

**EU PERCEPTIONS OF ISLAMIST WOMEN FROM WELFARE PARTY TO
JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY**

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AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY

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ABSTRACT

EU PERCEPTIONS OF ISLAMIST WOMEN FROM WELFARE PARTY TO JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY

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The purpose of this study is to present a comparative analysis of attitudes, perceptions and expectations of “Islamist women” regarding the European Union, between the period of the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*-RP) and the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*-AKP). The study argues that Islamist women approach to the EU is subjected to a visible change as a result of secession from the “social pattern of control” of the Nationalist View Movement. The thesis applied Norwegian Anthropologist F. Barth’s theory of “social organizations” to explain this change in the perceptions of the Islamist women. In order to control this argument the thesis uses both questionnaires and interviews that are held with Islamist women party members.

Findings suggest that Islamist women are experiencing a more rapid and visible social change. These changes have started to be more visible mainly after the AKP government. The women do not perceive the EU membership as a challenge to the Muslim identity of Turkey and who regarded the EU as a Christian club during the RP era, interpret the EU with its institutions, and possible democratic advantages of membership today. Moreover, findings identify the expectation about head scarf issue is one of the important determinant of Islamist women’s perceptions regarding the EU.

Key words:
Islamist women, European Union, Nationalist View Movement, Refah Party, AK Party.

ÖZET

REFAH PARTİSİ DÖNEMİNDEN ADALET VE KALKINMA PARTİSİ DÖNEMİNE İSLAMİ KADINLARIN AB ALGILAMASI

Esmâ Erdoğan
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Bu çalışmanın amacı, Refah Partisi döneminden AK Parti dönemine İslami kadınların Avrupa Birliği algılamalarının, beklentilerinin ve yaklaşımlarının karşılaştırmalı analizini yapmaktır. Çalışma, İslami kadınların AB algılamalarında Milli görüş hareketinin sosyal kontrol mekanizmasından ayrılmaları sonucunda fark edilebilir bir değişikliğin var olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Tez, bu değişikliği açıklamak için Norveçli Antropolog F. Barth'ın "sosyal organizasyonlar" teorisini kullanmaktadır. Mevcut argümanın kontrolü için ise tez, parti üyesi İslami kadınlarla yapılan mülakat ve anketlerden faydalanmaktadır.

Bulgular, İslami kadınların belirgin ve hızlı bir sosyal değişim tecrübe ettiklerine işaret etmektedir. Söz konusu değişim, AKP hükümetiyle birlikte daha gözle çarpan bir hale gelmiştir. Kadınlar, AB üyeliğini Türkiye'nin Müslüman kimliğine bir tehdit olarak görmemektedirler ve AB'yi Refah Partisi döneminde Hristiyan klübü olarak nitelendiren İslami kadınlar; bugün AB'yi kurumları ve sağlayabileceği demokratik avantajlarla birlikte değerlendirmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra bulgular, başörtüsü problemini, İslami kadınların AB algılamalarını şekillendiren önemli unsurlardan biri olarak belirlemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

İslami kadın, Avrupa Birliği, Milli Görüş Hareketi, Refah Partisi, AK Parti.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

D-8: *Developing Eight*

ECHR: *European Court of Human Rights*

ENVO: *European Nationalist View Organization*

EU: *European Union*

FP: *Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi)*

AKP: *Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)*

NATO: *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*

NOP: *National Order Party (Milli Nizam Partisi)*

NSP: *National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi)*

NVM: *Nationalist View Movement (Milli Görüş Hareketi)*

NYF: *National Youth Foundation (Milli Gençlik Vakfı)*

RPP: *Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)*

TPP: *True Path Party: (Doğruyol Partisi)*

VP: *Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi)*

WP: *RP (Refah Partisi)*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

We are currently witnessing the most intensive economic, political and institutional rapprochement between Turkey and the European Union (EU) in the history of their relations. As a result of this intensive rapprochement, social groups and individuals in Turkey try to clarify their positions and perceptions regarding the EU. However, when we look at the short history of social reactions towards the EU, it is possible to say that positions and perceptions of these social groups and individuals have a dynamic and changing characteristic. In other words, it is difficult to talk about stable and unchanged perceptions concerning the EU. This dynamic and changing nature of perceptions can be shaped by, for example, political party preferences.

When evaluated on the basis of political identities; we face three different identities concerning the subject of the EU in Turkey. Political groups, such as the Left and the Right-wings, and the Islamists have various perceptions of the EU; some are in favour and some oppose a Turkish membership in the EU. The debate has caused the public to change and diversify their perceptions of the EU. While, within the leftist framework, the perception of the EU differs for the social liberals and social democrats, it may also differ between the radical, conservative, and Islamists.¹

¹ H. İnanç, “Avrupa Birliği Entegrasyon Sürecinde Türkiye’nin Kimlik Problemleri”, *Doğu Batı* (Identity Problems of Turkey in the Process of Integration with the European Union), 6/23 (2003), p.185-208; H. Yavuz, *Modernleşen Müslümanlar* (Modernizing Muslims), Kitap Yayınevi, 2005, p.219-335. According to İnanç, for some Leftist politicians and authors the European Union, integration should be rejected because of her imperialistic and supra-national character. The European Union membership should be rejected not only on the grounds of nationalism and national sovereignty, but also because the needs of Turkey can be conceived only by the Turks themselves. The Leftists think that West or Europe symbolizes the cultural image of the modern and

Diversity of the positioning in the perception of the EU was similarly accompanied by the diversity and differentiation among the public regarding the EU. Thus, the EU has different implications and approaches for the nationalists, social democrats, greens, conservatives and liberal, as well as for educators, merchants, producers and various professional groups. When one asks for their perceptions regarding the EU, (s)he will probably hear a variety of different responses and perceptions. During my research process, I myself closely witnessed these different perceptions of people who belong to these social groups. Certainly these different public groups' approach to the EU assumes importance. This importance naturally becomes more stressed with the significance attached to the post-Cold War domestic actors at the international level; that is, in the process of the negotiations the public perception of the EU faces us as an important tool.² Therefore, examination of the EU approaches of different groups within the framework of a cause-effect relationship takes on major meaning in terms of structuring the EU-Turkey relations on a healthy ground.

1.1. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of attitudes, perceptions and expectations of “Islamist women”³ regarding the European Union,

capitalist life and, therefore, the Left tends to reduce the capitalism and imperialism into the cultural and national identities. The Rightists' narrative about the European Union integration concentrates on the loss and transfer of national sovereignty to the superior authorities and the erosion of the national identity. For Islamists, European Union aims to wait for Turkey before the so-called accession partnership process starts in order to prevent developing good relations with her geographical and historical interest areas, such as Turkic Republics, Balkans and the Middle East.

² A. Moravcsik, “Introduction, Integrating International and Domestic Policies,” in Peter Evans, Harold K. Jacobson and Robert D. Putnam (eds.), *Double Edged Diplomacy, International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, University of California Press, 1993, p.5.

³ Islamist women is a term generally used after the 1980's in order to stress two dimensions of the Muslim women in Turkey who hold a religiously defined general view about the world and more specifically a clearly religious approach in their political views. The term is rejected by the Islamist writers such as N. Şişman and F. K. Barbarosoğlu since it has classified the religious women and given a radical character to

between the period of the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*-RP) and the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*-AKP). It is quite observable that there is a substantial shift in the perceptions of Islamist women regarding the EU from the period of the RP to the AKP as a result of secession from the deterministic pattern of the Nationalist View Movement (*Milli Görüş Hareketi*). When the RP was in office in 1996, many of the Islamist women supporting this party were against Turkish membership in the EU.⁴ According to them, integration of Turkey into the EU could damage and abrade the Islamic character of Turkish society. In addition to this, they regarded the EU as a Christian community/club into which Turkey would never be integrated as a member. As a result, they believed in the necessity of establishing an alternative Islamic union consisting of Muslim countries against this “Christian club”. By contrast, women belonging to the AKP support the integration of Turkey into the EU. They perceive this integration as a contribution to the social, cultural, economic and democratic well being of Turkey.⁵ Examining this diametrically opposed change in the perceptions of Islamist women has importance in order to understand the social forces behind the construction of opinions of this particular social group.

In this study my research questions are as follows:

1. What are the root causes of this change in the perceptions of Islamist women concerning the EU?
2. To what extent is the change of perception a result of structural and ideational differences between RP and AKP?

them. I will use the same term in this study to provide conformity with the existing literature. However, I mean by Islamist women those women who have strong political Islamic orientations.

⁴ This understanding is still widely common among women belonging to Felicity Party, a continuation of successive parties of the NVM. See, “AB Yeniden Azınlık Kartını Kullanmaya Başladı” (The EU started to use Minority Card Again) 30. 10. 2005, *Milli Gazete*. According to the news, members of the women’s commission of Felicity Party agree on the point that the EU wants Turkey to face a possible fragmentation by emphasising minority rights as Europeans did at the last era of the Ottoman Empire. Starting from these comments, they also point out that there is an urgent need for the NVM in order to prevent these plans. What is more, they blame the AKP for its EU policies.

⁵ H. İnanç, “Avrupa Birliği Entegrasyon Sürecinde Türkiye’nin Kimlik Problemleri”, *Doğu Batı*, 6/23 (2003), p.185-208; H. Yavuz, *Modernleşen Müslümanlar*, Kitap Yayınevi, 2005, p.219-335.

3. To what extent does the change of perception stem from the Islamist women's own awareness about the EU or from the male-dominated political agenda?
4. What are the main concerns of these women on EU related issues?

Answering these questions is important in considering the socio-political forces that result in changes in the perceptions of Islamist women.

1.2. Existing Literature

This study focuses on Islamist women in Turkey. When we scan the literature on Islamist women in Turkey, it is possible to compile them into four categories; the sociological approach, the political approach, the intellectual Islamist women's approach, the conservative Islamist women's approach.

In the *sociological approach* woman in Turkish society is generally examined within the framework of a social change evolving from traditional to modern. While, at this point, religion, that is, Islam, is being regarded as an obstacle on the road leading to modernity, those who adopt the Islamic life style, or at least intend to carry on their Islamic lives, are called anti-modernists. That is why the authors of the *Sociological Approach* who strive to define the Islamist woman attempt to do so by emphasizing the different expressions of modernity. Gender relations, covering, education and life styles comprise the area of study of these categories. All of these areas of studies are consistently subjected to scrutiny within the contrast of traditional/modern. The authors, who are pioneers of this approach, endeavour to understand and even to describe the identity of the Muslim woman, which they have alienated from themselves.

Almost all of these studies are based on the issue of the head-cover. As a matter of fact, the basic premise of the description of women as modern or traditional in such studies is undoubtedly the tendency to cover. All of the women who wear head-covers may be a building block for such studies.

Similarly, the efforts of the Islamist women towards gaining an appearance in the public arena with their head covers are studied in these works. Indeed, the factor which makes the Islamist women the leading actresses of the studies is their demand to

be visible in the public domain. Though looking normal at first glance, women making their demand with their head-covers constitute a problem. After this very point, the head-cover assumes a political character and whether it is a symbol of faith or politics becomes the point of discussion. Therefore, the definition of the Islamist woman is found to be important in this sense.

The *political approach* includes studies regarding the Islamist women in the context of political Islam.⁶ According to these studies, Islamist women changed their defensive position against modernity after the 1980s and started to pursue active roles by participating in politics. In this context, the importance of the RP and its women's commissions has become apparent. These studies try to examine the reasons behind the decisions of Islamist women to take active roles in politics by working in the women's commissions of the RP. The main aim of these studies is to draw attention to the contributions of Islamist women in the success of the RP in the elections.

The intellectual Islamist women's approach of studies contains the works of intellectual Islamist women.⁷ They try to explain their opinions and feelings regarding social and cultural events through their works. The dominant thought or effort lying behind studies of this type is the wish by the women to tell their own stories themselves. These women, who feel that they are made an object of their own stories by other writers, somehow intend to transfer from the position of object to that of subject through the works they have produced. That is why the writings of the Islamist female writers are generally embodied by the reactions given to studies carried out for the purpose of understanding and defining them. In other words, such writings are generally reactionary.

⁶ See e. g. Y. Arat, *Rethinking Islam and Liberal Democracy: Islamist Women in Turkish Politics*, State University of New York Press, 2005 and *Political Islam in Turkey and Women's Organizations*, TESEV, 1999; R. Çakır, *Direnış ve itaat: İki İktidar Arasında İslamcı Kadın*, Metis Yayınları, 2000.

⁷ See, e. g. C. Aktaş, *Tesettür ve Toplum* (Veiling and the Society), Nehir, 1992 and *Tanzimat'tan Günümüze Kılık Kıyafet İktidar* (Attires from the Administrative Reform to the Present Times), Nehir, 1990; N. Şişman (ed.) *Kamusal Alanda Başörtülüler: Fatma Karabıyık Barbarosoğlu ile Söyleşi* (Those Who Wear Head-cover in Public Area: Conversation with Fatma Karabıyık Barbarosoğlu), İz, 2000; Y. Ramazanoğlu, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Kadın Tarihi Dönüşümü* (Historical Transformation of the Woman from the Ottoman to the Republic), Pınar, 2000.

Another remarkable point in such writings is the critical viewpoint. They stress the necessity of a change in unquestioned Islamic understanding, including many historical illusions. Contrary to what is claimed, they assert that Islam attaches great importance and grants rights to women. However, the patriarchal thought structure creates the impression that Islam makes the woman worthless as a result of its efforts to establish an order in its favour by obscuring the difference between religion and tradition.

The conservative Islamist women's approach includes studies based on a conservative interpretation of Islamic sources. These studies, generally, describe the role of women in Islamic society by making references to the sacred texts (the Koran and Hadiths). The principle feature of these kinds of studies is their conservative language. They try to clarify the position of women in Islamic society from a traditional law-school-based Islamic point of view.

These studies also include novels called *Hidayet Romanları*.⁸ They generally have the slant of male dominated views by placing women as second class citizens. These novels generally treat as their subject matter as the heroines who lead a modern life reaching and finding the right path through a male hero. The novels do not have a self-critical viewpoint, that is, the life styles of the heroines of the novels as taken prior to adopting Islam are presented. Subsequently, the first signals of happiness are given upon the adoption of Islam. Thus, the return to religion is presented as a happy end, or the only key to happiness as it may be attained.

The studies, which are discussed under the four main headings with the Islamist woman in Turkey as the subject, treat the Islamist woman as a separate area by differentiating her from any other Turkish women, and assist in understanding the reflections of the Islamic identity on a female scale. Nevertheless, many authors who carried out studies in the area evaluated the Islamist woman at the point of head-cover and preferred examining many dimensions, social, political and even economic, of the phenomena by only taking the head-cover as the reference point. That is why books attempting to understand and define the Islamist woman have evaluated the demands of

⁸ See, e. g. Ş. Y. Şenler, *Kız ve Çiçek* (Girl and Flower) Timaş, 1990; *Hidayet*, Nur Yayınları; *Huzur Sokağı* (Street of Ease), Timaş, 1991, E. Şenlikoğlu, *Ne Olur İhanet Etme*, (Please Don't Betray) Mektup Yayınları.

these women for entering the public arena, their education, party activities and their efforts to come together by associating these demands with their head-cover.

This study aims to draw attention to a subject which was not studied in the literature. It will question the varying perceptions and expectations as regards to the EU membership of Turkey of the Islamist women which we have summarized and will be examining in detail in the first Chapter. From this aspect the study will, unlike its precedents, attempt to understand what the Islamist woman understands from a subject described as a civilization project, how much she is interested in it, what she is expecting, and why is she supporting or opposing the EU.

1.3. Theoretical Framework

In order to explain the change in perception towards the EU of the Islamist women forming the main framework of the study, it shall benefit from the “social organisation” theory⁹ of the Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth, particularly in the interpretation of this theory by the Swedish scholar of religious studies, Anne Sofie Roald. According to Barth, it is possible to make a distinction between ‘the cultural’ and ‘the social.’ While he regards culture as being in a state of flux, he argues that social organizations tend to have distinct boundaries.¹⁰ According to Roald, “in the light of Barth’s theory of ‘social organizations,’ one can regard Muslim social organizations as containing social patterns of control which can prevent a rapprochement between ideologies or between individuals belonging to different social organizations.”¹¹ These ‘social patterns of control’ produced by social organizations play decisive roles in the acceptance or rejection of new ideas coming from outside. Applying this theory to the interactions established by Muslims living in the European contexts, Roald reaches the following conclusion: The Muslims who live in Europe and become members of any

⁹ A. S. Roald, *Women in Islam: The Western Experience*, Routledge, 2001, p.81.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

Islamist movements are exposed to less change than those who do not belong to these movements.¹²

1.4. Organisation of the Study

Chapter 1 provides a literature review by taking the precedent examples of the studies on Islamist women in Turkey as reference. Chapter 2 consists of two sections. The first section offers a theoretical discussion of the process of change in the perceptions of the EU among Islamist women. This section dwells upon the social organisation theory, its application to Islamic movements by Roald and applies this to the structures of the two Islamist parties of recent decades that is the RP and the AKP. The second section, on the other hand, discusses the nature of the RP and the AKP in view of Barth's theory.

Chapter 3 includes the methodology section and gives the criteria for the selection of informants and interviewees for this study. It also explains how interview questions and questionnaires were structured and contains some methodological reflections. In Chapter 4 the empirical materials are analyzed. In this chapter, I will analyze the interviews that I have conducted with Islamist women who used to support or belong to the RP and currently belong to the AKP. In addition to this, I will try to explain and analyze the empirical materials in the light of theoretical framework discussed in the first chapter. In the Conclusion the results are summarized with a brief overview of the chapters. The appendix contains empirical materials including interview questions will be presented.

¹² *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2

A LITERATURE REVIEW ON ISLAMIST WOMEN IN TURKEY

Although women's studies have an old history in Turkey, the emergence of "Islamist women" as a separate area of study has a relatively new history.¹³ In the early examples of the women's studies in Turkey, the Turkish woman was examined as a whole and not subjected to any image, belief or political differentiation. The role of women in society was the principal point of early women's studies in Turkey.¹⁴ However, in the 1980s, with the start of a group of female students studying at universities wearing their head-coverings, who somehow claimed the right to exist with their head-coverings in public arenas, caused the action of veiling to be perceived as a political movement and, consequently, the differentiation of the Turkish woman in the scientific studies was a new area.

This differentiation reflected in the scientific area established a new field for the scientific circle, which had previously examined the Turkish woman in areas such as transformation, political participation, education, social and economic status as a

¹³ The first periodical publishing for women during the Ottoman Empire was "*Terakki-i Muhadarat*" (Progress for Virtuous Women) in 1869. In 1892 Fatma Aliye wrote the *Muhatarat Novel*. "*Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*" (The Gazette for Women) was started to publishing in 1895 with the heading "good mother, good wife and good Muslim" Between 1913 & 1921 "*Kadınlar Dünyası Dergisi*" (The Journal of Women World) was created and it was open only for woman writers. This was the first publishing which included feminist signs.

¹⁴ A. Afetinan, *Tarih Boyunca Türk Kadınının Hak ve Görevleri*, İstanbul, 1982; S. Çakır, "Siyasal Yaşama Katılım Mücadelesinde Türk Kadını", *Kadınlar ve Siyasal Yaşam*, İstanbul, 1991; E. Doğramacı, *Türkiye'de Kadının Dünü ve Bugünü*, Ankara, 1989; Ş. Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını 1839-1923*; N. A. Unat "The Legal Status of Turkish Women" *Turkish Review* 1: 6 Winter, 1986.

whole.¹⁵ Both studies (contemporary Turkish women's studies and Islamist women's studies) have similar points of departure. Turkish women were the same starting from the *Tanzimat* era, to the modernization calls of the newly founded Republic. In view of the social codes, women display a complete portrait in that they are veiled and deprived from many political and social rights. However, they became differentiated as regards to their responses towards modernization. That is, the women who responded favourably towards modernization, such as the Republicans, Kemalists, Leftists, Feminists or secularist Turkish women were being identified as modern. On the other hand, those who were considered to have responded unfavourably by carrying on with veiling were differentiated as Islamist women.¹⁶ The works that study these two types of women also present a differentiation and become two distinct areas after this point.

Since the phenomenon under examination and which constitutes the subject of the study is the Islamist woman, the point at which the studies on the Islamist women have arrived as well as the different approaches assume importance. As also referred to in the introductory part of the study, it is possible to collect the studies treating the Islamist woman in Turkey under four main categories.

2.1. Sociological Approach

The *sociological approach* of studies covering the sociology-based approach includes various pictures portrayed in accordance with the concept of "modernity." Modernization is an important aspect in this approach of studies. The identity of the Islamist woman, her life style and even political stance are attempted to be defined through the modernization perspectives.

For example, Nilüfer Göle, a sociologist writing on Islam and modernity, views women with head-covers as a failure of modernity and places them, at the very end of

¹⁵ N. Abadan-Unat, "Women in Developing World: Evidence from Turkey", *Monograph Series in World Affairs*, 22:1, (1986); T. Taşkıran, *Women in Turkey*, 1976.

¹⁶ N. Göle, *Modern Mahrem: Medeniyet ve Örtünme*, Metis Yayınları, 1991, p.17.

her book, in the “dark side of modernity.”¹⁷ She bases her positioning on this assertion: “Women rebel against the modern world by carrying on their veiling actions.”¹⁸ In consequence of this rebellion, the demand of the veiled women to move from the point at which they are positioned, the “dark side of modernity,” to the light side of modernity with their head-cover on, is defined as a political action. Göle attempts to strengthen this approach by referring to the Turkish modernization. In other words, the modernization as introduced to the public by the state was not made equally accessible to all the people from the East to the West. As a result of this, while a certain part of the people were keeping pace with modernization and becoming modern, another part turned down this blessing as extended to them and resisted it.¹⁹

The question posed by John L. Esposito may be evaluated within exactly this framework. Esposito explains that, in many examples of the modernization reforms, the reforms are carried out by the state beyond the initiative of the public and that these reforms are shaped as the wishes and demands of the ruling class and the minority of modernizing elites, and not of the public or religious leaders. After the education reforms, women started taking on duties in public life, government and professions.²⁰ However, here Esposito talks about the existence of questions that remain unanswered and asks the following question:

“To what extent were the primary beneficiaries of modern reforms a very small minority of urban elite women of upper classes and upper middle classes? In other words, to what extent had modern reforms trickled down and across society?”²¹

The criticism that Esposito made regarding the modernization processes carries importance also for Göle who conceptualizes this situation, defining it as the “dark side

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.170. The dark side of modernity is described as the areas in which modernization could not take place. Therefore, the light side of modernity is used to describe the modern face of the Republic, such as modern institutions and modern law.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 43-99.

²⁰ J. L. Esposito, “Women in Islam and Muslim Societies” in Y.Y.Haddad and J. Esposito (ed.), *Islam, Gender and Social Change*, Oxford University Press, 1998, p.x-xi.

²¹ *Ibid.*

of modernity.” Thus, the situation, which reveals the differentiation of women in Turkey, is hidden in Esposito’s question. According to Göle, our most visible differentiation against the Western civilization is the head cover. With politicized Islam, Islamist women reveal the face of the dark side of modernity by veiling.

Turkish modernization according to this approach is a civilization project where local codes and traditional values are excluded and rejected. This project, which took shape in the hands of the elite, has infiltrated into the domain which, as put by Göle, works under the subconscious level beyond political and economic classifications and defines the eating, drinking, speech, acts, etc. of an individual beyond his or her control or will. However, the Islamic movement recreates the Islamic identity (based on traditional values) that was erased in minds by modernism, reveals it as a collective identity and a social actor.²² It is because of this state of affairs that the distinction between a Muslim and a modern person corresponds to this differentiation in this area.²³

Göle mentions in her work that a new a Muslim prototype that is urbanized and educated has started emerging with the radical Islamist movement. She states that an Islamist elite is being formed which is rising socially through education, becoming urbanized and taking its place in modern locations, participating in the production of normative values and, as such, giving direction to social events. Reminding us that according to the Kemalist civilization project a lettered person is not independent from the western life style and behavioural components; she re-differentiates and defines them as “counter-elite.”²⁴ The point serving as basis in the re-differentiation of the Islamist woman is the head-cover. Therefore, it is possible to say that unless the educated, professional Islamist woman who has modern traces in the various areas of her life gets rid of the head-cover, she seems to be subject to such differentiations.

²² Göle, (1991) *Ibid.*, p.172.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ N. Göle, “Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: the making of Elites and Counter-Elites” *Middle East Journal*, 51:1, (1997) p.46-58.

Under the section with the heading “From Traditionalism to Radicalism” in her book, Göle has treated the Islamist traditionalism over the veil.²⁵ The way that the daughters of the families, the majority of which live in Anatolia and which lead a modest life, is different from that of their mothers. They veil at their own will and the manners in which they interpret Islam contradict the traditional Islamic styles of their families.²⁶ Although they are raised in traditional religious environments, the decision of the majority of them to cover themselves has been described as extremism by their families.²⁷ These girls state that they have differentiated themselves from the Muslims who act on religious information picked up here and there and that they have gone down and researched into Islam at its sources.

According to Göle, the cover up of the educated, urbanized Islamist woman (that is, the girls mentioned above) symbolizes radical Islamism.²⁸ The Islamist women turn to Islamic sources and try to get rid of the traces of traditionalism, in other words, they try to create a new, alternative lifestyle between Muslim traditionalism and criticism of the Western modernism.

What is noteworthy here, are the different reference points of traditionalism. While, during the interviews held with the Islamist women, and the activities of the Islamist intellectuals, the subject of discussion is traditional Islam, emphasis is made on the roles of the women within the social life and the discomfort felt from the traditional interpretations of such roles as located away from Islam rather than on the ways of veiling.

Consequently, it may be said that although, for the Islamist women, to get rid of traditionalism means the elimination of the limitations imposed on females by the male culture within the social life,²⁹ for Göle it is the manners of covering of young girls

²⁵ Göle, (1991) *Ibid.*, p.121.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.123.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.125.

²⁹ For more information see e. g. H. Ş. Tuksal, *Kadın Karşıtı Söylemin İslam Geleneğindeki İz Düşümü (Projection of the Anti-Woman Expression in the Islamic*

which differ from their mother's, that is, which show extremism, as well as their understanding of religion. In other words, while traditional Islam is representing a soft Islam for Göle, it represents a hard Islam for the Islamist intellectuals and presents a problematic case.

Göle also stresses the consequences of participation by the Islamist women in Islamist movements. Göle talks about the secret individualization of the Islamist women as such.³⁰ These women who gain a public and professional visibility develop individual life strategies and come to criticize the Islamist ideology even if they do not reject their conjugal and maternal identities. In other words, the Islamist women participate in public life by joining in the secular education and Islamist movement, and enter into individualization efforts by diverting away from the principles of the Islamist community.

The Islamist women defined as traditionalists and placed against the modern woman by modernist writers is, according to sociologist Aynur İlyasoğlu, not totally independent from modernism. They form a synthesis instead of opposing modernism by keeping to their cultural characteristics and beliefs. Accordingly, they perform their own modernity themselves and can somehow become modern. This process, called “self-modernization” by İlyasoğlu, emphasizes that the Islamist woman, who builds a bridge between what is modern and traditional, ensures the modernity which is suitable for her. Thus, the Islamist woman is both included in the modern world, and not drawn away from her beliefs.³¹

The sample of İlyasoğlu, who aims at discovering the identity of the Islamist woman, is formed by the urban, educated and working covered women in their 30s. These women have achieved their modernization themselves and moved away from their traditional life to a certain extent and established a distinct area of life for themselves. The study of İlyasoğlu views the lives of the urban and educated Islamist

Tradition), Kitabiyat Yayınları, 2000; C.Aktaş, “Bacıdan Bayana”, *Birikim* (September-2000) and “İslamcı Kadının Hikayesi” (Story of the Islamist Woman) in (ed.) Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Kadının Tarihi Dönüşümü*, Pınar, 2000.

³⁰ Göle, (1991) *Ibid.*, p.14.

³¹ A. İlyasoğlu, *Örtülü Kimlik*, Metis Yayınları, 1994.

women more modern as compared to the relatively uneducated women who carry on their adherence to the local culture. İlyasoğlu has reached the term of “self modernization”³² by examining the difference between mothers and their daughters in a sense. The daughters are believers, as are their mothers. While demonstrating similar sensitivities as regards to praying and religious duties, they also enjoy certain, modernized concepts. The way they become acquainted with and marry their husbands, the manner in which they decorate their houses, differences in their dress codes, enhancement in the educational level, and similar social data are shown as examples of the steps taken towards modernization.

While the Islamist women demand to be included in the public arena within the sphere of existence as surrounded by the Islamist belief, they tend to make the Islamic framework as compatible with the present times and to reconcile it with the possibilities opened up by the modern situation for women, and to put their own “modernization” versions on the agenda, to “invert modernism,” and to “self-modernize”³³ somehow. The aim of these women is to be freed from the limits of traditionalism and to define the boundaries between the public and private domains and to establish their own socialization versions and to bring about a safe sphere of existence in the plane of faith.

As a matter of fact, the point which needs to be emphasized here is the change arising as a result of perception of traditions and beliefs on different planes. That is, the Islamist women described as “modern” generally assert that they are familiar with the true Islam and that they are freed from the traditions of the patriarchal social structure. What is meant by tradition here are the efforts to reinforce certain customary and cultural codes with religious premises. The disapproval of education for girls, or their political participation, are both an examples of this. Similarly, different covering codes, too, are each a reflection of this tradition. For example, while deprivation of a woman from the right of inheritance and polygamy are rather shaped by tradition, it was asserted that their base was religion. However, the Islamist woman described as modern considers that the right of inheritance and polygamic positions and political participation rights of the woman is overshadowed by tradition. Within the new order established for them, these women reject the religious information which is picked up

³² *Ibid.*, p.104–24.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.133.

here and there and which their mothers accepted, and state they are able to differentiate between the so-called Islamic information which have become “unanimous” and the true Islamic information. The new vision formed by the educated women has been defined as self-modernisation by İlyasoğlu.

Consequently, in differentiating between traditional/modern, Göle describes the Anatolian cultural Muslim women born into Muslim families as traditional and keeps them outside of modernity, and, likewise, positions those women who are educated and have adopted an Islamist lifestyle as radical Islamists resisting modernity. As a result, a woman is outside of modernity in either case or remains on the dark side of it.

For İlyasoğlu, the situation is slightly different. While the women who gained their Islamic information by listening to the same here and there, and who are unaware of many of their existing rights and largely emphasize their maternal and conjugal duties, are being described as traditional, Islamist women in the traditional/modern contrast, those women who have received a modern education in a distinct manner and taken on the efforts of existence in the public domain and established a new life style with the synthesis of the western modernism and the Islamist philosophy and reflected this on their clothing codes in exactly the same manner, are self-modernized Islamist women and not wholly independent from modernism. Finally, for both authors the Islamist woman, whether self-modernized and on the dark side of modernity has been described as having a distinct identity form which is different from the identity of modern Turkish women.

It is relatively difficult to estimate how perceptions of Islamist women would be evaluated in this approach that mostly focuses on non-Western or self-modernization. Göle defines alternative modernization as efforts of dark side of modernity to be included into modern life with the covered body of women. Based on this view, it is possible to say that there are two likely approaches of Islamist women towards the EU.

First approach can be a total rejection of a possible integration of Turkey into the EU. This approach is characterized by the desire of differentiation from the West and opposition of it. Desire of creating a non-Western way of life requires rejection of effects of a possible EU membership including expansion of Western culture and

legitimization of this culture within Turkish/Islamic culture. Looking from this angle, the EU membership is not desirable for the Islamist women.

As for second approach, it can be a total support due to headscarf issue. They may regard EU membership as an instrument for the aim of making wearing headscarf free in the public sphere. Freedom of wearing headscarf in the public sphere is very important for the Islamist women who want to be included into the brighter side of modernity with their alternative modernization. Therefore, presence of liberal and democratic discourses and praxis within the EU can provide an appropriate ground for Islamist women to have positive perceptions towards the EU.

2.2. Political Approach

The political life of Islamist women is also a sub-area which is attached importance, as well as their social lives, and which is intensively studied. In this section, I consider the *political approach*, the organic ties with which the Islamist women enter into the political parties and the activities carried out by them for their parties as a result of such ties are discussed. The driving force behind such works is the roles played by these women in the electoral victory of the RP. This situation, which is quite a new and effective phenomenon as compared to the other political parties, has been found worthy of notice academically.

According to political scientist Yeşim Arat, the women who are members of the women's commissions of the RP have been trained in modern public relations methods. The basic success of these women lies in their ability to effectively use the manners of socialization specific to the traditional culture for their own aims. It is such that they succeeded in attracting women to politics within the safe household environment during the entirely apolitical traditional meetings such as circumcision, wedding and holy night celebrations. According to Arat, this is an apparently non-political politicization method.³⁴ As stated at the very beginning, such studies have turned their objectives

³⁴ Y. Arat, *Political Islam in Turkey and Women's Organizations*, TESEV, 1999, p.12-33.

towards the effective roles held by the Islamist women in the RP women's commissions and attempted to understand the basic reasons of their success.

Arat, in her works, puts emphasis on the important role played by women in election success of the RP and inside the party. However, she also emphasizes that these women do not have important duties/missions within the party and in the political scene. In other words, she argues that, women are generally directed by male members in the male dominated hierarchical structure of the party.

In this hierarchical structure, it is likely to say that these writers believe that perceptions of Islamist women are shaped by the male dominated policy. In other words, these women who have very limited roles in making of party politics will accept/follow without questioning what male members decide for them. On the bases of this view, it is possible to infer that these writers would come to the conclusion that because of the RP's negative approach towards the EU, Islamist women who were members of this party were also against the EU.

2.3. Intellectual Islamist Women's Approach

In the section, titled the *intellectual Islamist women's approach* we find that the intellectual Islamist women relate their own stories. Such studies start with an objection to the definition made by the "other." According to the authors, the studies treating the East generally, and Islam specifically, consistently take shape under the disguise of orientalism. It is possible to note the effect of this type of orientalism in the studies adopting the Islamist woman as the subject, sometimes directly and at other times indirectly. This is such that the "contemporary modern Turkish woman" who, by having adopted all the humane and modern values of the West and as such, being modern, Republican and secular, differentiated herself from the religious Turkish woman, has examined the object in hand, that is, the religious Turkish woman, and attributed to her

an identity. This identity is the Islamist woman.³⁵ Though objecting to such an identity as attributed, they somehow tend to be the subject of their own stories through their writings by defending the point that they are objectified and differentiated in such studies. The studies, which include such a discontent and generally remain reactionary, are their most conspicuous characteristics. Answers that the subjects found erroneous or needing corrections, are commonly found in such books.

