

The (Re)Production of Conservatism in Conservative Media in Turkey: An Analysis of Yeni Şafak and Sabah Newspapers in the AKP Period

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Abstract

“The (Re)Production of Conservatism in Conservative Media in Turkey: An Analysis of Yeni Şafak and Sabah Newspapers in the AKP Period”

Naz Uyulur, Doctoral Candidate at the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2019

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This dissertation scrutinizes how conservative values are produced by the mainstream, pro-government media in Turkey in the AKP period. Adopting Teun A. Van Dijk’s discursive, socio-cognitive approach to news production, the news content of two national conservative newspapers, Sabah and Yeni Şafak, are analyzed under four main themes - education, youth, women and family, and culture - that are critical for measuring the nature and scale of conservatism as an ideology (re)produced by the pro-government, mainstream media.

The research reveals that media in Turkey plays an important role in producing, enabling, and promoting the hegemonic conservative ideology, put forward by the AKP government. The textual and linguistic analysis of the news stories, editorials, and columns produced in this particular media suggests that conservative ideology in Turkey rests on the values of Islam, a severe dislike and a grudge against the secular republic, and a strong interest in Turkish history and culture of the pre-republican period. This conservative ideology pines a religious upbringing for the youth, a society that rests on a traditional family structure that reinforces conventional gender roles, and a social life in and outside of the home that reflects local and national traditions, culture, and values.

89,000 words

Özet

“Türkiye’deki Muhafazakar Medyada Muhafazakarlığın (Yeniden) Üretimi: AKP Döneminde Yeni Şafak ve Sabah Gazeteleri İncelemesi”

Naz Uyulur, Doktora Adayı, 2019

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Bu tez, AKP döneminde muhafazakâr değerlerin Türkiye’deki ana akım, hükümet yanlısı medyada nasıl üretildiğini incelemektedir. Teun A. Van Dijk’in haber üretimine söylemsel, sosyal-bilişsel yaklaşımı kapsamında iki ulusal muhafazakâr gazete olan Sabah ve Yeni Şafak’ın haber içerikleri, bir ideoloji olarak muhafazakarlığın doğasını ve çerçevesini belirlemede kritik rol oynayan ve AKP dönemi süresince hükümet yanlısı ana akım medyada (yeniden) üretilen dört ana tema (eğitim, gençlik, kadın ve kültür) etrafında analiz edilmiştir.

Araştırma, AKP hükümeti tarafından ortaya koyulan hegemonik muhafazakâr ideolojinin üretilmesi, olanaklandırılması ve teşvik edilmesinde Türkiye’deki medyanın önemli bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir. Muhafazakâr medyadaki haberler, editoryaller ve köşe yazıları özelinde yapılan metin çözümlemesi ve dilbilimsel analiz, Türkiye’deki muhafazakâr ideolojinin İslami değerler, seküler Cumhuriyete karşı hoşnutsuzluk ve kin, ve Cumhuriyet öncesi dönem Türk tarihi ve kültürüne olan güçlü ilgi etrafında şekillendiğini öne sürmektedir. Söz konusu bu muhafazakâr ideoloji dini değerlerle yetiştirilmiş bir gençlik özlemi çekmekte, konvansiyonel cinsiyet rollerini pekiştiren geleneksel bir aile yapısına dayalı bir toplum istemekte ve ev içinde ve dışında yerli ve milli gelenek, kültür ve değerleri temsil eden bir sosyal yaşamı teşvik etmektedir.

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To my husband

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Glossary of Non-English Terms

Dershane	Private cram schools
Türban	A religious style of wearing a headscarf
İmam hatip	Public religious vocational schools

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
ANAP	Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
AP	Adalet Partisi (Justice Party)
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
DHA	Doğan Haber Ajansı (Doğan News Agency)
DP	Demokrat Parti (Democrat Party)
DSP	Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party)
DYP	Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party)
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
EU	European Union
FETÖ	Fethullah Gülen Terör Örgütü (Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organization)
HDP	Halkların Demokratik Partisi (Peoples' Democracy Party)
KADEM	Kadın ve Demokrasi Derneği (Women and Democracy Association)
METU	Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi (Middle East Technical University)
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party)
MKYK	Merkez Karar ve Yönetim Kurulu (Central Decision-Making and Administrative Board)
MSP	Milli Selamet Partisi (National Salvation Party)
MÜSİAD	Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği (Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
RTÜK	Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu (Radio and Television Supreme Council)
TBMM	Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (Grand National Assembly of Turkey)

TESEV	Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation)
TMSF	Tasarruf Mevduatı Sigorta Fonu (Savings Deposit Insurance Fund of Turkey)
TÜİK	Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (Turkish Statistical Institute)
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
YÖK	Yükseköğretim Kurulu (Council of Higher Education)



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Introduction

There is no doubt that the 2002 parliamentary elections in Turkey marked the beginning of a new era in contemporary Turkish politics. The elections commenced a period of restructuring in the political landscape and brought the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* or AKP) to power. The AKP was the first party in eleven years to win a comfortable majority in the assembly and since enjoyed more than fifteen years of uninterrupted rule.

With the rise of the AKP, the term conservatism has regained popularity as part of the mainstream political terminology. The AKP defined itself as a *conservative democratic party* in an effort to distance itself from its controversial roots in the Islamist National View (*Milli Görüş*). This reinvented image, the AKP leadership expressed, implied a worldview promoting gradual, progressive change and seeking a reconciliation between the center and the periphery. Conservatism, as outlined in the 2002 party program, rested on the fundamental pillars of family, religion, and the state and also emphasized the culture and tradition of the glorious Turkish nation. On a social level, the program emphasized the party's attempt of restructuring on the areas of education, culture and arts, health, social security, work life, women, family, media, youth, environment and science and technology, among others.

While election victories allowed the party to realize these aims on the political level through regulation and changes to policy, the media has helped to

produce and disseminate this conservative ideology in everyday life. Turkey was certainly not immune to the politicization of public broadcasting before the AKP rose to power. Özal's neoliberal policies of the early 1980s also had a significant echo in the media landscape. At the beginning of 1990s, Turkey has made a swift transition from a state-run media structure to privately-owned media in a free market economy.

