FORMATION OF THE FIRST LEGAL OPPOSITION TO SECULARISM IN TURKEY:

THE JOURNAL *BÜYÜK DOĞU* IN THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY (1945-1950)
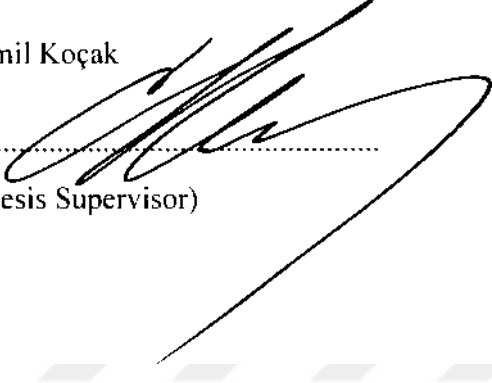
by

HANDE TATOĞLU

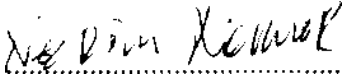FORMATION OF THE FIRST LEGAL OPPOSITION TO SECULARISM IN
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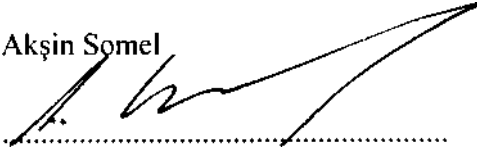
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Secularism is one of the most significant and hotly debated issues in the social sciences. The most common understanding of secularism today refers to a public settlement of the relationship between politics and religion; and secularization is considered the historical process through which these settlements. On the one hand, in the most of Western countries, this process has been practiced as a relatively slow and simultaneously transformation in many segments of the society; on the other hand, it has been experienced as political projects in the non-Western countries. In this sense, Turkey's secularization experience since the late Ottoman period is one of the most noticeable cases. The concept of secularism has taken root in Ottoman/Turkish modernization process very different from its original source in the West. In the context of Turkey as a Muslim country, it is not easy to talk about a full adaptation of secularism, which is developed in the West as main lines of secularism with different names: French *laïcité* and Anglo-Saxon secularism. When one analyze the Turkish case, it will show that these two models are not mutually restricted but representative models to choose at necessary situations.

The debates on secularism in Turkey are generally thought of a conflict between secularists against anti-secularists. However, the debates, especially in the last decade, stem from different perceptions about the proper definition and practice of secularism. Therefore, one of the motives of this study is to discuss the varied perceptions of secularism both in its general meaning and its specific implementation in Turkey by focusing on the literature. In the literature, it is a predominant to define secularism in Turkey with one main characteristic that is associated with the position of state and its institutions versus religion. However, secularism also functions as one of the defining elements of modernity and a vital political project for the state in governing its society in Turkey. Consequently, it is significant for suggesting that what is known as Turkish secularism shaped within not only a process included legal and political reforms to transform the social and political life, but also a process of formation the opposition to this transformation. For this reason, the main purpose of this study is to understand the religious opposition to the secularism in Turkey through a detailed case study analysis on the journal *Büyük Doğu* (Great East) adopted both an Islamist and a religious

nationalist (*milliyetçi mukaddesatçı*) perspective, which is also called as conservative nationalism.

In this study, it is considered that the origins of the center right politics in Turkey can be traced in the democratic transition period, in which the Islamist ideology was transformed to the conservatism within the political atmosphere of the new established Turkish Republic and its authoritarian secularization politics during the 1920s and 1930s. As Tanıl Bora has evaluated that this kind of secularization was the biggest "extremism" of the *Kemalist* modernization project, so the Turkish conservatism aimed to purify the extreme features of this transformation process in order to reconcile the Turkish modernization with the tradition.[1] Kemalism here refers to an ideology, in the sense of "*a wider and long-term framework for directing the social and political world*" and not "*just a practical 'action plan' in a narrow sense.*"[2] Kemalism's principles, including secularism, are declared in the programs of the Republican People's Party (RPP), which appropriated the ideas of its founder and the first President of the Republic Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) as its institutional ideology. Following, the repressive policies of authoritarian single-party rule had caused that the Islamist thinkers adopted a pragmatist attitude to be able to maintain the religion in a minimum level. Thus, Islamism easily incorporated a conservative language in the authoritarian days of the early republic. While they did not proclaim an explicit Islamism during the period of transition to democracy, they promoted the conservative nationalism, that is Muslim-Turkish nationalism, in opposition to the secular nationalism of the Republican People Party (RPP).[3] In this sense, their perspectives differed from a parallel nationalist current, which was marked by racism and a *Turanist* ideal of unifying all Turkic peoples. They emphasized the importance of religion in

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[1] Tanıl Bora and Burak Onaran, "Nostalji ve Muhafazakarlık", in *Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*: *Muhafazakârlık*, Vol 5, İletişim Yayınları, 2013, p. 236.

[2] See Taha Parla, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Kültürün Resmî Kaynakları*, Vol. 3, Kemalist Tek-Parti İdeolojisi ve CHP'nin Altı Ok'u, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1992.

[3] Nuray Mert, "Cumhuriyet'in İlk Döneminde Yurtdışında İki Muhalefet yayını: Yarın ve Müsavat." *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 69, 1996, p. 138-139.

national identity and strove to highlight the glories of not only the pre-Islamic Turks but also their Ottoman/Islamic ancestors a constitutive role in the national history.[4]

This study is limited with the period of transition to democracy between 1945 and 1950. The reason is that there was no active religious political opposition to the secular reforms of the single-party regime until 1945, and then the transfer of political power to the Democratic Party (DP) in the general elections of 1950 marked the beginning of a new phase for secularism in Turkey. In the transition period to democracy, some journals such as *Selâmet* published by Ömer Rıza Doğrul in 1945–49, *Millet* published by Cemal Kutay in 1946-50, *Serdengeçti* published by Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti in 1946–60. These publications also became platforms where the single-party regime's neglect of religion was criticized. However, it should be noted that *Büyük Doğu* was different from the other Islamist journals, because it adopted a strong political stance that would be transformed as a political organization in 1949. It must be noted that this study has a tendency of dividing the intellectual heritage of *Büyük Doğu* into two parts. In the first part, it is considered *Büyük Doğu* as an intellectual initiative demanded that the government responds to the religious needs of the people in order to prevent social and moral crisis. In the second part, *Büyük Doğu* is seen as a militant publication organ of conservative nationalist ideology aimed at initiating a political movement as opposed to the ideology of the RPP.

In this study, qualitative research methods will be employed. For the first chapter, which will focus on the understanding of secularism in general, and in Turkey, will be on literature review. For the following chapters, which will contain the examination of *Büyük Doğu*'s religious opposition to secularism in Turkey, a discourse analysis will be conducted, especially by looking at the primary sources through a close reading of them. The outline of the chapters in this thesis is as follows:

The purpose of the first chapter is to focus on the modern social theory of secularism and its problems, in order to establish a theoretical ground for the historical analysis of Turkish secularism and its historical development. Second, this theoretically grounded historical analysis will also enable me to propose an analysis of the secularism in Turkey in order to demonstrate how it has operated as one of the main

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[4] Nuray Mert, "Muhafazakarlık ve Laiklik", in *Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*: *Muhafazakârlık*, Vol 5, İletişim Yayınları, 2013, p. 314.

'constitutive' elements of Turkish modernity, and also as a 'political project' on which the state-centric mode of governing the society.

The objectives of the second and third chapters are to indicate that the main characteristics of the political thoughts on politics and state in *Büyük Doğu* will be examined by Kısakürek's idealization of Islam as an alternative political ideology versus the *Kemalist* ideology of the modern Turkish Republic. The analysis of Kısakürek's conceptualizations of politics and state were connected with the critical evaluation of his ideal Islamic state: *Başyücelik devleti* and its institutions. Furthermore, in these chapters, an examination of *Büyük Doğu*'s critique of *Kemalism* will provide a perspective in order to re-understand *Kemalism* within the ideological and political framework of those who opposed it. It will also be portrayed in this chapter that what brought the writers of the journal together in *Büyük Doğu*, was their opposition to official history and their anticommunism. Finally, this study aims to contribute the secularism debates by providing an analysis of the Turkish secularization by focusing on not only process of legal and political reforms to transform the social and political life, but also a process of formation the opposition to this transformation through the evaluation of *Büyük Doğu*'s opposition.

Chapter 1

UNDERSTANDING SECULARISM

1.1. A Brief Introduction to Secularism

Although secularism has been very much discussed by focusing on its philosophical, sociological and political dimensions, it is not easy to provide a single or broadly accepted definition of secularism. In addition, the terms "secular," "secularism," and "secularization" have also a range of meanings.[5] The discussion of the difference between these concepts is still an ongoing one and this discussion is so crucial to describe different experiences of secularization. Therefore, the main purpose of this initial chapter is to provide an outline of the varied perceptions of secularism both in its general meaning and its specific implementation in Turkey.

The concept of secular is generally considered today as a term is closely related to the non-religious matters in the social and political life. However, when the notion of secular emerged in the ancient ages, it's meaning comes from the Latin *seaculum*, which was closely related to both "this age" and "this world" as opposed to "the other world" within Christianity.[6] It also referred to a distinction between the temporal and spiritual worlds, but this distinction is not equivalent to today's distinction between the secular and religious. It is due to the fact that in the middle ages, the distinction was not between a purely secular domain and a purely religious domain, but between "this world" as a mixed secular-religious domain and "the other world" as a purely religious

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[5]For a more detailed discussion see Jose Casanova, "The Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms", in *Rethinking Secularism*, (ed.) Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen, Oxford University Press, 2011.

[6]William H. Swatos and Kevin J. Christiano, "Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept", *Sociology of Religion*, 1999, No: 60, p. 211-212.

domain.[7] However, this mixture of the temporal and the spiritual within the secular was subjected to a systematic critique with the Reformation within Western Christianity and the scientific revolution in the early modern era.

In the Enlightenment age, secularism took the form of the separation of the secular from religion. In this era, religion was posed as a regressive force in the world, and the term 'secular' was used to describe a worldview fighting against religion that was in the form of 'secularism' was submitted as universal like reason.[8] The main purpose of the Enlightenment was to reform society using reason to challenge the ancient regime that was considered as being represented by the religion and the religious establishment. As a result, the ideas of the Enlightenment played a central role in the French and the American Revolutions of the eighteenth century. While philosophers and politicians tried to expand the power of the state and restrict religion to the individual level, two intellectual and political traditions of secularism evolved from two different contexts. The first model of secularism was French *laïcité*, which was anti-religious and sought to eliminate or control religion. The second model of secularism evolved from the Anglo-Saxon experience, which sought to protect religions from state intervention and encourages faith-based social networking. The contemporary classification of secularism is also based largely on these two lines of secularism, which are commonly identified French *laïcité* is separationist against religion, and Anglo-Saxon secularism is accommodationist for religion.[9]

As a result of this process, to 'secularize' meant to make someone or something secular by converting from clerical to civil use or possession. This meaning of secularization occurred for the first time at the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, in which secularization meant to the transfer of church properties to the exclusive control of the

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[7] For instance, Augustine calls the *saeculum*, the realm of temporal existence in which politics takes place. See Paul Weithman, "Augustine's Political Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, (ed.) Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, 2001, p. 235.

[8] See T. Asad, *Genealogies of religion: Discipline and reasons of power in Christianity and Islam*, John Hopkins University Press, 1993.

[9] For a more detailed comparison of the American and French model of secularism see, Huma Ali, "Religion, discrimination and assimilation: a comparison of contemporary France and the United States," Dietrich College Honors Theses, 2012.

political leaders.[10] However, the understanding of secularization crystallized during the nineteenth century with rising of the secular societies in Western Europe.

In 1851, the term secularism was defined formally by George Jacob Holyoake as "*a policy of life for those who do not accept theology.*"[11] Holyoake was far from alone; the influential thinkers of the nineteenth century such as Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx believed that the significance of religion would gradually decrease with the rising of modern industrial society. Although their analyses differed somewhat in the details, all agreed that the significance of the religion would be definitely on the decline. For instance, Weber was one of the founding figures in the field of sociology used the term secularization as "disenchantment of the world"[12] which meant rationalization and moving away from sacred and spiritual. This approach gave rise to the classical theory of secularization, which emerged as the field of sociology at nearly the same time with the meaning of modernization. According to Jurgen Habermas, the concept of modern emerged from the idea of recapturing the capacity of 'old' rather than rupture of the old in the cultural traditions.[13] However, Along with rationalization, urbanization, and bureaucratization, secularization was also considered as a necessary part of being modern. As a consequent, the nature of secularism occurred as it acts as a central political project for the state both to practice its power over society and to legitimize it with reference to the normative primacy of secular reason over traditional values and beliefs. Thus, the political function of secularism became more important and effective than its sociological function as a defining element of modernity.

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[10] John Keane, "Secularism?", *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 71, Issue Supplement s1, August 2000, p. 5–19.

[11] George Jacob Holyoake, *The Principles of Secularism*, rev. 3rd ed. (London: Austin and Company, 1870), 6. Cited by Andrew Davison, "Turkey, a "Secular" State?: The Challenge of Description", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 102, No. 2/3, Spring/Summer 2003, p. 334.

[12] See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, (Trans.) Talcott Parsons, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958.

[13] See Jurgen Habermas, *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*, (trans.) Shierry Weber Nicholsen and Jerry A. Stark, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1988.