The main feature differentiating the writings of such women from those written by conservative Islamist women is the dual-way net of criticism. The first point of criticism is based on a deep self-criticism. Certain behaviours, actions and intellectual structures which, though not Islamist, are asserted to be in the name of Islam, are criticized. Criticisms are directed towards the “wrong inheritance” excluding the traditional woman from the educational, political and economic life in the name of religion, and the woman is redefined and her position clarified by including true Islamic reference points.³⁶

The second point of criticism is the “Jacobin seculars”³⁷ imposing their worldviews to others as the only truth and who describe themselves as contemporary. It views the Jacobin seculars at a minimum as dangerous, as the wrong inheritance facing the Islamist woman. And it views and criticizes these two points as the greatest obstacles lying against the Islamist woman to find her own way, to individualize in a sense, to establish contact with the outside world and to have a place in the social and professional lives.³⁸

It is defended that the greatest discomfort of the Islamist female authors arises from the past. Their understanding of religion, which is male-dominated and isolated

³⁵ N. Şişman, “Türkiye’de Çağdaş Kadınların İslamcı Kadın Algısı” (The Islamist Woman’s Perception of Contemporary Women in Turkey) in (ed.) Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Kadının Tarihi Dönüşümü*, (Pınar, 2000), p.122.

³⁶ C. Aktaş, “İslamcı Kadının Hikayesi” (Story of the Islamist Woman) in (ed.) Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Kadının Tarihi Dönüşümü*, Pınar, 2000, p.171-87.

³⁷ This term is usually used by the Islamists in Turkey in order to identify “secular” people who has the radical stand on the secularism approach and want to impose their ideas to the other people.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

from its essence (Koran, Hadiths (the Prophet Muhammad's sayings), Fıkıh (canon law)), is felt to have imprisoned the woman within a framework. Within this frame, the woman is a passive individual who is obliged to take care of her family and husband in her house and has the duty of carrying out the demands of her husband. Cihan Aktaş is an intellectual Islamist woman who has written extensively on Muslim women's role in society. According to her, the traditional woman is one who lives only for her husband and children, has devoted herself to household chores, is passive and submissive, generally has religious faith, but without a depth of faith and an accompanying world view, and views the world through the eyes of, first, her husband and then her children. She has no self-confidence, because she cannot stand on her own feet without her husband. Instead of viewing life as a concrete responsibility of her own, she has entrusted it into the hands of others and followed it up through people who are more active and brave than herself.³⁹ As a victim of this understanding, the first contact of the Islamist woman with the public domain is cut off. The woman, who is unaware of her rights, while leading a passive life within the frame in which she is abandoned, is always in the position of a listener. She has accepted what is offered to her in the name of religion and in a sense has submitted. Therefore, those women who act differently and seek to question and to claim are considered rebels and not welcome in the community in question and, finally, overawed.

Aktaş mentions this initial point where the contact of the Islamist woman with the public domain is cut off as in past times. In present times, she states that the situation is the same, evaluating only a group of so-called modernists or Jacobin seculars as the second attitude cutting off the contact of the Islamist woman with the public domain in order to prevent their educational right. Distinct from the first break, the Islamist woman who has attained a certain level is aware of her rights now and asks for education in order to pass from the passive status to the active one; however this plea is turned down.⁴⁰

³⁹ C. Aktaş, *Sistem içinde Kadın* (The Woman within the System), Beyan Yayınları, 1988, p.81-103.

⁴⁰ R. Çakır, An interview with Cihan Aktaş in *Direnış ve itaat: İki İktidar Arasında İslamcı Kadın* (Resistance and Obedience: The Islamist Woman Between Two Powers), Metis Yayınları, 2000, p.120-36 and C. Aktaş "İslamcı Kadının Hikâyesi" (Story of

It seems that those who adhere to a traditional understanding of Islam and Islamists are similar in that they have a framework in which they attempt to imprison the Islamist woman, in other words, in the two attitudes the aim and expression are common, however the situation intended to be consequently arrived at is different. While one is claiming that it is doing so in the name of religion, the other defends that it has the purpose of protecting the secular republic. Both views seem to have taken a stance against the woman with the mentality of protectionism. This is such that it is aimed at keeping the Islamist woman away from the public arena in order to protect the Islamist order in the first case and the secular order in the latter. According to Aktaş, the literate Muslim woman is intended to be perceived within the limits of this traditional female stereotype today.

“They wanted the well-aware Muslim women to shut themselves into their homes and to be isolated from the society, to hide behind the cages, to lock themselves in homes, to get carried away in the vicious circle of the household chores and not to appear around instead of preparing for effective positions in the society.”⁴¹ [Translation mine]

A group of Islamist women who have had the opportunity of education gets active and makes the effort to get themselves heard, however these efforts also include a great deal of concerns. As a result of what they write, they may be accused of treason by the circle in which they are included, or the circle which they call Jacobin seculars may not give importance to what they write, like to what they think, and apply quotas to what they write, or experience problems at the point of finding a publishing house. That is why Aktaş points out that writings by the Islamist woman are as difficult as climbing steep hills.⁴²

Consequently, Aktaş explains the writings being different from those of the other Islamist authors or the modern/secular authors with the following words:

the Islamist Woman) in (ed.) Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Kadının Tarihi Dönüşümü*, Pınar, 2000, p.181.

⁴¹ C. Aktaş, *Modernizmin Evsizliği ve Ailenin Gerekliği* (Homelessness of Modernism and Necessity of Family), Beyan, 1992, p.155.

⁴² C. Aktaş, “İslamcı Kadının Hikâyesi” in (ed.) Y. Ramazanoğlu, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Kadının Tarihi Dönüşümü*, Pınar, 2000, p.81.

“She should be able to sort out the bad inheritance of the history which attempts to identify herself, on the one side, and to establish the conditions of being able to write with freedom in subjective and objective respects, on the other. She should be able to make good use of the opportunity of self-reforming and -establishing, which accompanies modernism, on the one side, and to be inquisitive towards modernism, on the other. She should attach importance to making her voice heard in the public domain, yet she should also make efforts to develop and build a new understanding of publicness at the same time.”⁴³
[Translation mine]

Writing by taking into consideration specific concerns caused them to be reactionary. If we evaluate such studies on the basis of the authors, it will undoubtedly become clear that they carry a subjective quality, that is, the problems or phenomena are quoted first hand. Indeed, the writings aim at establishing the delicate balance between what is modern and what is Islamic in general. Another feature of such studies may be said to show the way in establishing the delicate balance.

In this approach, woman is more individualistic and less traditional. Male dominance can be rejected or at least is a debatable subject. Writers belonging to this approach support women to involve in the social and political life effectively and actively. For this approach that support individualism and modern life, perceptions of Islamic women towards the EU is a sensitive subject of balance. Islamist women can construct their perceptions not only towards the EU but also towards all issues without effects of any parties, congregations or organizations. But these perceptions must be convenient with Islamic base.

2.4. Conservative Islamist Women’s Approach

Within *the conservative Islamist women’s approach* are the studies carried out by the Islamist women; however such studies vary from the studies carried out by the intellectual Islamist women (*the Intellectual Islamist Women’s Approach*) in many respects. Such books written by the Islamist women aim at suggesting how the woman is to defend herself against the modern world. Such studies also cover various novels and stories. The major pioneers of this group called “Hidayet (the right way) novels” are

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.177.

Şule Yüksel Şenler and Emine Şenlikođlu. The books of these authors were once the best-selling and widest read by the Islamist youth. Indeed the novel titled “Huzur Sokađı” (Street of Ease), written by Şenler in 1986 and entering its 80th edition in 2002, is proof of this.

As obvious from their name, the ‘Hidayet’ novels generally treat the subject of extraordinary transformations of girls who are in a void and in error as ensured through the male hand. Girls who have a modern life style and are educated, however who aspire after true happiness consistently make up the main heroines of such novels. The novels find an end with such women finding the right way that is, fully adopting an Islamic life style.

This type of novel totally targets young girls. Love, which will naturally attract youth, is indirectly introduced to readers in these novels. They start like a love story and gradually externalize human love and finally find what true love that is, divine love. In these novels, which give a deep satisfaction and the pleasure of victory to the target circle, those who conduce to the right way are the male heroes. From this aspect, they somewhat tend to recognize what is offered to women by a male dominated religious understanding.

The authors of the *intellectual Islamist women’s approach* have criticized these studies in many aspects. For example, Fatma Karabıyık Barbarosođlu maintains that the novels end where true life starts. According to this assertion, will the person adopting the Islamic life style be able to carry on the same pleasure and joy? She will not be able to enter many of the locations open to her previously because of her head-cover and maybe she will feel discontent in her situation as the love of her husband lessens. In other words, she claims that they offer a fantasy world of pure dreams to readers.⁴⁴

On the other hand, Barbarosođlu complains that such novels were read excessively and found more credence than they really deserved. Indeed, she has voiced her concern on the fact that, as a result of such novels, though quite weak in the literary sense, being consumed excessively, no time will remain for the other major literary

⁴⁴ N. Şıman, *Kamusal Alanda Bařörtülıler: Fatma Karabıyık Barbarosođlu ile Söyleři*, İz, 2000, p.55.

works and that, upon the youth focusing on such, they are weakened in terms of literary character.⁴⁵

These assertions may not be said to be improper. It is definite that the works are weaker, whether in terms of form and even substance, than literary works, and the fact that they were novels which the youth of that period did not put down is obvious from the interviews we held. However, there is still another truth that exists and it is that such novels cast light on the sociological events of a period. In the interviews with Islamist women they stated that this literature is not preferred by the new generation any more. Especially now, the well-aware Islamist women attach importance to their daughters benefiting from literature and direct them towards classical literature. As a matter of fact, Barbarosoğlu also agrees with the opinion that readers should evaluate such novels as sociological works and not as literary works.

It seems that these books written by the conservative Islamist women generally have the nature of serving the male dominated society and religious understanding. Emphases are rather made on the duties assumed by women as wives and mothers. Such books, which have a single way of critical focus, dedicate their criticisms directly to the people who they believe are the slaves of the modern life. The male and female readers find out answers as to how an Islamist male can or should be, and how an Islamist woman can be against the man or within the society respectively.

This approach has a traditional male dominated standing. Therefore perceptions of women will likely be affected by this standing. Islamic women have to avoid modern, in other words European life because Islam bans having resemblance to non Islamic way of lives. Looking from this angle, EU membership is a challenge to Islamic way of life. Therefore it is not an acceptable situation for writers of this approach. Muslims in general and Islamic women in particular have to be with people or groups similar to them. As a result, Islamic union will be desired but the EU membership will be rejected.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.66-68.

2.5. Reflections

If we consider the authors and their studies so far examined, we find that they touch on a great deal of subjects regarding the Islamist women. While some differentiate the Islamist women and position them against the modern women or discuss their roles in the electoral success as the female teams of any political party, others, viewing from the inside, direct criticism at such differentiating studies, on the one side, and subject themselves to a self-criticism on the other.

However, other than some newspaper articles, no study that we treat here is focused on the opinions of the Islamist women on subjects which may be considered important for Turkey. No stance in a more concrete area has been handled other than what the Islamist woman is or is not, what they contribute to which formations and where they stand in the system. It is not possible to access data regarding what view does the Islamist woman, who is included in a great deal of political subjects, hold on the integration with the European Union, which is one of the major projects of Turkey in regards to the results thereof, and how she positions herself.

As a result, this study tries to make a meaningful contribution to this subject that has not been treated in the academic sense by focusing on an obvious shift from a total opposition by the Islamist women in their perceptions regarding the integration of Turkey with the EU towards an enthusiastic and selective support. In doing so, two periods shall be handled. The first is the period of the RP which is based on an anti-western expression since its establishment, and the second is the period of the AKP which has recently made steps in the route towards the EU as could never before be made.

In the following chapter, I will discuss the theoretical framework of this study and make a comparative analysis of RP and AKP in terms of their structural and ideational differences including their approaches to the EU and structural traits.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL REFLECTION

As also mentioned in the introductory part, in understanding the radical change in the perceptions of the Islamic women regarding the EU from total rejection to support, Barth's theory of "social organisations," primarily its specific application to the Islamic movements by Roald, has a fundamental importance. In this chapter, therefore, I will firstly discuss Barth's theory of 'social organizations' and its application to Islamic movements in Europe by Roald. Then I will touch on the ideational and structural differences between RP and AKP. In doing so, I will propose that while RP has the character of Islamic movement/congregation, AKP is a pure political party having no such a character in order to demonstrate applicability of the theory to the issue.

As a reminder, according to Barth social organizations play effective roles in the social lives of the people within the organization by establishing social patterns of control. These patterns of control stem from the tendencies of social organizations to have distinct boundaries.⁴⁶ According to Roald, Barth makes a distinction between 'the cultural' and 'the social.' While he perceives 'culture' as a fluid thing, he feels that social organizations tend to have separate boundaries.⁴⁷ It can be said that, by producing social 'patterns of control,' social organizations shape, to a certain extent, the worldviews of the people within the organization, their social relationships, and what type of attitudes will be developed in different contexts. Accordingly, inclusion in or exclusion from an organization of any new trends coming from outside of the movement is carried out by 'social patterns of control.' Consequently, an individual

⁴⁶ A. S. Roald, *Women in Islam: The Western Experience*, Routledge, 2001, p.81.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

belonging to a social organization is less open to change than one who is outside of the organization.⁴⁸

According to Roald, it is possible to apply Barth's theory to the Islamic movements that can be regarded as social organizations containing social patterns of control in order to understand "how changes in the perceptions and behaviours of women are manifested in an Arab Islamist context in Europe."⁴⁹ She argues that the Muslims who live in Europe and become a member of any Islamist movement undergo less change than those who have no ties with these movements. Because, according to the author, the Islamic movements which they are members of or affiliated with, slow down, if not finally prevent the change of individuals belonging to the movement thanks to such 'social patterns of control.' However, in the case of those outside of the movements the situation is different. The Islamists remaining outside of the movements display a faster change and transformation than those remaining within, because they stand outside of the "social patterns of control" produced by these movements, which makes change more difficult.⁵⁰

For example, in her book, Roald tries to understand how changes occur in the perceptions and behaviours of Islamic women who live in an Arab Islamist context in Europe. In other words, she discusses "ways in which widespread migration initiates processes of change in Muslims understanding of the Islamic message, with the introduction of new cultural paradigms challenging traditional solutions to problems."⁵¹ The value system of dominant culture including equality between sexes contrary to the patriarchal values and social structures of many Arabic-speaking countries affects Muslims' interpretation of the Islamic sources.⁵² Then she comes to the conclusion that:

"...although there are changes of attitude within Islamic movements, the changes among individuals within movements are less than those outside movements. Changes of Islamic perceptions of women in a European context might therefore be more pronounced among independent Islamists than among Islamists belonging to the various Islamist movements."⁵³

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.79-87.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.3.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.3-4.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.81.

Barth's theory of "social organisations," which is one of the three theoretical assumptions that Roald, who explains the situation of the European Muslims, bases herself on, may be said to have the same explanatory nature also for this study. The deep differentiation regarding the perceptions of the European Union between the Islamist women who were members or supporters of the RP and those who are members or supporters of the AKP, many of whom had supported the RP previously, is closely interrelated with the structures of these parties. For instance, it is misleading to think of the RP solely as a political party and its leader Erbakan solely as a political leader. This party is a political extension of the Nationalist View Movement, which may readily be viewed as an Islamist movement as the respective successors and predecessors. Therefore, membership to or affiliation with this party somehow means adherence to the Nationalist View Movement. From this standpoint, membership to the party means to voluntarily accept the 'social patterns of control' produced by the movement.

However, in the case of AKP, there are substantial differences. First of all, the AKP may be solely described as a political party. As in the example of the RP, it is not a political extension of any Islamist movements. From this viewpoint, relationships are formed not on a metaphysical domain, but entirely on the pragmatic environment of politics. Taken from this perspective, it is not possible to talk about 'social patterns of control' of the type mentioned by Barth. This, in turn, means that a change in the AKP will be easier as compared to the RP or the parties which are a continuation of the same. Indeed, what is maintained in this study is this argument. In the following section of this chapter we will go into further detail on the differences between the two parties in question as mentioned above.

Application of Theory: Ideational and Structural Differences between the RP and AKP

The Nationalist View Movement (NVM) which was formed concurrently with the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*-MNP) established by Necmettin Erbakan in 1970 is an Islamist movement in which political phenomenon overweighs as regards to structure and approaches. Erbakan, who is the founder, from past to present times, is

carrying on the leadership of this movement. Behind the giving of the title of *Hoca* to Erbakan it is possible to see the traces of the structuring of an Islamist movement. Although it may seem possible to consider that Erbakan took on this title thanks to his identity as an academician, the fact that the title bears an Islamic connotation is fixed through the line and posture of the NVM.

So what kind of a line and posture does NVM have? What are the factors which give the character of an Islamist movement to it? If we assume NVM as a theory, the parties following NVM are undoubtedly the formations where this theory is transferred to practice. Obviously, NVM represents a formation not only through its political and economic approaches, but also through its social and religious approaches. This is such a formation, which collects its members, and the policies produced by it within a framework, calling them *hakk* (justice), while calling those outside of itself *batıl* (injustice). In this sense, the ultimate target of NVM is shaped by the idea that “*hakk*” will be manifested and “*batıl*” will vanish.

This movement approaches, within the frame established by it, to the social, political and economic subjects with Islamic points of departure, and shows, as the origin of this approach, the civilization of fundamental belief which the Seljuk and Ottomans based themselves on, that is, a system of faith established on the sublime principles of Islam. Through this, it opposes the imitation of the West because Christianity establishes the foundations of the West, and Christianity will not bring about the happiness.⁵⁴ The return to the glorious periods of the Seljuks and Ottomans as an ideal that has found support within the National Movement. Aspiration for and the emphasis made towards the Asr-i Saadet (Age of Felicity) among the Islamist communities were shaped with the aspiration for and emphasis made towards the classical era of the Ottoman era within this community where political phenomena overweigh.

⁵⁴ R. Çakır, *Ne Şariat Ne Demokrasi: Refah Partisini Anlamak* (Neither Sharia nor Democracy: Understanding the RP), Metis Yayınları, 1994, p.81; H. Yavuz, *Modernleşen Müslümanlar (Modernizing Muslims)*, Kitap Yayınevi, 2005, p.281; N. Erbakan, ‘Milli Görüş Lideri Erbakan’ın ESAM’da Yaptığı Konuşma’ (The Speech Delivered by Erbakan, Leader of the Nationalist View Movement, at ESAM), 19.11.2005, *Milli Gazete*.

The Nationalist View Movement is a movement of announcement and invitation (davet). It invites individuals from what is *batıl* to what is *hakk*. Through announcements people are directly called to the Islamic interpretation of NVM. In the NVM meetings an intensive Islamic call and warning is noteworthy, so much that it instils the feeling that the individuals are responsible for their votes cast in the after-life and renders political participation a religious theme and makes its invitation clear.⁵⁵ People, men or women, young or old, to gain the approval of God, take part in politics. Organizations, publications, aids, etc. are carried out in order to serve on the route to God. To give a more concrete example for the gratuitous aids of the masses, although the Islamist women do not actively participate in political formations, it has always been this motivation lying behind their on-going support and this motivation mobilizes and sets them in motion with the belief that even though they will not get a return on this earth, they will have the same in their after-life.⁵⁶

All of those mentioned above are each an Islamist movement phenomenon. The dominant opinion in Islamic movements is that the human being has two duties. The first one is to worship God and the second one is announcement of intention. Humans serve in movement without expecting a return. Their most important interest is again to gain approval by God. Inviting individuals to Islam and ensuring them to walk on the just route are also among the purposes of the Islamic movements. No one step as taken within the movement is expected to be rewarded on earth; steps are more evaluated as an investment in the after-life. From these standpoints, we see that the “submission” of individuals, who are the most important tools of the Islamist movement, are also applicable to NVM.

In addition to all these, Süleyman Arif Emre, one of the writers in Milli Gazete (National Newspaper), states that the Nationalist View Movement is the first movement, which, in addition to the economic development, also includes ethical development in

⁵⁵ H. Yavuz, *Modernleşen Müslümanlar (Modernizing Muslims)*, Kitap Yayınevi, 2005, p.309; R. Çakır (1994), *Ibid*.

⁵⁶ R. Çakır, ‘An Interview with Sibel Eraslan’ in *Direnış ve itaat: İki İktidar Arasında İslamcı Kadın (Resistance and Obedience: The Islamist Woman Between Two Powers)*, Metis, 2000, p.89–104.

its program.⁵⁷ Erbakan cites the principle of ethics and spirituality as the first main principle and the flag of the vision.⁵⁸ As a matter of fact, this emphasis was finally expressed under the heading “Main Goal” as included in the program of National Order Party, the first party of the movement. This heading mentions “establishing a superior civilization again... without prejudicing our national and spiritual values while adopting, as the main principle, the actualization and development of the high ethics and morality prevailing in the creation of our nation.”⁵⁹

The Nationalist View is somewhat of a preference which provides the possibility to the nation, which due to the Westernization project has been removed from its respective values, to live with its own national values again.⁶⁰ From this aspect, the movement aims at giving the impression that it does not solely adopt a political purpose. The ethical development and spiritual improvement of the public is the first target of this movement. Other goals are built upon this. In other words, the target of NVM, which has priority over coming to power, is ethical and spiritual development.

Mehmet Zait Kotku, the leader of the *İskender Paşa* congregation, of *Nakshi*, a Sufi order based on mystic relations between a sheikh and disciples, origin, had stressed that a party needed to be established where Muslims could feel at home, thus serving as the father of the idea of the National Salvation Party.⁶¹ It is obvious that the “*Sufist Ethical*” understanding of Kotku⁶² affected the ethical and spiritual understandings, which the Nationalist View deals with sensitively. While describing the realities of

⁵⁷ S. A. Emre, ‘Milli Görüş Masonlara Darbedir’ (Nationalist View is a stroke on Masons), 21.11.2005, *Milli Gazete*.

⁵⁸ N. Erbakan, ‘Milli Görüş Lideri Erbakan’ın ESAM’da yaptığı Konuşma: Dört Ana Prensibimiz Var’ 21.11.2005, *Milli Gazete*.

⁵⁹ S. Şen, *AKP Milli Görüşçü mü? Parti Programlarında Milli Görüş* (Is AKP a National Visionist? National Vision in the Party Programs), Nokta Kitap, 2004, p.14.

⁶⁰ İ. Dağı, *Kimlik, Söylem ve Siyaset: Doğu –Batı Ayrımında Refah Partisi Geleneği* (Identity, Expression and Politics: The Tradition of the RP at the East-West Crossroads), İmge Kitabevi, 1998, p.25.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² M. Z. Kotku, *Tasavvufî Ahlak*, (Sufist Morality), Seha Neşriyat, 1998, p.25–35.

Sufism in his book, Kotku dwells on the term of ethics and describes its importance for the individual and humanity. Within the scope of the communal logic, ethics, refrainment and decency are important for the spiritual world, and communities aim at breeding individuals with *ihlas* (true faith) who can embody all these elements.

NVM has an anti-Western stance both on the domestic and international level. The discomfort felt from the viewing of modernization as a pure westernization and the belief that the adoption of Western values without questioning will cause social degeneration describe the opposition to the West in the domestic level. The opposition to the West on the international level, on the other hand, is formed by the principle of “Foreign Policy with Distinctive Personality”⁶³ which is the second principle of NVM. As this principle, Turkey needs to be a leading country, and not a puppet, and to become a powerful country in order to establish a world order, which holds the justice, expected and aspired to by all humankind, and not to feign superiority over others.

The EU perception of the Nationalist View Movement can be summarized as follows:

“Instead of an exploiting economic community such as the European Union, the Muslim countries should set an example by establishing among themselves an economic community based on a just order and enhanced cooperation between and among themselves. Then they should adopt their own monetary system. They should found their own NATO to ensure the law and justice on earth. Today’s NATO works against Islam. Rather, the establishment of the organization for defence and cooperation of Muslim countries which will protect the idea ‘No, all humans are equal; everybody on this earth should live in a just order’ and serve in the way as did the Ottomans and Seljuks in history has been taken as its basis.”⁶⁴ [Translation mine]

As is obvious in the above quotation, NVM regards the EU as an exploiting economic community. In addition to this, it proposes alternative institutions based on Islamic values in order to balance western institutions.

The organizations and organizational structure of the Nationalist View Movement have a great many aspects similar to those of the Islamic movements. The

⁶³ N. Erbakan, ‘Milli Görüş Lideri Erbakan’ın ESAM’da Yaptığı Konuşma: Dört Ana Prensibimiz Var’ 21.11.2005, *Milli Gazete*.

⁶⁴ Erbakan (2005) *Ibid*.

ties with the socio-cultural institutions and media outlets can be cited as examples of these.

The *Nur* movement in Turkey can be given as the best example for the Islamic movements with media outlet. The opinions of the movement's spiritual leader, the various activities of the movement and the answers relating to subjects that the members are curious about reach the reader, listener or viewer through such media tools. *Zaman Newspaper*, *STV* and *Burç FM* are known as the congregational outlets and their publication or broadcast overlap with the opinions and vision of the movement. Similarly, *Milli Gazete* and *Kanal 7* are included among the media of the Nationalist View community. Even though *Kanal 7* has subsequently followed an independent route from NVM, *TV5* has taken up the flag as of recently.

From the standpoint of the socio-cultural institutions the situation is not different. A large number of Islamic movements have strong foreign ties and even representative bodies. No political party enjoys such powerful ties or representative bodies, and this structure of NVM ensures a great deal of benefits to their party and witnesses the formation of a communal type. It is such that in the study by Birol Caymaz titled "*Les Mouvements Islamiques Turcs à Paris*," formations of communities abroad are treated in an informative manner. In the third section of this book, which he prepared by departing from the interviews held by him with many people favouring various Islamic movements who live in Paris, as well as his own observations, Caymaz describes NVM as a community in the heading of the section: "*Une Communauté de Solidarité Politico-Religieuse: l'organisation Européenne de Milli Görüş*" (A Political-Religious Solidarity Community: European Nationalist View Organization). In this section, various information is provided on the organizational structure of the Nationalist View Movement in Europe and the activities carried out as well as interviews held with the Koran course's *hocas* and imams as affiliated with this community. The schools opened and the *fetva* (advisory opinion) boards established draw attention to the congregational structure of NVM.⁶⁵

Another socio-cultural institution is the National Youth Foundation (NYF), which is an organization of NVM aimed at youth. NYF is an organization outside of the

⁶⁵ B. Caymaz, *Les Mouvements Islamiques Turcs à Paris*, L'Harmattan, 2002.

youth commissions of the NVM parties in which youth adopting the consciousness of the National View gather together and engage in various activities. This organization had over two thousand offices spread throughout Turkey. Included among its activities was granting of scholarships to students as well as the operation of private dormitories. İhsan Aktaş, the Vice-president of the Foundation, stated that the priority target of the Foundation was to nourish the spirituality of the Muslim youth. The National Youth Foundation is another example evidencing that NVM is an Islamic movement.

All the traces of the movement mentioned above demonstrate that NVM can be easily described as an Islamist congregation consists of Islam and politics. Erbakan and his followers founded the National Order Party (NOP), the first party of the movement, in 1970. The party was disbanded following the military coup in 1971. In 1972, the former cadres of the NOP founded the National Salvation Party (NSP). That party also was disbanded after the military coup in 1980. These parties were both accused of being anti-secular. When its party was disbanded, the movement founded a new one. In 1983, the Nationalist View Movement founded the RP. The RP gained influence in the 1990s in Turkish politics and was simultaneously strengthened by the nationwide rise of Islamic movements. It won the mayors' seats in Turkey's two largest cities, Istanbul and Ankara, in 1994. In the national parliamentary elections, the RP increased its share of the votes in 1995 and became the leading party. Erbakan became prime minister in 1996 in the WP-True Path Party coalition.

The RP, in addition to its character as a political party, is one which bears the traces of the understanding of the movement as a result of its relevant tradition (NVM). The religious and political ideas that the party represents concurrently caused it to be perceived not only as a party, but also as an identity in the eye of its electors:

“When you look at the parties, you see them as an interest group or organization aiming at distributing goods and works based on the state. On the other hand, the RP expresses more than this. This party is an expression of our identity.”⁶⁶
[Translation mine]

For Erbakan, the leader of NVM and the WP, Nationalist View is an upper identity and RP is an institution ensuring the building of this identity. All religious,

⁶⁶H. Yavuz, *Modernleşen Müslümanlar (Modernizing Muslims)*, Kitap Yayınevi, 2005, p.315.

ethnic and regional sub identities may be contained within this institution, provided, however, that transformation is available. As stated by Erbakan:

“Unlike the other parties in the parliament, our party places religious faith in its centre. Everybody joining us will undergo a transformation within time.”⁶⁷
[Translation mine]

Viewed from this perspective, the RP had aimed to ensure the collection of devotees, Kurds, Anatolian bourgeoisie groups within the upper identity of Nationalist View and the integration of them, too, into the system. Differences within the congregation were not important, because even if the participant is Kurdish or Turkish, he has adopted the Nationalist View. As the tendency of the RP to collect differences under an Islamic roof stipulates transformation, we cannot state that it is pluralist. However, it is true that its electors gave a definitive answer to the question of “*who am I?*”

The WP, which became the most powerful party of the Nationalist View Movement thanks to the definitive answer given to this question, was the only party which did not need the congregational support, unlike the other political parties which made efforts to obtain the support of the Islamist movements in order to get the votes of the pious Muslims prior to every election. As stated by Çakır:

“Those who had once favoured first *Nakshi* and then National View favoured, in time, the National View first and then *Nakshi*. Even a major part of those who had been introduced to the party prior to any congregational affiliation came to stop looking for the joy of belonging to a certain congregation in any other place.”⁶⁸ [Translation mine]

How the Nationalist View Movement has become a congregation in the true sense of the word thanks to this is very clearly understood. During the prime periods of the Nationalist View Movement there was a large demand for a sense of belonging to a movement, and the party met this demand for the Islamist circle.

The RP had a political Islamist and anti-Western agenda. It opposed Turkey’s membership in the EU. This opposition was based, and is still based, on two reasons.

⁶⁷ R. Çakır, *Ne Şeriat Ne Demokrasi: Refah Partisini Anlamak*, Metis Yayınları, 1994, p.81.

⁶⁸ Çakır (2000), p.68.

The first reason is the view that regards the EU as a Christian club and civilization. Therefore, a possible integration of Turkey into the EU can damage the Islamic character of Turkey and Turkish society. The second one refers to the sovereign rights of Turkey. According to this, becoming a full member of the EU will bereave the sovereign rights of Turkey. Because of these two reasons, integration of Turkey into the EU is unacceptable.⁶⁹

Moreover, the RP was planning to found an Islamic Union and to create an Islamic currency. In late 1996 and early 1997, Erbakan visited several Muslim countries as prime minister, and tried to organize an Islamic Union. He succeeded in creating an international cooperation organization among eight Muslim countries, called as the D-8 (Developing Eight).

The February 28, the military's indirect intervention in 1997 ended the WP-TPP coalition and substantially, the Nationalist View Movement. The February 28 incident, when a military warning demanding that "Erbakan curtail the tide of Radical Islam"⁷⁰ forced the Welfare Party to resign from the government in June 1997. The RP was dissolved, and the Turkish Supreme Court banned Erbakan from politics in 1998. Following that, the WP's mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, was imprisoned for reciting a poem, and consequently banished from political life.

Following the February 28 coup, the RP experienced an inner fragmentation. This fragmentation produced two groups within the party. One led by Erbakan, and the other led by Erdoğan. After the closure of the WP, WP's parliamentarians founded the Virtue Party (VP) on 17 December 1997. The VP, however, favored Turkey's EU membership, referred to religious rights as part of a broader agenda on democratization, emphasized individual and human rights, attached importance to decentralization and local governments, and stressed the market economy and privatization. But this support did not last long.

⁶⁹ İ. Dağı, *Kimlik, Söylem ve Siyaset: Doğu –Batı Ayrımında Refah Partisi Geleneği*, İmge Kitabevi, 1998, p.45.

⁷⁰ Ben Lombardi, "Turkey- The Return of the Reluctant Generals?", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol.112 no.2, (1997), p.215.

Despite the VP's democratic discourse, Turkey's Constitutional Court dissolved the party in 2001, arguing that it had become a standard-bearer against secularism by defending the right to wear a headscarf at universities and in the Turkish Parliament. This closure deepened the disagreement between the elders led by Erbakan and the younger generation led by Erdoğan. The elders were inclined to preserve political Islamism as the normative framework, whereas the younger generation was for democracy. The followers of Erbakan founded the Felicity Party (FP), whereas those of Erdoğan founded the Justice and Development Party (AKP). The discussion on the EU is one of the most important fault lines between these two parties.

The FP returned to the anti-EU and anti-globalization discourse. Two factors were influential in this return. First, in 2001, the European Court of Human Rights rejected Erbakan's appeal of the Turkish Constitutional Court's dissolution of the RP and his ban from politics. Second, the younger generation of the Nationalist View, who were resisting the old political Islamist normative framework, were gone. The elder generation, led by Erbakan again, monopolized the Nationalist View Movement. They easily re-emphasized political Islamism. With its political Islamist agenda, the FP received only 2.5 percent of the national votes in the elections of 3 November 2002.⁷¹

The AKP has become a leading supporter of Turkey's membership in the EU.⁷² In 2002, Erdoğan pointed to the EU as the only alternative political project for Turkey: "We support Turkey's EU membership for not remaining in a suburb of civilization as a backward country in a changing and globalizing world." In the November 2002 elections, the AKP won 34.3 percent of the national votes and 363 of 550 seats in the Parliament. Erdoğan visited several European capitals to ask for support for Turkey's

⁷¹ Yavuz, Hakan (1997) "Political Islam and the Welfare (Refah) Party in Turkey" *Comparative Politics*, 30/1, p.63-82.

⁷² The Justice and Development Party emerged from the embers of the RP, which briefly led a coalition government in Turkey in 1996. In 2000 the RP was closed by a constitutional court decision for allegedly threatening the secular nature of the Republic of Turkey. A faction of conservative moderate members within the old RP, known as *Yenilikçiler*, or in English, *Reformist* formed the Justice and Development Party on August 14, 2001 under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in an attempt to ground moderate conservative politics in a secular democratic framework.

membership. During his long trip, Erdoğan argued that Turkey's membership would be the best response to the thesis of the "clash of civilizations."