The AKP, from the beginning, identified information management as a top priority. The beginning of the second term of an AKP majority after the 2007 elections ushered in a period of media restructuring, political control, and an increase in the number of pro-government media outlets. These significant structural and institutional changes in the media intensified with the "Kurdish Opening" initiative and its aftermath, the Gezi Park protests, and the designation of Gülen movement as a terrorist organization. Media outlets with affiliations with terrorist groups were either transformed into pro-government outlets or shut down entirely. Most mainstream media changed hands and started printing or broadcasting news supportive of the ruling party. In contemporary Turkey, nine of the ten mainstream television channels and nine of ten national dailies belong to conglomerates affiliated with the government.¹

The dynamics of this new media landscape is too complex to explain by a simple concession that the mainstream news media has fallen victim to economic and political limitations; as Van Dijk (1996) suggests, media "are not passive recipients or sufferers of economic or political control and manipulation but also manufacturers and (re)producers of ideology and public opinion. . . . The news media generally do not act as major opponents of political or corporate policies and interests is not because of their powerlessness, but because of the fundamental similarities of ideological positions" (pp. 28-29). In the Turkish case, similar ideological positions resulted in the dissemination of conservative values through pro-government print and broadcast media. Characterized by veiled columnists and news women and editorial teams with Islamic educational backgrounds, the conservative media has become the new

1 The Media Ownership Monitor (<http://turkey.mom-rsf.org/en/findings/political-affiliations/>) reports the numbers as seven out of ten for both TV channels and mainstream dailies, but the numbers increased to nine out of ten with the sale of the Doğan Group media assets to Demirören in early 2018.

mainstream and has evolved into an important tool to produce and disseminate the official conservative ideology of the government to the masses.

Even though Van Dijk's approach to news production is not a new phenomenon, no comprehensive studies currently apply his theory to the contemporary media landscape of Turkey. Existing analyses address the news media as a martyr under AKP rule and its role as a producer of ideologies is typically ignored. This dissertation contributes to this gap in the current literature and asks the question of how conservatism in the AKP period was produced by the mainstream, pro-government media in Turkey.

The first theoretical consideration of this question becomes the effect of the media on the public and media's role in producing and distributing the dominant conservative ideology. Literature on the topic of media's role in disseminating ideologies in societies dates back to the interwar period and research in the field is significantly vast and growing, changing the popular understanding of how media functions. Early studies of the 1940s and 1950s perceived mass media as a powerful tool to create behavior change and suggested that it could directly and uniformly influence the large group of recipients by sending them the messages designed to trigger a desired response. This early understanding of the power of news media, for example, gave way to a more skeptical approach two decades later as more and more research showed that the media in fact had little direct effects on changing people's behavior. Instead, it was then suggested that the media coverage set the agenda for the public, prioritize issues and intentionally or unintentionally shape public opinion, and therefore has agenda setting and framing functions.

Criticism to these early studies of news and news making, which were oriented toward the power of media and the social dimensions of news, came from Van Dijk in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. Contrary to the previous literature, Van Dijk proposed a multidisciplinary theory, arguing that the power of news media should be analyzed within the framework of the broader conjunctural power structures of society. He claimed that "in order to understand the role of the news media and their 'messages,' one needs to pay detailed attention to the structures and strategies of such discourses and to the ways these relate to institutional arrangements, on one hand, and to the audience, on the other hand" (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 10). Thus, he proposed a more

integrated relationship between media and the society and argued that the news in fact plays a critical role in production of ideologies and dominant discourses.

Van Dijk's approach to news media proved effective and contributed greatly to the literature on media studies through his thorough review and analysis of the ways the media are involved in the reproduction of racism. He applied his analytical approach to identify, assess and evaluate all features of the relationship between production of the racist discourse by the press. In doing so, Van Dijk established new and higher standards by which future ideology - media studies must be conducted. His analyses have served as a paradigm for the role of the media in other forms of dominance and ideologies such as gender, class, capitalism, communism, or in the case of this dissertation, conservatism.

Pinning down the second theoretical consideration of this dissertation – conservatism – however, is much more difficult and poses a theoretical disadvantage. From a global perspective, conservatism in politics generally refers to the right-wing viewpoint that desires to maintain the existing order. However, a thorough analysis of the existing literature suggests that “it is contested both what conservatism is, and what it could or ought to be—both among the public and politicians, and among the philosophers and political theorists” (“Conservatism,” 2015). There is no consensus, for example, on whether conservatism is an ideology, a critical standpoint, or a political philosophy. “Is it an ancient attitude, or one that developed only in response to Enlightenment rationality and its political products, liberalism and socialism? How is it related to contemporary ‘neo-conservatism’? Is it a coherent position, or does it, as many have argued, fail to distinguish what is worth conserving from what is not? . . . are some of the questions commonly raised about conservatism” (“Conservatism,” 2015).

Because of its adaptive, situational and contingent character, research on conservatism requires context-bound, small-scale work to secure a realistic understanding of what constitutes the meaning of conservatism for particular social groups in particular periods of history. This dissertation adopts this approach and in Chapter 3, focuses on analyzing what conservatism constitutes to in the Turkey case, especially during the AKP period. The empirical surveys

of Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu (2009) and KONDA (2007, 2014, 2018) and historical studies of Bora (1998), Mert (2007) and Tuğal (2013) prove particularly useful in determining the elements and meaning of conservatism in Turkey. Research based on this literature suggests that the Turkish conservative mindset has traditionally rested on the two main pillars of religion and nationalism, but the weight given to them on the political level changes according to the socio-political conjuncture of a particular time period.

On this background, in the main part of the research, the dissertation takes a deeper look into these main pillars and analyzes the capillary vessels of the conservative ideology as produced and reproduced by the mainstream conservative media in the AKP period. Through the media representations of the mainstream social elements of conservatism, the research also offers an analysis of the nuances, changes and continuities both between the AKP and the previous center-right parties that embraced conservatism as an ideology and within the period of the AKP governance.

§ 1.1 Methodology

1.1.1 *The role of the Researcher: Asking Questions*

Any form of qualitative research brings out the question of how the research is affected by the researcher's bias and personal background. "As Charlotte Davies points out, it is especially vital to be aware of this when societies and cultures are studied in which the researcher is personally involved (Davies, 2008, p.5)" (Herding, 2013, p. 70).

The main question of this dissertation came into being as an attempt to explore and develop an understanding of a community and ideology that is unfamiliar to the researcher. Born and raised in a very liberal and secular family and social circle, the researcher falls in the very margins of what the conservative media considers as the other. The researcher did not have previous experience socializing with this fraction of the society nor following conservative media. While not knowing a mindset "from the inside may result in overamplifying minor details or misunderstanding more important issues," (Herding, 2013, p.