In parallel, studies of the 1960s in the field of sociology stated that secularization was directly associated with modernization in terms of a gradual process that leads to the declining influence of religion in social institutions, communal life and human relationships. [14] From this perspective, as societies become increasingly modernized, religion would lose its social and political functions, and would operate at individual level. [15] In 1967, Peter Berger, who was one of the prominent scholars developed the classical secularization theory in the twentieth century, clarified the term of secularization as "*the process by which sectors of society are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols.*"[16] It could be easily said that in the early twentieth century, there were important developments supported this usage of secularization. Firstly, it was obviously seen that religion lost its social functions, as a result of the establishment and expansion of secular institutions in the fields of social and political activity once controlled by the church. Secondly, it was noticed that the long-standing decline in religious values, beliefs, and practices occurred most visibly among the most modernized and prosperous sectors of the society.[17]

However, this view of secularism since the Enlightenment, as well as the place of religion in modern life, required to be revised with the increasing role of religion in a number of social transformations throughout the post-Cold War world.[18] Contrary to the all expectations, which indicated the big decline of the religion, the presence and impact of religion has remained as vibrant. This development was characterized as the resurgence of the religion displayed that it was indispensable to criticize the classical secularization theory. Consequently, there has been a growth of interest to criticize the secularization theory from the mid-1980s onwards. First of all, it was emphasized that

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[14] Philips S. Gorski, "Historicizing the Secularization Debate: An Agenda for Research", *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p.110.

[15] See Brian R. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, C.A. Watts, London, 1966.

[16] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, N.Y.: Doubleday, Garden City, 1967; rprt. 1990, p. 107

[17] Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics* Worldwide, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 4-7.

[18] For a more detailed historical background see Steve Bruce, *Politics and Religion*, Polity, Cambridge, 2003.

the classical secularization theory was still significant with regard to explain the historical development of the relationship between religion, society and state in the Western countries, but its claims was limited suitability to the Western countries owing to the specific historical and cultural development conditions.[19] Secondly, some social scientists suggested replacing it with a new theory[20] or declared it to be buried.[21] In 1999, Berger, who was previously proponent of this theory, withdrew his earlier statements and wrote "the theory was incapable of making sense of the empirical evidence from different parts of the world."[22] In the same year, in United States particularly, Stark and colleagues developed the supply-side theory based on the rational-choice oriented religious market model to replace secularization theory.[23]

The disagreement between supply-siders and secularization theorists on the different interpretations of secularism and secularization cannot be resolved in academic discourse; however at least three indispensable findings can be emphasized. First, Western narrative of secularization had to change radically by considering that there was no one-to-one correspondence between the secularization theories and practices in the worldwide. Second, secularization seemed successful politically by realizing separation of religion from politics, but it has always faced the problem of legitimacy, especially in terms of supposing the privatization of religion will lead to its declining social significance in society. Third, non-Western countries and non-Christian religions, which are generally left out of this debate, became the focus of academic consideration. As a result, debates about the meaning of the secularization concept or the implications

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[19] See Jeffrey K. Hadden, "Toward Desacralizing Secularization Theory", *Social Forces* 65, 1987, p. 587-611; Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, University of Chicago Press, 1994.

[20] Stephen Warner, "Work in Progress toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of Religion in the United States", *American Journal of Sociology* 9, 1993, p. 1044-1093.

[21] Rodney Stark, "Secularization, R.I.P.", *Sociology of Religion* 60, 1999, p. 249-273.

[22] P. L. Berger, "The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview", in *The Desecularization of the World, Resurgent Religion in World Politics*, (ed.) Peter L. Berger, Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington, 1999, p. 1-18.

[23] Philip Gorski and Ateş Altınordu, "After Secularization?" *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 34, 2008, p. 57.

of secularization theory were confronted with the variety of secularisms, and it was obviously seen that there is a various range of secularisms within different historical experiences of several societies, rather than one universal or normative secularization process.[24]

1.2. Definition and Characteristics of Secularism in Turkish Experience

As indicated above, within the social sciences a general theory of secularization was developed at first modern European and later increasingly globalized historical transformations. However, the universality of the secularization theory has been one of the most contested debates in the social sciences especially in terms of its applicability in non-Christian and non-Western societies. As most of the previous studies take into account that the concepts such as "secular," "secularism," and "secularization" were imported from the West like many other ideas; however, those took roots in the non-Western countries varying from their original sources within different social and historical contexts.[25] In parallel to this, in this study, the idea of secularization in Muslim-majority societies is presented as a sociological and political process has affected the Muslim world, rather than the argument that secularization as an alien concept.[26] In this sense, Turkey's experience with secularization since the late Ottoman period is one of the prominent models of secularization in a non-Western context. In order to better understand and interpret the Turkish experience, as well as, its relation to modernization and Westernization, it is vital to review existing understandings and to

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[24] Nilüfer Göle, "Manifestations of the Religious-Secular Divide: Self, State, and the Public Sphere", in *Comparative Secularisms in a Global Age*, (ed.) Linell E. Cady and Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Palgrave Macmillan, November 2013, p. 41-56.

[25] It is presented with reference to scholars such as Asad and Taylor, who have pointed to various practices and ways of secular being. See Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity (Cultural Memory in the Present)*, Stanford University Press, 2003; see also CharlesTaylor, *A Secular Age*, Harvard University Press, 2009.

[26] One of the most prominent scholars, Bernard Lewis has stated that secularization was an alien concept for the Muslim world by supposing contrasts between Christian and Muslim history. See Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, Oxford University Press, 2002.

introduce some implications about Turkish secularism from the late Ottoman to the Turkish Republic.

1.2.1. Different Definitions of Secularism for the Turkish Experience

Although much of the contemporary discussions revolving around the relationship between religion and politics in Turkey even today, there are diverse definitions and analyses in the literature dealing with the concept of secularism. However, in the contemporary literature, the most common usage of secularism in Turkish is "laicism" (*laiklik*), as a term comes from French origin. Most of time, scholars quite often use the terms laicism and secularism interchangeably in both of the Turkish-written sources and English-written texts.

In the early debates, some Turkish intellectuals preferred to use laicism instead of secularism. For instance, Ziya Gökalp, who concerned the compatibility of Islam with modernity by pursuing the positivist ideas, rendered the term "*laïque*" in French as "*lâ-dînî*" in the early twentieth century. However, it meant nonreligious and its connotation was atheism in Turkish, so it was replaced with the word "*laik.*"[27] By considering the thought of Gökalp, this term referred to the French experience, which associated with the French Jacobin tradition, was entirely antagonistic to religion.

Contrary to this early attempt to describe the Turkish secularism, Niyazi Berkes also offered that the concept of "secularism" rather than "laicism" had to be used for the Turkish case. Indeed, he also believed that Turkish experience was based on the radical Jacobin laicism in France; but he considered the etymologic origins of laicism,[28] which referred to the distinction of the laity from the clergy within the Western Christian context, where the organization of the church was a major issue. Therefore, he maintained that the term laicism was incompatible with Islam or Ottoman tradition.[29]

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[27] See Andrew Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey: A Hermeneutic Reconsideration*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1998.

[28] Laicism comes from the Greek words *laos*, the people, and *laikos*, the lay. See Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey,* Routledge, New York, 1998.

[29] Ibid.

Berkes outlined the history of Ottoman secularization as the history of the basic conflict between the forces of change and progress and the forces of tradition. This dichotomous perspective of the modernization paradigm was the main theme of his well-known work on secularism in Turkey.

Indeed, when one considered that the abolishing of the caliphate, the closure of all Islamic higher education institutions and *tariqats* (religious orders), and the adoption of European codes of law in the early years of Turkish Republic, it could be claimed that what was aimed by the founders of Turkish Republic corresponded to the French model. These reforms were designed to serve the aim of separation between state and religion. On the other hand, the organization of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, and the state project to offer an "official Islam" to the public by cutting off the power of independent religious organizations, and educating all the religious officials by the state do not fit into the separationist model of French secularism. Therefore, the Turkish experience is not entirely matching with the French secularism, because of the direct intervention of state on religion, especially Islam. In parallel, Andrew Davison wrote one of the recent accounts of secularism in Turkey, stated that the concept of laicism was still more compatible with the unique character of the Turkish experience. He argued that that the term laicism indicated the transfer of some fields, such as education and governance, to coordinate control. In addition, Ahmet Kuru, who highlighted the variation of state policies toward religion in his recent study, proposed that Turkey could be classify as in the same "assertive secular" category with France as opposed to the "passive secular" United States.[30]

Moreover, particularly the English-written texts use either "secularism" or "laicism" referring to Turkish secularism. For instance, in one of the most famous works on the history of modern Turkey, Bernard Lewis has mainly used "secularism" without emphasizing any difference between "secularism" and "laicism."[31] In addition, as the most prominent scholars write about the modern Turkish history, Şerif Mardin,

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[30] See Ahmet T. Kuru, *Secularism and State Policies toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

[31] See Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1968.

Eric Zürcher and Feroz Ahmad also do not conceptualize the usage of "secularization" and "secularism" while describing the Turkish experience.[32]

By considering the attempts to clarify the secularism in Turkey with different usages, both of them defined it with one main characteristic that is associated with the position of state and its institutions versus religion. When one considered the difference usages of Turkish secularism, it was clearly seen that laicism was used as a form of secularism, although it has its own peculiarities in the Turkish experience. Therefore, the more general term of "secularism" instead of the particularly French concept of "laicism" is preferred in this study.

1.2.2. A Historical Overview of Secularism in Turkey

Turkey as a member of the Islamic civilization, even its most modernized, Westernized and secular member as a non-Western society, has practiced secularization in the form of modernization, which had already started in the Westernization policies of the late Ottoman period.[33] The adoption of Western type modernity in the Ottoman Empire had started with the decline of the state against the Western Europe that was interpreted as a kind of civilizational decline by the intellectuals who were sent to Europe for education starting with the eighteenth century.[34] These intellectuals met the ideas of democracy, equality, progress, and science in the West. This ideological transformation was founded a background for the official reform movement and institutional modernization

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[32] See Şerif Mardin, "Religion and Secularism in Turkey", in Ali Kazancıgil & Ergun Özbudun (eds.), *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, C. Hurst&Company, London, 1981, reprint 1997, p. 191-210; Eric Zürcher, Turkey*: A Modern History*, I.B. Tauris, London, 1993, reprint 1997; Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, Routledge, London; New York, 1993.

[33] Indeed, even the pre-modern Ottoman era cannot be claimed to lack the idea of secularism. The state tradition of Ottoman Empire has often defined by historians as the tradition of *din u devlet* that is a dual system of political legitimacy in which both Islam and the state were sources of legislation. See, Halil Inalcık, "The Nature of Traditional Society: Turkey," in *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*, (ed.) Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1964, p. 42-63.

[34] İlber Ortaylı, "Osmanlı'da 18. Yüzyıl Düşünce Dünyasına Dair Notlar", in Mehmet Ö. Alkan (ed.), *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi*, İletişim, Istanbul, 2001, p. 37-41.

of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century.[35] The institutional modernization process started firstly with the establishing of Western designed secular institutions, including the professional army during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II.

However, this modernization process had great influence on the private life of the people as well as on the institutional levels of society; for instance, new family law or the secular schools opened for girls was significant amendments towards the social life. It must be noted here that this kind of changes were justified by the Ottoman bureaucratic elites as being "essential for the well-being of the Islamic community."[36] Indeed, even though the reforms were made with European influence, the primary objective of the Ottoman administration was to maintain the traditional structure in terms of being able to save the state, so the "*new*" was considering as a condition to transform the "*old*."[37]

Besides the major modernizing and Westernizing reforms, the first significant secularizing attempt was seen with the declaration in 1839 of the imperial edict known as the *Hatt-ı Şerif of* Gülhane, which guaranteed Ottoman subjects' life, honor and property regardless of their religion. The second development of the secularization in the Ottoman Empire was the Reform Edict of 1856 (*Tanzimat*), which made equal Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire in the grounds of taxation, public employment, and military service.[38] However, even in this developments Islam continued to be the legitimizing framework by considering the settled place of Islam in Ottoman society. This dualist characteristic of the Ottoman modernization and secularization process gave rise to dichotomies such as "*old*" and "*new*" or "*traditional*" and "*Western*" that would lead to not just the failure of the reform process but also conflicts between the old and new cultural elements in the social life. Consequently,

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[35] Şerif Mardin, "Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesi", in Mehmet Ö. Alkan (ed.), *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 1: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi*, İletişim, Istanbul, 2001, p. 42-53.

[36] İnalcık, 1964, p. 57.

[37] Reşat Kasaba, "Kemalist Certainties and Modern Ambiguities," in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, (ed.) Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, University of Washington, 1997, p. 24.

[38] Berkes, 1998, p. 152.

Ottoman intellectuals had produced three proposals to overcome the crisis: Ottomanism (*Osmanlıcılık*), Islamism (*İslamcılık*) and Turkism (*Türkçülük*). While Ottomanism was falling as a political ideology, Islamism and Turkism would be among the items of the political agenda throughout the history of the Turkish Republic.

Indeed, the declaration of the Constitutional Monarchy in 1908 was the most significant development of secularization in the Ottoman. Since the *Tanzimat* Period, Westernist/modernist thought and its supporters gained a serious political power for the first time in II Constitutional Monarchy. In that period, politicians and intellectuals realized that the overthrown of Abdülhamit's rule, which was considered as the cause of all evil things, did not prevent the decline of the Empire. In order to provide the salvation of the Empire, they pursued more radical solutions and the idea of social transformation was added to agenda.[39]

In contrast to the Ottoman period, in which the transformation process had been much smoother, allowing the accommodation of both traditional and modern worldviews within the borders of the empire, the Republican era started in the structure of a nation state that turned its face to the West; thus, no Islamic justification was needed in Westernizing the country. When the Turkish Republic was established, its official ideology was based on secularism as the basic principle. In accordance with this principle, the new Republican was aiming to create a secular state and a secular society. In this sense, secularization was considered as the process of transformation from a mode of life to another. As Mert has indicated that "secularism, which originates from the French political organization and can be called as separation of religion from the state officially, is one of the expressions of secular political organization. In addition, each of the modern nation state is secular political mechanism."[40]

The most important focus of the literature of secularism in Turkey was the secularism discourse and understanding of Republican elites. The discourse, which consisted of both continuity and discontinuity between the Republican and Ottoman periods during 1920s, influenced the secular politics of the *Kemalist* regime became more authoritarian during the 1930s. However, focusing on the only top down reforms

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[39] Nuray Mert, *Laiklik Tartışmasına Kavramsal Bir Bakış: Cumhuriyet Kurulurken Laik Düşünce*, Bağlam, 1994, p. 57-58.