Although he was an important defender of the Nationalist View Movement, Tayyip Erdoğan quit this community and joined in a new political formation established under his leadership. Many of the founders and members of the Justice and Development Party were affiliated with the Nationalist View Movement; however, with this party they announced their independence on the political platform. The party, which had to deal with the dubious approach to the question "Is it a dissimulation?" made efforts for a long time to reject and even to criticize the tradition from which it came. As quite obvious from Erdoğan's defence that "we have taken off the Nationalist View shirt..." the subject politicians, who once wore the Nationalist View shirt, when not successful in altering the model of the shirt, refused the Nationalist View saying that they have directly taken it off.⁷³ In other words, AKP took off this shirt, which it thought to be too small for itself. So, what kind of a shirt is AKP wearing today?

AKP differs from the parties adopting the Nationalist View in many aspects. The AKP, which upon its announcement of its independence became different from this community in a number of areas, has the nature of an individual political party. In other words, there is no powerful, institutionalized idealistic formation such as (NVM), which surrounds it and determines its vision and stance. For this reason, AKP can readily keep up pace with and seems to be open to change. Indeed, when Erdoğan addressed Baykal, leader of RPP (Republican People's Party), during the budget negotiations for 2006, as "I have changed; I have developed by changing. I have not remained thirty years behind, because I am not outdated"⁷⁴ seems to verify this opinion.

The AKP attempted to make its difference from the Nationalist View Movement clear by moving beyond the primarily Islamic expression. Now the new owner of the phrase "use of religion for making politics" is AKP. Opposition by Bulent Arınç, a key

⁷³ Although Abdullah Gül, acting for and on behalf of the Reformist wing, became a candidate for the party leadership against Recai Kutan during the Extraordinary Congress of the Virtue Party held in 2003, he did not succeed. A faithful politician following the NVM tradition Recai Kutan was re-elected as the party leader with the support of Erbakan.

⁷⁴ R. T. Erdoğan, '2006 Budget Negotiations', 27.12.2005, *TBMM TV*, Ankara,

figure who played an important role in the founding of the AKP and existing president of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, to the concept of “religion equals politics” and declarations by Gül as “religion has no party; this only harms religion” seemed to summarize the message that AKP moved beyond the political Islam and the Nationalist View Movement. Mustafa Özel defines the trend of “Conservative Democracy” as introduced to the political literature by AKP, which, at every opportunity, makes reference to universal criteria and fundamental rights and freedoms in the party program, as “the ideology of a safe adjustment to the globalized Western system rather than the keeping of a basically local thought and practice blended with universal values.”⁷⁵ The AKP which, as Özel put it, “came to power before having the opportunity to become a party in the true sense of the word” has had difficulty to try and explain to its base the identity which it has succeeded in building, as well as the difficulty it experienced concerning its identity.

For the Islamist circle, which became thoroughly fatigued after 28th February 1997 the only route was the AKP. The AKP, which came out of the elections a great success under Erdoğan’s charismatic leadership, was organizing various conferences in order to promote or explain itself and receiving assistance from foreign academicians in order to legitimize its “Conservative Democratic” identity and have it recognized. The AKP succeeded in identifying itself; however this identification did not match its base. Indeed, for its base, which defined itself as Islamist, conservative sometimes, and as liberal at other times, the “Conservative Democratic” identity faced the AKP as an identity which needed to be built. At this very point a new identity was required for the base which quit the community (NVM), in other words, the base also had to take off the Nationalist View shirt now. The theses that AKP “transformed” the Islamist circle may be justified with this identity paradox.

The major weapon of transformation is, no doubt, the supreme values held by AKP before anything else, that is, the global value judgements. The base was convinced of the fact that the whole of these values replacing the Islamic principles was not inconsistent with Islam and consequently, these values began to be adopted. The issue in discussion that followed was: Is the party transformed because the base is

⁷⁵ Özel, Mustafa ‘Ak Parti ve Türk Siyasetinin Paradoksları’ (AK Party and the Paradoxes of Turkish Politics), *Anlayış*, December 2005, Vol: 35, p.22–25.

transformed, or is the transformative function of the power in action? AKP and its key figures, which quit the Nationalist View movement, are open to change and transformation in the face of the changes on the social base. Because, the protective shield of the congregation, which will identify its position in response to such social and political changes and protect it from interaction in the face of such differences does not apply to AKP. More specifically, it is not possible to talk about social patterns of control, which will restrict AKP in the pragmatic environment of politics. That is, relations and the policies as followed are not formed in a metaphysical/religious sphere, but in the secular environment of politics. That is why change is not a very difficult matter for AKP.

Its approach to the European Union is one which is in parallel to the expression “we have changed” by this party. The EU policy of AKP, which is acknowledged as one of the major data of the change, is treated within the scope of “the Development and Democratization Program” and is shaped at the point of the fundamental rights and freedoms. As a matter of fact, thanks to the wind of democracy blowing from the EU it has made its electors recognize the fact that the EU has a key role in the settlement of the head-cover issue and as such, has included the EU membership in its agenda.

The foreign policy of AKP, which was established upon leaving the Nationalist View Movement, is focused upon the EU membership. The idea of an Islamic Union and an anti-EU expression of the Nationalist View is not applicable to the AKP, which quit the movement. AKP gave off the first signals of change with the support it provided to the EU membership. If it is considered that the support to the EU membership and, therefore, to AKP, by the Islamist women is shaped at the point of a search for “freedom for head-cover,” the views and expectations of these women regarding the EU membership take on importance. Has the split from the Nationalist View movement indeed caused a change or transformation for the Islamist women favouring AKP? What are the reasons for the change in their approach to the EU? We will obtain answers to all these questions as a result of the interviews and surveys we will have with the Islamist women.

In conclusion, Barth’s theory and its application by Roald can be applied to illustrate the differences between the RP and the AKP, and their members’ attitudes towards social and cultural changes. As I mentioned before, the Islamist women

belonging to the RP were against Turkey's integration into the EU. By contrast, Islamist women belonging to the AKP support this integration. These changes and differences in perceptions can be illustrated by Barth's theory.

When we look at the structure of RP, it is not only a political party running for office, but also was a political organ of an Islamist social organization/congregation, "the Nationalist View Movement." As an Islamist movement embedded in an anti-Western ground, the Nationalist View Movement is a supporter of an Islamic union created by Islamic countries. In addition to this, it has a critical standing regarding the sincerity of the EU countries towards Turkey as an Islamic country. From this point of view, Nationalist View Movement and its political organ RP has a character of the Islamist movement. So, RP as an Islamist social organization had strong patterns of control that filtered the cultural and social inputs. It was difficult to support Turkey's integration into the EU for a party that based its policies on its anti-Western standing.

By contrast, despite the fact that its founders departed from the RP, the AKP is not an Islamic movement or congregation. By rejecting the policies and projects conducted by the RP and founding a political party that tries to embrace all parts of Turkish society, the founders of the AKP make the party open to cultural and social changes and differences. In other words, there is not a strong pattern of congregational control over cultural and social change. As a result of this situation, members and supporters of the AKP become more open to new social and cultural effects. It can be said that the changing perceptions of Islamist women belonging to AKP regarding the EU is a product of this structure. They can evaluate the pros and cons of a possible integration of Turkey to the EU beyond the strong patterns of control of a congregation.

In the following chapter I will discuss the methodology that I use in this study. It includes several methodological approaches to data collection, and the focus group selection criteria.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Taking into consideration the difficulties of studying various types of Muslim women, I have decided to focus upon a limited group of women, that is, the party women who have become members or strong supporters of the AKP after having spent a certain amount of time with the RP. I will be referring to them as Islamist women throughout the following. I have focused upon a small group of educated Islamist women who have leading positions among Islamist women. In other words, while the educated Islamist women have a leading position compared to uneducated Islamist women, they similarly act somewhat as the spokeswomen of the uneducated women and have become their representatives on many levels.

The EU-focused issues have largely become the subject of discussion as a result of the rapprochement experienced and major steps taken in the currently prevailing situation in Turkey. However, although this subject has always kept its freshness on the popular front, its inclusion in a deep and wide chain of discussions for everybody, young or old, has a relatively recent history. Therefore, it is likely that the Islamist women will face a great number of questions as to the EU membership and what effect this membership will have on their beliefs and traditions. In the majority of cases the intellectual elites attempt to answer these questions.

The present study examines the changes in the EU perceptions of the Islamist women who were members or supporters of the RP before, but who subsequently participated in the AKP lines. Furthermore, while questioning the reasons for such change, it strives to understand the stance of the Islamist woman at the EU point in general. Evaluated from this viewpoint, the Nationalist View Movement, joining with the RP, and the different and varying approaches of the AKP, has stepped beyond the

sphere of influence created by this movement, as arising as a result of such break assume importance for this study.

In order to be able to evaluate the thoughts, approaches and perceptions of the Islamist women, I have employed several different methodological approaches in data collection. My research methodology includes questionnaires, discussions and interviews. Furthermore, I have also attended meetings and conferences arranged by many different Islamist congregations and groups.

4.1. Criteria for Focus Group

Prior to starting the interviews in the focus group study, I have designated certain selection criteria for my interviewees. Although each criterion serves towards certain purpose(s), it will provide more validity and easy evaluation of the results.

The women who will be interviewed:

1. Should be a supporter or a member of the party: (before the RP, now the AKP) the sample of this study comprises the Islamist women who were members or supporters of the RP previously and who transferred to the AKP subsequently. This criterion assumes importance in understanding how the party differentiation and the disconnection of the AKP from the NVM affect this change.
2. Should be well educated: Educational criteria, other than those cited at the beginning of the methodology section, are necessary for a high quality interview and discussion. I have decided that the interviews to be held with these women who, in my opinion, have an intellectual capacity due to their education level, will be more intensive and deeper in their evaluations. If I had also included uneducated women in my interviews and discussions, I could have needed alternative questions in case the questions I posed could not be understood or the answers could not address the questions, although answers differed in terms of quality and depth. This could have endangered the stability of the interviews.

However, as a result of the interviews and discussions I held with educated women I have not faced such a problem.

3. Should be well-versed in Islamic knowledge: When the subject is the EU perception of the “Islamist” women, it is important that the answers have an Islamic origin. It is not possible for an Islamist woman who lacks Islamic knowledge to approach the European Union from the viewpoint of an Islamist woman. Therefore, I have placed importance in my interviewees and informants to have a good knowledge of Islam. I have made sure that reference can be made to the Islamic sources in certain subjects rather than to information that is generally memorized by the masses. I have had the chance of measuring this through the questions I have asked in certain important subjects. I have included such questions in both the questionnaires and the interviews. The viewpoint of an Islamist woman could be provided through deep Islamic knowledge, which was not picked up here and there.
4. Should wear a head-cover: First of all, I would like to clarify this point: I do not think that the head-cover indicates whether or not women are Islamist or devout. However, as obvious from Chapter Two, head-cover has become an identity card of the Islamist woman. The head-cover criterion as included here is a necessity for the questions to be posed in the interviews, questionnaires and discussions rather than supporting or carrying on the approach in the literature. Moreover, head-cover may mark an Islamist worldview.

4.2. Questionnaire & Interviews

The questionnaires consist of 35 questions and include open-ended and yes-no answers. Other than those, which are personal, questions are mostly open-ended. Questions are generally formed between the EU and the political parties. Additionally, there are also questions on Islamic thought and associated with social life. The other questions, on the other hand, have been formulated in order to measure the level of knowledge regarding the EU, as well as to understand the support given to and the perceptions of it.

I distributed forty questionnaires to educated Islamist women who do not have active party membership, but who are the sympathizers of before the RP and now the AKP. In this way I tried to spread my research to a broader area and tried to see whether party decisions or politics have or not have party platform support. The questionnaires were given selectively to those who met the criteria outlined above. I handed out the questionnaires at the meetings arranged by different Islamic groups and individuals whom I knew from my own personal contacts.

I received twenty-two responses and of the questionnaires which I handed out personally, almost all were returned, whereas the questionnaires only a few came back from several meetings I attended. I think there was a trust problem for women in the meetings because they do not know me very well and they were suspicious about my objectivity.

I had six in-depth interviews with AKP women in leading position in the party who had a past linked to the RP. I chose women in the leading position due to their potential influence on the party's policies. Through the snowball method these interviewees connected me with others. Two of the interviewees belong to the upper class and the four others have a middle class background.

I carried out interviews in Istanbul. During these interviews, I used a digital recorder to tape my interviews. My main concerns in these interviews was as follows: compare the perceptions of the Islamist women in the period of the RP and the AKP towards the EU, present the main changes in the perceptions of these women regarding the EU, understand the reasons that lay behind this change, explore the changes in social and political life of Islamist women whether it is possible to talk about a transformation for them after the AKP government or not. Each interview lasted a maximum of one hour.

The structured interview consists of six different sections. However, there is a line between the first four and last three sections of the structured interview. The first four sections consider the ideas of Islamist women without a political identity. The last two sections, however, consider the ideas and approaches of Islamist women with the AKP identity.

The first section directly aims at defining the social life of the woman and her place within this life. Questions generally include individual answers to the personal questions. In other words, the participant participates in this section only with her personal identity. The identity of the AKP woman who is the important identity of the study has not yet emerged here. In this section covering personal questions, the aim is to get into a comfortable atmosphere and to capture a genuine frequency with the interviewee. To get to know the participant and to determine her life style and codes are also among the purposes of this section.

Although, in the first section, an attempt is made to know the Islamist woman within her family and close vicinity, in the second section the political approach of the participant is studied. In this section, while the Islamist woman is included in the interview with her party identity, she is not yet included within her party identity. The aim is to study the involvement of the participant in politics and the place of the environmental factors in such involvement.

The third section covers the EU-focused questions. This section attempts to understand how the participant interprets the process in which the EU and Turkey are joined. Further, through a small quiz it aims at measuring the knowledge of the participant regarding the EU. The participant is still in a neutral approach in the third section, as in the first two sections. She does not declare a view in party terms.

The fourth section attempts to understand the level of Islamic knowledge and understanding of the participants and also how she evaluates the situation in which she find herself. Examination of the traditions often referred to by the *intellectual Islamist women's approach* writers and the approaches regarding the decomposition of Islam by the Islamist women assumes importance in this section. Similarly, those who answer these questions gave their responses by only their Islamist identity, not their political identity.

The party factor comes to the light in the fifth section and the participant answers the questions as an individual, but also by taking into consideration her party ties. The AKP and the RP are the important key points. This section is the heart of the study along with the last section. The answers to many important questions will be

given in this section. The RP and the AKP differentiation and dimensions of this differentiation are covered.

The final section aims at obtaining the conclusion and summary of the opinions of the participant at the point of the EU by combining her Islamic identity and party identity. The EU perceptions, expectations, and the answers to be given to several topical questions will be sought here.

To avoid any orientation or clues as may involuntarily arise in my tone of voice; I wrote the questions in small, individual cards and gave them to the interviewees. As such, they felt they were freed from surprises and excitement and I observed that they were more comfortable during the interview. Moreover, I could also avoid any misunderstandings or orientations as could arise from my tone of voice or movements.

In order to turn the interview into a relaxed atmosphere, rather than only questioning, and in order to be able to obtain genuine answers, I also talked about myself and I made them feel more comfortable about any questions they might be wondering about and posing to me concerning my project. They generally asked me about my family and my future plans. Besides this, there were those who inquired why I wanted to study the subject of Islamist woman and some criticized me for this.

The condition for the Islamist woman with head-cover, as determined among the participant criteria, received criticism from the AKP Islamist women during the interviews, because they defended that the head-cover was not a criterion at the point of being Islamic. They did not omit talking about the existence of their friends who, though not wearing a head-cover, had a strictly Islamic philosophy of life.

My request for a discussion with the AKP's Eyüp women's groups was rejected due to lack of confidence. A top-level authorized woman expressed her major discomfort; she was afraid that the recorded conversations should be altered through editing and that the thoughts and sentences, which were not hers, would be presented as if these were hers. She stated that she received instructions not to participate in recorded conversations. Nevertheless, she stated that she could answer the questions, which I could communicate to her through email or fax in the form of a written text. However,

since such a correspondence was not compatible with the method of the study, it was turned down.

In addition to all these, there was a woman who insisted upon giving a written answer to the interview questions. I did not include the answers that this woman gave in the study considering that they were given by taking the image issue excessively into consideration and even that they were not independent answers.

Taking into consideration the “principle of reliability” which I felt obliged to take into account as such, I presented to the people who I interviewed a signed document undertaking the guarantee that I would not make any alteration in the answers given by them and that; otherwise, they could initiate legal action against me. As such, it was also acknowledged by these people that my study had the tendency to serve to professional ends. Furthermore, I have used pseudonyms to protect my interviewees’ identities.

Another important aspect of ‘the principle of reliability’ is how the researcher can judge the answers given by the interviewees. Interviewees react differently to different researchers and the reliability of the answers depends to a great degree on the interviewees’ trust on the researcher. The way of my contact with the Islamist women in order to make interview provided appropriate ground for me on the issue of ‘the principle of reliability’. The first person, I made an interview was the person that we know each other well. She trusted me and told other interviewees about me. In addition, I tried to establish closed relations with the interviewees before making interview with them. Therefore, it seems that I got as much reliable answers from the women that I had interviews with as possible.

4.3. Written Materials

Viewed through written materials, my point of departure has been the wide variety of Islamist woman studies in Turkey. The source which directed me on my way after my point of departure throughout the project has been Roald’s authority book

“Women in Islam: The Western Experience.” In her book Roald investigates the premise that the Islamic perception of women and gender relations tend to have a significant change in Western Muslim communities. She also shows that the cultural encounter between Islam and the West gives rise to new interpretations of Islamic texts. I used Fredrick Barth’s theory by quoting from Roald’s work. Roald’s study has a distinctive approach about the change or transformation in Islamic belief on the issue of gender relation. This distinctive approach leads me through to the end of the study.

In order to be able to better observe the framework established by NVM, I have further taken the party programs and statements of the party leaders as a reference. Thus, I have attempted to catch the signals of change by the AKP in certain slogans or key points.

CHAPTER 5

EUROPEAN UNION FROM A “CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY” TO A “CIVILISATION PROJECT”

This chapter will evaluate the empirical materials produced by inquiries and interviews that were conducted with Islamist women between two periods, the RP and the AKP. In looking at it from this angle, this chapter constitutes the most important part of the study. Subjects discussed in previous chapters provide an appropriate ground for contextualizing what is discussed here. This chapter consists of two parts. The first specifically analyzes interview questions and responses; the second reflects upon the general impressions from the results of interviews and questionnaires.

As stated in Chapter 3, the methodology part, the interview questions are prepared under six headings with the aims of easier elaboration and the creation of more systematic empirical data. Related to this latter aim, the interpretative results of questionnaires and interviews are grouped separately under six headings:

5.1. Social Life of Islamist Women

The first part of the interview questions consists of questions regarding the social life of Islamist women. The aim of this part of the interviews is to learn the social roles of these women, their self-perceptions, and their placement in social life, as well as important changes, if applicable, in their social status during the period of time extending from the RP era to the present. The exploration of these points provides a ground for understanding the social forces behind the substantial shift in the perceptions of Islamist women concerning the integration of Turkey into the EU. In addition,

exploring these points also offers the chance for observation and evaluation of the changing or continuous elements of the social life of these women from the period of the RP to the AKP.

My interviews with Islamist women demonstrated that although they give importance to their duties as wives and mothers; they also express their individual stance apart from these duties as well. Nevertheless, the role of motherhood is their first priority. They give tremendous importance to it. For instance, all responders get up early to help their children get ready for school.⁷⁶ None of the responders and interviewees mentions this as the fathers' job. Generally speaking, they view preparing meals and dealing with children as their own responsibility, not those of their husbands. One can argue that these women participate in a traditional type of family structure because they do not emphasize the labor division at home, such as the sharing of children and housework etc. On the other hand, they only mentioned how their husbands aided with caring for the children and household chores when asked separately about these.⁷⁷

A woman's primary duty is regarded to be a mother and housewife, but at the same time women state that they all have the same rights as their husbands.⁷⁸ This situation can be evaluated as the continuous elements of these women's social life because the emphasis on a woman's roles as a mother and wife is a feature of a traditional family.

⁷⁶ Please refer to A1 for R4, R3, R2, R1 and R5. Responder 3 gives great importance to cooking as a mother mostly due to romantic reasons. She endeavours to be at home before her husband. She says "it is a special and emotional contract among us." Responder 4 divides herself into two parts in a day. First she deals with her duties as a mother and wife. Second are her individual activities or responsibilities. She considers cooking, care of the children and husband as duties of a mother and wife. Responder 1 prepares a very nice breakfast as her first duty of the day. Responder 2 gets up early to get her son ready for school. Differently, Responder 5 does not mention her duties as being a wife or mother.

⁷⁷ However, answers to "Please tell me a day of Mrs. X" do not indicate a husband's aid. It seems that this is not perceived as an ordinary situation. Please refer to A5 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5.

⁷⁸ Please refer to D4 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. Almost all responders accept gender equality. They only talk about a superiority which is related with *takva* on the side of God. However, Responder 1 and 4 accept a psychological superiority of men over women.

Interview results indicate that these women also experience an individualization process. It is possible to see many signs of individualization in their lives. They come from different communities in which there are strong ties and sense of togetherness such as traditional family structure, religious congregations or political parties etc. that leave restricted room for individualization. Nevertheless, it is possible to talk about a gradual individualization process within or in addition to these roles. It can be argued that there are two types of individualizations for these women: physical and ideational individualizations. By physical individualization I mean that they live in nuclear families that provide an appropriate ground for individualization that differs from wider, traditional families that leave restricted space for individualization. In other words, physical individualization corresponds to a physical separation from a traditional and wider family or other kinds of social organizations/structures. On the other hand, ideational individualization corresponds to making decisions out of communal or congregational social relations of traditional families or societies. One may view these two individualization processes illogical for other social groups. But for the practical purposes these categorizations, in my opinion, are helpful in order to understand the social realities of Islamist women.

One can think that there must be an obligatory relationship between these two individualization processes. In other words, if one of these individualizations occurs, the other will automatically follow the first one. This may be true for different particular social groups. But according to interview results, it is possible to say that there is no obligatory relation between these two individualization processes, at least for Islamist women. For example, all responders and interviewees live in a nuclear family.⁷⁹ Therefore, they first separate from their traditional and wider families. Namely, they experience a physical individualization process. It can be seen as an indicator for the physical individualization but physical individualization does not automatically lead to ideational individualization. According to the results of the interviews and of the questionnaires, their past communal and congregational social relations of traditional societies and families also have control over, to a lesser or greater extent, these women

⁷⁹ Please refer to A3 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. See also Appendix: Result 5 in Questionnaire Survey. According to the results 89 % of the responders live in a nuclear family.

even after they create their own nuclear families.⁸⁰ As a result, despite partial success, the ideational individualization of these women is still an ongoing and unfinished process.

In another example, one of the interviewees talks about the reasons why she does not want to read Hidayet novels. One of the reasons is related to the desire for an individual stance.⁸¹ Viewed from this angle, they give great importance to education. According to them, education creates an atmosphere that paves the way for individualization of girls, and related to this point their religious beliefs.⁸² For instance, Responder 1 counselled that some people argue that girls covered themselves due to family pressure. “It is not true for all, so you should give permission to covered students to enter school with their head scarves. Education provides a liberated stance for all individuals. If these girls covered themselves as a result of family pressure I strongly believe these girls would uncover themselves at the end or during the modern education.” Her ideas can be assumed as a different understanding of the road which goes to individualization of covered girls. Responder 3 assumes that education has a great influence on individual stance. Then she added that “you learn how to believe, how to pray, how to live and then you stop to repeat, follow or imitate the other people.” When Responder 2 explained her ideas on education, she underlined the needs of concrete and valid knowledge about everything, religion included. “Because, in an educated environment you have to explain yourself and have to make your own intellectual capacity, not the views of this “*Hoca*” or that uncle. Education provides this kind of intellectual quality and your words get higher importance. You need to improve your own knowledge in order to deal with all questions.”

⁸⁰ For example all A6 Responders have a modern type of marriage. However, responders also mentioned that they get the consent of their families before marriage. This can be evidence of the influence of their past communal and traditional relations over their own decisions. Another example, none of the E2 responders seceded from the RP alone. All responders left the party with her father, or husband. A man can effect these women’s individual decisions.

⁸¹ See A8 for R2. Responder 2 complained that she does not want to refer to the world from the eyes of Emine Şenlikoğlu or Şule Yüksel Şenler. She exhibits her wish to read the world with her own words. She says that these books are presented to them by the conservative community as books that are necessary to read.

⁸² Please refer to D2 for R1, R2, R3, and R4.

In my discussion with Responder 2, she referred a book titled “*Şeker Portakalı*” (Sugar Orange). She defined this book as her favorite. She said that this book teaches her to live her life how she wants and without other people’s control. She claimed in her conclusion that she had started to live only for herself. She read this book when she was twenty-four years old, so her individual stance became apparent mostly after finishing book. When I confronted her with the idea that Islam is a religion which admonishes believers to live with the sense of togetherness and to care for other people, she claimed that in order to live in a healthy society all people should provide an individual identity for her/himself; otherwise s/he can be lost in the society.⁸³

I find her answer interesting because she mentions the importance of an individual stance as a woman. She desires this stance in order to survive in the community. She has a realistic world view which is not common among the Islamist women in my interviews. To be specific, she adjusts herself according to the requirements of the environment in which she lives. In other words, she thinks that without an individual identity, it is very difficult to live in existing society where individualization is widely established.

There are also some changing elements in the social life of Islamist women. It is obvious that although they did not mention it, these women went through a fundamental social change. There are substantial differences between their past and present lives. For example, they tend to have two or three children. This is in contrast to their parents and their grandparents who had a higher number of children. These women do not want to have more children; therefore, in this way, they differentiated from their traditional family.⁸⁴ They decide together on issues, which can affect them, with their husband and even children.⁸⁵ Their marriage histories are also different from those of their parents;

⁸³ Please refer to A7 for R2.

⁸⁴ Please refer to A2 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. None of the responders have more than 3 children. Moreover, it is important to add that the questionnaire survey also indicates the same result: only 17 % of the responders have more than three children. See Appendix: Result 3 in Questionnaire Survey.

⁸⁵ Please refer to A2 for R1 and R2, A3 for R3, R4, and R5. For instance Responder 1 and 2 decide with their husbands on the issues such as number of children. Responder 3 and 5 said that they decided together where they would live. Also, Responder 4 takes their children’s decision into account about the same issue with R3.

they believe that they made an individual decision and wish the same thing for their children as well.⁸⁶ These features of Islamist women can be accepted as changing elements of their past social lives. They try to pursue somehow a modern social life. Namely, the combination of many phenomena, including education, common social trends and intensive individualization process, lead these women to reconstruct their lives differentiated from their parents, which was effected to a lesser degree by these phenomena.

Islamist women, both responders and interviewees, read the *Hidayet Romanlari* that I referred to in detail in the first chapter.⁸⁷ However, most do not want their girls to read those books. According to them, in the existing cultural and social context, there is no need for reading these books.⁸⁸ One of the responders says that “I read *Hidayet Romanlari* because many people were talking about these novels.”⁸⁹ That is to say, the previous young generation read these novels because their social lives were in a community in which people think and behave like each other. In order to be involved in this community, they saw the reading of *Hidayet Romanlari* as a necessity.

Today many Islamist women do not read these kinds of novels. Islamist women, who read the books that were almost compulsory before, now choose books according to their own liking. Their reading preferences also have changed in this

⁸⁶ Please refer to A6 for R1, R2, R3, and R5. Responder 2 has the most radical type of the marriage. She says that I approve of the same thing for my daughter. It is also visible in the questionnaires that 78 % of the responders married by choosing their mates without asking their parent’s advice, and only 22 % of them married through parental interference. See Appendix: Result 6 in Questionnaire Survey.

⁸⁷ Please refer to A8 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. The 81 percent of the responder read *Hidayet* novels. See Appendix: Result 10 in Questionnaire Survey. All of the interviewees also read *Hidayet* novels.

⁸⁸ Please refer to A8 for R1, R2, and R3. Responder 4 accepts these books as readable and prefers them for her daughter. Responder 5 advocates that every kind of written material is readable so she prefers her daughter to read them. She also mentions Aktaş’s novels and approves of them. In these novels women learn to create solutions when they face difficulties, and also they give meaning to the individual when compared the other *Hidayet Novels*.

⁸⁹ Please refer to A8 for R2.

individualization processes. They do not offer these books for their daughters and do not read any like them.⁹⁰

There is no doubt there are many changing elements in Islamist women's social life, but it is difficult to mention all of these in the interviews and even in this study itself. Differences from past to present, in other words changing elements from the NVM to the AKP period, should be examined in a separate study. However, I just try to mention some of the visible changes that occurred after results of interviews and questionnaires or unrecorded personal talks. Although the responders do not reject changes in their social life, they are not relaxed when they deal with changes in their social life due to some practical considerations.⁹¹ For example, Responder 1 approves of the existence of a change or transformation. She said that "this change is unawares and not a radical change. We are different from NVM. The AKP and its floor are what they must be." Responder 3 says that the AKP is not a transformation project. However, she argued that the floor became more democratic and more open to changes. She also added that the characterization of the Radical Islamist left its place to the conservative Democrats. Responder 4 talked about transformation as an ongoing process. She said that there has been always transformation, but it takes place in the Turkish media's agenda mostly because of the AKP. She cites news as an example of her argument. According to her, the news establishes a comic relation between the AKP government and *tesettür* hairdressing salons. She said that there were many *tesettür* hairdressing salons in Turkey before the AKP. She added also that there were *çarşafli* and *cübbeli* people in Turkey before the RP government but they became important as a result of the WP. However, she accepts that there is a transformation, but not only in Turkey. She added that it is meaningless to establish a direct relationship between current government and ongoing transformation. According to her, the AKP can expedite the process and prepare a legitimate ground for it but cannot be the unique reason for it. In E4, Responder 2 approves the change. She said that the people who support this party feel the need to act and behave in accordance with party policies so they can change

⁹⁰ Please refer to A7 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. All responders read different kinds of books except *Hidayet Romanları*. Responder 5 and Responder 4 recommended reading all kinds of books. Responder 1, Responder 2 and Responder 3 emphasised the necessity to read the classics of Turkish and World literature.

⁹¹ Please refer to F8 for R1, R3, R4, and E4, F8 for R2.

with it. In F8, she accepts a transformation for the Islamist people but she does not relate it with the AKP.

It seems that they do not want to associate these changes which occurred in their social life with the coming of AKP to office because these changes are criticized by more conservatives in some respect. According to these criticisms, with the AKP era it witnessed a degeneration of the Islamic faith. For example, according to İsmet Özel, one of the important Islamist thinkers in Turkey, after the AKP era differences between Islamist girls with headscarves and purely modern girls with bared bellies have become blurred.⁹² Therefore, when the results of interviews and questionnaires are compared, it is quite observable that responses of interviewees regarding changes in their social life are more deliberate than results of the questionnaires. For example, 75% of the responders to the questionnaires accepted a transformation wave in Islamic social life coming with the AKP.⁹³

It is also important to draw attention to modernity approaches of Islamist women in this framework. They accept the relationship between modernity and Europeanized consciousness in some respects.⁹⁴ They all see themselves as modern. However, one of the responders made her own definition of modernity and added that she was modern according to her understanding of modernity.⁹⁵ She defined modernity as walking on the way to the advanced target which is determined by the intellectual base. This definition is quite controversial because it is not a certain definition. For instance, what is *advanced target* and what are the determinants of this target? She refrained from answering such questions. However, the answers can show differences from one person to another. Therefore, her response did not make any sense on the modernity issue.

As for other responses, they mainly complained about the “wrong” relationship established between modernity and Europeanized consciousness. They said that in the

⁹² Özel, İsmet ‘*İslami Kesimin Önceliği: Çıkar*’, 10.08.2003, Milliyet Gazetesi.

⁹³ The questionnaire results show that 75% of the responders accept the transformation of Islamic identity after the AKP government. However, 17% of them do not agree with the previous idea. The remaining 8% preferred to leave blank the choices.

⁹⁴ Please refer to F3 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Turkish intellectual tradition, modernity is equal to the Europeanized consciousness. According to them this is a wrong relationship, so modernity does not mean to live, behave or think like a European. They accepted the advances of Europe in terms of communication technology, science, and education etc. and they mainly defined modernity as being aware of the changes or improvement of these assets. In other words, according to Islamist women, modernity is made to fit the new changes.

I understand from their perceptions of modernity that they do not want to recognize any cultural reflections of modernity. Their emphasis on the issue of modernity is more materialistic rather than spiritual or moral. This is the general characteristic of the Islamist thinkers of the Republican years. Islamist women still have the same ideas about modernization similar with the past. The idea that “*İslam terakkiye mani değildir*” (Islam is not an obstacle to progress) have close ties with the belief in a “return to the pure sources”⁹⁶ which mean in order to be advanced, return to real Islam. They see the traditions which are not related to Islam as the obstacles to progress. This situation can be seen as non-modern for Islamists. They draw attention to the necessity of returning the pure sources of Islam in order to catch modernity because real Islam is not an obstacle on the road of progressing, modernity in other words.

What kind of traditions do Islamist women face in Turkey? According to my research on this issue they mainly consider three or four issues including the following: (I will discuss later) polygamy, division of labor, female dress, and education of girls. According to Islamist women these issues are directed by the customs in Turkey. They are different from their past in this context because they try to eliminate the shadow of the customs over Islam. In order to achieve this aim, they prefer to return to the pure sources.

Therefore, according to Islamist women, Islam is not an obstacle to modernity but customs limit the ways of reaching modernity. They agree that women’s political

⁹⁶ In her book, Roald describes the notion of returning to the sources as the reproduction of the past in the present, which has tended to be interpreted as an attempt to go back to seventh century Arabia. Thus, Islamists who turn to sources intend to search for the “genuine understanding”: what actually happened and what was the genuine intention behind an event or saying of the Prophet. She adds the interpretation does not focus on how the historical event actually occurred, but it becomes an unconscious process in which the most important consideration is: how can one live according to this historical example today? After this question the interpretation becomes a reconstruction of historical events.

participation is allowed in Islam, but it is prohibited by custom on behalf of Islam, as an example. Moreover, women have moderate rights in polygamy but these are superseded by customs. Women and men are seen as having a shared responsibility in childcare despite the traditional Turkish claim, which is influenced by the early traditional living codes of the Ottoman era, that children's upbringing is mainly the responsibility of women.