70) on the other hand, a contrasting background is beneficial for catching important that could otherwise be considered as ordinary or imperceptible for members of a community.

The researcher began this dissertation with an unconscious bias that is common to many people who identify themselves as secular and liberal, or the classification they use to refer to their non-conservative character. In this perception, conservatism in Turkey refers to an ideology that is solely guided by the Islamic rules and values. Conservatives in contemporary Turkey are extremely religious (veiled if woman), less educated, patriarchal AKP voters that live life solely through the guidance of the Quran, rejecting change and undermining the accomplishments of the new republic for introducing laicism.

Conducting this research with such a contrasting background contributed significantly to breaking this stereotype. In that sense, this dissertation also serves the purpose of defying previously constructed biases and forming empathy and mutual understanding among the Turkish society.

1.1.1.2 *Research Design*

Keeping Van Dijk's discursive approach to news media in mind Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is employed in this research to understand the production and reproduction of conservative ideology by the conservative media.

According to Fairclough (1995), the method of CDA seeks to uncover the relationship between the use of language and sociocultural structures. "It tries to uncover ways in which the dominant forces in a society create versions of reality that favor their interests through spoken or written language (McGregor, 2018)" (Lombardi, 2018, p. 17).

As Van Dijk (2004) states that CDA "primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts" (p. 352). So, as a research method, CDA is used to analyze any type of text in a critical manner to determine the ways that it influences society.

CDA is a multi-disciplinary method employed in various disciplines ranging from sociology to anthropology. Scholars that use the CDA method have diverse theoretical concern but all seek to investigate and uncover the reproduction of ideology in language. By looking into the various discourses and

linguistic features of a text, it traces their underlying ideologies and shows how the language used in texts – such as news reports – reflect and produce hegemonic ideologies, stereotypes, and social values.

Critical discourse presumes that language is social and that “the discourse both reflects and constructs the social world” (Rogers, 2011, p. 72). Hence, it tries to investigate the influence of social and ideological context on use of language. Its particular emphasis and interest on textual interpretation and discursive practices has made CDA a fruitful method that is often applied to media research. As leading scholars of CDA Fairclough and Van Dijk often claim, “news is not just a value-free reflection of facts. Anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position” (Fairclough, 1991, p. 101), and the power and effect of news making can be revealed through an analysis of how language is being used in generating news.

This research adopts the CDA method to examine how conservatism in the AKP period was linguistically generated in media texts. The research, in Fowler’s (1991) words, does not gun for the press, but rather focuses on the structures of the media in question to discover the production and representation of conservatism in print media discourse. The study involves discourse analysis of coverage of the main determinants of conservatism. Although it primarily engages with news reports and columns in the mainstream, conservative-leaning newspapers *Yeni Şafak* and *Sabah*, the research occasionally includes coverage from other media outlets as well, mostly on the topics that generated broader media discussion. These two newspapers were selected for analysis through a process of elimination. Since the aim was to capture the ordinary and the mainstream, local and Islamic media were excluded from the analysis. Then, the ten mainstream dailies with the highest circulation were listed: *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Posta*, *Sözcü*, *Habertürk* (online-only as of July 2018), *Türkiye*, *Milliyet*, *Yeni Şafak*, *FotoMaç*, and *Takvim*. Among these, *Hürriyet*, *Posta*, *Sözcü*, *Habertürk*, and *Milliyet* were eliminated because of their liberal, neutral or anti-government stance during all or part of the AKP period. *FotoMaç* was not considered as it is a sports-centered newspaper. *Sabah* and *Takvim* newspapers belong to the same, conservative, pro-government media group, and *Sabah* was chosen between the two because of its higher circulation

volume. And between the two-remaining conservative-leaning newspapers, *Yeni Şafak* and *Türkiye*, *Yeni Şafak* was chosen due to its popular editorial team comprised of renowned opinion leaders in conservative circles, including Fatma Barbarosoğlu, Özlem Albayrak, Yusuf Kaplan, Hayrettin Karaman, and Rasim Özdenören.

The study covers part of the AKP period from January 2005 to December 2016, with a particular focus on the second term of an AKP majority and the post-Gezi protests, since both represent key milestones for changes to the media structure in Turkey. The changes and continuities between these milestones are underlined while discussing the selected themes, but the analysis chooses to take a wholistic approach in examination of the AKP period as it aims to demonstrate the established, deep-seated nuances of the understanding of conservatism by the conservative media during the entire period. It does not suggest, however, that the time period under analysis followed an unchanged, linear path.

The selected newspapers were scanned for a period of two years and news reports, articles, columns, opinion pieces, editorials, and interviews were used as part of the analysis. The database of the media monitoring and analysis agency PRNet was utilized to access the related coverage in the print media. The research ends in December 2016 for doability purposes, but as the AKP period still continues to date (March 2019), further follow-up research is needed to uncover the important social, cultural and political developments occurred between the beginning of 2017 to the present.

The analysis of news items is grouped in four categories: Women and family, education, youth, and culture. The reason behind the selection of these categories are twofold. First, they constitute the main elements of conservative thinking. As the theoretical chapter on conservatism further elaborates, conservative ideology defines itself with arguments supported on these pillars. The approach to women and their role in society, the attitude towards religious education, the policies concerning youth, and the perception of proper forms of culture and art distinguish this ideology from rivals, especially in the Turkish case.

Second and more importantly, these issues constitute the fundamental pillars of the AKP's social policies. In the three-party programs of the AKP that

are accessible via the Turkish Grand National Assembly's official library (the AKP party programs of 2002, 2006 and 2014), the AKP covers social issues under twelve chapters: Education, culture and arts, health, social security, work life, women, family and social services, youth, environment, science and technology, print and visual media, and traffic. Among these priority areas, health, social security, environment, science and technology and traffic are not included in this dissertation as they are highly tangible, policy-driven, measurable areas that do not create much contestation between the rival ideologies. The remaining pillars constitute the main focus of this research as values produced in these areas differentiates the conservative thinking from its counterparts.