[40]Ibid., p. 37.

and political rhetoric would fall short in order to understand all aspects of the secularization. In addition, when to regard the implementation in practice and social responses, one can face with confusing structure. This structure demonstrated that *Kemalist* ideology and its social imaginations have significantly shaped the policies applied in the context of secularism; but, they have not determined these policies and practices, because it was uneasy to transform the existence of some religious or traditional practices and institutions, which referred to Muslim identity in the society. In addition to this, the problems stemmed from a new established regime in terms of the state capacity and the necessities of nation building process made also this transformation difficult. Therefore, it is difficult to say that Republican secularization was a solid, determined project; however, it can be defined as a gradual process or an evolution towards a more authoritarian character.[41] For instance, the religious sprit formed during the National Struggle and in the early years of the Republican regime had started to modify after the Sheikh Said rebellion caused a discussion of the limits of the new regime and its ability to spread the Republican ideas. This experience would lead to a greater degree of authoritarianism in the attitude of the *Kemalist* elite in particular with regard to religion as a part of social life. Both the experience of Free Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*)[42] and the *Menemen* incident resulted in the decrease of the continuity elements in the political life. However, the supervisory and regulatory impact of the state on religious practices became increasingly visible and those were transformed in full compliance with the new, modern, and national definition of the Republic. At the same time, this transformation was important to understand the capacity of the state in terms of reconciliation and applying to religious practices. Therefore, it can be said that *Kemalist* secularization politics based on an idea of redefining the religion in modern and national characteristic, rather than removing the religion and religious references in public sphere.[43] Consequently, secularization

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[41] Sevgi Adak, "Kemalist Laikliğin Oluşum Sürecinde Ramazanlar", *Tarih ve Toplum*, No.11, 2010, p. 47-88.

[42] See Wakter Weiker "The Free Party, 1930", in *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey*, (ed.) Metin Heper and Jacob M. Landau, I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, London, 1991.

[43] Kemalizmin İslam söylemi ve bu söylemin değişimi üzerine see Umut Azak, *Islam and Secularism in Turkey: Kemalism, Religion, and the Nation State*, London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010.

process in the Turkish case started with modernization and Westernization from the late Ottoman to the Republican Turkey that included changes affecting social and cultural life; however, laicism could be understood as a process included legal and political reforms to laicize the state apparatus in the Republican era. Therefore, secularization and laicism were associated and intertwined concepts in the Turkish case.[44]

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[44] Mert, 1994, p. 17.

Chapter 2

**THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF *BÜYÜK DOĞU*'S OPPOSITION
TO SECULARIZATION**

2.1. An Overview of *Büyük Doğu*

The most remarkable consequence of the Turkish democratic transition period between 1945 and 1950 was the revival of the opposition against the one-party regime. The opposition groups and its ideological activities have mostly applied to the journals to create political consciousness and public opinion both during the second constitutional period of the Ottoman Empire and the early period of Turkish Republic. In line with that, most recent studies have focused on the journals that can be considered one of the most factual historical sources in understand the Turkish society in the past, to evaluate its evolvement into the current of affairs, and to gain insight about the future.

Büyük Doğu (Great East) adopted a religious nationalist (*milliyetçi mukaddesatçı*) perspective[45] and became one of the most permanent journals in the Turkish press history. Therefore, the review of *Büyük Doğu* might be significant to understand the religious opposition, which leads to the current debates of Turkish politics. This chapter aims to work out the general content of *Büyük Doğu* between 1945 and 1950, when it's ideological tendency which was in opposition to the regime came to the fore. From the first issue's publication in 1943, the journal was remarkable in terms of its religious references; yet its critiques were mostly against the one-party regime and the latter's ideological structure which had become apparent since 1945.

The journal was published periodically from 1943 to 1978, despite it having been closed down from time to time by regime forces or the lack of material resources. However, it always republished its first issue after each closure cases.[46] In general,

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[45] Tanıl Bora, *Türk Sağının Üç Hali Milliyetçilik, Muhafazakarlık, İslamcılık*, İstanbul: Birikim Yayınları/Yerli Araştırmalar Dizisi, 1999, 2nd edition, p.125-130.

[46] Orhan Okay, "Büyük Doğu," Tdv/Dia İslâm Ansiklopedisi, V 6, p. 513.

Büyük Doğu is considered as five sequential editions between 1945 and 1950.[47] Some distinguished intellectuals, writers and poets of the time sent their works to this journal. The intellectual significance of *Büyük Doğu* arose from being able to point out the problems in the foundation period of the republic, the desire of the society for a new formation and general conditions of the time since this journal consisted of the authors who personally witnessed the establishment of the Turkish Republic. However, *Büyük Doğu* was shaped by the ideas of its initial editor Necip Fazıl Kısakürek.

Kısakürek, was a famous poet and a committed *Kemalist* of the 1920s and early 1930s, who later in the mid-1930s came under the influence of a *Naqshbandi* sheikh, Sheikh Abdülhakîm Arvâsî. Kısakürek would be one of the influential figures in the development of the Islamic thought in Turkey, especially in the post-1960.[48] When the Law on the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu*) banned dozens of newspapers and journals in 1925, the Islamist current of thought was also pushed out of the political arena. As a result, that is to say that there was no active Islamist political opposition to the republican revolutions from 1925 to 1945. However, there were another journals after the introduction of the Latin alphabet in 1928 with the state's financial help for the press organs. For instance, in 1939, Nurettin Topçu published the journal of *Hareket* to initiate an intellectual movement, which was different from dominant thoughts in the Republican period. The journal was published periodically from 1939 to 1979, despite it having been closed down from time to. It could be seen as one of the significant attempts in terms of creating an atmosphere for the opposition to the regime. In addition, *Sebilürreşad*, whose first issue was published in 1948, was another influential Islamic journal of the period. The owner of the journal was Eşref Edip Fergan, who had been the publisher of a journal with the same name during the Second Constitutional period in 1908–19. In the transition period to democracy, some

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[47] It's periods, publishing dates, and publication types were as follows:
1th period was between 2 November 1945-13 December 1946; 2nd period was between 18 April 1947 - 6 June 1947, and 3rd period was between 10 October 1947 - 2 April 1948. In these three periods, it was published weekly as 87 issues in total. In the following years, 4th period was published weekly from 11 March 1949 to 26 August 1949 as 25 issues in total. Finally, 5th period was published weekly from 14 October 1949 to 29 June 1950 as 62 issues in total.

[48] Erdem Bayazıt, "Üstad," in *Necip Fazıl Armağanı*, (ed.) Musatafa Miyasoğlu, Marifet, İstanbul, 1996, p. 306-312.

journals such as *Selâmet* published by Ömer Rıza Doğrul in 1945–49, *Millet* published by Cemal Kutay in 1946-50, *Serdengeçti* published by Osman Yüksel Serdengeçti in 1946–60; and these publications became platforms where the single-party regime's neglect of religion was criticized.[49] However, it should be noted that *Büyük Doğu* was different from the other Islamist journals, because it adopted a strong political stance that would be transformed as a political organization in 1949.

Interestingly, *Büyük Doğu* was the title of Kısakürek's poet that was written as a national anthem in 1937 to be presented to Atatürk.[50] In these years, he had good relations with the Kemalist establishment and maintained no antagonistic stances against the regime.[51] However, since 1945, *Büyük Doğu* became an opposite of the *official ideology*. For instance, the journal introduced solutions to the social problems within its ideological background, which aimed to be "the voice" of conservative, nationalist and Islamic minded people. The example of this kind of solutions can be seen in the journal expression. In addition to the political ideological base of *Büyük Doğu*, Kısakürek remained to publish the literary work in this journal. Moreover, he established a political organization around the ideas of the journal in 1949. *Büyük Doğu* was one of the main media organs that was accessible to a wider audience, and became the instrument of a mission and the basis of an Islamic movement. As a result, the journal played an important role in illuminating the philosophical setting for the Islamist ideology in the Turkish press history.

The front and back covers of the journal were printed in color. It consisted of sixteen pages including the cover pages. Although its format was changed from time to time due to the fact that political, juridical and economical elements affected the publication's continuity, maintaining its classic titles and plan all throughout was one of the main targets. The covers were designed to reflect the main themes of the respective issue. The critiques of the current government, state system, and socio-cultural problems were among the frequently subjects on the covers. As stated in the

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[49] Fahrettin Gün, *Sebilürreşad Dergisi Ekseninde Çok Partili Hayata Geçerken İslamcılara Göre Din Siyaset ve Laiklik (1948-1954)*, Beyan Yayınları, p. 78-84.

[50] Okay, ibid., p. 514.

[51] Ayşe Hür, "Necip Fazıl Kısakürek'in 'öteki' portresi," *Radikal*, January 6, 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal.aspx?atype=radikalyazar&articleid=1115579.

Kısakürek's articles, his attitude against Republican People's Party (RPP) that stands for the official ideology was reflected on that covers. For instance, the title of "*Başımızda Kulak İstiyoruz*" and Kısakürek's article called as "*Devlet Reisinin Lisanından*" in the journal's cover that published on 13 December 1946 and stand out the reaction of the ruling party because it was regarded as an insult to İsmet İnönü, who was deaf person. For this reason, the journal was closed for a while. Thereupon Kısakürek found guilty again for having insulted Turkishness (*Türklüğe hakaret davası*) in 1947. [52] His antagonistic position against the regime completely crystallized after these closure cases.

Indeed, *Büyük Doğu* was known with its general features such as its special covers, which contained color pictures and short articles were related with the context of the issues. However, after the closure cases, the journal's broadcasting policy was revised and the journal's covers started publishing with a different format contains short articles that clearly express the ideas in 1947. In addition to this, its content also changed moving towards rather religious themes in 1949. In the same year, a new political party, the Democrat Party (DP), was established and it was thought as an opportunity for the opposition in the parliament. The circumstances reflected on both the cover and context of *Büyük Doğu* and Kısakürek's criticism became more radical. Especially the RPP's remaining in power for 27 years and its performances were criticized more intensively in the journal during this era.[53]

Another general feature of *Büyük Doğu* was that certain pages did not change and consisted of particular subjects in each and every of the journal's issues. To exemplify, the title of the second page was "*Büyük Doğu'ya Doğru*" that included two main columns were called "*Ideolocya Örgüsü*" and "*1001 Çerçeveden*" had written by Kısakürek. The most important column in that page was "*Ideolocya Örgüsü*" since it was kind a "manifesto" that defined the limits of the "East" and "West" at first and in the following issues, it offered a new model of state and society. It can be seen as Necip Fazıl's philosophical work and represents the journal's vision.

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[52] See Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Mü*dafaalarım*, *Büyük Doğu*, 1994, p. 91-92.

[53] Dedektif X Bir; "İsmet İnönü ve Türklük," *BD*., December 29, 1950, p. 8.

The third page's title was "*İş ve Hedef*" that mostly contained commentaries, opinions and criticisms about the topic of social morality. It is significant that several authors in each issue wrote that column. In effect, *Büyük Doğu* had a rich cadre of writers in its early periods from 1943 to 1950. The authors were not only from the Turkish right, nationalist, conservative or Islamist line but represented a much broader spectrum from left to right. [54] This somewhat reflected the political legacy of the Republican Party's single party rule from 1923 to 1946 that forced left and right wings to gather under a single party formation. In fact, it was not possible to distinguish between the right and left wing. [55] The main polarization among the authors of *Büyük Doğu* became visible after the transition to multiparty politics. From that time on, only the opponents of the regime and the authors in Islamist line wrote in the journal. In addition to this, the journal often changed its early rich cadre because of Kısakürek's Islamic-motivated polemical struggle against the regime.

On page four of the journal, there were mainly interviews, questionnaires and literary works. The columnists had changed constantly as well on that page. It is worthy of note that a questionnaire was published on that page during the first five issue of the journal in 1945. It was named as "*Nefs Muhasebesi*" consisting of nine questions asked 75 Turkish intellectuals. [56] The questionnaire purposed to state the ideas of respondents about certain subjects such as World War II, modernization process, and moral decline in the society. However, respondents could not give details in their answers because the

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[54] For example; Asaf Halet Çelebi, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, Burhan Toprak, Ali Fuat Başgil, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Burhan Belge, Oktay Akbal, Taha Akyol, Pertev Naili Boratav, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı, Peyami Safa, Cemil Meriç, Nurettin Topçu, Eşref Edip (Fergan), Mümtaz Turhan, M. Şekip Tunç, Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca, Kazım Nami Duru, Ziya Osman Saba.

[55] There were different interpretations of the ideological positions in the RPP. See Samet Ağaoğlu, "Atatürk Devrinin Sonlarına Doğru Beliren Akımlar," *Demokrat Parti'nin Doğuş ve Yükseliş Sebepleri,* Baha Matbaası, İstanbul, 1972, p. 72-75.

[56] Hasan Ali Yücel, Rıza Tevfik, Aka Gündüz, Edip Resit Rey (former minister), Kazım Nami Duru, Falih Rıfkı Atay, Mazhar Osman (professor), Hakkı Tarık Us (chairman of the press association), Cemal Nadir, Ahmet Emin Yalman (editor), Nuri Demirag, Sükrü Baban (professor), Cemal Tollu, Cemil Reşit Rey, Salih Zeki Atay, Nafi Atuf Kansu, Sedat Simavi, Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu, Burhan Felek, Tevfik Saglam, Ali Fuad Basgil (proffesor), Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, Mehmet Ali Bayar (professor), Ziyaeddin Fahri Fındıkoglu (professor), Orhan Seyfi Orhan, Asım Us, Sevket Rado, Cemalleddin Saraçoglu were some of the respondents.

questions designed as yes-no questions to shape the answers in perspective of the journal.[57]

Furthermore, as Orhan Okay states, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek wrote a myriad of articles under several pseudonyms in the journal. [58] For instance; on page four, Kısakürek himself, under the pseudonym "*Hikmet Sahibinin Abidinin Kölesi*" began to write the column of "*Efendimiz, Kurtarıcımız, Müjdecimiz'den*" in 1946. This column was significant in terms of its religious content including elements of *Islamic Sufism*. He wrote another column under the title of "*Halkadan Parıltılar*" by using a different penname "*Adıdeğmez,*" on the page five. Its subjects were again religion and Islam. In 1947, its topic remained the same but the title changed as "*Çöle İnen Nur.*" In addition to this, on the page eleven, Kısakürek also wrote the article of "*Tanrıkulundan Dinlediklerim*". It was as an interview with a fictional character that was "*Tanrıkulu.*" Kısakürek especially tried to convey his views about the society and current politics through that article.