It seems that the Islamist women have adopted ideological stands or reactions to gender discourses rather than having changed their actual practices. When the women claim equality with men it seems to be mere rhetoric; there are some indicators in their answers of male domination in domestic life. Firstly, in their answers it became obvious that the women accepted that their first and foremost duties are to be mothers and wives. Furthermore, there was no mentioning of their husbands doing domestic works or took care of the children until I asked about these issues in a separate question. The division of labor at home is not common for these women. Even working women were taking care of their children and all domestic work. Thus their gender discourse seemed to be more like rhetoric than reflecting actual practice.

Moreover, women draw attention to the necessity of education in order to rescue themselves from the shadow of traditional customs. They argue that education provides the ability for freethinking, so it is a tool for having a *genuine* Islam.

Consequently, it can be argued that the Islamist women are experiencing a more rapid and visible social change. These changes have started to be more visible mainly after the AKP government because the AKP government provided a legitimate ground for the changes among Islamist women since the party is also a production of changing ideas. In addition to this, Islamist women are still experiencing an individualizing process. They might reach physical individualization by seceding from the NVM and starting to make it ideationally after the AKP government. They are different from their past in some ways that I discuss above. Thus, it is possible to say that their perception of the EU changed and is still changing as a result of this social change and individualization process.

5.2. Islamist Women and Politics

The questions in the second part of the interviews aim to understand the views of Islamic women regarding politics and their involvement in politics. Taking the answers of Islamist women concerning these questions, it seems that their fathers or brothers played important roles in encouraging them to take active roles in politics. Looking at it from this angle, it is easy to say that they had a passive position in their first involvement in political process.⁹⁷ According to the results of interviews and questionnaires, it can be said that they pass from this passive position to an active position after participating in party activities. For example, one of the responders says that although her father and brother affected her in terms of joining the political process for the first time, she decided to join the AKP by her own will without any interference from her father and brother. However, husbands, brothers, and fathers of these women, generally, do not stay in the NVM's parties as well.⁹⁸ It should be asked what would happen if their fathers, husbands and brothers did not change their party. Probably they would also not change their party. I could not ask this question directly because if I did it would create a cold atmosphere over the interview. This picture shows that the effect that males may also play in the shaping of decisions by these women in order to become members or supporters of the AKP.

As for political issues, women often follow male relatives in their change in party/movement affiliation. The idea of gender equality is thus again rhetoric. For instance, none of the interviewees had left their party or movement independently from their husbands, fathers or brothers. It is obvious from this research result that men influence their political preferences. Islamist women take an active political stand by

⁹⁷ Please refer to B1 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. Responder 2, Responder 3, Responder 4 and Responder 5 approve the male's effect on their political activation. All four cite their fathers' or brothers' effect on their willingness to join into politics. However, Responder 1 and Responder 2 do not mention the male effect on their political will directly. They describe their political party membership as their own individual decision. Notwithstanding, these two responders' fathers or brothers are political party member as well.

⁹⁸ Please refer to B4 for R4 and E2 for all responders. According to all responders, their decision to secede from Virtue Party and joining the AKP was an individual decision. However, by looking more closely into the matter it became obvious that all the fathers, brothers and uncles are also members of the AKP.

deciding to be a party member. However these women's important decision, to become a party member or leave a political party, is taken together with their male relatives. Thus, it is quite impossible to talk about a real or absolute independence in the political activism of the Islamist women belonging to the AKP. Their talk about having the same political rights as the men might therefore also to a certain extent be regarded within this pattern of gender equality discourses being rhetoric rather than actual practices.

When they compare their Welfare and Justice and Development Party years, most of them are agree that during the RP their party activities were more dynamic.⁹⁹ This perception can be related to the *Merve Kavakçı* event because when asked about what they want to be in politics they answered this question by using the "used to be" form. According to results, they saw the RP as a chance for women participants to succeed and realize their political will. However, their political wills were only limited to carrying the party to power. It seems that this desire played important roles in activities of Islamist women during the RP era. On the other hand, with the Virtue Party they started to have more political will than they had before.¹⁰⁰ Despite being a first platform for implementing their political desires, they regard their activities during the NVM era as more dynamic and exiting. To the contrary, because of failures in realizing their political will (such as becoming MPs, ministers etc...), they may lose their excitement. As a result, they view political activities with less excitement than in the past.

After the female Muslim leaders such as Tansu Çiller and Benazir Bhutto, and as a result of a visible rise in women's political participation in the Muslim world in general and in Turkey in particular, the issue of women's involvement in politics has become a much debated issue.

All of the women I interviewed and who responded to the questionnaires support women's participation in politics. They responded to questions related to these subjects positively. Interestingly, some of them made reference to the time of the Prophet Muhammad in order to legitimize their views from a religious point of view. According to them, there is no barrier in the way of women's participation in politics in the Islamic

⁹⁹ Please refer to E2, B2 for R1 and B2 for R2.

¹⁰⁰ Please refer to B2 for R4 and R5.

faith. They make special references to the wives of the Prophet Muhammad. By these references, they try to demonstrate the Islamic dimension of their involvement in politics.¹⁰¹

A large section of the women want to take active roles in politics, such as a Member of Parliament and mayor.¹⁰² But after the experiences of Merve Kavakçı, they say that there is not a practical implementation for their political aims. If this is the case, why are these women still involved actively in political activities? According to them, they are involved in these activities because they seek to win the consent of God.¹⁰³ This approach was more dominant during the RP era. Taken in the AKP era; it seems that there is a shift in this understanding. In addition to this desire to get the consent of God, Islamist women belonging to the AKP want to see rewards of their efforts in this world. In addition, they talk about their future expectations as motives behind their activities. One of these expectations can be the resolution of the scarf problem because it seems that if this issue can be resolved in favor of Islamist women they began to become motivated themselves to be an active member of parliament for instance. This is also a big change between two eras.¹⁰⁴

One of the most interesting responses to questions in this section was about Tayyip Erdoğan's approach to women. According to one of these women, Erdoğan gives great importance to the women's commission ever since his mayoralty of Istanbul. For example, according to an Islamist woman, Erdoğan has periodically gathered the women's commission and asked their opinions regarding problems in Istanbul.¹⁰⁵ The

¹⁰¹ Please refer to D3 for R1, R2, R3 and R4. Responders mainly present *Aişe* (wife of the Prophet Muhammad) and *Akaba Biats* as proof of Islamic permission for women's political involvement. Moreover, Responder 5 rejects the ideas which perceive women's political involvement as forbidden by Islam. She also takes her rationality and conscience as references rather than Islamic resources.

¹⁰² Please refer to B2 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5.

¹⁰³ Please refer to B2 for R1, R2, R4, and R5.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* For example Responder 3 and Responder 5 propose future expectations and trust as motivation to work for party.

¹⁰⁵ Please refer to, B2 and E2 for R2.

higher trust for Erdoğan can be accepted as another motivation for these women because they say that just his name is enough for their support of the AKP.¹⁰⁶

5.3. The EU Perceptions

The third part of the interviews consists of questions regarding the EU. From the outset, it is obvious that there is a radical change in the perceptions of Islamist women regarding the EU from the time of the RP to the AKP era. All of these women who were involved in political activities for both parties accept that this substantial change occurred in their perceptions regarding the EU at past and present.

These women who regarded the EU as a Christian club during the RP era argue that they interpret the EU from a wider perspective today.¹⁰⁷ They say that during the RP era they depicted the EU as a Christian community and argued that Turkey would not be accepted into the Union as a full member. As a result of this, membership of Turkey became an illogical thing in their eyes. According to them, these views were very common in the RP and these perceptions were transferred from up to down through existing communication channels. They say, for example, that constructing D8 (Developing Eight) as a Muslim community alternative to the EU defined as a Christian community was perceived as a very meaningful foreign policy decision and was fervidly supported by them.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Please refer to E2 for R1, R3, and R5.

¹⁰⁷ Please refer to E6 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. For example R3 observes the EU as a project in the context of civilisation. She says that she does not generalize the politics and approach with a realistic and rationalist perspective. R2 remarks that she evaluates the EU from the party vision so these were not her own ideas. Now she evaluates the EU with her own ideas and rationale. On the other hand, R1 does not see it as important why her ideas changed about the EU. She says that she was interested in this issue when she was a member of the RP because it was not an actual at that time.

¹⁰⁸ Please refer to E6 for R2, R3, and R5. For instance, Responder 3 sees the Muslim community more appealing than the Christian one before. Responder 5 acknowledges that she was against the EU because of defence mechanisms. She was sure that the EU will never accept Turkey as a full member. This knowledge led her to be against the EU. This opposition was obligatory, not consciously. She adds that we did not wait for membership and established our Union (D-8).

After leaving the NVM tradition and joining the AKP, they say that there are no such perceptions regarding the EU. Many of them accept that they are still confused about the EU.¹⁰⁹ For example, one of the responders has a dilemma about membership. She cannot be in favor of or against of the membership. She describes her opposition to the EU as emotional but her support as rational. This uncertainty led me to think that her position about the EU can not be created by herself. There can be other people who inculcate membership as a rational choice for Turkey.¹¹⁰ However, most of them say that they make their perception clearer about the EU by accepting it as a civilization project and by supporting full membership.¹¹¹ They believe that the most important change that occurred in their mind is that, compared with their past, they can approach most things from a wider perspective. According to them, they avoid generalizations and reductionist manners. That is why they do not regard the EU as a Christian club, but as a civilization project. In other words, they point out that the concrete positive developments in various fields such as democracy, human rights and economic conditions, shape their existing opinions.

I generally received similar approving responses from these women about the AKP's policies related to the EU during interviews. They believe that the AKP's performance in the way of European integration deserves to be applauded. In other words, they approve of it and support the EU policies of the AKP.¹¹² For example, one of the interviewees says that the AKP, by pursuing such a successful policy regarding the EU, makes the sincerity of the EU clearer. She says that while Turkey completes its

¹⁰⁹ Please refer to E6 for R2. For example, Responder 2 confesses her suspicious about full membership like all citizens. Of course we have to sacrifice something to be a full member. She sees this state as the rule of game. She gives my "sacrifices" of travelling and fun to get a Masters degree as an example of the game. However, she underlined her trust in politicians and official members as relaxing.

¹¹⁰ Please refer to E6 for R4. Responder 4 is still unsure about approaching the EU as a civilisation project because she directly describes the union as Christian emotionally. She has worries about cultural challenges. She claims that her negative approach to the EU does not occur always, but rather it occurs sometimes. Because of that she describes it as emotionally not rationally.

¹¹¹ Please refer to E6 for R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

duty in the way of European integration; European countries produce pretexts in order to prevent Turkey's membership. Although she questions the sincerity of the EU, she also supports integration of Turkey into the EU.¹¹³ What is important here is that despite her doubts regarding the sincerity of the EU, she still supports Turkey's membership and does not label the EU as a Christian community. This also shows the change in the perceptions of Islamist women regarding the EU.

As for their intellectual capacity about the European Union, most of the women whom I conducted interviews with read and followed the news about the EU. According to interview results, it seems that they are not more prone to do research about the EU other than reading the related news. It also seems that they sometimes brain storm about the EU in the party meetings.¹¹⁴ But generally speaking, they are far from making more inquiries. It would not be false to say that their knowledge about the EU stemmed from the news in newspaper or televisions. That is why it can be said that there are not enough research efforts that can result in the existing shift in the perceptions regarding the EU. If this is the case, it seems that existing change in the perceptions of Islamic women are not based on a solid awareness of the EU. In other words, existing knowledge and awareness levels of these women does not seem to be adequate in order to result in a radical change in the perceptions.

It seems that the party's policy towards the EU shapes, to a lesser or greater extent, their perceptions concerning the EU. It must be said that the theoretical structure of this thesis is also applicable here, even if not 100 %. As I stated before, it became possible for AKP to support integration of Turkey into the EU when it left the congregational structure of NVM. As a result, this party has become open for new trends and ideas that cannot be filtered by the control patterns of the congregational structure. As for being members of this party, their perceptions towards the EU changed because of the reasons explained above. In other words, although they are passive in constructing their EU perceptions, the theoretical approach of this thesis is still applicable because of the structural transformation of the AKP that provides a ground for these women to support integration of Turkey into the EU.

¹¹³ Please refer to C3 for R4.

¹¹⁴ Please refer to C1 for R1, R4, and R5, and also C1 for R2, and R3.

When we look at it from the perspectives of the questionnaire responders, 78% of them support the AKP's EU politics. Nevertheless, 22% did not give an answer to the question. The idea that I get from the blank answers of this question lead me to think about the apprehensions of Islamist women have regarding the EU. In the period of the RP, on the other hand, almost every responder rejected the membership. As it seems that 22% of the women have not decided their stand on the EU indicates a greater possibility of independence from the party's stand in AKP than in RP. This means that the AKP does not have the absolute pattern the 'social patterns of control' over its members on the issue of the EU membership as had the RP. Then it is possible to accept the idea the RP had more 'social patterns of control' over its members because 81% of the responders regarded the EU as a Christian club at the time of RP, a notion promoted by the party. The issue of EU membership demonstrates a certain differences between the RP and the AKP. There was a strong pattern of control over the RP members, whereas this strong pattern of control over the AKP members is much more modified. It seems that the AKP accept more independent ideas than did the RP.

Analyzing results of a small sized quiz about the EU also supports this argument. Although these women give satisfactorily responses to questions,¹¹⁵ it seems difficult to talk about a consciousness that can result in this radical change. They also accept this situation. When they are asked about the Copenhagen Criteria most of them define these criteria as political criteria including democracy, human rights so on and so forth. But they also say that they do not have deep enough information about these criteria.¹¹⁶

When they are asked about the European identity, they define it as an identity whose base is not on a geographical area, rather on norms including democratization, human rights, economic welfare etc. that are created and shared by the European countries. The criterion for becoming a part of this identity is the consent towards

¹¹⁵ See Appendix 5: Quiz Results for both Interviews and Questionnaires.

¹¹⁶ Please refer to C3 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5.

accepting and implementing these norms. Although they see Christianity as a part of this identity, it is not regarded as the dominant factor in terms of shaping this identity.¹¹⁷

In spite of this, they observe Christianity as a part of European identity; but they do not see the EU as a Christian club. They do not perceive the EU membership as a challenge to the Muslim identity of Turkey. This seems a contradiction at first glance, but Islamist women have a slogan to defeat this contradiction. “Turkey will be a member of European Union not the European identity.”¹¹⁸ Therefore, in their approach there is a differentiation between Europe and the European Union itself for these women. They try to focus of the EU institutions and body of law rather than the EU as a whole with its cultural, economic and political assets.

Women party members answered the questions regarding the cultural challenges and describe them as fabricated scenarios. They believe some groups try to provoke the Turkish people against the EU membership by touching our people’s important values. It is likely that they get many questions about that and prepare a quick answer about these challenges. Thus, when they are challenged with the question of membership; they say that we are EU candidates, not candidates to be European.¹¹⁹

When they are asked about the incompatibility between Islamic identity and European identity, they say that there is certain compatibility between these two identities. According to them, most of the normative values of the EU (human rights, democracy, freedom of belief, and gender equality) are available in Islamic identity. Therefore there is not a conflict between these two identities for them.¹²⁰ But in the time of the RP, according to interviews and questionnaires, they might have regarded these two identities as diametrically opposed. They point out that they have realized the compatibility of these identities during the intensive rapprochement between Turkey and the EU as a result of AKP’s efforts. It seems that concrete indications of this

¹¹⁷ Please refer to C4 for R1, R3, and R4. Responder 5 assumes that the European identity is based on a geographical relation rather than cultural. She also accepts that we are European because we have a geographical contact with Europe.

¹¹⁸ Please refer to F11 for R1, R3, R5 and E2 for R2.

¹¹⁹ Please refer to F11 for all responders and F1 for R5.

¹²⁰ Please refer to C5 for R3, R4 and R5

rapprochement have played important roles in their support for the integration of Turkey into the EU. In other words, they see widening of freedoms and progress in human rights as important indicators in the way of development of Turkey.

There is an interesting point here. None of these women recognized the cultural and social challenges of the EU. They approach all EU-related issues in terms of freedoms. They did not touch on any challenges.¹²¹ Nazife Şişman draws attention to this point in her new book.¹²² According to Şişman, Muslims in general and Islamist women in particular do not take into consideration the moral problems that are produced by extension of the European culture. In other words, they do not make a comparison between freedoms and cultural challenges produced by the European culture. By this criticism, Şişman wants to point out the danger of the cultural challenges coming from the European culture. She also gives the canceling of the Adultery (*Zina*) Law after the voices rising from the EU as an example of the cultural challenges of the EU. Şişman pointed out that the issues like *Zina* and homosexuality are the most visible conflict areas between the religious Muslims and standards of European values or global values.

5.4. Islamic Knowledge

The fourth part of the interviews attempts to understand the level of Islamic knowledge and understanding of the participants and how they use this knowledge during their social and political preferences. From the outset, these women are well educated. They have a high level of Islamic knowledge. This situation is quite apparent when they make meaningful references to classical sources of Islam. Their deep Islamic knowledge provides a ground for their involvement in politics. They reject the traditional beliefs that prevent women from participating in social life in general and the

¹²¹ Please refer to F11 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5.

¹²² Nazife Şişman, *Küreselleşmenin Peçesi, Kadının Peçesi*, Küre Yayınları, 2006, p.5–16.

political sphere in particular. According to them, they behave within the boundaries of true Islam.¹²³

When they are asked to define Islamic woman, all of them, with no exceptions, regarded the head cover as a necessity for this identity.¹²⁴ According to them, the head cover is an order from God. That is why all Islamic women have to wear them. In addition to this, they reject the idea that labels the head cover as a religious symbol. It seems that they make a distinction between religious symbols and orders of God. According to them, the head cover cannot be evaluated together with the *cross* and *kippa*. The *cross* and *kippa* are symbols, because it is not a necessity for Christians and Jews to use them. By using those, Christians and Jews make their religion recognized. That is why these are symbols. This is not the case for the head cover. They argue that head cover is not a symbol, but an Islamic order.¹²⁵

All of the women who are responders and interviewees say that they are covered themselves not because of family or community pressure but because of their own decision and beliefs. It seems that they put on the headscarf in a central place in terms of their identity. According to them, their headscarves determine, the most of time, their social and political preferences. It seems that their concerns regarding the headscarf play a characteristic role in their political preferences. For example, nearly 85% of responders to the questionnaires regard the headscarf issue as the most important factor behind their political preferences.¹²⁶ It is not to say that they actually activate themselves only to get the right to wear the headscarf. However, they want to reach their political goals with their headscarves. It seems that they also demand and expect from the AKP to solve the headscarf issue. As for interviewees who have institutional ties with the AKP, it seems that they are not more relaxed than responders of

¹²³ Please refer to D2 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5. They all agree that true Islam sometimes lives under the shadow of traditions. Reflections of this situation mostly affect the Islamist women in Turkey. The solution can be provided again by Islamist women turning back to real sources of Islam.

¹²⁴ Please refer to D1 for R2, R3, and R4.

¹²⁵ Please refer to D1 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5.

¹²⁶ See Appendix: Result 25 in Questionnaire Survey. Only 3% of the responders do not accept the turban problem's influence over their political preference. However, 14% of the responders did not answer this question.

questionnaires when they make explanations regarding the connection between the headscarf issue and their support for the AKP. It seems that they share their party's discourse "*toplumsal mutabakat*" (social consensus) regarding solving the headscarf issue with taking support from all sectors of society.¹²⁷

5.5. The RP vs. the AKP

The fifth part of the interview questions tries to make clearer opinions of Islamist women regarding the RP and the AKP. As I stated before, it is possible to say that they label and perceive the RP as an Islamist movement. According to interviews and questionnaires, it seems that when they were members of this party, they did not need to make connections with the Islamic movements. However, after leaving the WP, two of them constructed close relations with various Islamist congregations.¹²⁸ As Ruşen Çakır says, members of the RP or its successors do not need a congregational affiliation, because NVM satisfies these needs with their congregational structures.¹²⁹

As for their perceptions regarding the AKP, it seems that they see this party as a political party. According to interviewees and responders of the questionnaires, this party represents only their political preferences. When elaborating on the results of

¹²⁷ Please refer to F1 for all responders. Responder 1 believes that the AKP will solve the head cover problem, but it is not a priority in their agenda. She also criticized suggestions that the AKP came to power just because of head scarf expectations. Responder 2's support of the AKP is not based only on the turban problem, but it is one of the reasons. She claims that she no longer waits for her party to solve the problem, but she did before. She still has the same expectations, but feels the party needs more time to solve it. Responder 3 believes it is wrong to expect a solution for the turban problem only from the AKP. She said that the problem requires a social consensus and this can be provided by the AKP. Responder 4, firstly, said that "the AKP can solve the problem." She added that actually the AKP is the only party with the capacity to solve it because the AKP provides a ground for peaceful togetherness of differences. Responder 5 also mentioned the need of a social consensus like Responder 4 did. However, she added that if some people believe that the RPP can solve the problem, she would of course believe the AKP can solve it at the same time.

¹²⁸ Please refer to E1 for R1, and R2.

¹²⁹ R. Çakır, *Ne Şariat Ne Demokrasi: Refah Partisini Anlamak*, Metis Yayınları, 1994, p.81.

interviews and questionnaires, it appears as if they need to make connections with Islamist movements in Turkey in order to satisfy their congregational needs. They argue that political activities must not be conducted on a religious basis.¹³⁰ This approach seems very important and corresponds to a breaking point in the electoral behaviors of Islamist women. This process may be read as a process of secularization of mind because they make a clear distinction between religious and political spheres.

It seems that they also regard the RP as an Islamic movement.¹³¹ According to them, the AKP does not have a congregational structure. As I stated above, these women point out that politics cannot be conducted in a congregational structure. It can be argued that this view stemmed from the belief that the difficulties in the way of reaching political aims in a congregational structure led these women to separate politics and congregational structure. Thanks to these ideas, they preferred to leave the RP and join the AKP.

To this point, I tried to interpret results of interviews and questionnaires under four specific headings. In the remaining pages I want to touch on the general inferences that I reached in this study. It is a reality that there is a radical shift in the EU perceptions of Islamist women, from total rejection to fervid and selective support. When RP was in office, these women saw the EU as a Christian club.¹³² With the starting of the AKP era, they started to regard the integration of Turkey into the EU as an inevitable and positive process in terms of democratic, political and economic well-being of Turkey. In other words, all the Islamic women belonging to the AKP that I conducted interviews with support the AKP's policies in the direction of the European Union. They regard the AKP as a reformist party in this sense. For example, one of the responders gave the law of broadcasting in native languages other than Turkish as an example of her ideas. She evaluates this law as the natural right of Kurdish citizens. Because of this new law she regarded the AKP as the most reformist party.¹³³

¹³⁰ Please refer to E1, E2 for R1, E1, E2 for R3 and E1, E3 for R5.

¹³¹ Please refer to E1 for R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5.

¹³² Please refer to E6 for R1, R2, and R3.

¹³³ Please refer to E7 for R1, R2, R4 and R5.

Another general inference is that I found the opportunity to see the validity of the theoretical framework of this study after conducting interviews and inquires. The structural and ideational differences between Welfare and Justice and Development parties played important roles in the occurrence of a radical change in the EU perceptions of Islamist women who are members or supporters of the RP in the past, and the AKP now. All of these women, with no exception, saw the RP as an Islamic movement, not as an individual political party. It is also a common belief among these women that RP had or produced ideas and ideologies that have strong binding power. In Barth's own words, the RP, together with its congregational character produced strong "social patterns of control," and took the group under control. These ideas and ideologies affected and shaped perceptions of all party members to a lesser or greater extent. In comparison to RP, the AKP does not have such peculiarities. Islamist women regard the AKP as an individual political party. They say that their membership of and support for AKP does not cover all parts of their lives. They define their relationships with AKP only in the political sphere.¹³⁴

It is also interesting to note that their physical and ideational individualization became visible through succession from the NMW and becoming a member of the AKP. For instance Responder 1 likens the AKP as a teenager in a big family. She tells the story of the teenager:

"He feels that he does not belong to his roots and is looking for his own character and freedom. Did he find what he was looking for? Of course! He left his big, traditional family and creates his own modern and nuclear family in which there are not any parents and their traditional minds. He draws his own road. In this family all individuals have the right of speech, even if they have different ideas. There is a high respect. Nobody says that if you carry this surname you have to behave as we do. The AKP is the party of individual freedoms and it is much more an individual party rather than a congregation."

After analyzing the empirical materials, I want to enumerate the answers to the main research questions of this study: what are the roots causes of this change in the perceptions of Islamist women concerning the EU? Is this change a result of secession from Nationalist View Movement? Does this change stem from a solid awareness of

¹³⁴ Please refer to E3 for R1; E2 for R2; E2, E3 for R4 and E2, E3 for R5.

these women about the EU, or is it a result of the male-dominated political agenda? What are the main concerns of these women on the EU-related issues?

My first research question is: what are the root causes of this change in perceptions of Islamist women concerning the EU, and is this change a result of secession from Nationalist View Movement? The answer of this question lies in the structural and ideational differences between the RP and the AKP. In other words, ever since its foundation, the RP was a political organ of an Islamic movement, Nationalist View Movement based on anti-Western ground. However, the people who left this Islamic movement established the AKP as a pure political party. Different structures of these parties are the prime factor behind this radical shift in the perceptions of Islamic women regarding the EU. While the first party defined the EU as a Christian club, the AKP regards it as a civilization project and shows a leaning towards becoming a member of this project. As a result, these party policies regarding the EU affected and still affect party members and shape their perceptions concerning the EU. For this radical change, a mental separation from the social patterns of control produced by the NVM was required. It is because of this separation that members of the AKP have become open to new ideas and changes. Due to this, it can be considered as an influence of leader elites over the masses/women. Thus it is not a bottom-up approach.

During the search for an answer for this question I realized that the RP did not have difficulties in transferring its policies, beliefs or its patterns of social control to party members. As an interviewee said, the RP was like a family congregation. It had a functional body that covers all family, from children to parents.¹³⁵ Beliefs and policies of the party were transferred from up to down through two ways. In the first way the party transferred its policies through its own newspaper and television.¹³⁶ The second one was the commissions within the party, including women's commission, youth commission so on and so forth. Thanks to these two ways, it is possible to say that there

¹³⁵ Please refer to E6 for R2, and R5. Responder 2 describes the NVM as a congregation of family, where no one from the family can stay out of the congregation. Fathers, mothers, children all have their own place in the congregation. Everybody knows which newspaper is going to be read and which television station is going to be watched.

¹³⁶ Milli Gazete and Channel 7. Channel 7 has not such a function and relation currently.

was a healthy communication channel between the party and its members. It is because of this channel that negative perceptions of Islamic women regarding the EU were shaped easily by party politics.

As the study discussed in Chapter 3, the AKP does not have a characteristic of an Islamist movement. Therefore, there is not strict ideology in it. As a result, it does not need to establish its own newspaper and television. It is a fact that there are televisions and newspapers that support AKP. However, none of these newspapers and TVs can provide their support as overtly as RP's television and newspaper did. Therefore, there is no a social patterns of control of the AKP that can take its members under control. Thanks to this structure the AKP in general and Islamist women in particular become open to new ideas and changes.

Eventually, women who seceded from the NVM started to be open to new and different ideas. It is possible to say that these women of all other party members disengaged their indispensable ideational contact with the NVM so they have their own political agenda which is different from the past as a result. This separation can be perceived as the first step on the road of changing perceptions of Islamist women regarding the EU. After that, we will see whether this change is autonomous or dependent.

The second research question is; does this change stem from a solid awareness/consciousness of these women about the EU, or is it a result of the male-dominated political agenda? With this question, the study tries to understand the role of awareness of Islamic women about the EU in the shift that has taken place in their perceptions. From the outset, it is possible to say that there is not a parallelism between the shift that has taken place in the perceptions of Islamic women and their awareness about the EU. It is a fact that there is a progress in terms of consciousness regarding the EU. At least, these women gave satisfactory responses¹³⁷ to a small size quiz regarding the EU. However, what I want to say here is that this progress in awareness of Islamic women regarding the EU is not on a level that can result in an existing shift. In other words, the shift which took place in the perceptions of Islamist women about the EU

¹³⁷ See Appendix 5: Quiz Results.

from rejection to support should require a consciousness more than existing progress knowledge regarding the EU.

If it is the case, why did this change occur? According to results of the interviews and questionnaires, it is possible to say that there are two different but complementary reasons of this change. The first reason is, without doubt, the trust of these women for the founders of the AKP. When I evaluate the interview results, it is possible to say that these women place a great deal of trust in their party leaders.¹³⁸ This trust stems from the belief that all party governing elites are honest and trustworthy persons. This is not surprising given the fact that these women were active partisans, so they simply could not say otherwise. However, the fact that they place their open trust in their leaders and the leaders are effectively signalling a pro-EU stance is important to note.

According to women party members, if this trustworthy party elites enact a policy, this policy will certainly be correct in terms of advancing Turkey's interests. In other words, these party leaders always behave in favour of Turkey and Turkish society. Of course, the issue of trust is common and not surprising for all political parties in Turkey. However, the trust here is mostly the result of male-dominated politics. Some women whom I interviewed carried various concerns about the membership but they legitimized these concerns by giving voice to absolute trust to their political leaders.¹³⁹ They do not prefer to be more active in order to interrogate or criticize concerns which they have. Thus, they prefer to show full trust to their political elites instead, and this approach is a kind of male-dominated political understanding. In this understanding, party elites make policies, and women; even all members belonging to the party, support them. The importance of absolute trust becomes apparent here. The trust between women and party governing elites paves the way for the supporting of party politics without any interrogations. Therefore it can be argued that if it is a total and autonomous change of perceptions regarding the EU, there would be certain answers of concerns for Islamist women apart from the absolute trust to the party elites.

¹³⁸ Please refer to E6 for R2, and R4.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

In addition to this absolute trust, it can be argued that Islamist women supported the party's policy not because of enhancing their knowledge regarding the EU, but because of their trust for their leaders. When these policies created a positive atmosphere in terms of political and economic interests, they provided their support for the integration of Turkey into the EU fervidly. In other words, their trust for party leaders led to the demolition of their prejudices concerning the EU. As they noted in the interviews, they start to approach all aspects of life from a wider perspective.

Moreover, expectations concerning the resolution of the head cover problem can be accepted as the driving motivation behind the absolute trust of the Islamist women, both for supporters or members of the AKP. Party women did not establish direct relation with their support of the AKP and the expectations about scarves, but supporters of the AKP did directly. As a result, it is quite observable to accept that the expectations regarding the scarf issue as a driving motive behind this absolute trust.

As for the second reason, as a result of progress towards the EU, there are some developments in democracy, human rights and freedoms in Turkey. Therefore, this progress affects and shapes the perceptions of Islamic women. During the interviews, almost all of these women touch on this point.¹⁴⁰ According to them, this progress in Turkish democracy makes Turkey a better place to live. They also say that they want their children to live in a country that has close ties with the EU.¹⁴¹ In addition to this, according to these women, European identity and Islamic identity can live together.¹⁴² There are no substantial differences between these two identities. According to them, if Turkey continues in the same line towards the EU, the problem of the head cover will be resolved due to freedoms produced by this process.¹⁴³ In other words, they seem to be sure that the social consensus that will make possible a solution to the head cover will emerge after intensive rapprochement between Turkey and the EU.

¹⁴⁰ Please refer to E4, F9 for R3, and F9 for R1, R2, R4 and R5.

¹⁴¹ Please refer to E6 for R5.

¹⁴² Please refer to C5 for R2, R3, R4 and R5

¹⁴³ Please refer to F5 for R1.

I further pursued the decision taken by the European Court of Human Rights against the head covering at universities¹⁴⁴ in my in-depth interviews with the Islamist women who support the EU membership and wish for a solution for the scarf problem from the EU as well. When I asked them how they had evaluated the decision which is taken by one of the EU courts, they generally defended it by saying that, this is not a final decision. It was just an evaluation of the present state of affairs.¹⁴⁵ One of them argued that the ECHR has only an advisory position and its decisions are not binding in this sense. Moreover, this is our internal problem, so the EU and its institutions cannot be intervening of this problem. After this statement I reminded her that she had the expectation from the EU to resolve the scarf problem. She reiterated by saying that when she said the EU can solve the problem, it can supply the democratic improvements for our country so these improvements can be the tools in order to solve the problem. She also added if the binding institutions of the EU approve the ban she would started to be in doubt about its credibility because there is no such ban in the EU countries.¹⁴⁶

All the women gave the same answers to the question of *Leyla Şahin Case*. It seems that they are informed by the party on this issue. Therefore, this indicates that the AKP has a certain pattern of control over its party members, at least in this issue. Moreover, the party members do not regard EU to challenge Turkish Muslims' neither culturally nor religiously. Thus, the decision which was taken by the ECHR was not seen as a challenge by these women. The party members do not regard the Court's decision as a challenge or see it as a problematic situation for themselves as their ideas on this decision were shaped by the party elites. However there is a contradiction in

¹⁴⁴ The European Court of Human Rights has recently reached a decision regarding Turkey's headscarf ban in universities. The court has decided that the restrictions imposed on the wearing of the Islamic headscarf had interfered with the applicant's (Ms. Sahin's) right to manifest her religion. Notwithstanding, the court found that this interference was prescribed by law and was, in fact, compatible with the Human Rights Convention. The court also stated that the interference "was justified in principle and proportionate to the aims pursued and could therefore be regarded as having been necessary in a democratic society-." (Case of Leyla Sahin v. Turkey, 44774/98, paragraph 71).

¹⁴⁵ Please refer to F6 for R2, R3, R4 and R5.

¹⁴⁶ Please refer to F6 for R1.

their acceptance of the party's decision in the *Leyla Sahin Case* as this case contradicts many of the respondents' notions of joining EU in order to use International Human Rights organizations to be able to wear a *hijab*, headscarf in public places.

It can be argued that their support the EU membership of Turkey is related to their support of the AKP. They show the absolute trust in their political leaders and their political decisions as well. If the AKP did not want to join the EU, these women probably would not want it at the same time. Their expectation on the solution of the scarf problem affects their political preferences both with the EU and AKP support issues.

Therefore, it can be argued that in the first instance, Islamist women are in a passive position that their perceptions regarding the EU are shaped by the party elites. However, in the second instance, they are in an active position and they make their perceptions clearer after evaluating positive results of process of integration of Turkey into the EU. In other words, they pass from a passive position to an active one in the second instance. However, their active position is controversial because they do not take place in any activities of the EU membership, even if behind their leaders. Their activation is limited with the supporting of the EU membership at the party meetings and at the grassroots level by convincing them of the necessity of the EU membership and provides an absolute trust to their party elites about the same subject.