The dissertation limits itself to how the idea of conservatism is produced by its own media and does not dwell with the question of whether or not this media representation has a direct or indirect influence on the audience's behavior. It grounded itself as a descriptive and explanatory analysis and its emphasis lies in investigating how conservatism is constructed and what it means to the media organs of these circles. This subjective meaning is uncovered by critical discourse analysis of the news stories that conservative media choose to disseminate. Thus, other alternative ways of telling the story or formulations of this research question were left for potential follow-ups to this qualitative exploration.

1.1.3 *Outline of the Thesis*

A brief outline of the dissertation is as follows: The first part following the introduction, is about the theoretical background. In this chapter, the concept of conservatism is introduced, and the definition and models of conservative ideology, its main elements and representations in Turkey are presented in detail.

The background chapter also includes an overview of theories related to the effects of mass media on the public and its behavior. Teun A. Van Dijk's discursive, cognitive approach to news structures and news production is introduced, followed by an analysis of the current media landscape and structure in Turkey. This chapter also includes a snapshot of the major media groups and their current political affiliations.

The analysis of how conservatism in the AKP period was produced and reproduced by the mainstream, pro-government media in Turkey begins with news coverage of education, followed by coverage of youth, women and family, and culture. In each chapter, how these themes are perceived and interpreted in *Yeni Şafak* and *Sabah* newspapers and then presented to the masses is analyzed through the columns, interviews, and news stories published in them.

Following this analysis, the dissertation also includes a chapter introducing the production of conservatism in audio-visual media. Given that television is the most important mass medium in the country and watching television is one of Turkey's favorite pastimes, this chapter offers a detailed look at the broadcasts of two conservative television channels, *ATV* and *TRT-1*, over one week. Their schedules and program content are analyzed based on their role in disseminating conservative values in the framework of the four pre-determined categories.

Conservatism: Theoretical Background

Social scientists who attempt to study conservatism face a theoretical disadvantage: The problem of thoroughly defining what constitutes conservatism. The concept itself has always been controversial and has “taken on a rich variety of meanings, posing problems of definition that have frequently given rise to heated controversy” (Kendal and Carey, 1964, p.406). Even though the word officially became part of political speech as early as 1835 in England, discussions on varied yet valid interpretations of the term continue, making it difficult to give a single definition of or formulate a common denominator among those who are regarded as conservatives.

The discussion starts first with whether conservatism is an ideology, and the answer depends to a great extent on how one defines ideology. If ideology is interpreted in a narrow sense and seen as an artificially-constructed set of ideas manipulated by political powers, as the British philosopher Michael Oakeshott (1962/1991) does, then conservatism cannot be regarded as an ideology. If, however, ideology is defined in a broader sense, as the ordering or configuration of political concepts that act as a means of arranging the lives of individuals, or, in Huntington’s (1957) words, as a “system of ideas concerned with the distribution of political and social values and acquiesced in by a significant social group” (p. 454), then conservatism can be interpreted as an ideology.

An important conservative, Micheal Oakeshott (1962/1991), strongly supports the former view. He regards conservatism not as an ideology but a tendency, mood, or a frame of mind. In other words, conservatism is not an ideology or a doctrine because the conservative disposition is an integral characteristic of human nature: Being resistant to sudden, disruptive change. According to him, ideologies can never include or understand the whole and cannot go further than being a poor selection of a part, as part of that knowledge comes from human nature; that is, of a kind that cannot be formalized. “The fullness of political knowledge can only be found in the practice of a given political community, in tradition. Political action can take as its guide nothing else but ‘the intimations of tradition’” (Mandi, 2014, p. 4).

Huntington, on the other hand, believes that there are three main ideological conceptions of the nature of conservatism: The aristocratic, autonomous, and situational theories.

The aristocratic approach, says Huntington, defines conservatism as an ideology of a “single specific and unique historical movement: The reaction of the feudal-aristocratic-agrarian classes to the French Revolution, liberalism, and the rise of the bourgeoisie at the end of the eighteenth century and during the first half of the nineteenth century” (Huntington, 1957, p. 454). This perspective interprets liberalism as a bourgeois ideology, socialism and Marxism as a proletarian one, and conservatism as the ideology of the aristocratic class – connecting it to the ancient regime and feudalism. Conservatism, therefore, is opposed to liberalism, democracy, the middle class, and individualism.

The second, autonomous definition of conservatism holds that “conservatism is not necessarily connected with the interests of any particular social group, nor depends upon any specific historical event, as the aristocratic interpretation claims” (Nagy, 2011, p. 17). Conservatism, is defined in terms of an autonomous system of ideas like order, balance, moderation, and justice. In Huntington’s (1957) words, “conservatism, in this sense, is, . . . a matter of ‘will and intelligence;’ the principles of conservatism ‘are not confined to the interests of a single class;’ conservatives may be drawn from ‘all classes and occupations’” (p. 455). Whether particular individuals hold these values depends not on their social affiliations but upon their personal capacity to see

their inherent truth and desirability, which implies that conservatism is a valid political philosophy under any social or historical circumstance.

Huntington criticizes the aristocratic definition for restricting conservatism to a small, limited segment of social class and of process. He does not accept the second definition of conservatism either because it ignores the same variables: “According to this approach the appearance of conservatism seems to be a matter of random chance; moreover, it frees conservatism from any connection with social reality” (Nagy, 2011, p.18).

The third – according to him – most preferable approach is the situational definition of conservatism.

The situational definition views conservatism as the ideology arising out of a distinct but recurring type of historical situation in which a fundamental challenge is directed at established institutions and in which the supporters of those institutions employ the conservative ideology in their defense. Thus, conservatism is that system of ideas employed to justify any established social order, no matter where or when it exists, against any fundamental challenge to its nature or being, no matter from what quarter. The essence of conservatism is the passionate affirmation of the value of existing institutions. This does not mean that conservatism opposes all change. Indeed, in order to preserve the fundamental elements of society, it may be necessary to acquiesce in change on secondary issues. No person can espouse the conservative ideology, however, unless he is fundamentally happy with the established order and committed to its defense against any serious challenge. (Huntington, 1957, p. 455)

Huntington (1957) argues that the common thread among these three theories of conservatism is that they fundamentally agree that conservatism is an ideology and that conservatives believe in some common fundamental values and ideas (p. 456). Another and perhaps more important unifying element that is common to all three approaches is that they identify Edmund Burke and his distinctive characteristics of his ideology as the “conservative archetype.” According to Huntington, it is situational theory that harbors all six

basic principles of Burkean ideology and therefore has the most explanatory power.