On the page six, different authors had written on various topics. Not only such articles but also literary works such as poems, stories and dramas could be seen time to time on that page. In a similar vein, some academicians, authors, and researchers had written on art, science, and politics on the page seven. However, the journal gave wide coverage to the subjects of domestic and foreign policy. Especially the pages eight and nine had been titled as "*Hadiselerin Bilançosu*" including political analysis of mainly Necip Fazıl Kısakürek (under pseudonyms) and some authors.

Classic literary works from all around the glob were usually published on the page ten. It is confirmed that the idea of *Büyük Doğu* embraced both of the East and West. As for the pages twelve and fourteen, there were articles about historical events or essays on political issues: Reşat Ekrem Koçu, Ziya Şakir and Kazım Nami Duru were some of the authors on that page. On the page thirteen, the stories were written by the distinguished authors of the time were published usually such as Sait Faik Abasıyanık.

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[57] See the first five issues of Büyük Doğu in 1945.

[58] The pseudonyms, which were used by Kısakürek in the journal: Adıdeğmez, Mürid, Dilci, Ozan, Adını Vermeyen Profesör, Dedektif X Bir, Prof. Ş.Ü., Dağların Çocuğu, Laedri, Muhasebeci, Bandai, Ne-Fe-Ka, Be-De, Ahmet Abdülbaki, and Hikmet Sahibinin Abidinin Kölesi, see Orhan Okay, "Büyük Doğu," Tdv/Dia İslâm Ansiklopedisi, V 6, p. 513-514.

As for the page fifteen, the interviews with the bureaucrats and intellectuals were printed. Those people were chosen particularly as being suitable for the religious nationalist (*milliyetçi mukaddesatçı*) opposition of *Büyük Doğu*. The interview with Nuri Demirağ, who established National Development Party in 1945, can be given as an example.[59]

The back cover of *Büyük Doğu* was usually designed to contain several different columns. One of the columns' name was "*Gülebilsek*" that was written by Necip Fazıl Kısakürek under the penname, "*İstanbullu*." In that column, there were debates, criticisms, and chaffs of poets, scholars, and authors. After 1947, the back cover began to publish in the form of a single column under the title of "*Gülebilsek*." Another column related to linguistic issue called as "*Zavallı Türkçe*" that was written by Kısakürek under the pseudonym, "*Dilci*." In that column, he suggested Turkish translations for foreign origin words that arose from Turkism ideology of the journal. In addition, the two columns of the back cover were "*Muhaşeret Edebi*" and "*Ev ve Kadın*" that were written by Neslihan Kısakürek. Those columns were published as a single column time to time; and towards to final issues of 1946, it was removed. In the first issue of 1945, Neslihan Kısakürek stated in the article that Necip Fazıl wanted her to write in the journal.[60] According to Akay, however, Neslihan Kısakürek was also one of the pennames of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek.[61]

The name of the column in the middle of the back cover was "*Sizinle Başbaşa*" that consisted of masthead, reader's announcements and letters. Moreover, there were sometimes puzzles, crosswords, and anecdotes in that column. In general, the format of the column did not change until the issues of 1950. The news about budget of the journal or the next issue's subjects was also seen in that page. Finally, another noteworthy point is that between 1945 and 1950, *Büyük Doğu* did not accept any advertisements on its back cover as the journal in effect put the phrase "it does not take ads." on its back page. This stance may be considered as a result of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's ideological attitude.

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[59] Nejat Muhsinoğlu, Röportajlarımız; "Yeni Fırkalar," *BD*., November 2, 1945, p. 15.

[60] Neslihan Kısakürek, "Ev ve Kadın," *BD*., November 2, 1945, p. 16.

[61] Okay, ibid., p. 513.

2.2. The Criticism of Turkish Modernization in *Büyük Doğu*

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the republican reformers had aimed to establish an entirely new society through diminishing the traditional order. One of the main goals of the republican cadres was to apply a secular ideology instead of the religion, which was previously an instrument of the social and political identification. Therefore, secularism took its stand against the Islamic tradition of the Ottoman Empire through the reforms that were publicized "top down" and trained to create Western type state system and institutions, and new secular, urban citizens.

It is crucial to note that Kısakürek's intellectual formation firstly developed within this atmosphere, in which Kemalist principles such as modernization and secularization were very effective.[62] However, he, on the one hand, became to criticize the Kemalist regime and its modernization policies; on the other hand, he maintained to share many points with the regime. As a result, the purpose of this chapter is to highlight the common points to understand the relation between the regime and its opposition through *Büyük Doğu*. However, particular attention is paid to the critiques to the nature of Turkish modernization and an alternative modernization model was presented especially in the articles of Kısakürek.

2.2.1. Towards A Non-Western Modernization Perspective: as the Synthesis of the East-West

The main framework of the Turkish modernization was based on the Western rational mind, science and being a part of the Western civilization. Therefore, the discussion around the civilization and the separation of the West and East has been significant to the formation of the Turkish intellectuals, whether as Westernist or Islamist one.

Necip Fazıl Kısakürek was an Islamist intellectual,[63] who attempted to formulize Islam as an ideology. He was the ultimate polemicist in *Büyük Doğu* that popularized

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[62] Şerif Mardin (ed.), "Culture Change and Intellectual: A Study of the Effects of Secularization in Modern Turkey: Necip Fazıl and the Nakşibendi", *Cultural Transitions in the Middle East,* p. 194.

[63] Here Islamist will be used broadly to define individuals who take Islam and tradition

the oppositional language around Islamic values during the single-party regime. The main theme in *Büyük Doğu* was redesigning every aspects of life through the idea of "true revolution" [64] by revitalizing of Islam and criticizing of Kemalist modernization/Westernization. In parallel to this theme, Kısakürek was firstly focused on criticizing the modernization/Westernization reforms of the Republic. However, he did not only criticize the modernization movement in Turkey, but also expressed his ideas for a new modernization paradigm. In other words, he was searching for an alternative modernization concept in the form of non-Western perspective. It should be mentioned that Nilüfer Göle offers an intriguing interpretation: on the one hand the concept of alternative modernization requires the criticism of West and even its rejection, on the other hand it indicates a political and voluntary change model.[65] It can be seen under the title of "*Ideolocya Örgüsü,*" which was published with the signature of *Büyük Doğu,* but the real owner of the signature was Kısakürek. Its main theme was to present the ideal of *Büyük Doğu* and its change project *Başyücelik Devleti* (The State of Grandsublime).

Kısakürek attempted to demonstrate that *Büyük Doğu* was opposed to a specific form of modernization but not to modernity or modernization and its intention was to show the right path of modernization to the society. To Kısakürek and *Büyük Doğu*, the main weakness in the Turkish modernization had been its failure to understand the concepts of East and West, which were primary issues to develop the true modernization model. Therefore, Kısakürek was primarily focused on the limits of East and West by concentrating on the Islamist interpretation of East and West. In general, this idea was based on a distinction between the spiritual and material that was common among the Islamist thinkers in that period. In parallel, Kısakürek attempted to underline east's domination over the spiritual.[66] He conceptualized the East as a way of thinking

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as one of the primary sources of inspiration in intellectual writings and political activism. See Murat Güzel; "Necip Fazıl Kısakürek", *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Muhafazakârlık*, İletişimYayınları, 2003, p. 335.

[64] Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "İslam İnkilabı-Giriş", *BD.*, number 1, October 14, 1949, p. 2.

[65] Nilüfer Göle, "Batı Dışı Modernlik: Kavram Üzerine", *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*, V 3, 2004, p. 58.

[66] Işık Yanar, "Necip Fazıl Düşüncesinde Doğu-Batı ve Modernleşme," *Hece Dergisi*, No. 97, January 2005, p. 46.

was based on Islam and Islamic civilization, which included Arabs, Persians, Indians, Chinese, and Turks.[67] He sometimes called it as *Büyük Asya* (Great Asia); however, it can be said that the real region in his mind was Turkey On the other hand, he stated that the ideal of *Büyük Doğu* was not for a specific place and country, because it was universal as a way of existence or human state of mind.[68] Therefore, he thought that Muslims should not confine themselves to the concepts of East and West. He noted that this distinction is only used for analytical purposes. In this regard, Kısakürek indicated that this distinction for the first time used by Heredot to identify the Persians, who attacked to the Greeks. It was pointed out that Heredot was an ancient Greek historian has presented the East as the world of unconsciousness. Kısakürek believed that this characterization has remained unchanged until the Renaissance in the West. It was significant that after the Renaissance, just a few Western intellectuals began to realize the East as a kind of wonderland.[69]

Accordingly, Kısakürek suggested that the image of West in the eyes of East should be evaluated in three stages: before Islam, after Islam and after Renaissance. He had identified the West consisting of three main elements were the reason of ancient Greek, regulation of Rome, and Christian ethic. In his opinion, the intellectual development accelerated when the pressure of the Church and feudality came to an end after the period of Renaissance, but a spiritual crisis arose in the West. He supposed that the First World War and the Second World War should be seen as the main indicators of this crisis. Consequently, he asserted that while the material power of the West was increasing, its values in terms of moral and virtue decreased.[70]

On the other hand, the East was fragmented and full of dichotomies before Islam, but it was integrated by the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the Eastern civilization had

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[67] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Millet Millet Doğu, " *BD.*, number 10, January 4, 1946, p. 2.

[68] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Bölümler, " *BD.*, number 2, November 9, 1945, p. 2.

[69] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Garbın Doğuya Bakışı," *BD.*, number 3, November 16, 1945, p. 2.

[70] Kısakürek, Ideology Örgüsü; "Batının Batıya Bakışı," *BD.*, number 4, November 23, 1945, p. 2.

risen after Islam. However, the period of Renaissance represented the increasing of the West's material power. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire and Islamic civilization began to decline in this period, because there was no development would be parallel to the intellectual progress in the West. Finally, the West began to occupy the territories of East and it was proved the material superiority of West. When the *Tanzimat* reformers found themselves upon this material challenge, they had chosen the imitation of West. As well, *Büyük Doğu* interpreted the way of imitation as the acceptance of the defeat against the challenging world.

In addition, Kısakürek assumed that the decline of East took place in four stages: the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent, the *Tanzimat* period, the second Constitutional period, and finally the Turkish Republic.[71] He considered that the deviation of Muslims from the true Islamic principles of the early Islam was the beginning of the decline had started in the sixteenth century. Under the reign of Sultan Suleyman, it had been completed by the expanding influence of the fanatics who misinterpreted Islam to their self-interests.[72] Describing the process of modernization from *Tanzimat* to the Republic, Kısakürek stated that it robbed the society from its "essential roots" (*öz kökler*) by lost of identity in the *Tanzimat* and demolition of spiritual heritages in the Republic. From his perspective, these were the "false revolutions" that endeavored to adopt not only Western technology but also the civilization of the West.

To put it briefly, *Büyük Doğu* shared the Islamist idea of taking "good sides of the western civilization" while leaving its bad sides.[73] Therefore, the nature of the modernization reforms was often criticized in *Büyük Doğu* on the grounds that imitating the West. Moreover, Kısakürek called it as "*apish westernization*" in his column.[74] According to him, the modernization/Westernization efforts of politicians and

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[71] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Kanuni Devrinde İslam Nasıl Bozuldu?" *BD.*, number 80, February 13, 1948, p. 2.

[72] Kısakürek used the definition of fanatics, those were affiliated with Islam, but at the same time they interpreted Islam in term of their interest.

[73] Mert, 1996, p. 129.

[74] Neslihan Kısakürek, Muaşeret Edebi; "Gayemiz," *BD.*, number 2, November 2, 1945, p. 16. Orhan Okay supposes that Neslihan Kısakürek was one of the pseudonyms of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek. See Orhan Okay, "Büyük Doğu", Tdv/Dia İslâm Ansiklopedisi, V 6, p. 513-514.

bureaucrats, who were far away from understanding the West, have contributed not to improvement but to the decline of Turkey.[75] He characterized the inner faces of reform initiatives, which appear positive at first glance, as a disaster.[76]

Kısakürek's strong language has been known as more remarkable than the content of his articles. In a similar vein, there was the idea of asking question is able to mold public opinion rather than answering the question in the journal.[77] Therefore, the questionnaire was under the title of "*Nefs Muhasebesi*" is significant to understand the stance of *Büyük Doğu*. It consisting nine questions asked 75 Turkish intellectuals and these questions were about the modernization policies of the government and the moral decline in Turkish society. As another feature of these questions that those were formulated as yes-no questions. One of the most remarkable questions was that "*Have you seen the fabrication language and foreign specialists in any country?*"[78] These issues were also discussed in his columns, in which especially under the title of "*Tanrıkulundan Dinlediklerim*," and it was definitely stated that he was against to bring foreign experts.[79] Additionally, Kısakürek made comments on the responses, and there were some well-known personalities of the time but some of them such as Kazım Karabekir, Memduh Şevket Esendal, Reşat Nuri, Behçet Kemal, Recep Peker, Halide Edip Adıvar, Sabiha Sertel, and Zekeriya Sertel refused the request of *Büyük Doğu*. Kısakürek criticized them in his article evaluated the results of the questionnaire. He stated that while most of them refused it without giving any reason, just Halide Edip Adıvar declared that she preferred to express her thoughts by writing articles.[80] This statement was inadequate for Kıskaürek, who articulated that these questions were chosen particularly to submit the truth in view of *Büyük Doğu*. He thought that when

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[75] Kısakürek insistently read the process of Turkish modernization as the decline see the cover of *BD*., number 3, October 28, 1949, p. 1.

