to *Sharia* rule, but to a redefinition of society as essentially a Muslim society.

What is thus problematized in this study is not the *content* of alternatives ideologies, i.e. Westernization and Islamisation, but the legitimate sphere of political activity that is granted by them. The idea of common good is indeed essential for politics, for politics is about the substantive purposes of the society. But attributing a moral status to a substantive idea of common good is itself a hindrance to political activity, because it implies a process of social engineering to homogenize a culturally and politically differentiated society, a restriction in the legitimate sphere of politics and therefore, a foreclosure of the possibilities of the dynamic consensus of the society. Kemalism and Islamism, in this respect, resemble each other and belong to the same family of republicanism.

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