Huntington lists these essential elements of Burkean ideology as follows:

(1) Man is basically a religious animal, and religion is the foundation of civil society. A divine sanction infuses the legitimate, existing, social order.

(2) Society is the natural, organic product of slow historical growth. Existing institutions embody the wisdom of previous generations. Right is a function of time. "Prescription," in the words of Burke, "is the most solid of all titles...."

(3) Man is a creature of instinct and emotion as well as reason. Prudence, prejudice, experience, and habit are better guides than reason, logic, abstractions, and metaphysics. Truth exists not in universal propositions but in concrete experiences.

(4) The community is superior to the individual. The rights of men derive from their duties. Evil is rooted in human nature, not in any particular social institutions.

(5) Except in an ultimate moral sense, men are unequal. Social organization is complex and always includes a variety of classes, orders, and groups. Differentiation, hierarchy, and leadership are the inevitable characteristics of any civil society.

(6) A presumption exists "in favor of any settled scheme of government against any untried project." . . . Man's hopes are high, but his vision is short. Efforts to remedy existing evils usually result in even greater ones. (Huntington, 1957, p. 456)

Another important, valid point that Huntington discusses is what differentiates conservatism from other grand "-isms": The lack of a substantive ideal. Unlike other philosophical systems, such as liberalism, socialism, and fascism, the conservative tradition does not put forward a normative formula with regard to the "ideal" configuration of society and about how power and values should be distributed.

The ideals of nonconservative ideologies change from thinker to thinker and generation to generation, but their fundamental characteristic remains the same: The ascription of value to theoretically-defined formulations and the appraisal of existing reality in terms of those formulations. Non-conservative ideologies are thus ideational or transcendent in nature, while conservatism is institutional or immanent. All the common ideational ideologies of modern western society approach existing institutions with an "ought demand" that the institutions be reshaped to embody the values of the ideology. In this sense all ideational theories involve some degree of radicalism, i.e., criticism of existing institutions. The greater the gap between existing institutional reality and the ideal of the nonconservative ideology, the more radical is the ideology with respect to that reality. Radicalism is thus the opposite of conservatism, and, like conservatism, it denotes an attitude toward institutions rather than a belief in any particular ideals. Conservatism and radicalism derive from orientations toward the process of change rather than toward the purpose and direction of change. (Huntington, 1957, p. 458)

Conservatism clearly has an unequivocally adaptive, situational, diachronic, and contingent character. Conservative thinkers of different ages have had very different ideas about what constitutes conservatism over the past two hundred years. The conservatism of a particular age, like any other ideology, cannot claim absolute validity in itself because it depends on changing social and historical conditions. But if that is the case, how should a study of conservatism conceptualize the term? In other words, what approach is the most productive for studying the history of conservatism?

Unfortunately, scholars are usually pessimistic about the future of the task at hand. According to Allen (1981), for example, it is not only better but also necessary to adopt an approach of describing the particular conditions in particular countries before characterizing individual thinkers or groups; nothing can be achieved by "new works of synthesis attempting broader and better definitions of or descriptions of conservatism" (p. 601). To define conservatism, he argues, "more can be achieved by smaller-scale works which bring to play several approaches to conservative thought and focus them on relatively

small areas” (p. 602). Similarly, Epstein (1975) underlines that apart from Edmund Burke, conservative thinkers rarely exercise much influence outside their own countries and times; therefore, “the future historian of European Conservatism will be required to immerse himself in the specific conditions of every European country in order to secure a realistic understanding of what diverse conditions different Conservatives wanted to conserve” (p. 7).

Given this background, this dissertation turns to analyzing conservatism and conservative thought in different European countries, providing a brief overview of the development of the term since its origins in the French Revolution, and then focusing on the emergence and development of the concept in Turkey.

§ 2.1 Genesis of European Conservatisms

2.1.1 *Edmund Burke and the English Model*

Of everything that has been said and written about Edmund Burke and his impact on the modern conservative ideology, Robert Nisbet (1986) best summarizes his critical importance and contribution to this socio-political tradition.

Rarely in the history of thought has a body of ideas been as closely dependent upon a single man and a single event as modern conservatism is upon Edmund Burke and his fiery reaction to the French Revolution. In remarkable degree, the central themes of conservatism over the last two centuries are but widenings of themes enunciated by Burke with specific reference to revolutionary France. (p. 1)

There is a general consensus that Edmund Burke (1729-1797), an Anglo-Irish statesman born in Dublin and defender of the Whig oligarchy in England, is the intellectual apogee of modern conservatism. Even though he was a statesman first and never produced anything that can be regarded as a systematic philosophy, his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) is the best-known attack on the French Revolution and its principles and “the most famous manifesto of the counter-revolution” (Weiss, 1977, p. 17).

Reflections on the Revolution in France was first published in 1790. Above all, it is a critique of the French Revolution and its ideals for its like egalitarianism, which were radical for their time. His argument that when they attempted to restructure French society by replacing honor, wisdom, and chivalry with the "barbarous philosophy" of rationalism, revolutionaries ignored the nation's history and traditions, which, in turn, would cause the revolution to end not in more liberty, but in war and dictatorship.

Burke maintains that even though the French monarchy and the great families of the landed aristocracy have their faults, they are nonetheless the natural rulers of France. Carrying out a revolution against them is pointless, counter-productive, and hence a terrible mistake. He detests the new revolutionary rulers of the country for ignoring the basic principle that the relationship among different classes with distinct functions, rights, and powers establishes the social harmony of mutual checks and balances. He insists that the assembly, without a senate to balance it, is dominated by lower clergy who are driven by the motive of immediate private gain, and who betrays the wisdom of their forefathers. Because they fail to realize that society is a contract among past, present, and future generations, he argues that such men can neither understand the meaning of community nor the timeless values of a great nation. This lost sense of community is also the reason why radical change is always a terrible idea, as it can only represent the ephemeral interests of a single generation. In addition, Burke holds that the revolutionaries turned their back on a relatively liberal and reform-minded king who was pushing the French constitution in the direction of the British one, the latter of which Burke admires for its virtues of continuity, tradition, and property as well as its delicate combination of rule by the king, nobility, and commoners.