The last research question is what are the main concerns of these women on the EU related issues? As I stated above, Islamist women concentrate mainly on freedoms and democratic progresses after and during the EU membership. They concentrate on all of these issues mainly because of the head cover problem in Turkey. It is inevitable to establish a relationship between Islamist women's support of the EU membership and the head scarf issue. Both questionnaire and interview results clearly manifest this situation.¹⁴⁷ Islamist women recognize the EU membership as a way to find the solution of the head scarf question. Consequently, they may pay attention and emphasis on the human rights, individual freedoms and democracy as utilities of possible membership.

¹⁴⁷ Please refer to F5 for R3, all responders. See Appendix: Result 25 in Questionnaire Survey.

Their expectations about the head cover issue plays an important role in their political preferences.

In light of these comments, it can be argued that the radical change taking place in the perceptions of the Islamic women regarding the European Union is a cyclical change. Because, as I have stated before, awareness and knowledge of these women regarding the EU cannot pave the way for the radical change that has occurred today. If it is so, these perceptions can change in different contexts. This change does not have a strong base in terms of critical evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of Turkey's possible membership to the EU.

CHAPTER 6

COUNCLUSION

In this study I tried to critically evaluate the perceptions/opinions of Islamist women regarding the EU. When we compare the RP and the AKP female members, the perceptions of these women have undergone a radical change from total rejection to support as they changed affiliation from RP to AKP. In this study I tried to understand the root causes of this change.

I applied Barth's theory of social organization, especially the interpretation of it by Roald, in order to explain this change in the perceptions of the Islamist women. According to Barth, social organizations are inclined to construct "social patterns of control". It is possible to say that, by producing "social patterns of control," social organizations shape, to a certain extent, the worldviews of the people within the organization, their social relationships, and what type of attitudes will be developed in different contexts. Accordingly, an organization's inclusion or exclusion of any new trends coming from outside of the movement is carried out by "social patterns of control." Consequently, an individual belonging to a social organization is less open to change than one who is outside of the organization.

Roald applied this theory to the Islamic movements in the EU. According to her, the Muslims who live in Europe and become a member of any Islamist movements undergo less change than those who have no ties with these movements. Because, according to her, the Islamic movements which they are members of or affiliated with, slow down, if not finally prevent the change of individuals belonging to the movement thanks to such "social patterns of control."

In this study, I argued that this theoretical approach can explain the existing change in the perceptions of the Islamic women regarding the EU. When we compare the RP and the AKP it is quite certain that the RP had the character of an Islamist movement. As for the AKP, it is an individual political party. Taking these points into account, I argued that by leaving the RP and the NVM and establishing the AKP, governing elites of this party become more open to change. It is because of this situation that a drastic change in the perceptions of Islamist women belonging to the AKP occurred.

There are several features of the Islamist women on the issues such as social and political life, EU perceptions and Islamic knowledge. My analyses indicate the following among the Islamist women:

Women's primary duty is regarded to be a mother and housewife. They give tremendous importance to it. They talked about the husband aid only when they were asked it separately as a question. They do not have division of labor at home. Therefore, these women's claim, in the interview, of equality with men seems to be rhetoric rather than actual practice.

It can be argued that there are two types of individualizations for these women: physical and ideational individualizations. Physical individualization corresponds to a physical separation from a traditional and wider family or other kinds of social organizations/structures. On the other hand, ideational individualization corresponds to making decisions out of communal or congregational social relations of traditional families or societies.

For a woman to leave the traditional families can be seen as an indicator for the physical individualization. However, physical individualization does not automatically lead to ideational individualization. According to the results of this study's empirical investigations, their past communal and congregational social relations of traditional societies and families also have control over, to a lesser or greater extent, these women even after they create their own nuclear families. As a result, despite partial success, the ideational individualization of these women is still an ongoing and unfinished process.

There are substantial differences between their past and present lives. For example, in contrast to their parents they tend to have two or three children. Therefore, in this way, they differ from their traditional family. They decide together with their husband and even children on issues which can affect them. Their marriage histories are also “modern” and different from those of their parents; they believe that they made an individual decision and wish the same thing for their children as well. These features of Islamist women can be accepted as changing elements of their past social lives.

It can be argued that Islamist women are experiencing a more rapid and visible social change. These changes have started to be more visible mainly after the AKP government. The AKP government has provided a legitimate ground for the changes among Islamist women particularly as the party is also a production of changing ideas. Although the responders do not reject that changes have taken place in their social life, they are not relaxed when they deal with changes in their social life due to some practical considerations. For example, they do not want to associate these changes which occurred in their social life with the coming of AKP to office because these changes are criticized by more conservatives in some respect. However, the majority of the responders to the questionnaire accepted that a transformation wave in Islamic social life had come with the AKP.

They accepted the relationship between modernity and Europeanized consciousness in some respects. They all see themselves as “modern”. They accepted the advances of Europe in terms of communication technology, science, and education etc. and they mainly defined modernity as being aware of the changes or improvement of these assets. In other words, according to Islamist women, modernity is made to fit the new changes.

Therefore, according to Islamist women, Islam is not an obstacle to modernity but customs limit the ways of reaching modernity. Moreover, women draw attention to the necessity of education in order to rescue themselves from the shadow of traditional customs. They argue that education provides the ability for freethinking, so it is a tool for having a *genuine* “Islam”.

When we come to the Islamist women and politics it is important to draw attention to fathers or brothers who played important roles in encouraging women to take active roles in politics. The women argued that their involvement in the AKP was a

totally independent decision when it is compared to their first involvement in politics. However it is quite common among the party women that they leave the NVM together with their fathers, brothers or husbands. This indicates that women follow male relatives in their change of party or movements. Therefore, their ideas of gender discourse and women's independent decision in political issues seem to be rhetoric rather than actual practices.

All of the women I interviewed and who responded to the questionnaire support women's participation in politics. According to them, they are involved in these activities because they seek to win the consent of God. This approach was more dominant during the RP era. Taken in the AKP era; it seems that there is a shift in this understanding. In addition to this desire to get the consent of God, Islamist women belonging to the AKP want to see rewards of their efforts in this world.

When it comes to the EU perceptions of Islamist women it is obvious that there is a radical change in the perceptions of Islamist women regarding the EU from the time of the RP to the AKP era. These women who regarded the EU as a Christian club during the RP era argue that they interpret the EU from a wider perspective today. According to the research results, during the RP era they depicted the EU as a Christian club and argued that Turkey would not be accepted into the Union as a full member. The construction of D8 (Developing Eight) as a Muslim community alternative to the EU defined as a Christian club was perceived as a very meaningful foreign policy decision and was fervidly supported by them.

It seems that existing change in the perceptions of Islamic women are not based on a solid awareness of the EU. In other words, existing knowledge and awareness levels of these women do not seem to be adequate in order to result in a radical change in the EU perceptions. There seems to be not enough research efforts that can result in the existing shift in the perceptions regarding the EU.

The interviewees define the EU identity as an identity whose base is not on a geographical area, rather it is based on norms including democratization, human rights, economic welfare etc. that are created and shared by the European countries.

In spite of this, the women now observe Christianity as a part of European identity; but in contrast to the stand of WP, they do not see the EU as a Christian club.

The women do not perceive the EU membership as a challenge to the Muslim identity of Turkey. This seems a contradiction at first glance, but Islamist women have a slogan to defeat this contradiction. “Turkey will be a member of European Union not the European identity.”

Women party members answered the questions regarding the cultural challenges and describe them as fabricated scenarios. They believe some groups try to provoke the Turkish people against the EU membership by touching the Turkish people’s important values. None of these women recognized any cultural and social challenges from the EU. They regard all EU-related issues in terms of freedoms. They did not touch on any challenges.

When the women evaluated the EU they mainly referred to democracy, freedom and human rights. In addition, all of the women saw a relationship between a solution of the headscarf problem and the EU membership. In other words Islamist women expect the headscarf ban to be removed after the membership.

It is interesting to note that the party members do not see the Leyla Şahin case as a challenge coming from one of the EU institution. It seems that they might have been informed about a certain stand on this issue by the party, as all of the women gave the same answer. Therefore, it is possible to argue that in certain cases, and particularly in the Leyla Şahin case, the AKP might control their members.

As for Islamic knowledge the women’s profound Islamic knowledge provides a ground for their involvement in politics. They reject the traditional beliefs that prevent women from participating in social life in general and the political sphere in particular. According to them, they behave within the boundaries of “true” Islam.

When the women were asked to define Islamic woman, all of them, with no exceptions, regarded the headscarf as a necessity for this identity. According to the interviewees, their headscarves tend to a great extent to determine their social and political preferences. It seems that their concerns regarding the headscarf play a characteristic role in their political preferences. For instance a great majority of the respondents to the questionnaire regard the headscarf issue as the most important factor behind their political preferences. This was similarly to the interviewees with

institutional ties with the AKP who also tended to see a connection between the headscarf issue and their support for the AKP. It seems that they share their party's discourse "*toplumsal mutabakat*" (social consensus) regarding solving the headscarf issue with taking support from all sectors of society.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Personal Questions:

A1

- Could you tell me a day of Mrs. X?

A2

- Do you have any child?
- How many brother & sister do you have?
- Do you have any plan to have a new child?
- Do you have any daughter?

A3

- Where do you live and with whom?
- Whose idea was to live here?
- Do you have closer relations with your neighbors?
- Do you satisfy with your city?

A4

- Do you visit your relatives?
- Which relatives do you have closer relations?
- How frequency does you visit your parents?

A5

- Are you employed?
- What is your husband's job?
- What is his educational situation?
- Does your husband assist to you at home?

A6

- How did you marry?
- Do you know how did your parents marry?
- What kind of marriage that you wish for your daughter?

A7

- Do you like to read?
- Who is the reader of your family?
- Which book did you read lastly?

- What is your favorite book?
- What kind of book that young generation should prefer?

A8

- Have you ever read any of “*Hidayet Romanları*” which was written by for example Emine Şenlikoğlu or Şule Yüksel Şenler?
- Do you want that your daughter read any of them?

Questions on Politics:

B1

- When did you start to interest in politics?

B2

- What was the motivation of you to work for RP?
- What is your motivation today?
- Why did you decide to be a political party member? Did any body have influences on your decision?
- Were there any of your family members who was a party member when you decided to be a party member?
- Which of the state officials’ position would you like to be?

B3

- Because you are a party member, you are more interested in politics unlike an ordinary woman. Is this situation influencing your relations to other women?

B4

- Is your husband also a party member?
- Did your husband influence you to become a party member?

Questions on the EU:

C1

- How did your ideas shaped about the EU?
- Do you follow the EU policies of your party?

C2

- Please answer the questions in the Quiz which is prepared to measure general information about the EU. This is a true/false based quiz.

Quiz

- The EU consists of 15 member states. (D)
- European Community was established after the First World War. (Y)
- The EU flag is blue with yellow stars. (D)
- Germany is the most populated country among the member states. (D)
- The members of the EU parliament are directly elected by the EU citizens. (D)
- The EU has a president who is directly elected by the EU citizens. (Y)
- There is not any border between the EU member states. (D)

C3

- How is your knowledge about the EU? On which issues do you have more information?
- What is the Copenhagen Criteria? What do you think about it?

C4

- What is the meaning of to be a European for you?

C5

- What is the meaning of Muslim identity for you?
- Do you think that there is a clash between Muslim and European identities?

Questions on Religion Perceptions :

D1

- Who is the Islamist woman in your opinion?
- Do you believe head cover can be a criterion for this identity?
- What is your reason to be covered?

D2

- Some Islamist women think that there must be a clear distinction between Islam and tradition. They support investigation of pure sources of Islam and put emphasis on importance of education in order to achieve this aim. Do you believe that you experienced such a process?

D3

- Could you tell me the place of women in politics from an Islamic perspective?

D4

- Is there any differentiation or superiority between man and woman?

Questions on the RP and the AKP:

E1

- Is it possible to say that the NVM is a congregation because it has the institutions (ENVM, NYF) and media organs (Milli Gazette, TV5) and also because of its vision and ideas?

E2

- Could you define RP?
- What was your reason to secede from the WP?
- Why did you become a member of the Justice and Development Party?
- Are there any family members who preferred to stay as a member of the NVM when you leave it?

E3

- Could you define the Justice and Development Party?
- What is the most visible differentiation between the RP & the AKP?

E4

- Did you observe any change or transformation around your surroundings and yourself after the AKP membership? If it is yes, in which direction did you observe this change?

E5

- Could you define conservative democracy or conservative democrat?
- Do you use one of these concepts in order to define your political stance?

E6

- Could you tell me your position towards the EU when you were a member of the WP?
- Why did you against the EU?
- Do you agree with the idea which says the EU is a Christian Club?
- What is the EU for you now as a member of the AKP?

E7

- Are you satisfied with the EU policies of your party and do you support your party totally?

Questions on the EU Perceptions:

F1

- Do you get any questions or comments from Islamist women regarding to the EU?
- If it is yes, which subject of area do they mainly focus on?

F2

- Will Turkish identity influence from the European identity? How?
- Do you think that the Turkish identity can influence the European identity?

F3

- Is there any relationship between to be modern and to be European?
- What is being modern for you? Do you think that you are modern?

F4

- What can be the reasons of negative approaches of the European public opinion towards Turkey's membership?

F5

- What is the most important question of Islamist women in Turkey?
- Do you think that the EU membership can be a solution at this point?
- Is it possible to establish a parallel relation between the EU membership and solution of the head scarf question?

F6

- How do you evaluate the decision taken by the European Court of Human Rights on *Hülya Şahin* trial?
- Do you still believe in that the EU can solve the head scarf problem after the Court's decision?

F7

- Have you ever believed that the AKP can solve the problem?

F8

- There is a current debate on the point that whether Islamic identity is experiencing a transformation with coming of the AKP to power or not. According to you, is it possible to talk about such a transformation? If yes, what type of transformation AKP aims to achieve?

F9

- What is the most important benefit of the EU membership?
- What can be the disadvantages of the membership?

F10

- Have you ever supported the EU membership in a community?
- Which one of the EU features on which do you make stress when you support the membership?

F11

- There is a widely common opinion appeared in the public opinion that the EU can pressure our some religious values. Is it possible to talk about such pressure? If yes, what is these values that can be pressured by the EU.

F12

- According to your observations from your community, which of the EU features do Islamist women make emphasis on?

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL QUESTIONS:

1. *Age:*

18–25 () 25–35 () 35–45 () 45–50 ()

2. *Marital Status:*

Married () Widowed () Divorced ()

3. *Children:*

Daughter (.....) – Son (.....)

4. *Educational Status:*

Undergraduate () Graduate () PhD ()

5. *Do you live with whom?*

Husband & children () Husband's parents () My parents ()

6. *How did you meet your husband?*

Traditional way (Görücü Usulü) () through mediator () Family meetings () School district () Friend ambient ()

7. *Does your husband assist to you at home?*

YES () NO ()

8. *Are you employed?*

YES () NO ()

9. *What kind of books do you prefer to read?*

Hidayet Romanları () Religious books () Literature () Philosophy () Psychology ()
History () Foreign Politics () Politics () Economics () Sociology () Other (-----)

10. *Have you ever read any of the Hidayet Romanları?*

YES () NO () Name: -----

11. *Do you want that your daughter read any of them?*

YES () NO ()

ISLAM & WOMEN:

Please answer these questions as true or false.

12. *There is gender equality in Islam.*

YES () NO ()

13. *In Islam, women do not have any place in politics.*

YES () NO ()

14. *Women do not responsible to take care of her children and house according to Islam.*

YES () NO ()

15. *The covering is a religious duty in Islam.*

YES () NO ()

EUROPEAN UNION:

Please answer the questions in the Quiz which is prepared to measure general information about the EU. This is a true/false based quiz.

Quiz

- The EU consists of 15 member states. ()
- European Community was established after the First World War. ()
- The EU flag is blue with yellow stars. ()
- Germany is the most populated country among the member states. ()
- The members of the EU parliament are directly elected by the EU citizens. ()
- The EU has a president who is directly elected by the EU citizens. ()
- There is not any border between the EU member states. ()

16. *What is the meaning of to be a European for you?*

17. *Is there any relationship between being modern and being European?*

YES () NO ()

18. *What is the meaning of "being modern" for you?*

19. Do you think that there is a clash between Muslim and European identities?

YES () NO ()

20. Will Turkish identity be influenced from the European identity?

YES () NO ()

21. Do you think that the Turkish identity can influence the European identity?

YES () NO ()

22. What can be the reasons of negative approaches of the European public opinion towards Turkey's membership?

RELIGIOUS () POPULATION () ECONOMIC WEAKNESS () HUMAN RIGHTS ()

23. What is the most important question of Islamist women in Turkey?

24. Do you think that the EU membership can be a solution at this point?

YES () NO ()

25. Have you ever believed that the AKP can solve the problem?

YES () NO ()

26. What is the most important benefit of the EU membership?

27. *There is a widely common opinion appeared in the public opinion that the EU can pressure our some religious values. Is it possible to talk about such pressure?*

YES () NO ()

28. *According to your observations from your community, which of the EU features do Islamist women make emphasis on?*

29. *There is a current debate on the point that whether Islamic identity is experiencing a transformation with coming of the AKP to power or not. According to you, is it possible to talk about such a transformation?*

POLITICS:

30. *Is there any differentiation between the RP and the AKP ?*

YES () NO ()

31. *Is it possible to say that the NVM is a congregation because it has the institutions (ENVM, NVF) and media organs (Milli Gazette, TV5) and also because of its vision and ideas?*

YES () NO ()

32. *Do you agree with the idea which says the EU is a Christian Club?*

YES () NO ()

33. *Did you agree with this idea when you were a member of the WP?*

YES () NO ()

34. *Do you follow the EU policies of your party?*

YES () NO ()

35. *Are you satisfied with the EU policies of your party and do you support your party totally?*

YES () NO ()

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY SURVEY RESULTS

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. Age Group:

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responders</i>
18-25	12	33
25-35	15	42
35-45	5	14
45-50	4	11
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

2. Martial Status:

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responders</i>
Married	32	89
Divorced	2	5, 5
Widowed	2	5, 5
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

3. Number of Children:

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
1 child	8	22
2 children	11	30, 5
3 children	11	30, 5
4 children	6	17
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

4. *Educational Status:*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responders</i>
Undergraduate	29	80, 5
Graduate	5	14
PhD	2	5, 5
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

5. *Do you live with whom at home?*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responders</i>
Husband & children	32	89
Husband's parents	4	11
Her parents	0	0
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

6. *Type of Marriage:*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Modern	28	78
Traditional	8	22
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

7. *Does your husband help you at home?*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	26	72
No	10	28
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

8. *Employment*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Employed	19	53
Unemployed	17	47
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

9. *Preferred Books:*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Literature	10	28
Philosophy	2	5, 5
History	1	3
Psychology	2	5, 5
Politics	6	17
Sociology	8	22
Hidayet Romanları	0	0
Religious Books	7	19
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

10. *Have you ever red any of the Hidayet Romanları?*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	29	81
No	7	19
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

11. Do you want that your daughter read any of them?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	2	5
No	34	95
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

ISLAM & WOMEN:

12. There is gender equality in Islam.

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
True	27	75
False	3	8
Blank	6	17
Total	36	100%

13. In Islam, women do not have any place in politics.

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
True	30	83
False	4	11
Blank	2	6
Total	36	100%

14. *Women do not responsible to take care of her children and house according to Islam.*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
True	30	83
False	5	14
Blank	1	3
Total	36	100%

15. *The covering is a religious duty in Islam.*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
True	36	100
False	0	
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

EUROPEAN UNION:

16. *What is the meaning of to be a European for you?*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Geographical description	7	19
Cultural description	21	58
Historical description	1	3
Religious description	2	6
Political description	5	14
Blank		
Total	36	100%

17. Is there any relationship between to be modern and to be European?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	8	22
No	26	72
Blank	2	6
Total	36	100%

18. What is the meaning of “being modern” for you?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
To fit the era	5	14
Be aware of the technology	8	22
To fallow the changes unless leave the native culture	22	61
To be aware of novelties	1	3
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

19. Do you think that there is a clash between Muslim and European identities?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	32	89
No	4	11
Blank	1	3
Total	36	100%

20. Will Turkish identity be influenced from the European identity?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	34	94
No	2	6
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

21. Do you think that the Turkish identity can influence the European identity?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	33	92
No	3	8
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

22. What can be the reasons of negative approaches of the European public opinion towards Turkey's membership?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Religion	29	81
Population	4	11
Economic weakness	0	0
Human Rights	3	8
Blank		
Total	36	100%

23. What is the most important question of Islamist women in Turkey?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Turban	36	100
Other	0	0
Blank		
Total	36	100%

24. Do you think that the EU membership can be a solution at this point?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	26	72
No	6	17
Blank	4	11
Total	36	100%

25. Have you ever believed that the AKP can solve the problem?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	30	83
No	1	3
Blank	5	14
Total	36	100%

26. What is the most important benefit of the EU membership?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Economic development	7	19
Democratic well being	19	53
Human Rights improvements	7	19
Educational Development	2	6
Unemployment reductions	1	3

Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

27. *There is a widely common opinion appeared in the public opinion that the EU can pressure our some religious values. Is it possible to talk about such pressure?*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	26	72
No	8	22
Blank	2	6
Total	36	100%

28. *According to your observations from your community, which of the EU features do Islamist women make emphasis on?*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Economy	6	17
Democracy	26	72
Human Rights	4	11
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

29. *There is a current debate on the point that whether Islamic identity is experiencing a transformation with coming of the AKP to power or not. According to you, is it possible to talk about such a transformation?*

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	27	75
No	6	17
Blank	3	8
Total	36	100%

POLITICS:

30. Is there any differentiation between the RP and the AKP?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	34	94
No	1	3
Blank	1	3
Total	36	100%

31. Is it possible to say that the NVM is a congregation because it has the institutions (ENVM, NVF) and media organs (Milli Gazette, TV5) and also because of its vision and ideas?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	33	92
No	2	6
Blank	1	2
Total	36	100%

32. Do you agree with the idea which says the EU is a Christian Club?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	2	6
No	34	94
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

33. Did you agree with this idea when you were a member of the RP?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	29	81
No	7	19
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

34. Do you follow the EU policies of your party?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	28	78
No	8	22
Blank	0	
Total	36	100%

35. Are you satisfied with the EU policies of your party and do you support your party totally?

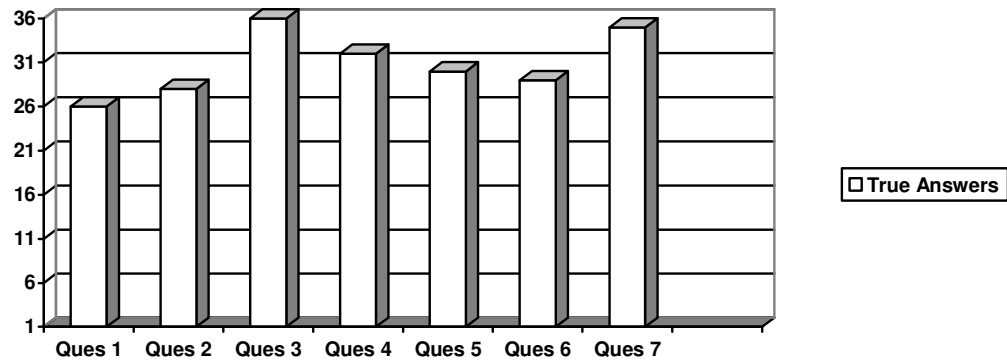
<i>Answer</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of Responses</i>
Yes	28	78
No	0	0
Blank	8	22
Total	36	100%

APPENDIX D: QUIZ RESULTS

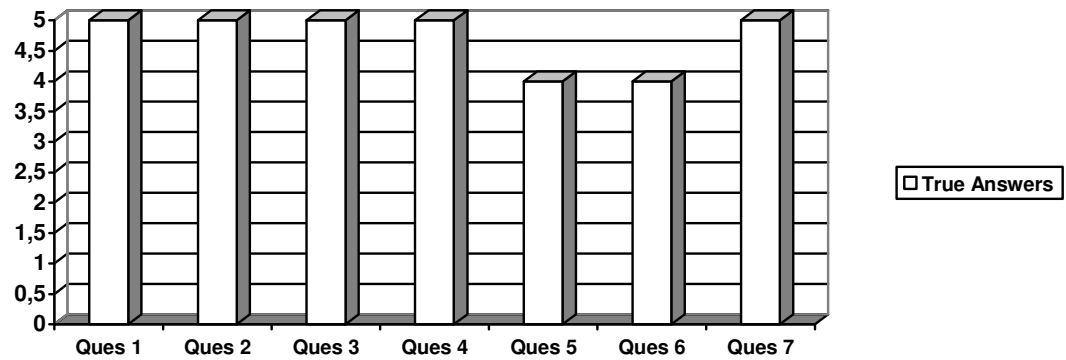
Quiz

1. The EU consists of 15 member states.
2. European Community was established after the First World War.
3. The EU flag is blue with yellow stars.
4. Germany is the most populated country among the member states.
5. The members of the EU parliament are directly elected by the EU citizens.
6. The EU has a president who is directly elected by the EU citizens.
7. There is not any border between the EU member states.

RESULT FOR QUESTIONNAIRE:



RESULT FOR INTERVIEW:



APPENDIX E: INTERVIEWS

Interview with Ebru

Responder 1

-R1-

A1 Benim için gün gece yatağa girmemle birlikte başlar. O gün ne yaptığımı düşünüp; sabah ne yapacağıma karar veririm. Ertesi gün ne yapacağımı bilerek yatmak bana, sabah uyanma zevki verir. Namazla birlikte kalkar aileme keyifle oturacakları bir kahvaltı sofrası hazırlarım, herkes yoluna gider ve ben de yola çıkarım.

A2 Biz beş kardeşiz ve ben en küçükleriyim. Üç çocuğum var. İki erkek. Kızım en büyükleri. Daha fazla çocuk düşünmüyoruz çünkü eşim ve ben çok meşgulüz.

A3 Bahçelievler’de oturuyorum. Evimiz kira, üç sendir bu adresteyim. Komşularım sınırlı sayıda çünkü burası bir site evi ve genellikle sitelerde kimsenin kimseden haberi olmuyor. Burada eşim ve çocuklarla birlikte yaşıyoruz. Burada oturmak hepimizin fikriydi diyebilirim.

A4 Akrabalarım ile sıkı ilişki içerisindeyim hepsiyle görüşürüm ama ebeveynlerimizle daha sık görüşme imkânımız oluyor diyebilirim. Aile bağlarımız kuvvetlidir. Büyüklerimize kıymet veririz.

A5 İşim rahat ve severek yapıyorum. Biyoloji öğretmeniyim. Bu aralar kürtaja karşı düzenlenen bir seri oturum ve konferansa katılıyorum. Ayrıca bu organizasyonun komitesinde de yer alıyorum. Eşim eczacı.

Eşim bana evde yardımcı oluyor ya da olmak istiyor ama ben yardım etmemesini tercih ediyorum. O yardım etmeye başlayınca işim bitmiyor nedense.

A6 Eşimle aynı fakültedeydik. Üniversitenin ikinci yılında tanıştık ve çok iyi arkadaş olduk. Daha sonra aile büyüklerimizin onayını alarak ilişkimizi evlilikle

pekiştirdik. Annemler akrabaymış uzaktan o vesile ile evlenmişler. Ben kızımın da benimki gibi bir evliliğinin olmasını hayal ederim.

A7 Kitap okumak en büyük zevkimdir. Ailem de herkes okur ama kimse eşim kadar değil. En son okuduğum kitap “*Ferrarisini Satan Bilge*”. En fazla okuduğum kitaplar mesleğimle ilgili olanların dışında sosyoloji ve otobiyografi kitapları oluyor. En sevdiğim kitap Edward Said’in “*Out of Space*” adlı eseri. Said’in mücadelesinin yakın takipçisi ve hayranıydım. Yaklaşık tüm eserlerini gözden geçirme fırsatım oldu. Bu derece hayranlık duyduğum bir ismin kendi kaleminden hayatını dinlemek beni çok etkilemişti. Kitabı iki kere okudum. Her okumamda kendimden bir parça hissettim. E. Said’e olan hayranlığım, ismini her duyduğumda artıyor.

Gençlerimiz öncelikle dünya klasiklerine doymalıdır. Romanlar ve hikâyeler önemli. Roman okumayan insan yazamaz, aktaramaz; yazsa bile yazılarının bir yeri boş kalmış gibi olur. Klasikler bu boşluğu doldurmak için önemli.

A8 Bu yazarlarımızın kitaplarından sadece birini okudum “*Huzur Sokağı*”nı. O zaman beğenmemiştim hala ilerleme yok gibi görünüyor. O kitapları okumanın bir amacı vardır. Roman okumuş olmak için okunmaz o kitaplar. Çünkü size ne söyleyeceğini zaten bilirsiniz. Duymak istediğinizi söyler. Benim o zamanlarda duymak istediğim şeyler bunlar değildi. Bu sebeple fazla okumadım.

Kızımın okumasını istemem zaten okuyacağını da sanmam.

B1 Siyasete ilgim ortaokul sıralarında başladı. Haberleri çok seyredirdim, her şeyden haberim vardı. Çok okurdum, bazen öyle şeyler okurdum ki hiç bir şey anlamazdım ama yine de okurdum. Mukayeseyi severdim. Siyasette bunlar iyi meziyetlerdir. Tavrımı siyasetten yana koydum. Her yerde siyaset tartıştım. RP’ye üye oldum.

Ailemde benden başka bir de ağabeyim siyasetle ilgilenirdi o da benim gibi bir parti üyesiydi. Evet, ben ondan sonra üye oldum.

B2 Allah Rızası için siyaset yaptım. Bu beni bir dönem tatmin etti. Uzun yıllar parti için çalıştım. Partiden 2003 senesinde ayrıldım. Bir dönem parti faaliyetlerine katılma gereği görmedim. Başka faaliyetler yapıyordum. Cemaatimizin faaliyetlerine katılıyordum. Çünkü burada da Allah rızasını gözetmek var. Şu an AKP için çalışıyorum çünkü partiye ve bu parti için çalışan herkese sonsuz güveniyorum.

Ben Milli Eğitim Bakanı olmak isterdim. Bence eğitime de artık bir kadın eli değmeli. Benim ki şu an imkânsız gibi görünüyor en son böyle bir şeyi tecrübe eden hanımın başına gelenlere hep birlikte şahit olduk. Vatana hizmet etmek isteyen biri vatan hainliği ile suçlandı. Üstelik sözünü ettiğimiz kişi seçilmiş olmasına rağmen.

B3 Ben siyasetle ilgilenirken çok eleştiri aldım. Şu bir gerçek ki bütün eleştirilerle mücadele ettik. Artık bayanlar siyasette destekleniyor bunun önünü biz açtık diyebilirim. Kabul görmek için çok mücadele ettik.

B4 Eşim de parti üyesi. Bu konuda bana destek olmuştur her zaman.

C1 AB ile ilgili düşüncelerim okuduklarım, gözlemlediklerim ve seyrettiklerim sonucunda şekillendi. Belli bir politikasını takip ediyorum denemez ama mümkün olduğunca her politikayı anlamaya ve yorumlamaya gayret gösteriyorum.

Partimin AB politikasını izliyorum. Zaten iktidar olduğu için bu pek zor olmuyor.

C3 AB ile ilgili bir uzman kadar ya da aktif bir siyasetçi kadar bilgim olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Umarım sorularınıza cevap verebilirim.

Kopenhag kriterleri, takip ettiğim kadarıyla siyasi bir takım önceliklerden oluşuyor demokrasi ve insan hakları gibi. Türkiye bu konularda Kopenhag kriterlerine uyduğu ölçüde üyelik statüsü kazanabilecektir.

C4 Avrupalı olmak ya da Avrupai olmak. Aslında bu iki terim ülkemizde hep modern ve çağdaş olmakla aynı anlamda kullanılıyor. Bunu yanlış buluyorum ama tabii benim için Avrupalı olmak sadece coğrafi bir sınırlamadan da ibaret değildir. Bunun dışında Avrupalı olmayı ortak tarih ve kültür üzerinden değerlendirecek olursanız bu Hıristiyan olmak, aynı dili konuşmak, ortak çıkarlara sahip olmak olarak değerlendirilebilir. Çünkü bunlar bir bütün oluşturuyor Avrupa içerisinde. Sonuçta Avrupalı diye bir kimlik varsa bunun bileşenleri de olmalıdır.

C5 Müslüman Kimlik! İslami kabul sonucunda oluşan bir kimliktir.

Böyle bir çatışma söz konusu değildir. Veya neden olsun ki? Benzerliklerin yoğun olmadığı kesin ama bir çatışmanın varlığından söz etmek imkânsız.

D1 İslami kadın, yaşamının her alanında İslami bir duruşa sahip olan ve İslami hassasiyetlerine fazlaca vurgu yapan kadındır. Başörtüsü İslami kadın için bir kıstas olamaz çünkü bu saydıklarımı yerine getirmek konusunda büyük hassasiyetler gösterdiği halde başörtülü olmayan bayanlar da var. Diğer taraftan bu zor şartlar altında örtünme bir bakıma nefisle mücadele gibi ve örtünen bayan aslında İslami olduğunun ilk ve önemli sinyallerini verir. Çünkü başörtüsü İslami bir duruştur ve İslami kadın örtünerek yaşamının her alanına başörtüsünü yani İslami duruşunu dâhil eder.

Benim örtülü olmamın nedeni Nur Suresinin 31. Ayetidir.

D2 Evet İslam bazen geleneğin gölgesinde kalabiliyor. Gelenekten kastım İslam'a ait olmadığı halde İslam'dan gibi sunulan toplumsal normlardan bahsediyorum. Ben çevremde bunun mücadelesini çok verdim. Birçok İslami kadın dinin kendilerine sunduğu haklardan gelenekler yüzünden vazgeçmişler ya da en azından geleneklerin kaynağının İslam olduğuna inanmışlardır. Örnek vermem gerekirse birçok kadın İslam'ın kadının tek eşlilik hakkını korumasına izin verdiğinden habersizdir ya da kadın istemezse ev işi yapmak ve çocuklarına bakmak zorunda değildir. Ama bizim geleneklerimiz öylesine kabuklaşmış ki araştırılmasını ve sorgulanmasını önlemek için İslam da bunu söyler denilmiştir.