[76] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; ¨Neye İnanıyoruz,¨ *BD*., number 6, April 25, 1947, p. 2.

[77] Akif Emre, "Büyük Doğu ve Gelecek Tasavvuru," *Hece Dergisi*, No. 97, January 2005, p. 50.

[78] Kısakürek, "Nefs Muhasebesi," *BD*., number 6, November 7, 1945, p. 4.

[79] Kısakürek, "Tanrıkulundan Dinlediklerim," *BD*., number 1, November 2, 1945, p. 11.

[80] Ibid., November 7, 1945, p. 4.

someone refused to answer them, they actually refused to face the truth and the ideal of *Büyük Doğu.*

All things considered, the ideal of *Büyük Doğu* was to synthesis the eastern spirit and moral values with the western positive sciences in order to give a birth to a new Eastern civilization. Nevertheless, the most vital question to answer was how to bring about a synthesis of these elements. In order to answer this question, Kısakürek had determined two ways. First of all, he continued to publish his journal *Büyük Doğu* interruptedly from 1940s to 1970s to share his ideological views in the public sphere. The articles in the journal generally directed redesigning every aspects of life by considering the principles of Islam. Secondly, Kısakürek attempted to establish a political party to participate in the political system. In order to understand the alternative modernization project of *Büyük Doğu,* its ideal state definition will be examined in the following part.

2.2.2. The Ideal Islamic State Definition: *Başyücelik Devleti* (The State of Grandsublime)

By considering the modernization concept of *Büyük Doğu*, it can be stated that there was a crucial common point between the Republican regime and the ideal of *Büyük Doğu*: both of them proposed that it is achievable to produce an idiosyncratic model for modernization. However, *Büyük Doğu*'s point of departure was different from the Republican regime, which adopted the Westernization mode to exclude Islam. Therefore, the ideal state of *Büyük Doğu* was proposed as an alternative state and society model by submitting Islam as an ideology. The new state model was mentioned for the first time under the title of "*Beklediğimiz İnkılâp*" in *Ideolocya Örgüsü*.[81] The analysis of the ideal of *Büyük Doğu* will be complemented through the evaluation of Kısakürek's ideal Islamic state[82]: *Başyücelik devleti* and its institutions.

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[81] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Beklediğimiz İnkılâp," *BD*., number 37, July 12, 1946, p. 2.

[82] As Koçak has argued that Kısakürek's *Başyücelik devleti* was not a personal utopia. It should be considered as one of the aims of *Büyük Doğu* and its publication policy. See Cemil Koçak, "Türk Milliyetçiliği'nin İslam'la Bulusması," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Muhafazakârlık,*: İletişim, İstanbul, 2004, p. 655-677.

Başyücelik devleti was consisted of mainly six parts: *Yüceler Kurultayı, Başyüce, Başyücelik Kurultayı, Yüce Din Dairesi, Halk Divanı,* and *Başyücelik Akademyası.* *Yüceler Kurultayı* was placed in a position of national parliaments. Similar to the democratic regimes, it was the place, where the all decisions were taken in the direction of laws. It is not clear who would elect the members of parliament but the members would be "*superior human beings*" who never had egoistic interests and who believed in God. Kısakürek justified this elitist formulation of assembly, in his own words; "the authority of true intellectuals would be the slavery to the truth."[83] According to Kısakürek, the truth is one (*Hakikat birdir*); however, the understanding of unlimited freedom (*başıboş hürriyet*), which was portrayed by Kısakürek as the reason behind the failure of the Turkish modernization process, would be harmful to the truth.[84] In parallel to this view, *Büyük Doğu*'s ideal state was based on notion that "sovereignty belonged to the God." In this state system, the major point to be appreciated was the moral standards of Islam, not the wishes of the people.[85] In addition, the scholars and artists, who were as the cadres of *Başyücelik Akademyası*, would be taken to special protection in *Başyücelik devleti*. Their duty was to submit their ideas to *Yüceler Kurultayı*.[86]

Yüceler Kurultayı selected the *başyüce* among their slate for five years. He was the prime and authorized to a high level of power, which did not contradict with the laws, recommended by *Yüceler Kurultayı*.[87] He was portrayed as being able to determine the rights of the society better than society itself. Reminding Platon's "philosopher king," Kısakürek imagined *başyü*ce as "an ideal person," who was at a higher level of morality, knowledge and intelligence. In addition, he was not only the executive but also the judiciary.[88] The role of the *başyüce* and the members of

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[83] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Yüceler Kurultayı," *BD*., number 38, July 19, 1946, p. 2.

[84] Kısakürek, "Başıboş Hürriyetçilik," *BD*., number 32, May 31, 1946, p. 11.

[85] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Teşkilat ve İdare," *BD*., number 32, October 27, 1950, p. 2.

[86] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Başyücelik Akademyası," *BD*., number 44, August 30, 1946, p. 2.

[87] "Başyüce ve Kurultay," *BD*., number 39, July 26, 1946, p. 2.

[88] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Başyüce," *BD*., number 40, August 2, 1946, p. 2.

başyücelik kurultayı was very large on condition that they was appreciated the moral criterions of Islam. [89] Another significant institution in *Başyü*celik *devleti* was Yü*ce Din Dairesi*. It manifested the knowledge and morality regarding government policies and was selected by the *başyü*ce. *Yüce Din Dairesi* would act as a major center of consultation for the state. [90] The members of the community could proclaim their problems to the *başyüce* in *Halk Divanı*.[91] Everyone had a matter in dispute could apply to *Halk Divanı*, which would be established on certain days of the year. However, it was a process, in which everyone had to be responsible for his or her complaints. It should be mentioned that Kısakürek regarded *Başyücelik devleti* as the most advanced form of republic.[92]

Indeed, Kısakürek believed that the modern political ideologies of his era such as communism, fascism or Nazism were not able to solve the problems and moral crisis of the West. Therefore, he insisted on putting the religion up against other ideologies and attempted developing a new ideology from Islam that would shape every aspect of political, social and individual life.[93] As a result, the ideal state of *Büyük Doğu* had a complex organization into every side of social and individual life. The state had to create and impose on society and individual what was good and had to remove totally what was immoral. In addition, in order to establish this ideal society, there would be strict punishments when necessary. For example, in every kind of theft, measure of punishment was to cut the handle of thief. [94] As a result, its main target was to characterize the social and private life with the morality, principles and ideals as being

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[89] *BD*., number 32, October 27, 1950, p. 11.

[90] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Hükümetin 11 Davası," *BD*., number 42, August 16, 1946, p. 2.

[91] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Halk Divanı," *BD*., number 43, August 23, 1946, p. 2.

[92] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Devlet," *BD*., number 11, December 23, 1949, p. 2.

[93] Abdurrahman Karadeniz, "Büyük Doğu'nun Siyaset, Toplum ve Devlet Tasarımı: İdeolocya Örgüsü", *Hece Dergisi*, No. 97, January 2005, p. 16.

[94] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Başyücelikte Ceza Ölçüsü," *BD*., number 46, September 13, 1946, p. 2.

in the perfect forms.[95] In addition, there were many articles in *Büyük Doğu* about women and their duties for the ideal society. For instance, being a good mother was considered as an essential duty of the women.[96] Moreover, within the commands of *Başyücelik devleti*, every forms of gambling, drinking alcohol and drug, adultery, interest, dancing, statue were illegal.[97] Therefore, according to many scholars Kısakürek's *Başyücelik devleti* was a totalitarian model and seemed to be influenced by the modern political ideologies such as liberal constitutionalism, and communism, fascism, and *Kemalism*.[98]

2.2.3. A Legal Attempt to Get into Politics: The Establishment of *Büyük Doğu Cemiyeti* (The Association of Great East)

When the Republican People's Party (RPP) allowed the establishment of the Democratic Party (DP) by some members of the RPP, the democratic transition started in 1945. It could provide the very possibilities for the establishment of political associations and *Büyük Doğu Cemiyeti* was such an organization. However, the transition period was one of the most problematical issues for *Büyük Doğu*. In his column, Peyami Safa asked some questions about the requirements of the liberal democracy and blamed both of the Republican top cadres and members of the new opposition party. He pointed out that their slogan "*towards the real democracy*" would raise doubt in the society by indicating the single party system was false. According to him, no one had any reason to transition aside from being motivated by international dynamics in favor of a multiparty system.[99] In addition, there was not a great ideological difference in relation to the *Kemalist* principles between the two parties in

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[95] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Başyücelikte Umumi Manzara," *BD*., number 47, September 20, 1946, p. 2.

[96] Cafer Şeno, "Kadın Çalışmamalı, " *BD*., number 50, October 11, 1946, p. 4.

[97] See Kısakürek, "Başyücelik Emirleri-Kumar," *BD*., number 34, November 10, 1950, p. 2; "Başyücelik Emirleri-İçki ve Zehir." *BD*., number 36, November 24, 1950, p. 2; "Başyücelik emirleri-Zina ve Fuhuş." *BD*., number 35, November 17, 1950, p. 2.

[98] See Cemil Koçak, 2004, p. 655-677.

[99] Peyami Safa, İs ve Hedef; "Sualler", *BD*., number 1, November 2, 1945, p. 3.

that period, so *Büyük Doğu* judged the establishment of the DP in the beginning of the transition period. Kısakürek also criticized the transition to multiparty politics. According to him, "democratization from above which is granted by the *Kemalist* elite with the limitation of democratic politics as a product of external influence, even by the force of the West."[100] Moreover, the government's attempt for democratization was characterized as a new kind of opportunism and camouflage by considering the democratization experiences in the past, and Nizamettin Nazif noted, "If they removed *Basın Kanunu* (Press Law), we could believe that the authoritarian regime would eliminated by the government."[101] In spite of rising demands for democracy between 1945 and 1946 in Turkey, *Büyük Doğu* did not call democracy or freedom except for the removing of the Press Law (*Basın Kanunu)*, which was strict to political publications. Indeed, to *Büyük Doğu*, there was no equivalence between the regime's understanding of the freedom and Islamic one. The current understanding of freedom was defined as unlimited freedom (*başıboş hürriyet*) by Kısakürek. He offered another freedom concept had to be understood in a limited way that it was fulfilled within the principles of Islam.[102]

From this perspective, Kısakürek formed a program of the *Büyük Doğu Cemiyeti* (The Association of Great East) that could be seen as a summary of *Büyük Doğu*'s ideal that aimed to gather Muslims around a view of world, human being and society.[103] However, it's the most indispensable purpose was to create a new generation from the Turkish youth.[104] Thus, Kısakürek submitted another significant question was how to establish an ideal model of people and society. In his standpoint, the association would be a pioneer in Turkey to follow the trail of the period of Prophet and his companions, which was named as a golden age by Islamist thinkers.

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[100] Be. De., Hadiselerin Muhasebesi; "Muhalefet," *BD*., number 1, November 2, 1945, p. 8; Kısakürek, "Artık Anlaşılıyor mu?," *BD*., number 42, August 16, 1946, p. 2.

[101] Nizamettin Nazif, "Bu Kanunu Kaldırınız!" *BD*., number 3, November 16, 1945, p. 3.

[102] Kısakürek, "Başıboş Hürriyetçilik," *BD*., number 32, May 31, 1946, p. 2.

[103] See ibid, p. 1-3.

[104] Kısakürek, "Büyük Doğu Cemiyeti Ana Nizamnamesi", *BD*., July 1, 1949, p. 2-3.

The members of the association had to have the following characteristics: to be deeply loyal to the national values, to adopt the ideal of *Büyük Doğu* unconditionally, and to turn the age of twenty-two. In addition, the system of thought, which would enable the ideology of the association, was such as spiritualism, moralism, nationalism, sociologism, personalism, interventionism, and protectionism in terms of economy. Finally, Kısakürek described some ideological groups as opposition to the principles of the association, and he used these terms: Godless people, those who adopted the materialism and communism, non-Muslims, cosmopolitans, those who dignify the individiualism, and Westernists who do not follow the conception of the East and West in *Büyük Doğu*.[105]

When Kısakürek established *Büyük Doğu Cemiyeti* (The Association of Great East) in 1949, its center was in Istanbul, but one of the main goals of the association was being organized across the country. In the same year, Kısakürek gave several conferences in various parts of Anatolia and the Association of Great East was soon started to open its branches in some cities.[106] Although Kısakürek emphasized that it was considered as a cultural association, there was a purpose to come to power by transforming into a political party.[107] In his articles, Kısakürek articulated that Kayseri was the most powerful branch of the association and he could be participated to the elections, which would be in 1954, as a candidate of Kayseri. However, the aim of getting the power in the elections was not realized.[108]

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[105] Ibid., p. 2-3.

[106] The first branch of the association was opened in Kayseri, and then in Samsun, Malatya, and Tavşanlı.

[107] Kısakürek, "Büyük Doğu Cemiyeti Dava", *BD.*, number 6, November 18, 1949, p. 6.

[108] Ibid., p. 6.