Burke fears the consequences of a tyranny of the majority and claims that democracy is an appropriate form of government only in rare circumstances. He dismisses the liberal idea of the masse choosing their own rulers as he believes that rights are inherited and that "man's social position from serf to noble [is] the consequence of God-given innate qualities intended to complement one another in a harmonious whole" (Weiss, 1977, p. 20).

Whereas for liberals the state's main responsibility is to protect and enforce individual rights and liberties, Burke argues that man is by nature a social animal, and he consequently views the state as a living organism, ordained by God.

It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born. (Dearborn, 1835, p. 498)

Burke holds that man is instinctively religious, and his moral values are derived from the Christian tradition. "The spirit of religion, he argue[s], held man's pride, lust and vicious appetites from tearing apart the social fabric. The social order as given [is] sacred in origin; man, tainted by original sin, could never change it for the better in any radical way" (Weiss, 1977, p. 20). According to him, society is undoubtedly a contract, but it is a contract between God and man and among all the generations in history.

As can be seen in his arguments, history has an important place in Burke's political philosophy. Defining it as "the known march of the ordinary providence of God" (Mansfield, 1998, p. 106), he considers historical experience to be an important source of wisdom and warns against the dangers of radical and violent change through revolution.

Burke believes that private property is the foundation of the maintenance of a just social order which serves as a powerful check on the potentially intrusive actions of the state. "In his view, moral education by intermediary social institutions-the family, the church, the local community-can only flourish if the property that supports those institutions is secure" ("Edmund Burke," 1997).

Burke's ideas are undoubtedly mostly driven by history, tradition, and heritage of the past, "but it is important to also note that Burke [is] a developmental, not a static, conservative [and] he fought valiantly against his conservative contemporaries who wished merely to preserve the heritage rather than, as he put it, 'preserve and improve' it in the interest of an expanding justice and

ever-greater well-being for the country as a whole” (Kendal and Carey, 1964, pp. 413-414). Nor is Burke antagonistic towards the idea of freedom; he simply believes that freedom goes hand in hand with effective governance, order, morality, private property, and prudence.

As underscored, Burke’s ideas, inosculated in his legendary *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, are considered the foundational ideas of modern conservatism and are adopted by conservative thinkers of later generations. Hearshaw’s “twelve principles,” Kirk’s “six canons,” and Rossiter’s “twenty-one points” of the conservative tradition are all rooted in Burke’s theory, and scholars such as Cecil (1912), Zürcher (2003), and Torun (2011) argue that Burke’s principles still roughly define the concept of conservatism: The importance of religion and the value of its recognition by the state; antagonism towards injustice to individuals committed in the course of political or social reform; attack on the revolutionary conception of equality and emphasis on the necessity of distinctions of rank and station; history as the accumulated wisdom of all generations; private property as an institution sacred unto itself that is vital to the well-being of society; respect for existing institutions, authority, and law; human society as an organism (as opposed to mechanism) and the organic product of slow historical growth; the necessity of maintaining continuity with the past and making changes as gradually as possible (Cecil, 1912, p. 48).

2.1.2 *Joseph de Maistre, Louis Gabriel Ambroise de Bonald and the French Model*

In France, the two most influential formerly exiled aristocrats (ultras) who voiced harsh criticism of the revolution, the Comte de Maistre and the Vicomte de Bonald, are also inspired by Burke. Like him, both view the French Revolution as a disaster and perceive the new order as destructive to social order and harmony. They see society as an organism – ordered not by men but by God – with the traditional patriarchal family as its foundation, and consequently they believe in the superiority of society over the individual. According to them, “the basic social institutions of the Church, the state and the patriarchal family [are] all based on God’s will, and therefore the individual

should subordinate self to these institutions and to the traditions associated with them” (Zeitlin, 1997, p. 56).

Still, “the case which Maistre and Bonald saw themselves confronted was rather different that the one that had motivated Burke’s *Reflections*, and the nature of their conservatism varied accordingly” (Muller, 1997, pp. 124-125). As Allen (1981) suggests, the revolution never reached Britain, and the country did not face a radical transformation like the one that Napoleon’s armies brought to France. The relatively close alliance between the middle class and aristocracy and the adaptability of its institutions caused a moderate conservatism to flourish in Britain. But in France, the situation was different. The Ancien Régime being overthrown in 1789 was only the beginning of a century of political crises and revolutions, so “it was natural that a group of ‘ultras’ adamantly opposed to the principles of the French Revolution and favoring the restoration of the powers of king and church should appear – hence De Maistre (and) Bonald” (Allen, 1981, p. 596). Compared to Burke, French conservatives are much more critical of the new institutions, beliefs, and customs that the revolution brought about. And whereas Burke wants to preserve the status quo, de Bonald and de Maistre want to bring back a golden age of monarchy and religious authority. What the latter regard as ideal is medieval society, and both believe that modern industry and capitalism are destructive and undermine the divine social order.

The comparison of the views of de Bonald and de Maistre shows that the latter is more conservative, theological, and reactionary than the former. De Maistre argues that the origins of society are in the *Old Testament*, and he does not believe human reasoning is advanced enough to create anything lasting or worth preserving. “In de Maistre’s view, if men desired a stable and just social order they should write no constitutions, invent no laws, but follow instead the divinely implanted instincts of the bulk of mankind – instincts which informed them that it [is] best to do things as they had always been done” (Weiss, 1977, p. 46).

Given that he was a practicing politician and a member of the most reactionary Chamber of Deputies in France’s history (that of 1815), de Bonald was more proactive with respect to restoring the divine order. “He personally led the ultras as they made divorce illegal, sacrilege punishable by death, and used

rigid censorship to instruct the ‘violent and ignorant’ public in the traditional principles of social order” (Weiss, 1977, p. 48). De Bonald’s ideal vision for society is modeled on the old French regime, based on the Catholic Church and the monarchy, but without the flaws that had led to its demise. According to Bonald, the primary role of the monarchy is to support and ensure the functioning of natural social groups, and he prefer the self-sufficient, traditional, personal aspects of rural village life to the chaotic and anonymous way of urban living. “The decline of the self-contained village, he [holds], would end generations of closely-knit personal contacts [and] from the interrelations of such traditional groups as the village elders, guilds and Church . . . had grown the norms of ethical behavior, norms that could hardly be maintained in the harsh anonymity of casual and fleeting urban relationships” (Weiss, 1977, pp. 49-50).