Buradan gelmek istediğim nokta şudur, eğitim bireylere analitik düşünme ve sorgulama kabiliyeti ve güdüsü aşılar. Din dâhil her şey sorgulanmaya başlar. İslam insan fıtratına aykırı bir din değildir bu benim sorgulamaya başladığımda hep aklımın bir köşesindeydi ve fıtratıma aykırı gördüğüm her şeyi sorguladım. Sonuç olarak eğitim bana sađih bir İslam sađladı diyebilirim. Ülkemizde birçok kız öğrenci başörtüsü bahane gösterilerek eğitim hakkından mahrum ediliyor. Bunun rejim için gerekli olduđu savunuluyor. Hâlbuki bu kızların kendi hayatlarını kurtarmak ve kendi geleceklerini kurup ülkelerine ve insanına faydalı olmaktan başka istekleri ve uğraşları yok. Bu kızların eğitim görmeleri rejimin de milletin de lehinedir. Mesela zorla örtündükleri söyleniyor bu kızların. Bırakın o şekilde girsinler ve eğitim alsınlar ve bilginin gücünden faydalanarak kendi kararlarını verebilme yetisine sahip olsunlar. Bu şekilde zorla örtünen de kalmaz. İnancının geređi için örtünen de belli olur. Eğitimli insanlar gelenek ile İslam arasındaki farklılığı rahatlıkla su yüzüne çıkarabilirler.

D3 Kadının siyasetteki yeri de yine geleneklerle belirlenmiştir bizde. Kadının siyasette yeri yok diyen çoktur İslami kesimde. Tabi Aynı şekilde İslami kadının siyasette yeri olmadığını savunan sözde Cumhuriyetçiler de mevcut. İslam adına kadının siyasette yeri olduğunu biliyorum. Bunun fazlaca örneklerini gördüm. Akabe Biatleri, Hz. Ayşe'nin ordu komutanlığı vs.

D4 Kadın-erkek eşitliğinin var olması gerektiğini düşünüyorum ama bu olurken de kadının ve erkeğin yaratılış itibariyle mevcut olan farklılıkların inkâr edilmesi şeklinde olmamalıdır. Yani bayanlara pozitif bir ayrımcılığın olması beni rahatsız etmez ve bazı durumlarda da olması gerektiğini savunurum. Sosyal ve siyasi hayatta kadın neyse bence erkek de odur, bir fark yok.

E1 Bence Milli Görüş Hareketini bir cemaat olarak değerlendirmek mümkün. Düşünün bir kere bir cemaatten ne beklersiniz? Yol göstermesini! MGH bize her konuda yol gösteriyordu. Siyasi, sosyal, ekonomik her konuda... MGH duruşu tüm üyelere adeta nakşedilmişti. Benim cemaatimin gazetesi, dergisi, televizyonu, yardım kuruluşları her şeyi vardı. Fıkhi bir konuda yardıma mı ihtiyacım oldu, MGH bana yardım etmeye hazırdu. Birimizin başına bir şey gelse

mutlu ya da acı topluca bir seremoni halinde hareket eder tebrik, taziye, yardım ne gerekiyorsa yapardık. Böyle şeyler cemaatlerde sıkça olan şeylerdir.

Dürüst olmak gerekirse, MHG 'den ayrıldıktan sonra bir cemaate üye olma ihtiyacı hissettim ve oldum. Aslında bu iyi bir gelişme. Bizim din ve siyaseti bir birinden ayıran vizyonumuza da uygun bir hareket. Din AK Parti ile birlikte benim özel yaşantıma kaldı diyebiliriz sanırım.

E2 Refah Partisi, Milli Görüş Hareketinin zirve partisidir. Cemaatin en olgun meyvesi de diyebiliriz. Hakkı savunan, batıldan hesap soran; unutulmaları hatırlayan, adalet, hukuk ve inancı koruyan bir siyasi partiydi. Parti destekleyicilerine muhteşem bir coşku ve haz sunuyordu. O parti için çalışmak beni hep heyecanlandırmıştır. Şu an tabii o zamanlarda olduğu gibi bir coşku yok içimde. Biraz yoruldum sanırım ve emek verdiğiniz şeylerde gözünüzün önünde yok olmaya mahkûm bırakılınca biraz şevkim söndü ister istemez.

Ardı ardına yaşanan MGH partilerinin kapatılması bizi farklı arayışlara yöneltti. Biraz kendimle baş başa kaldım, cemaatim çatırdamaya başlamıştı. Tayip Erdoğan ismi bana güven verdi. Reform gerektiğine ben de inanıyordum. Yenilikçileri destekledim. AKP yeni ve farklı bir oluşumdu. Sadece siyasi bir partiydi. İsimler cazipti. Cemaat bizi fazlaca kontrol altına almıştı. Yeni görüşler, farklı görüşler cemaatin duruşunu değiştirmekte başarısız oldular. Cemaat içinde bireysellik düşünülemezdi ama bu görüşlerin destek bulacağı açıktı. AKP'yi destekledim çünkü benim güvenimi kazandılar. Türkiye'de artık siyaset farklı, dini yaklaşımlarla yapılan siyasete prim verilmiyor artık.

Evet, eşim de AKP' ye geçti; ağabeyim de. Bu kararı eşimle birlikte aldık zaten.

E3 AKP'yi tanımlamak kolay değil aslında. Fakat AKP ne bir RP ne de bir SP. AKP, kendi başına normal ve sıradan bir partidir aslında. Ben AKP'yi genç bir bireye benzetiyorum. Ebeveyninin yani MGH'nin kökünden yetişmiş olsa da onlara ait olmadığını hisseden ve kendi şahsiyetini ve özgürlüğünü arayan bir genç. Aradığını buldu mu? Elbette. Geniş ve geleneksel ailesinden sıyrılıp kendisine çekirdek ve modern bir aile kurdu. Kendisini sınırlayabilecek aile

büyükleri ve onların gelenekleri yok. Kendi yolunu kendi çiziyor. Aile içinde herkesin düşüncesine saygı var, kimseye bu soyadını taşıyorsan şöyle davranmalısın denmiyor. Ak Parti, inanca saygının ve bireysel özgürlüklerin partisi.

RP ya da MGH partileri cemaat ya da büyük bir topluluk partisiydi. Cemaatin sınırları vardı ama AKP daha bireysel bir parti.

E4 Başarılı ve bir o kadar da şahsiyetli siyasetin neticesinde bazı dönüşümler yaşanıyor şüphesiz. Daha sakin ve ılımlı bir toplum var. Geleceğe karamsar bakmaktan kurtuldu insanlar. Bu ülkede konuşulması imkânsız olan her şeyi konuşuyoruz artık.

E5 Muhafazakâr Demokratlık çok fazla aşına olduğum bir siyasi kimlik değil aslında. AKP ile birlikte tanıdım ya da tanımaya çalışıyorum. Kültürel değerlere sahip çıkan ve aynı zamanda demokrasinin kapsayıcılığını da benimseyen bir kimliktir.

Yok, bu terimi kullanmıyorum. Zaten dikkat ettiyseniz sağ-sol ayrımı yetiyor. Bazen parti ismi vermek de yeterli oluyor. Ben başörtülüüyüm bu sebeple siyasi kimliğimi az çok tahmin ediyor insanlar ve gelenekçi misin yenilikçi mi diye soruyorlar. Cevap mı? Sağcı, yenilikçi ve AKP'li.

E6 RP döneminde AB, ABD, İsrail aynı cümlede değerlendirebiliyordum. AB hakkında eleştirel bir yaklaşımım vardı. Tabi o dönemde pek sıcak ilişkiler söz konusu değildi bu nedenle çok fazla AB üzerinde düşünmezdim. Fikirlerim MGH çerçevesinde şekillenmişti. Tabi artık AB'nin Hıristiyan kulübü olduğunu değil bir medeniyet projesi olduğunu düşünüyorum. AB şuanda benim için çok daha manidar çünkü ilişkiler sıcak. Her an gündemimizde AB konusu. Üyeliği destekliyorum ve sonuç üyelik olmasa bile sürecin bize kazandıracaklarından ümitli olduğumu söyleyebilirim.

Görüşlerim neden deđiřti nasıl deđiřti bu o kadar önemli deđil bence. řuanda size kiřisel yaklařımlarımı sunuyorum. O zamanlar bu konuları fazlaca irdelemiyordum ve neticede onlar benim řahsi kanaatlerim deđillerdi.

E7 AK parti'nin AB politikalarını yakından takip ediyorum ve her politikanın bir reform paketi niteliğinde olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bütün bu izlenen politikalar hep Türkiye'yi AB yolunda ilerlerken bir adım daha ileriye kavuřturmak içindir. Mesela ana dillerde yayın hakkı. Bu bir dönem için Türkiye'de böyle bir şeyi düşünmenin dahi yasak olduđu zamanları hatırlatıyor bana ve AKP'nin bu yasa ile ne denli yenilikçi ve modern olduğunu gösteriyor. Aslına bakarsanız zina yasası biraz farklı bir durumdur. Su yasa halktan gelen istekler dođrultusunda çıkarılmış bir yasaydı ve fazlaca abartıldı bazı çevreler tarafından. Bence bu yasa kadın haklarını da koruması açısından da iyi bir adımdı.

F1 Alıyorum tabi bazen özellikle de yakın çevremden. Yani bazen bir takım ön yargıları yıkmaya çalışıyorum bazen de destek verme nedenlerimi onlarla paylaşıyorum.

F2 Müslüman kimliğimizin AB üyeliğinden etkileneceğini düşünmüyorum. İnanç anlamında da bir özgürlük sağlayacağını düşünürsek bu daha iyi anlaşılır. Çoğunluğun Hıristiyan olacağını düşünmek biraz rahatsız edici olabilir ama yine de ben bunun o kadar önemli olduğunu düşünmüyorum.

F3 Modern olmak benim için çağın gerisinde kalmamaktır. Yeniliklerden haberdar olup bilinç düzeyini yükseltmektir. Ben modern olduğumu düşünüyorum. Yeniliklerle buluşmam ve onlara karşı duruşum her zaman için bir harmoni içerisinde. Beni kimse anti modern ya da çağ dışı olarak nitelendiremez. Ben, modern olduğunu düşünen ve beni modernlik dışı olarak yorumlayan birçok insandan daha modernim.

F4 Türkiye'nin geniş ve dinamik bir nüfusa sahip olması. Ekonomik anlamda birliğe zarar vereceğini düşünüyor olmaları. Tabi Türkiye'nin Müslüman bir nüfusa sahip olması.

F5 İslami kadının en önemli sorunu başörtüsü sorunudur. Bunu derinlemesine anlatmama gerek yok sanırım. Ortada kadınların haklarının ihlali var.

AB çözüm olabilir. Kendini demokrasi ve insan haklarının güvencesi olarak tanımlıyor. Vicdan ve din hürriyetine önem veriyor. Bu meseleye aynı pencereden bakabilir.

F6 AHİM kararı! Karar yok ki ortada AHİM durumu değerlendirmiş ve Türkiye'yi haklı bulmuş. Bağlayıcılığı yok. Tavsiye makamıdır AHİM. Başörtüsü bizim iç meselemiz, ben AB sorunu çözebilir derken bizim iç dinamiklerimize sağlayacağı demokratik atılımın sonucundan bahsediyorum, ülkede oluşabilecek insan hakları gelişiminden bahsediyorum. AB'nin bağlayıcı kurumları bu yasağı savunursa onun demokrasi savunuculuğundan şüphe ederim ve neden kendi ülkelerinde yasak yok diye düşünürüm.

F7 AKP'nin başörtüsü sorununu çözebileceğine inanıyorum ama bunun öncelikler arasında olduğunu zannetmiyorum. Zaten kendileri de söylediler. İktidara bu vaatle ve bu özlemlerle geldiler diyemeyiz çünkü böyle bir düşünce başörtülü kadınların dünyayı başörtüsü sorunu üzerinden değerlendirdiğini kabul etmek olur ki bence bu son derece kötü ve aşağılayıcı bir ithamdır. Aynı şeyi AKP için de düşünün yani AKP başörtüsü sorununu çözmenin dışında hiçbir şeye muktedir değil midir yani?

F8 Farkında olmadan bir değişim söz konusu galiba çünkü bunu son zamanlarda fazlaca okur ve seyrederek oldum. AKP tabanını kendine benzetmek istiyor deniliyor. Fakat ben bu iddialardan bir şey çıkartamıyorum. Bana gereksiz bir takım fikirler gibi geliyor. AKP'nin belki de MGH'den farklı bir parti olduğunu kabullenen bazı kişiler şimdi bu farklılığı radikal bir düzleme oturtmaya çalışıyorlar. Taban da AKP de bence olması gerektiği gibidir ve fazlası ne de eksisi vardır.

F9 AB'nin en önemli getirisi demokrasi ve insan hakları, dezavantajı ise rekabet sorunudur.

F10 Savundum. Demokrasi, ekonomik gelişmeler, işsizlik sorunu, insan hakları, özgürlükler.

F11 Açıkçası bu türden hikâyelerle ben de çok muhatap oluyorum. Özellikle de zina yasasının geri çevrilmesi sonucunda insanlar biraz şüpheli oldular AB konusunda. Ancak bu zorunlu bir adımdı. Özgürlükler ve insan hakları derken hoşumuza gitmeyen ve giden şeyler birlikte aynı cümlede yer alabiliyor. Ancak yasalar ve yönetmelikler düzeyindeki değişimlerin bizim kültürümüzü yok sayacağını ya da kültürümüzün bundan olumsuz etkilenebileceğine inanmıyorum. Türkiye kendi değerlerinden ve hassaslarından asla taviz vermeyecektir sonuç itibarıyla burada bahsettiğimiz bir ekonomik ve siyasi topluluk ben kültürel normları AB içerisine fazlaca katma taraftarı değilim. Bu normlar bence Avrupa dediğimizle belirginleşir; Avrupa Birliği dediğimizde değil.

F12 Vurgu yapmaktan ziyade, özgürlükler ve demokratik açılımlar sayesinde başörtü sorunun çözüleceği noktasında umutlu olduklarımı söyleyebilirim.

Interview with Elif

Responder 2

-R2-

- A1 Sabah sekizde kalkıyorum. Oğlumu hazırlayıp okula yolluyorum. Hemen programıma bakıyorum gün içerisinde partide olmam gerekiyorsa partiye gidiyorum gerekmiyorsa hemen kendimi diğer aktivitelere kaydırıp yeni bir program hazırlıyorum. Parti dışında üyesi olduğum bir sivil toplum kuruluşu var arkadaşlarıma orada yardımcı olmaya özen gösteriyorum.
- A2 Evliyim bir oğlum var ve bir de kız bekliyorum. Daha fazla çocuk düşünmüyorum. Eşim ve ben iki çocuğun bizim için ideal olduğunu düşünüyoruz. Benim altı kardeşim vardı.
- A3 Florya'da oturuyorum. Evim bana ait ve üç aydır burada oturuyorum eşim ve çocuğumla daha önce de Florya'da başka bir evde oturuyordum. Buradan çok memnunum. Herkes bir birini tanıyor daha doğrusu burada hanımlar arasında güzel birliktelikler ve bağlar kurmak mümkün. Şu ana kadar hiç bir şikâyetim olmadı yaşadığım muhitten. Çok yakın ilişki içerisinde olduğum komşularım da mevcut. Burada oturmak benim fikrimdi e, tabi ev de hazır olunca.
- A4 Akrabalarımla çok sık görüşürüm, kendime en yakın olarak dayılarımı görüyorum. Kayınvalidemle günde iki kez mutlaka görüşüyorum.
- A5 İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı mezunuyum. Şu an çalışmıyorum, hamileliğim dolayısıyla. Normalde ise kendime ait bir iş yerim var. Eşim esnaf ve üniversite mezunu. Evde bana yardım etmeyi sever ve eder de sağ olsun.
- A6 Eşimle ilginç bir şekilde tanışıp evlendim. Birbirimizi yolda gördük, tavaffuklar bizi bir araya getirdi ve şu an mutlu bir evliliğimiz var. Benimki biraz radikal olduğu için kızım söz konusu olduğunda aynı şeyi ancak benimki gibi iyi bir insanla karşılaşmışsa ve bunu gerçekten istiyorsa kısacası kızımda kendimi görebilirim onaylayabilirim. Kızımın kendi seçimini yapmış olması beni mutlu

ederdi şüphesiz. Bizimkiler komşuymuş babam görürmüş annemi bazen sonra annesine söylemiş ve istemiş bu şekilde evlenmişler.

A7 Babam kitap okumayı çok severdi ve çok büyük bir kitaplığı vardı. Ben ondan görerek kitap okuma alışkanlığı edindim. Şuan *Sonsuz Nur*'u okuyorum. O bittikten sonra *Çılgın Türkler*'i okumaya başlayacağım. Edebiyat kitapları okumaktan zevk alıyorum. Çocuklarımın öncelikle Türk Edebiyatının eşsiz yazarlarının klasiklerini okumalarını telkin ederdim. En sevdiğim kitap *Şeker Portakalı*ydı. O kitap benim hayatımda önemli bir yere sahipti. Benim hayatımda *Şeker Portakalı* öncesi ve sonrası var. Kitapta küçük bir çocuğun hayatı ve o çocuğun dünyası var. Bir takım şeyleri kafaya fazla takmamak lazım ve ikinci plana atmak lazım. Bu kitabı ben çok küçük bir yaşta okumadım 23–24 yaşlarında hayata tamamen idealist bir bakış açısıyla yaklaşırken okudum. Kitap, hayatı fazlaca ciddiye almayı sadece benim istediğim şekilde, başkalarının tesiri altında olmadan yaşamayı öğütledi bana. Kitaptan sonra kendim için daha fazla yaşamaya başladım. Aslına bakarsanız sağlıklı bir toplum için o toplumu oluşturan bireylerin kendi şahsi kimliklerini belirlemeleri gerekir aksi halde o topluluk içerisinde yok olmaya yüz tutar bireysel duruşlarını tamamlayamayan kişiler.

A8 Hidayet romanlarını okudum. Mesela *Huzur Sokağı*'ni okudum. Kızımın okumasını istemem ama şu var ki o kitaplar bir döneme ait olan akımı temsil ediyordu. O zaman onları okunmayı uygun gördüm ve okudum. Şuan için ise farklı bir dönem ve farklı bir kitle mevcut, her şey değişti. Benim kızımın bu romanları okumasının ona fayda sağlayacağını düşünmüyorum. Aslında bana da sağlamadı sadece duygusal manada git gel yaşattı ve biraz da roman kahramanlarında kendimi aramamı sağladı. İnsanlar bir araya gelince “sen şunu okudun mu?”, “bak işte burada ne güzel bir şey anlatılmış şunu da oku” diye derinlemesine (!) tartışılardı bu romanları. Feyzalar, Azralar, Merveler hep hayatımızın bir parçası olmuştu. Sonuç olarak bu romanlar somut bir getirisi olmayan kitaplardı. Örneğin Feyza'nın İslami yaşamı tercih etmesi, bizi o zaman tatmin etmeye yetiyordu başka bir arayışımız da yoktu zaten. Samimiyetle söylemek gerekirse ezilmişlik psikolojisine sunulmuş bir savunma mekanizmasıydı bu romanlar. Romanlarının peşinden koşmuştuk. Bize o

dönemlerde okunması gereken kitaplar arasında sunulmuştu ve biz bu kitapları o zamanlar çok sevmiştik. Hatta okumamız gereken diğer kitapları bile bir dönem kenara bırakmıştık. Romanlar dili ve içeriği bakımından kendilerini yenileyemediler ve zamanın gerisinde daha doğrusu ilk çıktıkları zaman diliminde takılıp kaldılar. Bence bu kitaplar kendilerini yenileyemediler ve tükendiler. Hidayet romanları tam da İslami kesimin duygusal manada zayıf olduğu bir dönemde ortaya çıktılar ve bu açlık onların gereğinden fazla değer görmesine neden oldu. Şuan aynı romanları önüme koysalar meraklı kişiliğim neticesinde okurum ama çok eleştireceğim kesin. Çünkü artık beklentilerim, dünyaya bakış açım farklı, ben dünyayı Emine Şenlikoğlu'nun gözünden ya da Şule Yüksel Şenlerin gözünden değil Elif'in gözünden bakıyorum artık...

B1 Siyasete ilgim babamla birlikte başladı. Babam Refah Partisi'ndeydi ve güçlü ilişkileri vardı. Onu çok takdir eder ve desteklerdim. Bir gün seçim zamanı partide çalışacak arabalı genç kızlar aranıyordu ben ehliyetimi henüz almıştım ve koşa koşa partiye gittim, şunun ya da bunun isteği ile ya da aracılığı ile partiye dâhil olmadım. Parti arabalı kız istiyordu ve benim arabam vardı. O şekilde siyasete bir adım attım.

B2 O zamanlar seçimler daha görkemli ve daha hareketli geçerdii. Herkes tek bir amaç için bir araya gelirdi. İslami kesim için, özellikle parti bağlantısı olanlar için seferberlik ilan edilirdi. Bu durum beni çok etkilerdi ve ben de bu topluluğun o coşkun akışına katılmak istedim. Bir tarafta Allah rızasını kazanıyor olmanın verdiği doyumsuz haz; diğer tarafta ise size verilen önem ve takdir edilmeniz... Ben bunu ilk olarak en fazla T. Erdoğan'da gördüm yani takdir edilmeyi. Hatta Tayyip kadın kollarını her ay belediyede toplayıp yaptıklarını anlatırdı ve bize ne yapalım ne yapabiliriz diye fikrimizi sorardı. Tabii bu bizim için çok fazla onur verici bir durumdu. Bu şekilde zaten siyasete dâhil olabildiğimizi düşünürdük. Tayyip bizim ona hizmetimizin karşılığını fazlaca veriyordu. Refah Partisi'nin başarısını ve gücünü kadınlardan aldığını her kesim onayladı. Parti, bayanları aday olarak elbette ki göstermek istedi ama sistem buna elverişli değildi. Ortada başörtüsünün neden olabileceği bir kaos korkusu vardı. Ben milletvekili olmak isterdim mesela ama malum dediğim gibi bu bugünün Türkiye'sine yakışmayacak şekilde mümkün değil.

B3 Parti üyesi olduğum için biraz tepki alıyordum önceleri. Hep aynı soru soruluyordu “niye gidiyorsun?” menfaat ilişkileri bağlamında sorulmuş bir sorudur bu. Her kesimden tepki alıyordum hem İslami hem de laik çevreler bana şüphe ile yaklaşıyordu. Bazen başka partilerin hanımları bizi anlamaya gayret ederlerdi daha doğrusu kafalarına göre yorumlamaya ama bir kere onlarla aramızda çok önemli bir fark vardı. Bizim işimiz gönül işiydi çok fazla fedakârlık ve çok fazla çaba göstermek gerekiyordu. Koordinasyon bizim için önemliydi, inanç önemliydi. En büyük fark ise biz bu işi Allah rızası için yapıyorduk. AKP ile birlikte durum biraz değişti daha normalleştik, normal bir parti ve normal bir kadın kolları söz konusu artık. RP döneminde yaşadığım o olağanüstü hal AKP döneminde yok. İnsanların görüşleri de zamanla değişti. Benim siyasetle ilgilenmem de normal artık. Eskisi kadar çok tepki almıyorum.

B4 Eşim parti üyesi değil ama beni çok destekliyor.

C1 AB’ye, RP döneminde şüphe ile yaklaştığım doğrudur. Benim için o zamanlar AB, Erbakan Hocamın tanımladığı ve şüphe ile yaklaştığı AB’ydi. AB konuşulduğunda kafamda hep biz neler vereceğiz AB üyeliği için sorusu belirirdi. Ben partimin dış ilişkiler bölümündeyim ve dış siyasetini daha çok takip ediyorum. Benden daha bilgili ve ilgili olduğunu düşündüğüm kişilerin AB ile ilgili görüşlerini alıp değerlendiriyordum.

C3 AB siyasetini de doğal olarak takip ediyorum.

Kopenhag Kriterleri üyelik konusundaki şartları barındırıyor zannedersem.

C4 Bir kimlik olarak Avrupalı olmak bugünün Avrupası gibi yaşamak, yönetilmek ve bireysel ve toplumsal özgürlüklerin geniş bir yelpazede sunulmasıdır.

C5 Müslüman kişi İslamı dini olarak kabul eden kişidir. Müslüman kimlik ile Avrupalı kimlik arasında bir çatışma olduğuna inanmıyorum. Bence iki kimlik de birlikte rahatça yaşayabilirler. İslam ve Hıristiyan Avrupalı kimlik bence hoşgörü ve diyalog içerisinde yaşayabilir.

- D1* İslami kadın denince benim için ölçü İslami bir hayat tarzıdır, söz konusu olan kadın olunca başörtüsü benim karşımdaki kadını İslami olarak algılayabilmemi sağlayacak ilk sinyaldir. Örtülü olmamın tek bir nedeni var o da Allah'ın emirlerine riayet etmemle alakalı, vicdani bir mesele ve tamamen kişisel. Ben annemden önce kapandım ve bu kararı tek başıma aldım. Başörtüsü benim için Allah'ın bir emir tıpkı namaz kılmak veya yalan söylememek gibi. Sembol değildir başörtüsü çünkü sembollerin kullanılma zorunluluğu yoktur. Mesela haç takmak, İncil'deki bir emir değildir ya da kippa, Tevrat'ta her daim takılması emredilmemiştir. Ancak başörtüsü için çizilen çerçeve Kuran'da açık ve nettir.
- D2* İslam üzerinde bir gelenek kamburunun olduğunu düşünüyorum ve bunun ancak eğitim yoluyla aşılabileceğine inanıyorum. Ayrışma gerekiyor neyin din neyin safsata neyin doğru neyin yanlış olduğu anlaşılmalı. Ben böyle bir dönüşüm yaşadığına inanıyorum, bugün hidayet romanları okumuyorum çünkü artık gerçeğe dönüyorum. Dini, onun bunun ağzından değil kaynağına inerek Kuran'a sarılarak öğreniyorum. Bu durum bana eğitimden sonra yerleşti diyebilirim. Eğitim yeni yeni çevrelere dâhil ediyor bireyi. Bu çevreler sizi ister istemez sorguluyor bu sorgulamalara karşı donanımlı olmam gerektiğini düşünüyordum ve verdiğim her cevabı sahil kaynaklara dayandırmam gerektiğini biliyordum çünkü beni sorgulayanlar sokaktaki her hangi bir insandan farklıydılar, entelektüel insanlarla tartışıyordum ve onlara falanca hoca böyle dedi şu amca bunu söyledi diye cevap veremezdim. Sonuçta bu süreç bana İslam'la geleneği ayırmamda yardımcı oldu. Artık ben neyin İslam neyin sadece atamadığımız ve yadsıyamadığımız gelenek olduğunu biliyorum.
- D3* Peygamber Efendimiz döneminde kadının söz hakkı vardı şimdi neden olmasın? Kadını siyasetten ve birçok şeyden mahrum olması gerektiğini düşünen fikir yapılarının yavaş yavaş çözüldüğünü görüyorum. Genel olarak kadın özel olarak dindar kadın artık her platformda var.
- D4* Dünya üzerindeki tüm insanlar eşittir. İster kadın olsun ister erkek; ister zengin ister fakir. Üstünlük ancak Allah katında Takva derecesinde olan üstünlüktür.

E1 Milli Görüş Hareketinin bir cemaat hareketi olduğu düşüncesine katılıyorum. Böyle bir cemaate ihtiyaç vardı. Bu öyle bir cemaat olmalıydı ki bu cemaate üye olanların çocuklarının seyredeceği kanal, dinleyeceği radyo belli olmalıydı. Okunacak gazete, yapılacak faaliyetler belirli olmalıydı. Bu cemaat bir aile cemaatiydi ve dışarıda kimse kalmıyordu. Babaların yeri belli zaten, anneler düşünülmüş, gençler vakıf çatısı altında toplanmış. Yurt dışındaki vatandaşlar unutulmamış onlar yalnızlığa itilmemiş aynı faaliyetler katlanarak oralara da sunulmuş. Evet, MGH bir cemaat oluşumdur. Ben kendim için söyleyeyim kimse beni sabah sekizde kaldıramazdı ama ben bu oluşum için sabah sekizde ayağa kalkardım, her gün bir depo benzin harcardım, geç saatlerde eve girerdim, kapı kapı dolaşırdım, zenginlerden bağış toplayıp fakirlere dağıtırdım. Bunu Allah rızası için yapardım ve karşılık beklemezdim. Koltuk mu? Ne önemi var? Bizler zaten cennetteki tahtımıza kurulacaktık hepsinin sonunda...

Evet, şuanda bir cemaatin tam anlamıyla üyesi olmasam da toplantılarına katıldığım doğrudur. Aslında şu an takip ettiğim cemaatle bir gönül bağım hep vardı ancak Refah döneminde pek hoş karşılanmamıştı ilişkim diğer parti üyesi arkadaşlarım çok eleştirirlerdi bu cemaati ama şimdi öyle bir sorunum yok benim bir cemaatin toplantılarına katılmam partim için çocuğumun okulunda okul aile birliği toplantılarına katılmam gibi bir şey. Farklılıklara saygı duyuyoruz parti içerisinde ve herkesin kendi özel yaşantısı kendini ilgilendirir neticede.

E2 RP benim için bir aile partisiydi kapatılması beni çok etkilemişti. Bölünmesi de aynı şekilde etkiledi ailem dağılmış gibi hissettim. Duygusal bulutlar yok olmaya başlayınca yeni oluşuma dâhil olmaya karar verdim. Daha sonra bu çözülmenin gerekli olduğuna inandım. Benim AKP'de olma sebebim Tayyip Erdoğan'dır. AKP'yi tanımlamak için Erdoğan'ı tanımlamanın yeterli olduğunu düşünüyorum. Zaten yeni kurulan bir partiydi ve kendisini tanımlamak için fırsatı yoktu bu nedenle Erdoğan eşittir AKP demek yeterliydi. Erdoğan bir reforma imza attı ve başarılı oldu. Evet, herkes benim gibi AK Parti'ye üye oldu.

- E3* RP ile AKP arasındaki en büyük fark Muhafazakârlık ve İslama yapılan vurgunun dozajında belirgindir. AKP reformist yaklaşımıyla biraz daha demokratik bir çizgide...
- E4* AKP iktidara geldikten sonra çevremde biraz daha tolerans ve demokrasiye vurgu gözlemlediğimi söyleyebilirim çünkü AKP ile siyasi görüşünü tanımlayan kişiler partinin siyasetine uygun davranma gereği hissettiler ve bir anlamda AKP ile birlikte dönüşüm yaşadılar.
- E5* Biz özünden kopmayan demokratlarız. Artık dememiz gerekiyor çünkü çok sık kullanmıyorum.
- E6* Parti üzerinden AB'ye yaklaşıyordum. Üzerinde düşünülmüş ve tamamen bana ait olan yaklaşımlarım yoktu bu konuda. Hristiyan kulübü olduğunu düşünüyordum çünkü alternatif olarak bir D-8 vardı ve bu da Müslümanların kulübüydü. Şimdi ise AB'yi kendi düşüncelerim doğrultusunda değerlendiriyorum. Daha geniş bir perspektifle yaklaşıyorum. Daha önce neden kendi fikirlerim etki değildi bilmiyorum ama sanırım parti içerisinde biraz pasifize olmuşuk düşünsel manada. AB konusunda yine kaygılarım var her vatandaş gibi. Ne vereceğiz, kaybımız ve zararımız olacak mı diye ama sonuç olarak hükümete ve kadrosuna bu konuda kesinlikle güveniyorum bu nedenle içim rahat diyebilirim.
- E7* Demin de dediğim gibi ben hükümete bu konuda çok güveniyorum. Çıkarılan yasaların ve alınan kararların hepsini destekliyorum. Türkiye yeni bir dönemden geçiyor ve AK Parti bu döneme imzasını atmış durumda. Türkiye'yi ve Türk siyasetini olması gereken yere taşıma misyonunu üstlenmiş durumda. AB uyum yasaları ile devlet eliti önemli bir dönüşüme imza attı, bir büyük ileri adımla ülkede çağını yakalayacak altyapıyı tesis etme yönünde önemli mesafe kat edildi. Çağın meydan okumalarına karşı daha güçlü, istikrarlı ve barış vaat eden bir ülke inşası hayalini bu reformlar gerçekleştirecektir.
- F1* Bu konuda soru çok fazla aldığımı söyleyemem ama genellikle kafalarda AB üyeliğinin başörtüsü sorununa çözüm olup olamayacağı sorusu var diyebilirim.

- F2* Bana sorarsanız bizim dinsel kimliğimiz AB üyeliğinden etkilenmeyeceğini düşünüyorum. Bu bir üyelik sonuçta. Üyelikten beklentilerimiz ve üye olma amacımız belli. Bazen düşünüyorum da uzun vadede acaba yine aynı iyimserliği gösterebilecek miyim diye ama açıkçası bu son derece ucu açık bir durum. Dinsel kimliğimiz etkilenmez ama uzun vadede kültürel kimliğimiz için aynı şeyleri rahatlıkla söyleyemeyebilirim. Gerçi küreselleşme önü alınamayan bir gerçeklik ve kültürel etkileşimler de zaten küreselleşme ile birlikte kaçınılmaz hale geliyor.
- F3* Modernliği farklı algılıyorum Avrupalılığı farklı. Asyalılık neyse Avrupalı olmak da o kadar bir şey. Ben modern olduğumu düşünüyorum yani şuan için maddi anlamda ileri seviyede olan medeniyetlerdeki insanlar gibi eğitim aldım, teknolojiye onları takip ediyorum ve daha bir çok şey. Benim için modernlik gelişimine ayak uydurabilmektir. Mana yine aynı kalabilir zira bu modernliğe engel değildir.
- F4* Müslüman olmamızla alakalı diyebiliriz. Sanırım bana sorduğunuz sorunun aynısını AB ülkeleri vatandaşlarına da yöneltmeniz gerekir. Bu çok iyi olurdu. Acaba onlar AB'yi bir Hıristiyan Kulübü olarak mı görüyorlar? Nedir AB onlar için? Bu sorunun cevabı bizim içinde bulunduğumuz sancılı AB süreçlerini daha iyi anlamlandırmamızı sağlayabilir. AB ülkeleri biraz içe dönük sanırım çok fazla muhafazakârlığın etkisinde kalıyorlar. İslam konusunda çok bilinçsizler. İslam eşittir 11 Eylül ve Usame bin Ladin Batı halkları için. Bu sebeple bence diyalog şart ve bu diyalogu en iyi Türkiye gerçekleştirebilir.
- F5* Tabî ki en büyük sorun başörtüsü! Ben başörtüsünü bir sorun olarak asla görmüyorum ve bir bakıma onu sorun olarak nitelendirenlere karşı duruyorum. Bu Allah'ın iman eden hanımlara bir emridir. Sorun yok yani! Ne var ki, ülkemizde başörtülü bayanların bir çok kamusal alanın dışında bırakılması bir sorun teşkil ediyor. İşte sorun budur. Ben AB üyeliğinin bir çözüm olacağını düşünüyorum çünkü Fransa hariç hiç bir AB üyesi ülkede böyle bir sorun yok. E, tabi bu arada Fransa'nın da durumu malum. Bu kişisel bir hak ve vicdani bir

özgürlük işidir. Aslında Türkiye bu işi kendi başına da rahatça çözebilmelidir. Fakat pek mümkün görünmüyor.