Chapter 3

EVALUATING *BÜYÜK DOĞU*'S OPPOSITION TO SECULARISM

The rise of opposition political parties after 1945 enabled to bring religious interest to the fore, as rival candidates who had at first avoided any concern for religion in their political platforms soon changed their minds and added appeals to the religiously inclined to their campaign promises. Although the widespread popular support for the DP could not be translated into an election victory in 1946, the corruption of the governing party further undermined the latter's popularity. The challenge of the DP led to the emergence of debates within the RPP concerning future government policies, including those on religion. In that period *Büyük Doğu* had a command of more actionery and critical language, which was between 1947 and 1950. It began to publish the articles resembling the party program. Those expressed the envisagement of a community life defining within the framework of Islamic values. In that period, Kısakürek was idenfied with reactionism, fanaticism and Islamism. Due to such criticisms, some writers needed to express their ideological positions in their columns. For instance, the former RPP deputy, Kazım Nami Duru had needed to explain the difference between to be a fanatic or a religious person. In addition, he declared his understanding of secularism: "*A religious person can live freely in a secular community,* because *secularism is not atheism. If one insulted to the sacred values by the claim of secularism, it would be a kind of fanatic atheism.*"[109] In his article, Duru declared that people should avoid exploiting religion for political gain, but state should also avoid reacting to call oneself a Muslim.[110] Although most of the authors shared the ideal of *Büyük Doğu*, they conflicted with the Kısakürek's Islamic-motivated polemical struggle against the regime. The first breakaway from the journal began with the conservative intellectuals could be defined as regime supporters; for instance, one of them was Peyami Safa.[111]

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[109] *BD*., number 5.

[110] *BD*., number 13, January 25, 1946, p. 16.

[111] *BD*., number 56- 57- 58, 1946.

Readers of the Turkish press, before the elections in 1950, could get the impression that politics in Turkey was about religion. There was the politicization of religion and division of the electorate into two "camps." In that period, for instance, the reintroduction of religious instruction in public schools was debated in in the Seventh Congress of the RPP in 1947. It was argued that as a necessary step to remedy a current neglect of the religious sphere and they stressed the importance of religion as the basis of national solidarity in the congress. In this sense, secularism debates between two camps engaged with each other in terms of the nationalist view. Therefore, this chapter evaluated the secularism debates in that period as religious nationalism versus secular nationalism.

3.1. Religious Nationalism versus Secular Nationalism

The establishing and strengthening of a national identity in Turkey has nearly hundred years covering the last years of the Ottoman Empire. In particular, after the Balkan Wars trauma, Turkism for the nation state that was considered as the only way for salvation of the country has become one of the state administration practices during the single party period. In other words, the pro-nationalism in the Constitutional period of the Ottoman Empire was converted to the ideology of nation state in the period of Turkish Independence War and the establishment of Turkish Republic. Nationalism was one of the driving forces during the Turkish Independence War; however, its desire was to build up a new society that rejects the identity connections of Ottomanism, Turkism and Islamism.

When Turkey was accepted and recognized by the international community as an independent and self-governing with the Treaty of Lausanne on 24 July 1923, the exchange of populations provided the opportunity of creating a culturally homogenous state in terms of religion. It means that in the 1920s, Islam was a definitive symbol of Turkishness. The Turkish Republic within its internationally recognized boundaries defined the Turkishness, and its culture was to be called "Turkish culture." For this reason, the Republican regime founded some institutions and constituted a new nation narrative. For instance, the Society for the Study of Turkish History (*Türk Tarihini Tetkik Cemiyeti*) was founded in 1931. Its main mission was disseminating the Turkish

national history. Another mission of the society was to show that Turkish was the mother tongue of the great civilizations. For this reason, the Society for the Study of the Turkish Language, which later became the Turkish Language Society (*Türk Dil Kurumu*), was established in 1932. Furthermore, nationalism would be one of the six principles of Kemalism; republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism and reformism that were involved in RPP's party program in 1931 and were enshrined in the Constitution in 1937. As far as those developments were concerned, the crystallization of Kemalist nationalism as an official ideology was the key development of the 1930s, in when race and language joined religion as symbols of Turkishness.

Nevertheless, at the end of the 1930s, there was a problem that the six pillars of Kemalism were unclear and remained open to different kinds of interpretation. Therefore Turkish intellectuals and statesmen attempted to construct an ideology out of Atatürk's ideas and the reforms of what *Büyük Doğu* called the imitation of West. In order to create an ideology, they applied to Atatürk's masterpiece, *The Speech*. However, as Hanioğlu has noted that "*it was nothing other than a long description of the Turkish War of Independence and major events occurring in its wake, from the vantage point of the new leader of Turkey. Supplemented with hundreds of documents reproduced to support Atatürk's narrative, The Speech looks like a hybrid of a historical monograph and a memoir.*"[112] In other words, to use it as the guiding book of an ideology seemed very difficult, so the intellectuals looked for different ways. For instance, a group of left-wing intellectuals began publishing a journal called *Kadro* and attempted to interpret the Turkish revolution within a Marxist theoretical approach in 1932. Another journal, *Ülkü*, published as the organ of the People's Houses in 1933, represented the reproduction of a right-wing Kemalist ideology. However, the regime decided to close Kadro in 1935 on account of the fact that *Kadro*'s intellectuals followed a partisan Marxist theory within an idealistic approach. On the other hand, *Ülkü* wished to produce an ideology resembling German National Socialism and Italian Fascism and its goal matched with the right-wing Kemalism promoting an authoritarian rule like to similar ideologies were dominant in the Europe at that time. [113] The different

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[112] Şükrü Hanioğlu, "The Historical Roots of Kemalism," in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, (ed.) Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan, Columbia University Press, 2012, p. 44.

[113] Hanioğlu, Ibid., p. 46.

understandings of Kemalism were not the only forms described by *Kadro* and *Ülkü*. In addition, a lot of individuals had their own Kemalism in that period; however, *Kadro* and *Ülkü* were distinguished from the others in many ways. It can be said that they were more systematic, and their efforts were formed as teamwork. Consequently, the supporters of *Kadro*'s and *Ülkü*'s thoughts were motivated towards establishing authoritarian ideology.

In this frame, *Kemalism* formed the backbone of the official version would be promoted especially between 1938 and 1950. Also, it depended on a new interpretation of Turkish nationalism based mainly on racial anthropology, and a strong personality cult. However, the single party period was such a period, in when Turkish nationalism was the most discussed. Those debates brought about the establishment of various understandings of nationalism in Turkish politics. In 1944, *Kemalism* put some distance between itself and the extreme Turkish nationalism, which was known as *Turancılık*. Nevertheless, the secularism was an incontestable element for the view of *Kemalist* nationalism, which embraced both the secularism and nationalism in 1931, and its understanding was shaped in the form of substitution of religion or nationalizing Islam. For instance, in 1945, the Turkish Language Association prepared the Turkish dictionary that provided the following example in its entry for religion metaphorically: "*An idea or ideal to which one fervently adheres. Kemalism is the religion of the Turk.*"[114] This conception could be seen as a main reason for the opposition of *Büyük Doğu*, which was shaped as the nationalist and conservative formation between 1945 and 1950.

As previously stated, *Büyük Doğu* was almost the opposite of everything Kemalism represented; however, it searched for a strong shelter in Turkish nationalism in order to dispute the results of Westernization and radical secularization policies of the Kemalist regime by saying that the Turkish national identity was related with the Islamic identity. *Büyük Doğu*'s going towards the nationalist discourse is thought to be of two main reasons. First of all, the nationalism embodied a refuge and channel for the expression of Islamist demands in the secular Republican period. Secondly, the

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[114] Cited by Şükrü Hanioğlu, "The Historical Roots of Kemalism," Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan (ed), *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey,* Columbia University Press, 2012, 45.

nationalism was only vehicle for reconstruction of the tradition, while Islamic opposition movements was considering as a threat towards the secular regime due to the fact that the pillar of secularism and the Republican regime were integrated with each other.

As stated in the previous chapter, one of the basic principles for the ideal of *Büyük Doğu* was described under the title of *Ideolocya Örgüsü* was nationalism. However, the definition of nationalism was a controversial issue among the intellectuals in *Büyük Doğu*. For instance, Burhan Belge mentioned this issue in his column, with his own words, "we conflict with each other about the essence of Turkish nationalism… Some of us follow Ziya Gökalp's nationalism, so they interpret it with racist overtones like in the West. Others describe Turks and Turkism as *Anadoluculuk*. As for another group, Ottomans is perceived as Turks because they did not break their connection with Ottoman Empire. Finally, some of us call all citizens in Turkey as Turks without considering their religion and race by following the secular and humanitarian principles of French Revolution."[115] In the conclusion of this article, Belge stated that all these perspectives relates to the destructive aspect of nationalism, whereas, more universal definition of nationalism is required in the new world order.[116]

According to Kısakürek, in fact, nationalism is a source of faith, which is based on the spirit of a race; however, recently it had been distorted and it was presented as racism. In one of his articles, Kısakürek stated that the term of race should be understood as *Turkish spirit* that was related with Islam, and its framework was Anatolia.[117] He named this definition as *Anadoluculuk* that is a kind of Turkish nationalism around the concrete territory of Anatolia rather than the abstract idea of Turan. He believed that if the nationalism based on race, it had to be perceived as a psychology, not as an ideology. In addition, he adopted a kind of nationalism, which loves Turks because of its Muslim identity. In his own words, "If the goal is Turkishness; the essence of Turkishness comes from being Muslim."[118] In parallel to

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[115] Burhan Belge, "Milliyetçilikler," *BD*., number 13, January 25, 1946, p.6.

[116] Ibid., p. 6.

[117] Kısakürek, İdeolocya Örgüsü; "Milliyetçilik," *BD*., number 29, May 17, 1946, p. 2.

[118] Kısakürek, Ideolocya Örgüsü; "Türkün Muhasebesi:2," *BD*., number 13, January 25, 1946, p.2.

this, he had rejected the conceptualization of Nihal Atsız named by "Islam as the religion of the Turkish nation," and perceived this standpoint as the humiliation of Islam. He criticized Atsız by saying that "if your nation's religion was Shamanism, would you glorify it?"[119]

To *Büyük Doğu*, nationalism could be considered as a positive attribute only if it was engaged in the service of Islam or if it originated from Islamic essences, so racism (*kavmiyetçilik* or *ırkçılık*) had to be banned. In order to strength this argument, Kısakürek stated "there can not be a claim of racism for the moralist Turkish youth (*mukaddesatçı Türk gençliği*) and if I have to choose a supreme race, I would prefer Arabs of the past."[120] As Özdalga has stated that Kısakürek's combination of Islam and Turkisness might be regarded a forerunner of Turkish-Islamic synthesis despite the very early signs of this synthesis in the Second Constitutional Period.[121]

In *Büyük Doğu* the concept of the nation was defined as the followers of a belief in general, the followers of Islam in particular. However, *Büyük Doğu* emphasized that its understanding of the nationalism was limited with the boundaries of the country. However, in a similar sense of the idea of *umma* in Islam, *Büyük Doğu* often considered the problems of the Indonesian, Pakistani, Indian and Bosnian Muslims in their countries. As stated in the idea of the East and West synthesis, the ideal of *Büyük Doğu* targeted to collect Muslims around a view of world, human being and society. In that context, Indonesian, Pakistani, Indian and Bosnian Muslims were often discussed in the title of *Hadiselerin Muhasebesi*. [122]

Therefore, the understanding of Turkish nationalism in *Büyük Doğu* was limited with two features: Islam and the Turkish race. While *Büyük Doğu* was describing the

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[119] Kısakürek, Ideology Örgüsü; "Milliyetçilik," *BD.*, number 29, May 17, 1946, p.2.

[120] Ibid., p.2.

[121] Elisabeth Özdalga, *İslamcılığın Türkiye Seyri: Sosyolojik Bir Perspektif*, İletişim, 2006, p. 129-146.

[122] See; Nizamettin Nazif, "Hadiselerin Muhasebesi; 'Cevalılar ve İngilizler," BD., number 17; "Sömürgeler ve İslam Dünyası," *BD.*, number 20; "Bosna Müslümanları," *BD.*, number 23; "Pakistan ve Hindistan," *BD.*, number 25; "Uzak Şarkta Müslümanlar ve Yamyamlar," *BD.*, number 27, 1946, p. 9.

expected Islamic revolution, the nationalism was also defined as a matter of spirit, essence and time but not as a matter of form, material and space.[123] It can be seen in its *başyücelik* state, which was formulized to provide training for the people rather than representing the national will. In that context, everything that Turkey had, ranging from religion, language, history and politics had to be rediscovered in the light of the nationalist concept of *Büyük Doğu*.

3.2. Reconstructing the Symbols of Turkish Identity within the Religious Nationalism Perspective

The founders of the Republic arranged the process of making modern Turkey by attempting to establish necessary political and cultural institutions both to break with the Ottoman past and to reach the contemporary level of Western civilization. As Mardin has pointed out that the creation of a modern nation with this aim involved a set of transitions such as the transition in the political system of authoritarian rules and regulations to democratic one, and the transition from a religious-based community to a modern nation-state.[124] In this sense, secularism has played an extremely important role in the process of making modern Turkey. According to Binnaz Toprak, who examines these reforms for secularization in Turkey, it should be defined in four levels. The first one is the symbolic level changed the life style and cultural characteristics. The second one is institutional level declined the institutional power of Islam. The third is functional level amended the education and judiciary fields. The last level is constitutional including legislative changes based on West.[125] It can be easily observed that all these levels were deeply criticized in *Büyük Doğu*; however, the journal gave wide publicity to the cultural changes and its symbolic level. It was required by the modernization paradigm of *Büyük Doğu* resembling Ziya Gökalp's formula, which can be summarized as the idea of taking just good sides of the western civilization. In

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[123] Kısakürek, "İslam İnkilabında Milliyet," (Nationality in Islamic Revolution) *BD*., number 13, January 6, 1950, p. 2; Büyük Doğuya Doğru, p. 113-114.

[124] Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye'de Din ve Siyaset*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1997, pp. 14-15.

[125] Cited by Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi'nin Kurulması 19223-1931*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005, p. 224.

addition to this, *Büyük Doğu* had embraced the discourse of conservative populism, which requires the protection of the cultural and religious values of the people.