2.1.3 *Adam Müller and the German Model*

As it did for all other Western European countries, the French Revolution had a significant impact on German states, transforming an unsystematic traditionalism in society into a politically-coherent, conscious conservatism. Like its British and French counterparts, conservatism in Germany also reacts against the revolution – its causes and effects, the radical ideas of individualism, and the equality it brought about. It recommends the old (history) in lieu of the new.

Yet, according to Puhle (1978), German conservatism differs from Anglo-Saxon and French counterparts in one important respect: “it has a certain one-dimensional quality, derived in general from its close connections with the landed aristocracy and in particular with the Prussian Junkers . . . originated in the landed aristocracy’s opposition to Prussian absolutism and, more particularly, to the interventionist policies in the era of reform and the bureaucratic attempts to carry out those policies.” (pp. 697-99). In Germany, conservative organizations traditionally represent the landed aristocracy, and even though the great classes significantly reformed production methods, social life and relationship, as well as the conception of an ideal society remains similar to that of the pre-revolutionary, authoritarian world. “Germany at this time was therefore in this respect quite unlike the England of Edmund Burke,

many of whose followers were drawn from the commercial classes; unlike the 'new nation' being established on the other side of the Atlantic, unhampered by feudal relics and founded on a capitalist consensus; unlike even the post-revolutionary, bourgeois France of Chateaubriand" (Puhle, 1978, pp. 697-99). Therefore, conservatism in Germany remains largely anti-bourgeois, anti-liberal, and anti-capitalist and the close link between conservatism and the land-owning classes is the single most determining characteristic of the German conservative movement.

Among the German conservatives, Adam Müller is the most influential. In 1809, Müller published his chief work, *Elements of Statecraft*, in which, heavily influenced by Burke, he argues that the state is not a product of reason but a product of historical development – a living entity created by God. As a romantic, idealistic visionary, Müller believes that only a return to medieval principles of government would restore the greatness of the German states. In his view, "Prussia and Austria had declined because even their feudal elites had succumbed to the selfish spirit of liberal individualism . . . and had forgotten what feudal warriors understood: That society [is] a community based on mutual sacrifice for the perpetual struggle against nature and foreign intrusion" (Weiss, 1977, p. 41).

Like Burke, Müller believes in the existence of an ideal state of values, but unlike Burke, "who . . . replied to the enormous theoretical ambitions of the revolutionaries in France with the weight of actual history, expressing a conservative skepticism toward political theory in general, Müller proclaimed a demanding theory of its own: . . . he oppose[s] the French Revolution in the name of history; at the same time, he claim[s] that the state he postulated [is] based on unchangeable 'law'" (Mahoney, 2004, p. 200).

According to Müller, liberals' rigid emphasis on individual rights and the social contract they consequently put forward as an ideal favor the needs of a particular class, and curbed the power of the community. "The only way to restore the harmony, Müller insist[s], [is] to look upon the state, as medieval man had, not as an aggregate of individuals but as a community of communities in which every citizen was part of a lesser community – nobles, priests, guildsmen, merchants – each with as much power of self-regulation as was consistent with its function and the good of the whole" (Weiss, 1977, p. 44).

The mediating figures of medieval times, such as the monarchy, the guild masters, and the urban patriciate are sufficient to maintain justice and order; hence, there is no need for the selfish, egocentric, anti-community, anti-social nature of the individual.

§ 2.2 Conservatism Then and Now: A Historical Overview of the Post-Revolution Period

Conservatism is a system of thought that emerged as a reaction to the French Revolution and the radical ideas it brought to the forefront but that has undergone important changes over time. To trace the historical development of the phenomenon and identify its evolution from a socio-cultural perspective, the following periods proposed by Tanıl Bora (1998) are useful: (a) from the end of the revolution to the mid-nineteenth century (the classical period), (b) from the mid-nineteenth century to World War II, and (c) the post-World War II period.

As explained in detail above, the first period is marked by the emergence of what is now commonly referred to as “classical” or “traditional” conservatism, led by the founding figures like Burke, de Maistre, and Müller as a reaction to the revolution. According to Weiss (1977), the generation that lived through the revolution was the first truly lost generation of modern Europe. “During the revolutionary years princes were exiled; nobles became homeless commoners; monks, nuns and priests were exiled or forced to renounce their orders; petty states disappeared from the map; young men were torn from the villages of their ancestors and launched at distant armies in foreign lands; an unknown Corsican became emperor of France and half of Europe, while old laws and institutions crumbled before his sword” (p. 37). The destructive effects of these unprecedented times of change in turn created nostalgia for the past and a desperate search for values worth preserving. It also enabled conservatism to flourish as a systematic socio-political ideology.

According to Bora (1998), the most important development to occur in the second period, from the mid-nineteenth century to World War II, is the artic-

ulation of the ideas of conservatism and nationalism. In this period, conservatives gradually concluded that the “nation” was a new, more enduring form of community, and perhaps more ambitiously, a new religion (p. 62).

The turn of the century witnessed many philosophies that emerged as a reaction to the inhumanity of modern industrial civilization, and World War I was the final straw. The devastating effects of war inflamed reactions against modernism, liberalism, and rationalism, and coupled with Great Depression, they affected conservatism in a radical way.¹

In Hobsbawm’s view (1994), of all the developments in the interwar era, the most shocking is the collapse of liberal values and institutions (p. 109). The period witnessed the rise of anti-democratic criticism and a right-wing that criticized liberalism’s individualism and emphasized sacrifice, obedience, and social duty as alternatives. By the mid-1930s, liberalism was exhausted and the organized left was crushed. In this atmosphere, a conservative reaction arose and claimed to offer the best alternative for founding an orderly, stable society.

During the interwar period, especially after the Great Depression, all political discussions were taking place within the right, mainly between two sub-groups: The old right (old-fashioned conservatives) and the new right (fascists). Mazower (2008) gives the en route of General Franco and General Metaxas as examples of the old wing. They had no particular agenda, were not comfortable with mass politics, and wished to return to the good days, while new right, the loudest voice of which were Hitler and Mussolini, represented a new, radical, revolutionary face of conservatism and promised a radical resurrection of the old regime and its unified, organic society (p. 31).