F6 AHİM kararı üzerine çok yazılıp çizildi ve ben hala neden bu kadar önemsendiğini anlamış değilim. Herkes bu soruna son noktanın konduğu düşüncesine kapıldı adeta. Böyle bir şey mümkün olabilir mi sizce. Bilmem farkında mısınız ama bence bu karar Türkiye'ye ve halkına yapılmış bir demokrasi eleştirisidir. Siz daha henüz tam anlamıyla bir Cumhuriyet olup demokratlaşmadınız o sebeple doğaldır böyle davranmanız demekten başka hiç bir şey değildir bu.

F7 Böyle bir beklentim yok AKP'den. Evet, dürüst olmam gerekirse çözülebileceğine inanıyordum. Hala inanıyorum ama zaman gerek. Benim AKP'ye üye olmamın ve onu desteklememin tek sebebi bu değil elbette ama tabii ki benim önceliklerimden biri de buydu.

F8 Böyle bir değişim projesinden söz etmek mümkün değil. Yani muhafazakârlık ya da İslamcılığın dışında AKP ile birlikte gelen muhafazakâr demokratlık kimliği bile aslında bizde zaten var olan ancak tanımlanmayan yaklaşımlardı. Mevcut durumda İslami kesim için de değişim ya da dönüşüm, ne derseniz, aynı şekilde var olan bir sürecin tanımlanması ve bir nedene bağlanmasıdır.

F9 En önemli getirisi demokrasidir.

F11 Kesinlikle böyle bir kaygı taşımıyorum. Herkesin inancını rahatça yaşayabileceği, demokrasi ve hukukla hakların güvence altına alındığı bir durum düşünüyorum. Karamsar olmamak ve AB'yi inançlı kişilerin gözünde gâvur egemenliğine gireceğiz şeklinde lanse ettirmememiz gerekir diye düşünüyorum açıkçası.

F12 Demokrasi, insan hakları, bireysel hürriyetler, ekonomik gelişme vs...

Interview with Fatma

Responder 3

-R3-

A1 Güne saat 6 civarında sabah namazıyla başlıyorum. Bu tam manasıyla bir başlama olmuyor çünkü tekrar yatıyorum. Saat sekize doğru tekrar kalkıp çocuklarımı okula yolluyorum o dakikadan sonra benim için yeni bir gün başlamış oluyor. Gazetemi okurken o gün ile ilgili planlarımı düşünüyorum. Ajandama bakıyorum ve günümü şekillendiriyorum. Parti ile ilgili bir program varsa oraya yoksa başka sosyal aktivitelere yöneliyorum. Arkadaşlarımla birlikte kurmuş olduğum bir dernek var o derneğe de ayrıca vaktimi ayırıyorum. Eve eşimden önce girmeye gayret ederim bu bizim aramızda olan duygusal bir anlaşma gibi. Bazen işlerim uzayabiliyor o zamanlar da ise eve ondan sonra girmem sorun olmuyor. Çünkü yaptığım işi benimsiyor ve destekliyor. Evde yardımcım var ama ben yemeği bir annenin pişirmesi taraftarım çünkü ona lezzetten başka katılması gereken şeyler var. Anne yemeğe sevgisini katar, umutlarını, şefkatini ekler...

A2 İki çocuğum var. Bir kız bir erkek. Daha fazla çocuk istemiyorum. Biz biraz sayıca fazlaydık 6 kardeşlik bir ağabeyim vefat etti ve şimdi sayımız 5.

A3 Kadıköy'de oturuyorum. Kiradayım, 6 senedir burada oturuyorum. Komşuluktan memnunum binada çok yakın komşularım var. Burada oturma fikri eşim ve bana aitti bu semti hep sevmişizdir. Evimizde eşim ve çocuklarla beraber yaşıyoruz.

A4 Akrabalarımla sık görüşürüm. Kendi ailem bize yakın olduğu için onlarla daha sık görüşüyorum.

A5 Eşim mühendis, ben mimarlık okudum ancak mimarlık yapmıyorum. Çok severek okumamıştım. Şimdi bu tür sosyal faaliyetleri kendime iş ediniyorum.

Eşim, kendisinden yardım istediğim zaman hiç tereddüt etmeden yardımına koşar ama buna pek ihtiyaç hissetmiyorum.

A6 Eşim benim akrabam, anlaşarak evlendik. Gerçek manada bir görücü usulü evlilik denemez bizimkine çünkü çük iyi anlaşır birlikte çok vakit geçirirdik. Kızımın evliliği konusunda pek fazla düşünmem çünkü kader neyi gösterir bilinmez bu sebeple de hayal kırıklığına uğramak istemem. Kısacası önemli olan nasıl ve ne şekilde bir evlilik yaptığından ziyade kiminle ve nasıl biriyle evlilik yaptığıdır.

Benim annemle babam da görücü usulüyle evlenmişler ama hep çok mutlu olmuşlar. Ben görücü usulü evliliğin bu denli eleştirilmesine karşıyım. Evlilik kapalı bir kutu ne çıkarsa bahtınıza.

A7 Kitap okumayı çok severim. En son okuduğum kitap *Farah Pehlevi*'nin anıları. Ailemde en çok okuyan kızım. En sevdiğim kitap *Suç ve Ceza* bana bazı çağrışımlar yapıyor. Bu nedenle en sevdiğim kitap. Kızıma genel olarak Dünya ve Türk Edebiyatı'nın klasiklerini okumasını öğütüyorum. Şu an onlara dalmış durumda. Kendisi, eğer liste ettiğim kitapların tamamını okursa bundan sonra kitap almak için kendi parasını vermeyecek ve istediği her kitabı almakta serbest olacak diye bir vaatte de bulundum.

A8 O kitapların birçoğunu okuduğumu söyleyebilirim okudum. *Huzur Sokağı* ilk aklıma gelen, *Siyah Zambak ve Merve* vardı bir de. Zaten bir klasiktir o roman. İlk onunla başlanır zaten. Artık bu kitaplara gerek kalmadığını düşünüyorum ve kızımın okumasını da gerekli bulmuyorum. Bir dönem onlar vardı mecburen okuduk şimdi o kadar inanılmaz yazarlar ve düşünürler var ki kızımın onları okumasını isterim. Cihan Aktaş, Fatma Barbarosoğlu gibi.

B1 Zaten ailem siyasi bir geçmişe sahipti. Babamı bu konuda kendime çok örnek aldım. Onun mücadelesini hep destekledim. Kendisinin de rızasını ve desteğini alarak siyasete katıldım.

B2 Daha önceleri beni ve arkadaşlarımı motive eden düşünce Allah rızasını kazanmaktı. Bu yine önceliğim ama bunun dışında bir farkındalık seziyorum kendimde. Şu zamana kadar bir çok şey denendi Türk Siyasetinde ama tam

anlamıyla bir istikrardan ve ülke insanının memnuniyetinden söz etmek mümkün olmadı. Partime ve geleceğe umutla bakıyorum. Biz geçmişten farklıyız ve bu ülkenin gerçek manada hizmete ihtiyacı var. Sözünü ettiğim bu güven ve umut da beni ayrıca motive ediyor.

Benim için her görev kutsaldır kendimle başbakan arasında fazla fark görmüyorum. Amaçlar ve idealler bir olduktan sonra her görevde düşünebilirim kendimi. Şimdilik sadece parti üyesi olmakla yetiniyorum ama günün birinde engellerin kalkacağına ve benim gibi başörtülü olan hanım arkadaşlarında diğer hanım arkadaşlarla eş görevler yürüteceğine inanıyorum.

B3 Bizim çevremizde kadınlar arasında siyaset pek sık rastlanılan bir durum değil bu nedenle bazı çevreler bize şüpheli yaklaşmıştı. Şimdilerde ise daha fazla bir güven hissediyorum bayanlar arasında.

B4 Eşim parti üyesi, ben onunla tanışmadan önce de parti üyesiydim. Şu anda bana destek oluyor.

C1 AB ile ilgili düşüncelerimin genel olarak parti politikaları üzerinden şekillendiğini samimiyetle söyleyebilirim. MHG içerisindeyken AB'ye şüpheyle bakıyordum. Şuan karşılıklı güven içerisinde değerlendiriyorum AB'yi. En çok iç siyasetini takip ediyorum. Her vatandaş gibi. Bazen de parti içi buluşmalarımızda kendi aramızda konuşup tartışıyoruz AB üyeliğini.

C3 AB ile ilgili çok tatmin edici olmasa da bilgi sahibi olduğumu düşünüyorum. Kopenhag kriterleri AB üyeliği konusunda bizden yerine getirmemizi istedikleri sorumluluklardır.

C4 Avrupalı olmak modern olmakla eş anlamlı gibi kullanılsa da benim için Avrupalı olmak Avrupa medeniyetine ait olmaktır. Avrupa medeniyeti içerisinde var olan ve savunulan değerlere sahip olmaktır. Bu değerler yani insan hakları, demokrasi ve hürriyetler söz konusu medeniyetin modern olmasına yardımcı etkenlerdir. Hıristiyanlık bu kimliğin bir yapı taşıdır muhakkak ama Avrupalı

olmak için de ille de Hıristiyan olmak gerekmez. Tabi benim aklıma Avrupa deyince Hıristiyanlık mutlaka gelir.

- C5* Bir kimlik olarak Müslümanlık iman etmektir yani Allah'ın varlığını ve birliğini onaylayıp Hz. Muhammed'in elçiliğini tasdik etmektir. Bence böyle bir çatışma yok. Bunun en güzel örneğini Osmanlı'da gördük zaten. Her iki kimlik de asırlar boyu hoşgörü ile yaşadı. Birlikte yaşayabilmenin ve var olabilmenin yegâne kuralı karşılıklı toleranstır. Bu her iki kimliğin de sahip olduğu bir değer. Zaten onun üstünde demokrasi ve insan hakları birlikte yaşamayı kolaylaştırmak için vardır.
- D1* İslami kadın, Müslüman olan ve inancını bir yaşam felsefesine dönüştürebilen kadındır. Başörtüsünün kriter olabileceğini düşünüyorum. Hayatının her alanında İslamı yaşamaya çalışan bir kadın açık da olabilir ama kapalı olması bunu bir anlamda emin hale getirir. İnancımın gereği olarak örtülüyüm. Başörtüsü kesinlikle bir sembol olabilecek kadar basit değildir nedeni ise baş örtmek Allah'ın bir emridir.
- D2* Eğitim sorgulamayı da beraberinde getirir. Bu sayede kızlarımız taklitçi olmaktan çıkarak gerçek manada imana ulaşırlar diye düşünüyorum. Ters olması da yani inançtan uzaklaşması da mümkün ama ben bunu imanın taklidi olmasından daha az tehlikeli görüyorum.
- D3* Hz. Muhammed, Akabe Biatleri'nde kadınlara da söz hakkı vermiştir. Bu siyasi bir katılımdır ve İslam'da kadının siyasette yeri vardır. İnancın anlamı eğitim yoluyla daha iyi anlaşılıyor. Eğitim yolu ile onun ya da bunun inandığı ve yaşadığı gibi değil kendi yolunu çizerek yaşıyorsun. Kendine ait bir duruşun ve tavrın oluyor. Bir birey olarak var olduğunu kavriyorsun.
- D4* İslam'da kadın ve erkek eşitliğinden söz etmek mümkündür. Erkeklerin kadınları üzerinde hakları olduğu gibi kadınlarında erkeleri üzerinde hakları vardır. Üstünlük sadece ve sadece Allah katında takva iledir.

- E1* Bence MGH o dönemde gözlemlediğim kadarıyla bir cemaat hareketiydi. Birçok yönden mesela yardımlaşmalar, teşkilatlanma, dini eğitim hep bir cemaat havası vermiştir bana.
- E2* Refah Partisi geleneğin ve İslam'ın öne çıktığı bir siyasi partidir. Ben yeni oluşumun içerisinde yer almak istedim. Kendimi burada daha iyi ifade ediyorum. Tayyip Erdoğan'a olan güvenimiz bize siyasi anlamda bir doyunluk sağlıyor. İsim bana her zaman güven vermiştir. Bizden MGH'de kalan kimse olmadı yakın çevremde herkes AKP'ye üye oldu.
- E3* AKP ise kişisel özgürlüklerin ve demokrasinin yegâne savunucusudur. Farklılıklara gösterilen tolerans ve söylem en önemli farktır bence iki parti arasında. AKP ile birlikte daha fazla bir kedine güven söz konusu ve insanlar geleceğe daha fazla ümitle bakıyorlar.
- E4* Değişim derken ne kastettiğiniz önemli bu noktada, elbette ki birçok anlamda değişim hissettiğimi söyleyebilirim. Örneğin ekonomik anlamda birçok adım kaydedildi, ilerlemeler hem toplumsal manada yansımaları hem de ekonomik anlamda bir istikrara neden oluyor. Dış politikada ayrıca büyük atılım ve değişimler söz konusu AB noktasında kararlı ve kendinden emin politikalar izleniyor. Kıbrıs konusunda artık Türkiye inisiyatifini diplomatik yönlerden ortaya koydu, takdir edildi, birçok unutulmuş ülke ile işbirliği ve dostluk içerisindeyiz yani aktif bir dış politika söz konusu. Eğitimden sağlığa; spordan turizme her alanda AK parti farkını hissetmek mümkün.
- E5* Hem muhafazakâr hem de demokrat olmak. Bu kimliği fazla kullanmıyorum AKP'liyim demem yetiyor.
- E6* Daha önceleri AB'yi benimsemiyor ve karşı çıkıyordum. Çünkü bir Müslüman birliği kurulması düşüncesi bana daha cazip geliyordu. AB'nin Hıristiyan birliği olduğu düşüncesine katılmıyorum çünkü bizi aday gösterdiler ve AB içerisinde Müslüman vatandaşlar da var. Benim için AB şu anda medeniyet bağlamında bir hedef ve bu hedefe ilerlerken ülkemizin çok fazla bir şekilde pozitif manada

ilerleyebileceğini düşünüyorum. Artık genellemeler ve kesin yargılar yerine her politikayı akıllıca ve komplo teorilerine batmadan değerlendirmek gerekir.

F1 AB ile ilgili fazla soru almıyorum. Soru alırsam da genellikle AB üyesi olunca ne olacak? Başörtüsü sorunu kalkacak mı? vs... türünden sorularla karşılaşıyorum.

F2 Bence AB üyeliği bizim açımızdan Müslüman kimliğin ortadan kalkması anlamına gelmez. Diğer taraftan AB için de aynı şey söz konusu yani demek istediğim Avrupa kimliği denen şeyin salt ve supra bir kimlik olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Hem Avrupalı olup hem de Müslüman olan birçok insan tanıyorum ne onların AB vatandaşı olması Avrupa kimliği üzerinde bir tehdit oluşturmuyor. Avrupa kimliği bölünmüşlüklerin oluşturduğu bir bütünlüktür harmoni birlik için önemlidir ve İslam kimliğinin bu harmoniyi bozacak bir yapısının olduğunu düşünmüyorum.

F3 Modernleşme bizim fikri yapımıza Avrupalılaştırma, Avrupalı gibi olma şeklinde yer etmiştir. Bunun bir nedeni Batının yani Avrupa'nın müspet ilimlerde ileri olması ile alakalıdır modern olanı takip etmek batıyı takip etmeyi bir anlamda. Bana sorarsanız modern olmak düşünsel bir düzlemde belirlenen ileri hedefe doğru yürümektir. Kendi modernlik tanımıma göre modern olduğumu düşünüyorum.

F4 Türkiye'nin fazlaca bir nüfusa sahip olması onlarda şüphe uyandırıyor. Bunun yanı sıra tanımadıkları ve bilmedikleri için İslama şüphe ile yaklaşıyorlar.

F5 İslami kadının en önemli sorunu başörtüsünün kamusal alanda yasaklanmış olması. AB'nin kişisel özgürlükler ve demokrasi anlamında bir kalkınma vaat ettiğini düşünürsek evet.

F6 AHİM'in kararı yok, bu bir tespit ve inceleme. Bu nedenle çok bağlayıcı olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Eğer AB' nin bağlayıcı kurumları bu yasağı desteklerse ki böyle bir ihtimal yok denebilecek kadar az, o zaman AB, bende farklı bir anlam ifade etmeye başlar kuşkusuz.

- F7* Başörtüsü sorunun çözümünü AKP'ye bırakıyorum demek yanlış olur bunda toplumsal bir mutabakata ihtiyaç var ve bunu rayına koymasına gereken de AKP.
- F8* Yani aslında AKP'nin bir dönüşüm projesi veya öyle bir programı yok ama taban bir bakıma AKP ile birlikte daha demokrasi yanlısı ve daha yeniliklere açık bir hal aldığını ben şahsen gözlemleyebiliyorum. Bir zamanlar radikal İslamcı olarak nitelendirilen bizler artık muhafazakâr demokratlar olarak tanımlanıyoruz.
- F9* AB üyeliğinin en önemli getirisi demokrasi ve insan hakları. Dezavantajı piyasalarımızın rekabet şartlarına ayak uyduramaması olabilir.
- F10* Genel olarak konuşmak gerekirse AB üyeliği ile ilgili pek fazla karşıt fikirlere maruz kalmamam hasebiyle çok fazla savunma gereği de duymadım. Ama gerektiği yerde AB üyeliğini desteklediğim için savunduğumu söyleyebilirim. Savunurken AB nin kişisel haklar ve özgürlükler konusunda ülkemize sağlayacağı atılımlardan bahsediyorum genellikle, ekonomik kalkınma, eğitim kalitesi ve yaşam şartlarının iyileştirilmesi vs...
- F11* Hayır, hayır kesinlikle! Böyle bir şey mümkün olamaz bunlar manevi değerlerine son derece düşkün olan milletimizin hassasına dokunarak pirim elde etmek isteyen bazı çevrelerin uydurmasıdır. Kaldı ki biz özgürlüklerden, din ve vicdan hürriyetinden bahsediyoruz nerede kaldı bu türden baskılar. Evet, Hıristiyanlığın Avrupa için önemine vurgu yaptım ama Avrupa Birliği için böyle bir vurgu yapmadım. AB teolojik bir oluşum değil siyasi ve ekonomik ortak paydalarının oluşturduğu bir birliktir.
- F12* Gözlemlediğim kadarıyla çevremde AB'nin daha çok sağlayacağı ekonomik kalkınma ve vicdan hürriyeti hususuna vurgu yapıldığını söyleyebilirim.

Interview with Hümeýra

Responder 4

-R4-

- A1 Güne erken başlarım. Kendimi gün içinde ikiye bölüyorum desem yeridir. Bir tarafta annelik ve eşlik görevlerimle ilgilenirken diğer tarafta kendi bireysel aktivitelerimle ilgilenirim. Annelik ve eşlik görevlerimden kastımı herhalde anlamışsınızdır. Çocukların bakımı, yemek pişirme, çocukların ve babamızın kıyafeti ile ilgilenmeyi bir annelik ve eşlik görevi içinde telakki ediyorum. Bireysel aktivitelerim ise, her sabah internetten gazeteleri takip ederim. Bu değişmez bir durum benim açımdan. Diğer taraftan, gün içerisinde parti işleri ve sorumlulukları derken günler çabucak bitiveriyor.
- A2 Benim 4 kardeşim var. İki kızım var biri onuncu sınıfta diğeri ise altıncı sınıf. Bilemem açıkçası, Allah nasip ederse belki bir tane daha olabilir.
- A3 G.O. Paşa bilindiği gibi İstanbul'un en kalabalık ilçelerinden biridir. Yaşamak için çok ideal bir yer olduğunu söylemek zor fakat yinede güzel bir ilçe sayılabilir. Toplumsal çeşitlilik açısından da zengin bir muhit. Türkiye'de var olan bütün kültürlerin temsilcilerini bulmak zor. Tabi bir de göçmen nüfus yoğunlukta. Göçmenden kasıt balkanlardan göç edenleri kastediyorum. Sanırım bunu GOP ile ilgili sorunuzda cevaplayabilirdim. Burada komşuluk ilişkileri hala çok güçlü. Tabi yıllar geçtikçe burada da bu bağlar zayıflıyor. Taşınmayı düşünüyordum ama çocuklar istemiyorlar. Sevdikleri arkadaşları var apartmanda. Eğer mutabakat sağlanırsa taşınmak istiyorum açıkçası.
- A4 Bizde akraba dendi mi uzağı yakını pek sorgulanmaz. Akrabaysan eğer yakınsındır. Tabi arada büyük problemler yaşanmamışsa. Kendim anne ve babam ve beyimin tarafı bize yakın yerlerde ikamet ediyorlar. Bu yüzden çok sık görüşme imkânımız oluyor.
- A5 İkinci çocuğum olana kadar belediyede çalıştım. Fakat çocuk olduktan sonra çalışmamamın daha iyi olacağını düşündüm. Kesin bir kararım yok ama eğer

çocukların bensiz idare edebileceklerine inanırsam tekrar iş hayatına dönebilirim. Eşim avukat.

Ben ona yardım ediyorum o da bana. Evlilik her konuda dayanışma demektir zaten.

A6 Annesi beni bir ev toplantısında görmüş ve beğenmiş. Oğluna benden bahsetmiş ve tavsiye etmiş. Daha sonra biz bir araya geldik. Ve son kararımızı evlenmekten yana verdik. Annemler görücü usulüyle evlenmişler. Ben kendi evliliğimde yanlış bir durum görmediğim için aynı şeyi kızlarım için de düşünmekte bir beis görmüyorum. Eğer kızlarım kendi seçimini daha modern bir şekilde de yaparsa da buna da belli ölçülerde saygı duyarım.

A7 Elbette, kitap okumayı çok severim. En fazla kitabı ben okurum ailemde. Aslında kocam eskiden çok okurdu. Ama işinin yoğunluğundan dolayı eskisi kadar okuyamıyor. Kendisi genellikle hukuki kitapları inceler. Martin Lings'in "On birinci Saat" kitabını okuyorum. Hacimce küçük ama çok yoğun bir kitap. Çeşitli alanlarda okumayı severim. Birçok kategoriye ilgiliyim. Cemil Meriç'in "Umrandan uygarlığa" kitabıdır. Diğer kitaplarında olduğu gibi Cemil Meriç'in duruşunu çok beğeniyorum; hep kültürel ya da medeniyetsel bir şahsiyet peşinde. Diğer taraftan kavramları analize tabi tutması ve her kavramın kendi kültürel bağlamı içinde şekillendiği düşüncesi üzerinden kendi kavramlarımızı üretmemizi salık veriyor. Dediğim gibi şahsiyetli bir duruş için öz kültürle bağın kuvvetli olması fikrini savunuyor. Buda çok hoşuma gitmişti. Bence insan gençken kitap ayırmamalı. Her türlü kitap okunmalı. Zamanla tercihler insanı zaten bir yöne itiyor.

A8 Elbette. Hem de çok okumuşumdur bu kitapları. Bir zamanlar bunlar çok yaygındı. Aslında okumasında bir beis görmüyorum. Ama eşimin bir arkadaşının bu kitaplar hakkında yapmış olduğu bir yorum bana çok inandırıcı gelmişti. Ona göre bu kitaplar, genellikle, zıt dünya görüşlerine sahip iki insanın aşkı konu edindikleri için, bu ilişkiler İslami gençliğin zihninde ideal bir şekle bürünüyor. Ve zamanla bu gençler bu tür ilişkiler peşinde koşmaya başlıyor.

Yani Müslüman erkekler solcu kızlara âşık olmaya başlıyor. Bunu erkekler için söylüyor tabi. Ama kızlar için bu durum nasıl onu bilemem.

B1 Ben siyasetle yoğun bir şekilde iç içe olan bir ailede büyüdüm. Babam ve erkek kardeşlerim aktif bir şekilde siyasetin içindeydiler. Dolayısı ile benimde dâhil olamam kaçınılmazdı. Bende çeşitli çalışmalara katıldım Refah Partisi döneminde. Yani tam olarak Refah Partisi döneminde oldu.

B2 Yaptığım çalışmaları inancımın bir gereği olarak yerine getirdim. Kişisel sorumluluk duygusu denebilir buna. Hiç bir zaman bir partiyle organik bir bağ kurma düşüncesinde değildim başlarda fakat kendimi hep destek verdiğim partinin bir üyesi gibi görmüşümdür. Yani Refah Partisi döneminde hep o partinin üyesi gibi davrandım. Yani bir üye gibi çalıştım. Daha sonraları parti için yapabileceklerimin farkına vardım ve artık üye olma vakti geldi dedim ve bir bakıma kendi kendimi motive ettim.

Milli görüş yıllarında ilk zamanlar öyle ben belediye başkanı olacağım, milletvekili olacağım gibi bir düşüncem yoktu sadece partimi iktidara taşımak istiyordum. Daha sonra fazilet partisi ile birlikte ben de varım dedim kendi kendime ve aklımda milletvekili ve belediye başkanlığı idealleri belirlemeye başladı ama fazla uzun sürmedi malum sonuç hüsrana oldu.

B3 Bazen oluyor tabi. İlgili alanları farklılaşınca aradaki iletişim bazen zorlaşıyor. Sonuç olarak bayanların konuştukları ortak bir dil vardır ve ben bu dilin hem iş dünyasında hem siyaset ortamında işe yaradığını düşünüyorum. İletişim kanallarının tıkalı olduğunu düşündüğüm zamanlarda hep bu dili konuşuyorum.

B4 Eşim hem Refah Partisi hem de AKP ile organik bir bağ içerisindeydi. Aslında hayır. Aşağı yukarı benzer aile yapılarına sahip olduğumuz için ikimiz içinde bir devamlılık vardı diyebilirim. Fakat şunu da söylemekte fayda var. Refah Partisine verdiğim destekte büyük oranda babamdan ve kardeşlerimden etkilenmiştir. Ama AKP'ye desteğim bireysel bir tercihimde vardı. Mesela ailemde ve yakın çevremde halen Saadet Partisine üye olanlar var. Yani AKP konusunda bireysel fikirler rol oynadı.

- C1 Sanırım Avrupa Birliđi konusunda diđer birok insan gibi benim zihnimde karışık. Ama eskisi kadar karşı olduğumu söyleyemem. Desteklediđim ve karşı olduğum birok yönü var. Ama AB'ye yaklaştıka ülkede özgürlükler adına bir nebze de olsa rahatlama sezince ister istemez sempati duyuyorum sürece. Tabi götürdükleri de olabilir. Burada bu süreci yürütenlere iş düşüyor ki, ben onlara güveniyorum. Genel olarak takip ediyorum. Ve genele vurulduğunda bence oldukça başarılı. Mesela gerilimlerden uzakta siyaset yapma çabası var ve bunda da başarılı oluyor. Örneđin ekonomide gözle görülür bir rahatlama var. En azından bir istikrar var ülkede. Evet. Aslında Bir önceki sorunuza bunu da ekleyebiliriz. AB konusunda oldukça başarılı bir politika izlendi bence. Yıllarca kapısında beklediđimiz AB konusunda oldukça büyük adımlar atıldı. Daha önceleri AB tarafı Türkiye'nin AB ile ilgili konularda yükümlülüklerini yerine getirmediđi yönünde eleştirilerde bulunurdu. Ama şimdi izlenen başarılı siyaset sonucunda bu tür suçlamalar yok denecek kadar azaldı. Bu noktadan sonra artık AB'nin samimiyetini sorgulayabiliriz. Evet, olmuyor deđil hala bazı AB ülkeleri üyeliđimizi engellemek için önümüze bazı zorluklar çıkartıyor ve işte ben de bu noktadan sonra AB'nin samimiyetini sorguluyorum.
- C3 Çok fazla ilgili olduğumu söyleyemem. Ama Her gün gazetelerden konuyla ilgili haberlere rastlıyoruz. İster istemez bu durum beni AB'ye aşına hale getiriyor. Ama daha öncede belirttiđim gibi AB denince aklıma genelde özgürlükler gelir. Ama şunu ifade etmeliyim, Leyla Şahin davasında AİHM'in verdiđi karar bende şüphelerin belirmesine sebep oldu. Basında bu konu zaten Kopenhag siyasi kriterleri diye ele alındıđı için AB üyeliđi için gerekli olan siyasi kriterleri ifade ediyor sanırım. Ama tam olarak içeriđini bildiđimi söyleyemem. Demokratik hakları içerdiđini söyleyebilirim.
- C4 Cođrafi bir tanımlanın ötesinde Bugün AB içinde tanımlanan normatif deđerlere sahip olmaktır Avrupalı olmak. Ben böyle algılıyorum. E tabi Hıristiyanlık da söz konusu kimliđin bir deđeridir.
- C5 Sanırım bir mukayeseye dođru sürüklüyorsunuz beni. Müslüman kimlik de belli başlı kurallı ve normları olan bir kimlik. Yani İslam'ın ve onun şekillendirdiđi

kültürel normların oluşturduğu bir kimliktir İslami kimlik. Eskiden taban tabana zıt olduklarını düşünürdüm. Ama şuanda böyle büyük bir zıtlık olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Bence bugün AB'nin savunduğu bütün normatif değerler zaten İslam'ın içerisinde bulunan değerlerdir. Fakat yine de tam bir uyum olduğu da söylenemez.

D1 Dini vecibelerini yerine getiren kadındır. Dinimizde İslam'ın ve imanın şartları olarak sıralanan dini vecibelerin takip edilmesidir. Elbette. Başörtüsü bir emirdir. Bazen başörtüsünün bir sembol olduğu yönünde yazılara rastlıyorum. Bence bu son derece yanlış bir değerlendirme. Özetlersek bence başörtüsü Müslüman kadın için önemli bir kriterdir. İnancım tabî ki. Bunu bir dini emir olarak görüyorum ve yerine getiriyorum. Sanırım bu soruyla ailemin bir baskısı olup olmadığını sorguluyorsunuz ama böyle bir baskı olmadı. Zaten bu tür yorumlara da rastlıyoruz basında. Belki bu tür örnekler vardır ama ben kendi kişisel tecrübelerime dayanarak söyleyebilirim ki bu tür örnekler istisnaidir.

D2 Evet bu tür yorumlar var. Ama gelenek derken neyin kastedildiği de önemli. Eğer gelenekten kasıt din dışı adetler ve inançlar ise evet bence dinin bunlardan temizlenmesi lazım. Yok, eğer İslam'ın gelenekselleşmiş bir takım özelliklerinin ayırt edilmesi ise buna karşıyım. Çünkü bu da dini köksüzleştirmek olur kanaatimce. Eğitim konusuna gelince, evet eğitim son derece önemli. Belli bir eğitim sürecinden sonra ailenizden aldıklarınızı bir sorgulamaya tabi tutuyorsunuz. Yani aileden aldıklarınızı eğitim yoluyla bireysel kararlarla şekillendiriyorsunuz. Bir anlamda kendi inancınızı şekillendiriyorsunuz. Bu anlamda eğitimin önemi sonsuz bence.

D3 Bence kadınlar siyasette aktif rol alabilirler. Bunun örnekleri bugün olduğu gibi *Asr-ı Saadet*'te de (Hz Muhammed'in yaşadığı dönem kastediliyor) var. Örneğin Hz. Ayşe ordunun başında savaşa bile girebiliyor. Bu siyasetin belki de en uç sınırı. Eğer o dönemde varsa şimdi niye olmasın. Aslında burada bir önceki sorunuza atıfta bulunabilirim. Mesela eskiden dindar aileler kızlarını bu tür şeylerden uzak tutarlardı dindışı olduğunu düşündükleri için. Bence bu düşünce İslami değil, geleneksel bir tavidir. Şimdi ise bu tür engeller kalkıyor. Buda büyük oranda eğitim yoluyla gerçekleşiyor.

- D4* Kadın-erkek eşitliği derken ben fiziksel anlamda bir eşitliğin olmadığını yani yaradılış itibariyle erkeğin kadından üstün olduğunu düşünüyorum ama sosyal bir eşitliğin varlığından kuşku yok.
- E1* Tabii ki zaten Milli Görüş Cemaati diye adlandırılmıyor mu? Bence siyasi boyutu olan bir cemaat ve bir cemaatin neredeyse bütün işleyişlerine sahip.
- E2* Milli görüş hareketinden bahsettik madem, bu hareketin siyasi kanadını oluşturduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Sanırım bu çizgideki partiler kastediliyor bu soruda. Ayrılma demem doğru olmaz ama destek çekme ve toplantılara katılmama ve AKP'yi destekleme dersek daha doğru olur. Bazı şeylerin yolunda gitmediğini takip edilen eski politikaların amaçlanan hedeflere götürmediğini anladım. Yani işi salt bir siyasi hareketin dışında bir cemaat mantığı içinde yürütmenin zorlukları olduğunu ve ileriye götürmediğini fark ettim. Özgürlükler noktasında bir şey sağlanamadığına şahit oldum. Sanırım benimle aynı düşüncede olanlar Partiden ayrılıp AKP yi kurdu. Sonuçta gördük ki tek başına iktidar oldu AKP. Demek ki insanlar bunu özlemiş. Düşüncelerimi temsil ettiğine inandığım için artık AK Partiliyim.
- E3* Bence dini hassasiyetleri olan ama geniş toplumsal tabanı temsil eden bir siyasal parti. AKP Türk siyasetinin merkezine kaydı bence. Bana ANAP'ı anımsatıyor. Diğer yandan bir cemaat teşkilatlanması yok yani salt bir siyasal parti. Ama RP böyle değildi. Arkasında cemaatvari bir yapı vardı. Partiyi bu yapıdan farklı düşünemezdik.
- E4* Sanırım eskiden çok eleştirdiğimiz bazı durumlara şimdi daha geniş bakabiliyoruz. İlla desteklemek değil ama normal karşılamak denebilir.
- E5* Tam olarak bilemeyeceğim ama bildiğim kadarıyla partinin dini hassasiyetleriyle demokratlığını bir arada götürecek bir kimlik ihtiyacı sonucunda ortaya çıkan bir tanım. Bence gayet yakıştı. Şuan değil ama biraz zaman geçtikten sonra neden olmasın.