The first wave of cultural change began with the abolishing of the Sharia (Islamic law) and accepting new civil and criminal codes. It should be noted that it influenced mostly the woman's situation in the society. With regard to the reforms, women were given equal rights with men in matters of marriage, divorce, and protection over children. The veil was banned for women who were government employees and it was discouraged for the rest. At the same time, compulsory primary school education became mandatory for both sexes and all state schools, including high schools and universities, became co-educational, so career opportunities were opened for women. In the previous chapter, it was stated that *Büyük Doğu* often emphasized the domestic duties of women rather than women's success in business life. In addition to this, *Büyük Doğu* also criticized the dressing style of the new, modern and secular women. It tried to suggest a moderate solution and it published some models that would befit Turkish women's dignity. In addition; for instance, *Büyük Doğu* pointed out that the keeping a mistress became increasingly popular in the society due to the new civil codes outlawed the polygamy.[126]

The role of Islam in politics and administration had been declined in the line of the early reforms of the republic. For instance, the Caliphate, which symbolized the unity of all Muslims in the world, was abolished; all religious schools were banned; the educational system was unified under a Ministry of Education; Orthodox Islam was put under the state control through the creation of a Directorate of Religious Affairs, which was tied to the office of the prime minister and the mosques' personnel became paid employees of the state. In addition, the Sufi brotherhoods represented unorthodox practices within Islam were outlawed. In *Büyük Doğu*, the imagination of an Islamic society and its institutions were already discussed under the title of *Ideolocya Örgüsü*. In addition, the issue of moral corruption was extremely criticized by the authors of *Büyük Doğu* and especially its editor, Kısakürek. The issue of moral corruption was seen as being related with the education reforms. Therefore, *Büyük Doğu* published an article, which stated the priority of religion to nationalism and the necessity of religious

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[126] "Dün Bugün," *BD*., number 38, July 19, 1946, p. 3.

education.[127]

According to *Büyük Doğu*, other changes had been in the symbolic level could be seen a radical rupture with the Islamic past. For instance, the weekly holiday was changed from Friday, the day of rest for Muslims around the world, to Sunday; the calendar changed from the Muslim lunar to the Gregorian; the Arabic alphabet was changed to the Latin that meant lack of access by the new generations to Ottoman sources, and the language itself changed as vocabulary and grammatical forms borrowed from Persian and Arabic were eliminated. These and a host of other minor changes were always criticized in *Büyük Doğu*. Moreover, *Büyük Doğu* attacked the symbols of Turkish identity such as language, and official history, which was created during the project of Kemalist nation-building process. In addition, *Büyük Doğu* claimed an alternative national memory providing the people with a sense of historical continuity with the Ottoman past and with a national identity inclusive of Islam.

3.2.1. The Disaster of Invented Language

The Turkish History Congress was held in 1930 constituted one of the first steps of state nationalism. The most important result reached in the former studies of national history and this congress was the thesis of associating the Turkish nation and the Turkish language. Therefore, *Büyük Doğu* was also discussed the language within the limits of nationalist framework but with the Islamist connotations.

For *Büyük Doğu*, there were two main problematic in terms of the language reforms in the Republican period. The first was changing the language and alphabet that disturbed the relation with the Islamic-Turkish culture and created a further degeneration of national spirit. For instance, Kısakürek stated that "if the purpose of the language reform was to open the way towards the Latin and Greek culture for Turkish society, it just broke the relationship between the Turkishness and its essential roots in Islam."[128] In addition, the purpose of the change in alphabet was always doubted and the adaptation of the new alphabet unquestioningly by intellectuals was harshly

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[127] "Vesikaların En Müthişi" *BD*., number 45, September 6, 1946, p. 6.

[128] See Kısakürek, "Artık Bu Komedya Yeter," *BD*., number 4, August 9, 1946, p. 2; also in Çerçeve 2; "24 Maddede 24 Yıl," *BD*., number 70, October 31, 1947, p. 2.

criticized in column of *Zavallı Türkçe*.[129] For instance, Reşat Ekrem Koçu wrote some articles about the history considering the relationship between language and history. According to him, in order to the radical rupture from the former alphabet, the history would hang by a threat. Therefore, the historians, who know Ottoman Turkish, should focus on this issue without loss of time and attempt to translate the history texts in Turkish from the Seljukians to today's history.[130] In *Büyük Doğu*, not being able to create a Turkish thinker, or philosopher (mü*tefekkir*) at a level of the world was often emphasized as one essential failure for the Turkish nation. Therefore, the language and education reforms of Turkish Republic were cited as the reason of the failure.

When comes to the second main problem in terms of the language reforms, purification the language was always problematic for Büyük Doğu. It has included the analysis about both the dominance of Arabic and Persian words over Turkish and the attempt of language purification in the Republican period.[131] Indeed, *Büyük Doğu* was not completely opposed to the idea of simplification, but it stressed that there should be some rules in the use of the Turkish language and listed them in five items.[132] The main theme of this rule was that the purification of the words, which were come from other sources, but match with the larynx and language structure of Turkish would be redundant. For instance, the word of *millet* has been internalized and has become widespread instead of the word of *Ulus.* Besides, the word of *uçmak* has sound unfamiliar in order to the non-Turkish word, *cennet* settled in Turkish.[133] According to Büyük Doğu, to insist on this kind of harsh purification of language could be defined as racism in the language issue and it caused harm for nation.[134] Kısakürek stated that Arabic Persian words, both could be fabricated our own language and adopted as their original because of shared common Islamic culture. However, using French words

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[129] "Samimi Olalım," *BD*., number 4, November 23, 1945, p. 16.

[130] Reşat Ekrem Koçu, "Tarihimiz Uçurumun Eşiğinde (G. G. Elerken)," *BD*., number 7, December 14,1945, p. 14.

[131] See Kısakürek, "Artık Bu Komedya Yeter," *BD*., number 41, August 9, 1946, p. 2; also in Çerçeve 2; "24 Maddede 24 Yıl," *BD*., number 70, October 31, 1947, p. 2.

[132] See Dilci, "Kanun," *BD*., number 10, January 4, 1946, p. 16.

[133] "Mutlak Ölçü," *BD*., number 30, November 1945, p. 16.

[134] "Anlayış," *BD*., number 7, December 14, 1945.

without any changes was reflected as a monkey-like behavior. In addition, the inventing of a completely new language could not be a good solution to avoid these problems. According to *Büyük Doğu*, the purification of the language caused an invented language and disaster for the future of Turkish. [135] It pointed out that even Bolsheviks revolutionized all structure and institutions of the former could not presume to purify the language. Moreover, Büyük Doğu asserted that the issue of the invented Turkish language was the plan of Moscow desired the dismemberment of the Turkish state. This idea was expressed as follows:

"*Bolsheviks wanted to dismember among the Turkish stratums and in order to achieve the goal, they decided to ensure a separation between the Turkish languages.*"[136]

Instead of an invented language, the words, like the word of *Midenuvaz* that is not Turkish, but can be used appropriately in Turkish as the word of *maydonoz,* can be treated as the pure Turkish.[137] In addition, the new words entered Turkish from the West should be adapted to the Turkish grammar and sound structure in accordance with the rules set by *Büyük Doğu*. Therefore, these rules were mentioned in many numbers of the journal.[138] In the column of *Lügatçemiz*, many articles included many examples about the provision of the Western origin words in Turkish[139]

As stated in these examples, *Büyük Doğu* frequently highlighted the issue of the invented language as one of the most important problems of Turkish Republic. In other words, this issue was taken serious in many numbers of the journal. Therefore, Büyük Doğu reproachfully mentioned that they did not invited to Language Congress although it had many critics and suggestion to the language reforms.[140]

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[135] "İllet," *BD*., number 8, December 21, 1945.

[136] "Uydurma Dil," and Rıza Çavdarlı, "Haber veriyorum: İşte İç Yüzler," *BD*., number 65, May 30 1947, p. 7.

[137] "Yine Öztürkçe," *BD*., number 9, December 28, 1945.

[138] See *BD*., number 17, 18, and 19, 1946.

[139] Dilci, "Lügatçemiz," *BD*., number 35, June 28 1946, p. 6.

[140] *BD*., number 5, May 30, 1945, p. 9.

3.2.2. Rewriting the Turkish Historiography

Büyük Doğu also rejected the writing of Turkish historiography within Kemalist perspective. A major area where the damages and falsities to be found in Kemalist modernization, to Kısakürek, appeared in sharp focus was in the writing of Turkish historiography about Tanzimat, Meşrutiyet and the National Struggle. By discussing critically the different aspects of the War of Independence in the various issues of Büyük Doğu [141], ranging from Sultan Vahdettin's impeachment to the victory of Lausanne and to the property of Mustafa Kemal, he, in a sense, tried to rewrite the Turkish historiography, which has been formed by Atatürk's famous Speech (Nutuk).[142] For instance, Kısakürek wrote, "*The beginning of the Turkish history is not 1923. You did not create out of nothing. 1923 was the glory of the nation.*"[143] In general, *Büyük Doğu* insistently read the process of Turkish modernization from Tanzimat to Republic as the history of decline and further decline.

One of the most intensely debated topics in *Büyük Doğu* was the negative image of Abdülhamid II that was created after the period of Tanzimat. He was depicted as "The Red Sultan" by ascribing his character to bad characteristics such as "ignorant, coward, and devious." For instance, Sami Karayel's article, "İç yüzüyle Abdülhâmit: 1" targeted to respond to all the debates about him. Karayel and some other authors of the journal characterized Abdülhamid as the only alternative among the statesmen in the period of Tanzimat. According to Karayel, after the period of Tanzimat, Abdulhamid had changed the economic and political structure, which was dependent on outside financial sources. In addition, Abdulhamid's initial dissolution of the Ottoman parliament has increased the hostility of Abdulhamid. Karayel noted that although these developments were for the sake of the empire, the intellectuals in that period such as Şinasi dan Namık Kemal portrayed him as "The Red Sultan." It was stated that the anti-Abdulhamidian thesis was put forward in the period of Tanzimat, but those were strengthened in the period of Meşrutiyet. In addition, the defamation campaign was

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[141] "Davanız Davamız," *BD*., number 53, November 1, 1946, p. 8.

[142] "Hadiselerin Muhasebesi," *BD*., number 29, May 17, 1946, p. 8-9.

[143] Kıskaürek, "Artık Bu Kadar Yeter," *BD*., number 3, October 28, 1949, p. 2.

carried on the schools in that period to transfer the hatred to future generations. However, unlike the Islamist thinkers in the period of Meşrutiyet, the authors of *Büyük Doğu* considered Abdulhamid as a positive figure and they believed that people would appreciate the value of Abdulhamid in the future.[144] Kısakürek reinforced this stance by saying that Abdulhamid II was a nationalist and Islamist sultan, who had tried to synthesize the spirit of East and the Western rational mind by considering the national elements. It is clear that Abdulhamid II was preferred as the positive historical figure to the ideal of *Büyük Doğu*.[145] Moreover, Duran supposes that Kısakürek preferred to describe "*an alternative modernizer/hero*" to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.[146]

In parallel, the poem "*Sultan Hamid'in Ruhaniyetinden İstimdat*" published enthusiastically in *Büyük Doğu*. Rıza Tevfik, who was a supporter of the Meşrutiyet, had written the poem as an admission to the Abdulhamid. To Büyük Doğu, the poem indicated that the thesis of *Büyük Doğu* was right and the history about the period of Abdulhamid was completely untruthful. However, *Büyük Doğu* was found guilty for having insulted Turkishness in this poem.[147]

In the era of transition to multiparty politics in 1950 when Kısakürek presented a wide range of counter-arguments to the Kemalist historical writing in *Büyük Doğu*. In parallel, a series of article with the title of "Doğu Faciası" was published on January 27, 1950. In these articles, Kısakürek focused on the suppression of the Dersim rebellion in 1938 that would be depicted as "the greatest of the disasters throughout history."[148] He

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[144] Sami Karayel, "İç Yüzüyle Abdülhamit 1-2-3-4-5-6-7," *BD.*, number 48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55, 1946, p. 14.

[145] Burhanettin Duran, "Kısakürek'in Siyasi Fikirleri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," *Hece Dergisi*, No. 97, January 2005, p. 78.

[146] Burhanettin Duran, "Transformation of Islamist Political Thought in Turkey From The Empire to The Early Republic (1908-1960): Necip Fazıl Kısakürek's Political Ideas," *dissertation* at Bilkent University, 2001, p. 229.

[147] "*Tarihler ismini andığı zaman/ Sana hak verecek, ey koca Sultan/ Bizdik utanmadan iftira atan/ Asrın en siyasi Padişahına/ Divane sen değil, meğer bizmişiz/ Bir çürük ipliğe hülya dizmişiz/ Sade deli değil, edepsizmişiz/ Tükürdük atalar kıblegâhına/ Sonra cinsi bozuk, ahlâkı fena/ Bir sürü türedi, girdi meydana/ Nerden çıktı bunca veled-i zinâ?/ Yuh olsun bunların ham ervahına!*"

[148] *BD.*, January 27, 1950.

evaluated the Dersim rebellion by considering its ethnic, religious and political levels. According to him, people of Dersim came from Akkoyunlu descent were pure Turks, but wrongly called as Kurds. The Dersim rebellion was initiated a long time ago by the Turkish Alevis, whose soul poisoned by Şah İsmail. It became a burden during the period of Tanzimat; however, the statesmen considered the oppression as being hopeless until the period of Republic. Therefore Kısakürek stated that the Kemalist oppression of Zazas, who were of Turkish origin, was intolerable. In additon, unlike the nationalist conservative thought, he blamed Celal Bayar and Fevzi Çakmak.[149] In Kıskaürek's own words: "the state acted as a teacher who poisoned the students, when he or she could not teach a lesson to the students."[150]

3.2.3. The Status of Women in the Society

As stated above, Turkish Nationalism was deriving its authority from a proposed primordial Turkish utopian nation. The status of women was one of the vital issues at the center of nationalist discourse in Turkey during the transformation from diverse empire to unitary nation by both embodying and transmitting the new Turkish identity. In order to create cultural secular nationalism called *Kemalism*, the reformers of Turkish Republic experienced radical ruptures from the Islamic tradition of the ancient regime, the Ottoman Empire. In parallel, one of the most remarkable reforms undertaken in the process of Westernization was institutionalizing the Swiss Legal Code in 1926. Turkey's new civil law, which had virtually nothing in common with the *shari'ah*, gave women the right to vote, join the army, inherit property, and run for office, while also banning child-marriage, polygamy, and the veil in public institutions. In other words, the emancipation[151] of women came to be synonymous with purifying the national culture.[152]

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[149] Dedektif X Bir, "Doğu Faciası," [The Eastern Calamity] *BD.*, number 18, February 10, 1950, p. 3, 15.

[150] Dedektif X Bir; "Doğu Faciası", *BD.*, number 16, August 27, 1950, p. 3.

[151] Deniz Kandiyoti said that "Turkish women were now emancipated but not liberated." See Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Emancipated but Unliberated? Relections on the Turkish Case', *Feminist Studies*, 13, No. 2, Summer 1987, p. 317.

[152] See Deniz Kandiyoti, *Women, Islam and the State*, Temple University Press, 1991.

All of these developments served to indoctrinate women into a new sense of self-confidence and self-awareness, especially educated and/or professional women. On the one hand, they provided new opportunities for women in education and the work place; on the other hand these women was rendered as deeply thankful for the Republican reforms. Although the Republic had abolished the religious segregation practices and granted women new civil and political rights, several elements in the new civil code were compatible with the nature of traditional Islamic world-view. For instance, as Tekeli stated that marriage as an institution was still completely controlled by traditional Islamic values that regulate the relationship between men and women.[153] When the family was seen as the cornerstone of society, men were perceived as the head of the family.[154] The notions of 'Father State' (*Devlet Baba*) and 'Motherland' (*Anavatan*), which were already used during the Ottoman Empire, were revitalized in the Republican era by considering the women as 'mothers of the nation.'[155] The traditional connotations of the construction of woman's identity would provide basis for opposition groups in order to publicize their opinions.

Büyük Doğu was such an opposition problematized the construction of women's position in accordance with Westernization and secularism policies of the Republican regime. According to *Büyük Doğu*, the women identity had to be formed with traditional Islamic values instead of imitating the West. First of all, it often concentrated on the concept of "mother" that was crucial in terms of Islamic values. For *Büyük Doğu*, an ideal woman was depicted as a devoted wife and a warmhearted mother.[156] In addition, the women should represent the Turkish culture in their life styles rather than

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[153] See Şirin Tekeli, "Women in the Changing Political Associations of the 1980s," in *Turkish State, Turkish Society,* (ed.) Andrew Finkel and Nükhet Sirman, Routledge, 1990.

[154] Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Social Change and Turkish Women", in *Women in Turkish Society*, (ed). NErmin Abadan-Unat, Deniz Kandiyoti, and Mübeccel Kıray, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1981, p. 5-31.

[155] Tekeli, 1990, p. 150.

[156] *BD*., number 8, December 21, 1945, p. 16.

imitiating the West in their home decoration or dress styling.[157] In addition, they should learn their religion properly to be able to teach their children.[158]

Another polemical issue for *Büyük Doğu* was women entering the business life.[159] Büyük Doğu often emphasized the domestic duties of woman instead of business career. The modern woman was portrayed as faced with modern dilemmas and lost her soul. Moreover, it was declared that if the traditional family structure and marriage was not keep, the woman would become a mistress, selling her soul for material pleasures. The covers generally had modern Turkish women with criticisms on women's fashion.[160] In many issues, while the German and English woman were praised for keeping their national identity, the characteristics of Turkish woman was depicted as rootless, intolerant and imitator.[161]

3.2.4. The Adoption of Strong Anti-Communism in *Büyük Doğu*

One of the significant issues, which brought the writers of *Büyük Doğu* together in the journal, was their strong anticommunism. In this sense, they were in line with the group within the RPP who had voiced a similar demand during the 1947 party congress. After the World War II, the conjuncture has affected Turkish internal and foreign policies. 1945 was the year that showed signals of transition to the multi-party system for Turkey, a country that wanted to secure a place in the post-war world order. The relation between Turkey and Soviet Union was shown as the reason behind the abandoning of neutral policies. In internal policies, the tension was also asserted as the reason of the rise of anti-communism. In that period, the anti-communism would be a common point between the regime and *Büyük Doğu.*

In the pages of *Büyük Doğu*, communism was depicted as a snake that was in the last rampancy before its death. To *Büyük Doğu*, the modern political ideologies were

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[157] *BD*., number 10, January 4, 1946, p. 16.

[158] *BD*., number 18, March 1, 1946, p. 6.

[159] *BD*., number 50, October 11, 1946, cover page.

[160] *BD*., number 25, April 19, 1946 and *BD*., number 60, April 25, 1947, cover page.

[161] *BD*., number 14, February 1, 1946, p. 16.

unable to discover the way of salvation for the humanity.[162] For instance, it was stated by Kısakürek that communism was right when it indicated the crisis of Western society; however, it sacrificed all the spiritual and religious values on the behalf of the salvation. In that context, *Büyük Doğu* shared the idea of anti-communism, which was common among the Islamist intellectuals during the Cold War, and proposed that Turkey and Muslim countries had to support the Western democracies against the communism.[163]

On the contrary with *Büyük Doğu*, *Tan* newspaper opposed Nazism and followed an anti-fascist policy during the period of war. However, Tan newspaper was also closed down by the regime in 1944. When it republished in 1945, it began to lead the opposition against the government. In addition, its leftist publisher Zekeriya Sertel and his wife, Sabiha Sertel's views on Turkish national interests were lying in reconciliation with the Soviet Unions.[164] Following, on December 4th 1945, Tan newspaper's printing house had been completely destroyed on an assault by a group of university students. The assault, which ended the publication of *Tan*, was described as "*the righteous act of the Turkish youth*" by *Büyük Doğu*. Kısakürek also openly expressed his appreciation and his pride in the dignified and emotional act of the Turkish youth.[165] Moreover, he believed that the RPP could not be held responsible for the assault.[166]

Büyük Doğu's early statements about the RPP, its ideology and leaders in transition period were rather soft in its structure of criticism. However, with the transition, the RPP had become a main target to be attacked. In that period, *Büyük Doğu* often alleged that the responsibility of the communist movement in Turkey belonged to

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[162] See the illustration in *Büyük Doğu*, No. 9, December 28, 1945, p. 8.

[163] Burhanettin Duran, *Hece Dergisi*.

[164] When the publishing house of *Tan* newspaper was attacked, the Sertels accused of communist sympathies. In addition, Celal Bayar and Adnan Menderes, who had agreed to contribute to a new magazine of Sabiha Sertel, immediately issued a public statement distancing themselves from both publications; *Tan* newspaper and the journal of *Görüşler*. See M. Zekeriya Sertel, *Hatırladıklarım*, Istanbul, Gözlem Yayınları, 1977.

[165] Kısakürek, Hadiselerin Muhasebesi; "Millete ve Hükümete," *BD.*, number 6, December 7, 1945, p. 9.

[166] Kısakürek, Hadiselerin Muhasebesi; "İç Muhasebe," *BD.*, number 7, December 14, 1945, p. 9.

the RPP. According to Kısakürek, the RPP provided a fruitful ground for the communism. Moreover, the Republican regime and communism worked together as a team to destruct the religion.[167] The Turkish youth's minds were filled by atheism, communism, and materialism in the institutions of RPP such as *Köy Enstitüleri* (village institutes) and *Halkevleri* (people's houses).[168]

In the relatively liberal era of the transition to the multi-party politics, the attacks of *Büyük Doğu* to the *Kemalist* regime focused on the personalities of the RPP's leaders. For instance, Kısakürek voiced his critical assessment about the personality of Atatürk in 1950. In this article, Atatürk was presented as materialist, follower of Marx and Lenin, and atheist.[169] However, after a short period of criticizing Atatürk directly, *Büyük Doğu* preferred the way of directing its opposition towards the RPP and İsmet İnönü.[170] He was pictured as the atheist, anti-Islamic and non-Turkish personality.[171] In parallel to this, it should be noticed that, communism was also labeled as anti-Islamic and enemy of the nation in *Büyük Doğu*.

As well as communists, some groups such as Masons, Jews and Westernists were also critically discussed in the journal. These groups were also often announced as the enemies of the nation and of Islam. In most of the articles published with the signature of *Dedektif X Bir*, Kısakürek focused on the establishment period of the Turkish Republic and especially the activities of the Jews in that period. He often pointed out that the Jews supported the establishment of the Republic. According to him, the community of Jews desired to eliminate the power of Islam in our country.[172] In one of few articles about Masons and Jews, Kısakürek's critics were taken a step forward

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[167] Dedektif X Bir, "Türkiye'de Komünizma," *BD*., number 4, April 1, 1949, p. 2.

[168] Dedektif X Bir, "Köy Enstitüleri," *BD*., number 5, April 8, 1949, p. 4.

[169] Dedektif X Bir, "Allahsız", *BD*., number 40, December 22, 1950, p. 6,11.

[170] There was the legal and ideological impossibility of criticizing Atatürk publicly because of the promulgation of Law on the protection of Atatürk (Atatürk'ü koruma kanunu).

[171] Kısakürek, "Sağır." *BD*., number 29, October 6, 1950, p. 8-9; "İsmet İnönü ve Türklük." BD, number 41, December 29, 1950, p. 8; "İsmet İnönü ve Müslümanlık." BD., number 41, December 29, 1950, p. 9.

[172] Dedektif X Bir; "İfşa", *BD*., number 3, October 28, 1949, p. 3.

and he asserted that *Tanzimat*, *Meşrutiyet* and the Republic were "*a product of Jewish and Masonic maneuvers*."[173]

While *Büyük Doğu* criticized these groups and ideologies; it sometimes evaluated its own world of thought. In one of these articles, Kısakürek had mentioned about a political position was different from the right and left positions. Indeed, this position is not exactly denominated, but it can be said that this position shared some basic notions such as state, nation, community and authority that were also apparent in Kemalism and Turkish conservatism. However, Büyük Doğu's position might be identified as different from the conservative school of thought, because its understanding of religion was not for the sake of legitimating a political authority. As previously mentioned, *Büyük Doğu* sought for a reestablishment of a political authority in order to realize Islamic ideals. For instance, it was often depicted an ideal person as true and deep Muslim.[174] However, Kısakürek pointed out that it was significant to be able to recognize the rude fanatics (*kaba softa*, *ham yobaz*), who were devoid of wisdom, reason, spirit and grace. In addition, Kısakürek declared that those were more dangerous than the Jews and Masons for the society.[175]

Consequently, the most remarkable fact that on the one hand *Büyük Doğu* defined itself as opponent of the regime, on the other hand it promulgated communists, Jews and Masons as the enemies of the state and society that was shared by the government at different times.[176]

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[173] Kısakürek, "Kimin Hesabına Konuşuyoruz," *BD.*, number 44, August 30, 1946, p. 2.

[174] Necip Fazıl Kısakürek; "Gerçek ve Derin Müslüman", *BD.*, number 7, November 25 1949, p. 2.

[175] Necip Fazıl Kısakürek; "Sahte ve Yalancı Sofiler", *BD.*, number 6, November 18 1949, p. 2.

[176]See Levent Cantek, "Büyük Doğu," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*, V 5, 2003, p. 654.

Conclusion

The application of secularization theory in Muslim backgrounds has often been questioned on the basis of consideration contrasts between Christian and Muslim history. The weakness of and resistance to secularism in Muslim societies is explained with the argument that secularization is an alien concept for the Muslim world. However, the secularization case in a Muslim country cannot only be described or understood with these ideal types. In this sense, Turkey's experience with secularization since the late Ottoman period is one of the prominent models of secularization in a non-Western context. On the one hand, a set of reform was designed to serve the aim of separation between state and religion; on the other hand, the organization of the Directorate of Religious Affairs was offered as a state project to determine an "official Islam." Therefore, the Turkish experience is not entirely matching with the French *laïcité* or Anglo-Saxon secularism.

In this study, I have argued that evaluating of the religious opposition to the secularism is significant in order to be able to understand the varied perceptions of secularism and its specific implementation in Turkey. The formation of the first legal opposition to secularism is based on the period of transition to democracy between 1945 and 1950 in Turkey. While *Kemalist* secularism redefined Islam on the basis of a Turkish Islam, its opposition, conservative ideology, mediated to a "soft" and "partial" secularization in order to preserve its religious ties, which were under threat of a radical elimination by the regime. Almost all the features of this conservative ideology was reflected in the discourse of *Büyük Doğu*, which aimed not only to protect its values in spite of the pressures, but also to avoid damaging on the interests of the state.

In the early period, writers of *Büyük Doğu* just demanded that the government respond to the spiritual needs of the people in order to prevent social and moral crisis and to stop the wave of communism. In 1946, Kısakürek became publish his series titled *Ideolocya Örgü*sü, in which he explained his political program. In this project, what he called *Başyücelik Devleti*, composed of individuals with superior qualities, would function as the parliament, while sovereignty would pertain to God. This Assembly would choose the leader from its own ranks, with almost limitless powers. Since then, the *Büyük Doğu* has been a militant publication organ, aimed at initiating a political movement under this name in 1949.

With the different articulations of modernity, national identity and the state, which are declared in *Büyük Doğu,* Kemalists were no longer alone in their claim to represent the nation and the secular state. Kemalist nationalism, which framed the Ottoman past as a degenerate period and radical changes under the single-party rule as the peak of Turkish history, was challenged by the new ideological wave of conservative nationalism. In contrast to the *Kemalist* conceptualization of modernity as the project of civilization by adopting the western way of life, *Büyük Doğu* had the desire of rediscovering the past. However, both *Kemalist* and conservative nationalist intellectuals used history and culture in a similar way, recreating a past for understanding, conceptualizing and shaping the present as a source of collective identity and a new society. The latter considered Islam to be a crucial constituent of national identity and based national pride on the counter-memory of Ottoman and Islamic glories. The early followers of this conservative nationalism, who demanded a true secularism respecting the freedom of conscience, paved the way for formulating an alternative secularism, which clashed with Kemalist conception of Islam.

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