- E6* Açıkçası karşıydım. Çünkü AB'yi hep dini kodlarla yorumluyordum. Bu açıdan bakıldığında bana hep bir Hıristiyan kulübü olarak göründü. Şu an bile bu yönde hislerim var. Ama o dönemlerde bu hissin oldukça baskın olduğunu söyleyebilirim. Evet, hala bir Hıristiyan kulübü gibi hissediyorum ama Türkiye'nin bu birliğe entegrasyonundan karlı çıkacağı taraflar olduğunu da görüyorum. Yani Demokrasi özgürlüklerin yaygınlaştırılması, dini inanç özgürlüğü gibi alanlarda gelişmeler oluyor. Ama yine de kendi kültürümüzü kaybetmeden uyum sağlamaya çalışmalıyız.
- E7* AB politikalarını takip ediyorum ama yani bilirsiniz takip etmek derken mevzuata dalıp gitmek ya da mekanik ve derin bir bilgi ve ilgiye sahip olduğum söylenemez. Ben partimin tüm politikalarını destekliyorum ve Türkiye için atılmış uygun ve akıllıca adımlar olarak nitelendiriyorum. Hiç olmadığımız kadar yakınız AB'ye bu nedenle fırsatları iyi değerlendirip karşılıklı kazançlar birlikteliğine odaklanmalıyız diye düşünüyorum. Sonuç olarak, bence AB karşıtlarının iddialarının çoğu temelsiz ve geçersizdir. Özellikle de demokrasi insan hakları ve özgürlüklerle ilgili olanları. Bu alanlarda yapılacak reformları taviz vermek ya da ülkeyi bölmek olarak değerlendirmek bence son derece yanlıştır. İnsan haklarına saygı her şeyden önce insanlığın gereğidir ve Türkiye'nin aslında vatandaşlarının sahip olması gereken hak ve özgürlükleri tanımamakta ısrar etmesinin taviz vermek ve vatani bölmek olarak değerlendirilmesi ülkeye zarardan başka hiçbir şey sağlamaz diye düşünüyorum.
- F1* İslami kadın olarak ayırmak ne kadar doğru tartışılır ama şu kadarını söyleyebilirim ki İslami kadın Avrupa Birliğinin kendisine ne getireceğini oldukça fazla merak ediyor. Bu merak bence bir sanayicinin, eğitimcinin ve bir doktorun merak edeceği türden konular mı? Elbette ki hayır. İslami kadın olaya biraz duygusal yaklaşıyor, kendisine sahip çıkması gerekenler sahip çıkamadı ve bu nedenle AB'yi bir umut olarak görüyorlar. Şu safhada İslami kadın için AB önemli çünkü desteğe ihtiyaç var. AB bunu belki verebilir diye düşünüyorlar.
- F2* Türk kimliği Avrupalı kimlikten veya AB kimliğinden etkilenmez. Türk kimliğinin oluşumu farklı ve bir o kadar da derin tecrübeleri içerisinde barındırır. Düşünün bir kere ortak tarih ve kader bilinci bu milletin kimliğini

oluşturan öğeler arasındadır. Avrupa Birliği üyeliği bu şekilde sahip bir kimlik sunamaz bize. Şahsi düşüncem olduğunu belirterek söylemek isterim ki, Türk milleti Avrupalı olabilir ama onların anladığı ve inandığı türden bir Avrupalı üst kimliği oluşturamaz. Bizim oluşturabileceğimiz yegâne üst kimlik Türk kimliğidir. Avrupa Birliği üyesi olabiliriz ama sadece Avrupalı olamayız çünkü biz önce Türk'üz. Diğer taraftan durumu AB için değerlendirecek olursak birçok yazarın dile getirdiği gibi Türkiye'nin üyeliği AB için bir imtihan olacak. Yani gerçekten farklı kültürleri ve dinleri kuşatıp kuşatamayacağı ortaya çıkacak. Eğer Türkiye kabul edilirse bu gerçekten AB kimliğini bir dönüşüme uğratabilecek gibi görünüyor. Demin de söylediğim gibi, Türkiye kültürel açıdan diğer AB üyesi ülkelerinden farklı ve bu karşılıklı farklılıklar her iki taraf için de etkileşime açık bir saha oluşturacak. Nasıl ki biz birçok farklılaşmayla karşılaşacaksa aynı şekilde AB'de bizden etkilenebilir. Nihayetinde bu etkileşimler derin mevzularda olmaz. Kimlik, din vs. bunlar AB üyeliği sonucunda iki taraf için de kolayca değişebilecek hatta değişebilecek şeyler değil bence.

F3 Modern olmak ile Avrupalı olmak arasında bir ilişki elbette var ama sandığınız gibi bir neden sonuç mensubiyeti üzerine kurulu bir ilişki değil bu. Demek istediğim Avrupalı olduğunuz için modern ya da modern olduğunuz için Avrupalı olmak mantığı bu çağda geçerliliğini yitirmiş bir yargıdır. Modern teriminin kaynağı Avrupa'dır yani terim ilk olarak Avrupa'da ortaya çıkmıştır ve benim ilişkidem kastım budur. Modernlik artık Avrupa'nın tekelinde olan bir durum değildir.

Evet, ben modern bir insanım. Modern bir eğitim aldım. Çağın gerisinde değilim yenilikleri ve değişiklikleri takip ediyorum. Benim için modern olmak gerekli yenilikleri takip edip uygulamaktır. Burada "gerekli" olarak addedilen göreceli bir yaklaşımlar bütünüdür. Yani neyin gerekli olup neyin gerekli olmadığına karar veren kişisel tercihlerdir. Bunun böyle olması da modernliktir.

F4 Negatif tavrın çok çeşitli nedenleri olabilir. Mesela benim aklıma ilk gelen Avrupa insanının Osmanlı fobisidir. Bildiğiniz gibi Osmanlı Avrupa'nın ötekisiydi ve hala bunu sürdüren düşünceye sahip insanlar var Avrupa'da.

Bunun üstüne bir de 9/11 fobisi de eklendi ve tüm Müslüman halklara potansiyel bir terör eylemcisi gözüyle bakıldı. Yani durum biraz korku politikası ile alakalı.

F5 Hiç şüphesiz başörtüsünün sınırı belirsiz kamusal alanda yasaklanmış olmasıdır. Bu sorunların başlangıcıdır. Bunun neticesinde oluşan birçok sorunlar dizisi de mevcut. Kız öğrencilerin kazandıkları okullarda okuyamaması, kadınların işsizlik sorunu ve daha niceleri. Başörtüsü yasaklanınca okula gidemez oldu kızlarımız, inançlarının gereğini yerine getirmek isteyen hanımlar memur olamıyorlar ve iş bulmak konusunda sorun yaşıyorlar bunun neticesinde harap olup giden emekler ve beyinler söz konusu. AB üyeliği bu hususta güvenilebilecek bir kurum bunun nedeni ise vicdan hürriyetine olan vurgusu ve demokrasinin savunuculuğunu üslenmiş olmasıdır. AB üyeliği bence bu sorunun çözümünde bize yardımcı olabilir.

F6 Ne üzücüdür ki AHİM böyle bir değerlendirme yapmış ya da karar almış ne dersiniz artık. Ben bu sonucu duyduğumda açıkçası hiç mi hiç şaşırmadım ve ümitsizliğe kapılmadım. Karar Türkiye’de Cumhuriyet ve demokrasi geleneğinin tam olarak yerleşmediğini ve tehdide açık olduğunu söylüyor. Benim aklıma şöyle bir şey geliyor, söz konusu Türkiye henüz AB’ye üye olmamış olduğunda zaten bir takım şeyler garanti altına alınacak ve AB üyesi Türkiye’de karar farklı olacaktır.

F7 AKP başörtüsü sorununu çözebilir. Daha doğrusu bu sorunu çözebilecek tek parti AKP’dir. Çünkü partimiz bütün farklılıkların bir arada rahatlıkla ve kimsenin hakkına hukukuna kastetmeyecek şekilde yaşadığı bir ülke tasavvuruna sahiptir. Dileğimiz bu sorunun biran önce çözülmesidir.

F8 AK Partiyle birlikte bir dönüşüm yaşanmadı yani dönüşüm hep vardı aslında sadece AKP hükümeti ile birlikte bu durum biraz daha fazla incelenir oldu ve gündeme taşındı. Geçenlerde bir habere rastladım bana çok gülünç geldi. Başörtülü kadınlar arasında estetik operasyonları fazlalaşmış; kuaförler tesettürlü bayanlar için özel bölümler açmış ve lüks modacılar tesettürlü bayanlara cevap verir olmuş vs... bunlar bana çok gülünç geldi çünkü buna neden olan sosyal dinamik olarak AK Parti gösteriliyordu. Ben kendimi bildim

bileli bayan kuaförlerinin bazıları tesettür bölümleri vardı, estetik yapan arkadaşlarım da oldu ve hiçbir modacı karşılığını ödedikten sonra size elbise yapmayı reddetmez. Demek istediğim bu durumlar AKP ile gelmedi bular zaten var olan şeylerdi sadece AKP ile birlikte gündem haline geldi. Refah Partisi döneminde çarşafly kadınları, cübbeli erkekleri, tarikat ayinlerini görürdük ekranlarda sanki bunları Refah Partisi yapmış gibi yani Refah Partisinden önce de vardı bu resimler, Refah Partisi gitti sergi bitti ama resimler hala duruyor. AKP'den öncede vardı bu resimler AKP ile sergilendi. AKP gider, sergi belki biter belki bitmez ama resimler hep kalır. Ben dönüşümün yokluğunu savunmuyorum sadece bu dönüşümün nedeninin sadece AKP olduğu gibi bir düşüncenin yersiz olduğunu savunuyorum. Dönüşüm her yerde var. Cezayir, Mısır, Ürdün, İran hepsi birileriyle ve bir yerlerle ilişkili elbette bağımsız değil AKP dönüşümü hızlandırabilir veya buna legal bir zemin hazırlayabilir ama dönüşümün tek sebebi olamaz. Böyle bir yaklaşım ne tarih ne sosyoloji ne de politika biliminde yer bulamaz.

- F9* Türkiye için AB üyeliğinin getirilerini burada saysak uzun bir zaman gerekir. Ben daha çok sosyal ve ekonomik anlamdaki getirilere odaklanmış durumdayım. Ne olacağını, nasıl olacağını bilmeyi çok istiyorum. Demokrasi, demokrasi, demokrasi! Benim için gerçek ve tam anlamıyla yaşanan bir demokrasi AB'nin en büyük getirisidir. Dezavantajı ne olur bilemem hiç o tarafları düşünmedim.
- F10* Bakın işte size savundum. Artık herkes ister oldu AB üyeliğini buna ihtiyaç duymadım.
- F11* Böyle bir şey olması mümkün değil. Biz AB'nin özgürlüklerinden bahsediyoruz baskı nerede kaldı. Bunlar bir takım çevrelerin hükümetin politikalarına karşı halkı kışkırtmak ve provoke etmek için dile getirilen yersiz kaygılar.
- F12* Gözlemlediğim kadarıyla daha çok din ve vicdan hürriyetinin garanti altına alınması konusuna vurgu yapıyorlar.

Interview with Nihal

Responder 5

-R5-

A1 Günlerim sabah namazıyla başlar, evde herkes o vakitte kalkar ve bir hareketlilik yaşanır, çünkü herkesin kendine göre bir planı vardır ve onu uygulamaya koyulur. Kahvaltı sofrasında tüm aile bir araya gelir, kahvaltı biter herkes kendi yoluna gider. Ben o gün programım neyi gerektiriyorsa onu yapmak üzere hazırlanırım ve en son evden ben çıkarım. Bazen işlerim uzun sürebiliyor öyle zamanlarda eve geç kalıyorum ama kocam da parti üyesi olduğu için beni anlıyor ve bu tür konularda problem yaşamıyoruz.

A2 İki çocuğum var ikisi de kız. Biri 16 yaşında diğeri ise 10. Artık düşünmüyorum, Allah bunları bağışlasın bana yeter. Benim dört kardeşim vardı. Ben üçüncüyüm.

A3 Merter'de oturuyorum. Şehir kalabalık ve semtim de aynı şekilde. Sitede evimiz var. Komşularım genellikle kendi apartmanımdan, onun dışında fazla bir komşuluk ilişkisi yok. Eskisi gibi değil İstanbul. Annemler hep komşuluk lafı geçince bu cümleyi kullanırdı. Yani bir karardan ziyade Merter'de oturma fikri bütçe ile ilgili alınmış bir ortak karardır diyebilirim.

A4 Aile büyüklerimizle sık sık görüşürüz. Eşimin kardeşi ile aynı apartmanda oturuyoruz bu nedenle onlarla daha sık görüşüyoruz ve tabii iyi de anlaşınca hep birlikte vakit geçiriyoruz.

A5 Hayır çalışmıyorum maalesef. Üniversite mezunuyum, eşim belediyede çalışıyor. Çocuklar artık kendi işlerini kendileri görebiliyorlar.

Ev işlerinde ise gerektiğinde yardım ediyorum.

A6 Benim ablamın eşi ile benim eşim çocukluk arkadaşı. Ablamlar evlenince, eniştem bizi birbirimize çok yakıştırmış, beni istediler biz de görüştük ve anlaştık, sonunda da evlendik.

A7 Ailemizde en çok okuyan belli biri yok ama ailemin okuma alışkanlığına sahip olduğunu söyleyebilirim. Kitap okumayı çok severim. En sevdiğim kitap diye bir şey yok ama sevdiğim kitaplar var mesela. Psikoloji kitaplarını severim, Doğan Cüceloğlu'nu ve Vamık Volkan'ı okurum. Şuan yine Cüceloğlu'nun "Mış Gibi Yaşamlar" kitabını okuyorum. Bu kitabı beğendim açıkçası "yaşayormuş gibi görünüp de aslında yaşamamak..." kitabın tanımı. Bence gençler her türlü kitabı okumalıdır, çünkü kitaplar insanların eksiklerini kapatır, bu yaşlar için bence kitaplarda çeşitlilik önemli. Benim gibi düşünmeyenler çoktur ama ben her yazılan şeyin okunmaya değer olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bu bir süreç daha sonrasında kişi kendi ilgisini ve merakını belli bir kanala yönlendiriyor zaten. Bu nedenle gençlerin fırsat varken her şeyi okumaları gerektiğini savunuyorum.

A8 Yaa, işte, her şey okunmalı deyince bunlarda giriyor işin işine ve ben hidayet romanlarını okudum, hala daha okuyorum. Bence bu romanlar sosyolojik bakış açıları ile önemli ipuçları vermekteler. Karakterler kimi zaman gerçekle uyumlu olabiliyor bu da okuma hazzı veriyor. Ancak yeni hidayet romanları eskilerinden biraz farklı yani romandaki karakterlere biçilen rollerde farklılaşmalar mevcut. Kadın daha aktif kendi hidayetini kendi buluyor. Ben Cihan Aktaş'ın yazdığı hikâyelerden bahsediyorum. Bilemiyorum onu da dâhil ediyor musunuz hidayet romanları içerisine.

Kısacası ben kızımın bir Cihan Aktaş okumasını mutlaka isterim ama Emine Şenlikoğlu, Şule Yüksel Şenler gibi bir döneme imzasını atan ve zihinlerde önemli izler bırakan yazarların kitaplarında ne dediklerini bilmesini tavsiye ederim.

B1 Hiç hatırlamıyorum desem yalan olmaz. Yani bir sabah kalkıp da ben siyasetle uğraşmak istiyorum ya da Refah Partisine katılmak üye olmak istiyorum demedim. Süreç ben farkında olmadan beni buraya yerleştirmiş. Siyasetle ilgili olanlar vardı ailemde. Ağabeylerim ve amcalarım. Eşimden önce ben ilgileniyordum partiyle zaten.

B2 Beni motive eden şey umudumu asla kaybetmememdir. Kendime ve milletime güvenim sonsuz. Benim milletim her şeyin en iyisini hak ediyor. Bu konuda ben üzerime düşeni yapmak istiyorum. Bazen sesinizi duyurmak istersiniz ve bu konuda bana cevap veren partimdir. Bunlara ve geleceğe olan iyimser bakışım beni motive ediyor sanırım. Zaten bir şeylere yönelmek için mutlaka örnek alınan kişiler olur benim de vardı. Halam çok ilgiliydi siyasette. Hep anneme onu örnek gösterirdim. Onun koşturması, çabası ve sağlam duruşu beni çok etkilemiştir. Sanırım benimkisi biraz da halam gibi olma çabası.

Ben kadın ve aileden sorumlu bakan olabilirdim mesela ama olamıyorum. İlk aktif olarak yani böyle tam bir aktif rol alma isteğim sanırım fazilet partisi döneminde oldu. Merve Kavakçı bu konuda bizi cesaretlendirdi. Şimdi yine o türden isteklerim var ama o kadar şevkli bir şekilde değil. Demek istediğim eğer ben de meclise başörtümle girebilseydim şimdi şevkle milletvekili olarak ülkeme hizmet etmek için çabalardım.

B3 Günümüz bayanları artık kendilerini evlerinin ve ailelerinin dışında farklı platformlarda da gösterir oldular. Ya partide görevliler, ya dernekte, ya cemaat içinde. En pasif olanı bile Cuma toplantılarına katılarak bir kamusalılık sağlıyor kendine. Hepsinde ben bir heves ve takdir etme isteği görüyorum. Bu da benim onlar tarafından algılanıp kabul görmemi kolaylaştırıyor.

B4 Evet, dediğim gibi ben eşimden önce de parti üyesiydim. Hatta diyebilirim ki eşimin parti üyesi olma yönündeki kararı benden etkilendiğini ispat eder; benim ondan etkilendiğimi değil.

C1 Gazetelerden, çeşitli projelerden, oturumlardan, konferans ve kitaplardan şekillendi diyebilirim. Elbette ki partimin AB politikalarını takip ediyorum. Şu süre zarfında en önemli gündem maddelerini oluşturuyor AB üyeliği.

C3 Sanırım çok cesur bir şekilde “ben AB ile ilgili her şeyi biliyorum” diyemeyeceğim ama yani yine de haberdarım birçok şeyden. Kopenhag Kriterleri Türkiye’nin tam üyelik için yerine getirmesi zorunlu olan kıstaslardır.

Türkiye bu kıstasların büyük bir çoğunluğunu yerine getirdi ve tam üyelik için hak elde etti.

C4 Bence Avrupalı olmak benim için kültürel bir aidiyetten ziyade coğrafi bir aidiyet anlamına gelir. Evet, biz de coğrafi olarak Avrupa'nın eteğinden tutuyoruz bu nedenle biz de Avrupalıyız. Benim için Avrupa nedir sorusuna verilecek yek bir cevap yoktur ama Avrupa neresidir sorusuna cevap verebilirim. Somut gerçekliklerle, soyut varsayımlar arası bir şey bu.

C5 Müslümanlık kültürel bir kimlik olarak kabul edilebilir veya en azından kültürel kimliği oluşturan öğeler arasında sayılabilir. Böylece Müslüman kimlik, tevhit inancına sahip olan kişilerin, yaşam felsefelerine de bu inancı yansıtması sonucu oluşan bir kimliktir. Söz konusu kimlik ile Avrupa kimliği arasında bir farklılık olduğunu kabul ediyorum ancak bu farklılığın zihinlerde hemen çatışma gibi gösterilmesini kabullenemiyorum. Bu iki kimlik bir birleri ile çatışma halinde değildir. Hatta gerektiği yerde muhteşem bir uyumdan da bahsedebiliriz. Yani Batının savunduğu düşünceler İslam'da zaten mevcuttur ama daha önce de bahsettiğimiz gibi çeşitli toplumların geleneksel ve kültürel kodları İslam'ın önüne geçmiş ve bu durumu belirsiz hale getirmiştir.

D1 Baştan ifade etmek isterim ki, daha önceden de anlattığım gibi ben İslami kadın diye bir kavramı asla ve asla kabul etmiyorum. İslami, İslamcı, dinci vs... Bu kelimelerin hepsinin altında kalıplaştırma, nesneleştirme ve zorla bir yerlere ya da düşüncelere dâhil etmek var. İslami kadın kullanımı bence çok yanlış bir kullanımdır. Bana fazlaca siyasi bir kimlik gibi geliyor. Ben kendimi İslami kadın olarak tanımlamıyorum. O şekilde de tanımlanmaktan hoşlanmıyorum. Ben normal bir kadıyım. Müslüman bir kadıyım. Haklısınız, Müslüman olan birçok hanımdan ayrılan yönlerimiz bir gurup içerisinde benzerlik gösteriyor olabilir ama bu benzerliğin veya farklılığın sebebi gerçekten ve en iyi şekilde Müslüman olmaya çalışmamızdır yoksa İslamcı, İslamist vs. olmamız değil. Bence Müslüman olan ve bizden çok çok farklı olanlar için bir tanım getirilmeli.

Başörtüsü inancın bir gereğidir. Müslüman olduğum için örtülüyüm. Bunun vicdani ve akli bir paydada gerekliliğini kabul ettiğim için örtülüyüm.

- D2* Eğitim her alanda önemlidir. Ben bu şekilde bir süreçten belki de farkında olmadan geçmişimdir. Aklımı kullanmayı severim. Vicdan ve gönül aklımın cevap bulamadığı yerde devreye girer. Gelenekler eğer İslam dışı ise eğitimin özgür gücüne sahip insanlar bununla kolayca baş edebilirler.
- D3* Kadının siyasette yeri var mıdır diye soruyorsanız ben açıkça söyleyebilirim ki, hiçbir zaman bundan şüphe duymadım. Yasaklandığı bazı kesimlerce dile getirilmiş olabilir ama akıl ve vicdan hürriyetim bunun yanlış olduğunu ve kadının belli ölçülerde siyasete katılım hakkının olduğunu düşünüyorum.
- D4* Allah katında tüm insanlar eşittir, üstünlük sadece takva iledir. Bu cümleden hareketle kadın ve erkek arasında bir eşitlikten söz edebiliriz.
- E1* Milli Görüş Hareketi diğer siyasi partiler ve oluşumlardan daha geniş ve kapsamlı olduğu için bir cemaat görünümüne sahiptir. Bir gelenek söz konusu, o geleneği takip eden siyasi partiler, partilerin üzerinde etkiye ve nüfuza sahip sembolik ve aynı zamanda etkili liderler, bunların hepsi bir cemaat havası kazandırıyor MGH'ne.
- E2* Refah Partisi, muhafazakâr sağıın en güçlü ve en sağlam partisiydi. Milli Görüş denince hala akla ilk gelen Refah Partisi oluyor. Bu parti Türkiye'nin bir gerçeğiydi. Necmettin Erbakan'ın ve ona güvenenlerin partisiydi Refah Partisi. Ben Refah partisi ile başladım parti çalışmalarına. O partinin içimde çaktığı şimşek bana geleceğe güvenme hissi verdi. Refah Partisi kapandı, Erbakan Hoca gitti. Refah bitince Refahlı olmanın bir anlamı da kalmadı. Biraz yorgunluk ve biraz bıkkınlık derken tam o sırada çakan ikinci bir şimşek ve AK Parti. Tayyip'in partisi AK Parti! Bizi belki biraz değişiklik kurtarır dedik ve AKP 'ye üye oldum. Kadroya güveniyorum. Bu sebeple AKP'liyim.
- E3* AKP' yi tanımlamak biraz daha zor aslında. Yani demek istediğim ben de henüz tam anlamıyla AKP'yi tanıyorum diyemem. Daha yeni bir partiyiz ve geleneğimiz ya da kendimize özgü kültürümüz henüz oluşmuş değil. Belki bir dönem daha sonra bu soruyu sorsanız daha kesin bir cevabım olabilir size. AKP

ile RP arasındaki en belirgin fark şudur ki, AKP kendi yolunu çizen yeni bir partidir. Milletçe değer verdiğimiz hassasiyetler üzerinde durur ve yeniliklere hep açıktır. Herkesi olduğu gibi kabul eder ve farklılıklara tolerans gösterir. RP ise Türk siyasetinde harmanlaşmış ve kalıbı uzun yıllar sonucunda belli olmuş bir partidir. İnananların partisidir. İşte en önemli fark burada yatar partinin hitap ettiği bir kesim vardır, farklılar nerede oturur bilinmez. Bu sebeple olduğunuz gibi kabul görmezsiniz. Tabi bu dediğim bu denli açık bir şekilde ifade edilmez edilmedi de ama söylem ve politikalarından çıkarttıklarım bunlardır benim.

E4 Sanki ortalık biraz duruldu ve insanlar sakinleşti gibi. Biraz normalleştik vesselam. Normalleşmekten kastım yani bir dönem fazlaca üstümüze gelindi. Kendi aramızda parçalanmalar yaşadık ama AK parti ile tekrar iyileşme ve güven sürecine girdik. Bunun dışında AK Parti vizyonunun da bir sonucu olarak farklılıkların bir arada kendilerinden bir şey kaybetmeden uyum içerisinde birlikteliğini sürdürebildiğini gösterdi. Değişimi daha çok karşılıklı toleransta gördüğümü söyleyebilirim.

E5 Takdir edersiniz ki bu kelime Türk siyasetine AK Parti ile birlikte girdi. Bundan önce hiç duymamıştım. Ve yine takdir edersiniz ki AK Partisini bu kelimedenden başka hiçbir kelime bu denli güzel tarif edemez. Muhafazakâr demokrasi son derece çağdaş ve kültürümüzle de uyumlu bir kavram. Ben bu tanıma kendime ve partime çok yakıştırdım bu nedenle sürekli kullanıyorum. Yani ben muhafazakâr demokratım...

E6 Şimdi şu var ki, Refah döneminde AB bu denli güncel ve sıcak ilişkilerin hâkim olduğu bir süreç içerisinde değildi. Tahmin edeceğimiz gibi ben o dönemlerde Avrupa Birliğine üye olabileceğimiz ve günün birinde bu ideale bu kadar yaklaşabileceğimizi hiç düşünmemiştim. Bizi oyuyorlardı sanki. E, biz de boş durmadık kendi birliğimizi kurma yolunda adımlar attık. Bunla gayet yapıcıydı. Salt bir karşı çıkış değildi benimki o dönemlerde. Daha çok çabayı boşa görmem sonucunda ortaya çıkan bir savunma mekanizması gibiydi. Boşa çaba gösteriyoruz bizi almayacaklar çünkü biz Müslümanız. O zamanların moda yakıştıması “Hıristiyan topluluğunda Müslümanların işi ne?” Doğal olarak mecburi bir karşı durma vardı AB’ye karşı. Hıristiyan kulübü olduğu görüşlerine

kesinlikle katılmıyorum. Bu bir ekonomik ve siyasi topluluk; din topluluğu veya haçlı ordusu değil. Ne yani AB içinde Müslüman vatandaşların sayısı sizce umursanmayacak kadar küçük mü? Ya da onlar herhangi bir dinsel dışlanma ile karşılaşılıyorlar mı? Bence hayır. Hem zaten bizim üyeliğimizi tartışıyorlar, üye olmamız olası artık. Eee? Nerede kaldı Hıristiyan kulübü atmış beş milyon Müslümanla?

Benim için AB medeniyet yolunda atılan bir adım ve birçok fırsat demek. Kalkınma için güç demek. İyi eğitim, iyi yaşam standartları, iyi ekonomi, iyi yönetim demek. Açıkçası ben çocuklarımın AB üyesi bir ülkede yaşamalarını ve bunun onlara sağlayacağı getirilerinden faydalanmalarını isterim bu sebeple de AB üyeliğini destekliyorum.

E7 Tabî ki takip ediyorum. Gündemden ayrı kalmak mümkün mü? Kesinlikle yerinde ve dikkatli adımlar atıldığını düşünüyorum ve kesinlikle destekliyorum. Onlara çok güveniyorum, hepsi vatan bilincine sahip insanlar bu nedenle de içim çok rahat. Onlar Türkiye’de çoktan atılmış olması gereken adımları atıyorlar belki biraz treni geriden takip etmenin verdiği sıkıntılar olabilir ama her şey zamanla konsolide olacaktır.

F1 Halkımız çok ilgili AB konusuyla. Herkesin merak ettiği ve yanıt olduğu sorular oluyor. Benim çevrem siyasetle ilgili olduğumu bildikleri için soruyorlar. Genelde dedikodular fazla yok işte din dersleri kalkacak mı? Ezan okunmayacak mı? Daha neler neler... İçlerinde beni hayrete düşüren sorular da olmuyor değil ama bilinçlenme önemli benim çocuklarım, gençler çok önemsiyor ve araştırıyor AB’yi. İslami kadınlar malum kendi dertlerine çözüm arıyorlar acaba AB’ye girince başörtüsü serbest mi olacak diye. Ben bu sorulara kesin bir cevap veremiyorum. Bizim ülkemizde neyin ne aracılığıyla nasıl olacağını önceden kestirmek oldukça zor çünkü.

F2 Bizim Müslüman kimliğimiz AB üyeliğinden etkilenmez, kimlikler AB üyeliğinden etkilenmez. Bunlar içsel meselelerdir. Bakın hala Fransa, İngiltere AB vatandaşım veya Avrupalıyım demiyorlar. Fransızım, İngilizim diyorlar. Bu birlik bence kimlik oluşturabilecek veya var olan kimlikleri dejenere edecek

kadar güçlü bir kimlik oluşturmuş durumda değil. Sanırım merak edilen ve üzerinde düşünülen sınırların ortadan kalkması ve serbest dolaşımın uygulanmaya başlanmasından sonraki süreçle ilgili Türkiye'nin AB kimliğini etkilemesi durumu. Bence aynı şey AB ülkeleri içinde geçerlidir. Küreselleşmenin yaydığı dalganın dışında bir şey beklemiyorum ben.

F3 Modern olmakla Avrupalı olmak arasında şöyle bir ilişki söz konusu olabilir. Modernizmin ilk dalgalarını Avrupa'dan almış bir tarihimiz var. Modern olanı Avrupa'dan aldık yani. Şimdi ise bence kendi modernliğimizi kendimiz oluşturuyoruz. Belli ölçülerdeki kültürel sentezlerimiz var yani salt bir Avrupalılık değildir bizim modernliğimiz artık.

Ben kendimi modern olarak görüyorum. Modern olmak benim için dünyanın neresine giderseniz gidin sanki başka bir âleme başka bir dünyaya düşmüş gibi hissetmemektir. Gittiğiniz yer neresi olursa olsun yani ne kadar modern ne kadar geleneksel olursa olsun. Demek istediğim modernlik bir farkındalık durumu, bilme ve farklılıklara saygı gösterme durumu. Sizin dışınızdakileri de sizmişsiniz gibi anlayıp değerlendirebilme yeteneği bence. Hiçbir kültüre ve yaşam biçimine yabancı olmama durumu kısacası.

F4 Yeteri kadar modern olamama durumu mu acaba? Ne dersiniz? Bence kesinlikle bununla alakalı bir durum. Türkiye'yi ve Müslümanları tanımıyorlar ve tanımadıkları içinde korkuyorlar bilinçsizce yaklaşıyorlar bir bakıma. Modern bir insan farklılıklardan korkamaz. Diyaloga açık olur.

F5 Başörtüsü sorunu hiç şüphesiz. Bu sorun öyle bir hal aldı ki mağdurları artık her şeyi bir umut olarak görmeye başladılar. AB'de onlardan birisidir. Hatta CHP'yi bile sorunu çözebilir olarak görüyorlar. AB tabii ki bir umut olabilir ama ben bunu bilemem. Bu ülkemizin bir ayıbıdır ve bizim modern olmadığımızın göstergesidir. Dilerim Türkiye bu sorunu kendi iç dinamikleri ile halleder.

F6 AHİM'in kararı medyada çok yankı buldu. Sonuçta bu bir karar değil bence. Tavsiye veren bir kurum AHİM. Bu sebeple bir bağlayıcılığı yok. Şahin'in lehine bir karar çıksaydı da diyeceğim şeyler aynı olurdu. AB'nin bu konuda bir

standardı yok. Belki Türkiye'ye bu standardın oluşması konusunda yardımcı olabilir.

F7 CHP'nin bile sorunu çözebileceğini düşünebiliyorsa insanlar ben tabî ki düşündüm AKP'nin çözüm olabileceğini ama bunun çözümünü sadece bir siyasi partiye bırakmak yanlış olur. Toplumsal bir mutabakat gerekli ve bu mutabakatın varlığını ispat etme görevi AKP'nindir diye düşünebilirim.

F8 Bence dönüşüm olarak görülen şey AKP'den öncesine dayanıyor. Öyle ki, artık sadece muhafazakâr kimliği ya da İslamcı ne dersiniz bize uymuyordu. Tam bu sırada AKP'nin Muhafazakâr Demokratlık kimliği ortaya çıktı ve biz yerimizi bu sayede bulduk. Bu kimliğe benzemeye çalışmıyoruz bu kimliğe benzediğimiz için onu taşıyoruz. AKP sadece hislerimize tercüman oldu yoksa dönüştürme projesi diye bir şey yok ortada.

F9 Ekonomik kalkınma ve demokrasinin iyileştirilmesi. Dezavantajı olarak şuan için aklıma kesin bir şey gelmiyor açıkçası.

F10 AB üyeliğini savunanlarla karşılaşıyorum genelde ve onlara katılıyorum. En çok demokrasi ve ekonomik gelişmelere yapacağı katkılardan bahsediyorum.

F11 Evet, demin sanırım bu sorunuza farkında olmada cevap verdim. Ben bu türden baskılardan kesinlikle söz edilemeyeceğine inanıyorum. Bunlar bizim kültürel kodlarımız kimse bunları yadsıyıp yok sayamaz. Nasıl ki, Avrupa'da bunlar yok diye biz AB üyesi olamayız diye bir durum söz konusu değilse aynı şekilde biz bunları AB üyeliği için feda etmeyiz. Bizim ulaşmak istediğimiz nokta belli, bilimde, eğitimde, ekonomide ve insan haklarında ileri olan ülkelerin oluşturduğu topluluğa üye olarak onların yakaladıkları standartları ülkemiz ve insanımız için sağlamak. Standarttan kastım elbette ki kültürel normlarımız ve manevi hassasiyetlerimiz değildir. Avrupa Birliği'ne üye olmak bu değil zaten.

F12 Yani başörtüsü sorununun bir adaletsizlik olduğuna inandıkları için AB'nin adaleti sağlama ve kişisel hak ve özgürlükleri güvence altına alma çabasına daha fazla vurdu yapıyorlar.