The most distinctive feature of this new right was its belief that long-lost values and traditions could be reconstructed through politics (Müller, 1995, p. 23). New right specialized in the rhetoric of the return to a traditional past, but it was an artefact based on invented traditions (Hobsbawm, 1994, p. 118). The words of one of the leading figures of this movement, Moeller van der Bruck, best summarizes the motto of the conservative thought of the time: “to be

1 According to Hobsbawm (1994), for example, without the Great Depression there would have been no Hitler and no Roosevelt.

conservative means to creating things that are worth conserving” (Radner and Turner, 2006, p. 71).

The conservative revolutionary movement was hostile to the heritage of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment but also passionately supported technology and technical modernity. Conservatism’s ability to be a modern ideology and a political program was revived with the use of technology, and as of then, it started to produce its values and past traditions through the tools of modernity and technology (Bora, 1998, pp. 66-67). Hitler’s National Socialism was the most radical version of conservatism the world had witnessed, and it served as a transition from the old, classical conservatism to a new, more modern, pro-capitalist form of conservatism (Müller, 1995, p. 142), which dominated the stance in the post-World War II period.

Contrary to the post-World War I period, the aftermath of World War II created a relatively more stable world order. In this atmosphere, conservatism in the West also painted a more coherent, orthodox picture (Bora, 1998, p. 68). Once again, a separation emerged within the conservative stance, which can be categorized as classical or traditional conservatives and liberal conservatives. As always, traditionalists were focused more on the restoration of values and post liberal economic and political models,² their influence remained limited to a small elite circle. The latter changed the face of conservatism and made it a new, popular, relevant ideology.

As a result of the alliance first against fascism and then communism, the second half of the twentieth century witnessed the unification of conservatism and liberalism in the areas of politics and the economy. Conservatism made peace with the technological face of capitalism and directed its conservative reactions to the cultural sphere. Even though it sometimes used a similar radical, progressive narrative to that of the revolutionary conservatism of National Socialism, the new neo-conservatism was incomparably conformist and favored preserving the status quo. What made this new conservatism “new” was the use of “old” values to protect liberal society (Bora, 1998, p. 69).

2 See, for example, Kirk (1960)

While the emergence of this neoconservatism can be traced to 1960s,³ it became a powerful, systematic movement in the 1970s and onwards. Neoconservatives react to the demands of the New Left and liberalism's tolerant attitude towards them. The leading figure of the neo-conservatism movement, Irving Kristol, summarizes the main principles of neo-conservatism as follows: "acceptance of the welfare state but opposition to social engineering by an intrusive bureaucracy; respect for the economic market; and support for traditional values, social order, and religion against the new cultural influences of the 1960s" (Morgan, 1994, p. 110).

Neoconservatives embrace the values of traditional conservatism with respect to authority, morality, religion and tradition; commonly criticize the excesses of democracy; and highlight the need for consistency between the modern economic order and core cultural values. According to them, individuals should accept the fundamental moral values of society as their guideline. The main argument of this new liberal conservatism is the belief that modern liberal societies cannot exist without common values and cultural identities,⁴ and the freedom, progress, and creativity provided by liberalism can only survive if certain common social values are preserved. It is sympathetic towards individual freedoms, free enterprise and private property,⁵ suspicious of working class movements, and in favor of radical measures to reduce crime. It supports pro-family initiatives like abortion laws and bans on pornography, emphasize the importance of religion (Medcalf and Dolbeare, 1985, p. 26), and favor the right to perform religious rituals at schools and public spaces.⁶

The 1980s witnessed the rise of powerful, self-confident conservative leaders around the globe (Özipek, 2011, p. 195). Ronald Reagan in the United States

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- 3 *The Public Interest*, a leading neoconservative quarterly, was founded by prominent figures of neo-conservatism, Daniel Bell and Irving Kristol, in 1965.
- 4 See Daniel Bell's *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1972) for a critique of how capitalism undermined the moral traditions of American society. This critique is often regarded as a foreshadowing of the upcoming neo-conservatism of Thatcher and Reagan in the 1980s (Habermas, 1985, p. 35).
- 5 They, like Frank Meyer, are closer to a liberal stance (Vural, 2003, p. 91).
- 6 Providing parents with the option to choose religious creationism instead of the evolutionary theory in their children's education, for example, is one of the most hotly-debated issues among the new-right (Safi, 2005a, p. 32).

and Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom refashioned “the governmental landscape in the western world during the latter half of the 20th century by rejuvenating the conservative philosophy that each championed so fervently” (Thornburgh, 2013). They drew ideas from neo-conservatives who “championed free-market capitalism liberated from government restraints and took anti-Soviet positions in foreign policy, questioned liberal welfare programs, affirmative-action policies, and called for reassertion of traditional values” (Aboukhadijeh, 2012).

Throughout the Cold War, anti-communism was the unifier that held conservatives together both politically and intellectually. Despite internal differences, conservative thinkers from all points on the spectrum agreed that the Soviet Union and communism was to be combatted at all costs (Henrie, 1993). For this reason, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and once communism no longer posed a threat, conservatism lost its focus. In the 1990s in the United States and the United Kingdom, for example, more left-leaning politicians came to power.

The turn of the century again saw a return of conservatism to American politics. “The election of George W. Bush in 2000 brought a new generation of conservatives to power in Washington” (Aboukhadijeh, 2012), and the September 2001 terrorist attacks offered an “enemy” to replace the one that conservatives lost with the collapse of communism. “The conservative argument that a strategy centered on preventive war could keep the country safe against dire threats that would only grow worse with time found additional purchase after the most devastating attack in American history” (Juil, 2011). On the back of these developments, Bush won the support of conservative voters again in the 2004 presidential elections. Exit polls in 2004 showed that of the 34 percent of voters who identified as conservatives, 84 percent voted for Bush (“Election Results,” 2004).

In Bush’s second term, the content and conduct of his policies, especially the handling of the economy and the management of the war in Iraq, seemed irresponsible to many on the right, and the 2008 victory of Barack Obama “appeared to many to mark a shift of national mood and a decisive rejection of the conservative ideas that had shaped the modern Republican Party and

of the broad and multifaceted conservative movement that had become a major force in American political life” (Aberbach and Peele, 2011, p. 3). In the aftermath of this demoralizing defeat, when the Republican Party seemed widely discredited, a group called the Tea Party emerged in the United States and provided a new identity to conservative activists. The Tea Party’s opposition concentrates on resentment against perceived federal government “handouts” to “undeserving” groups; anxieties about racial, ethnic, and generational changes in American society; concern about immigration; distrust of politicians; and a sense that the political class was not responsive or accountable to average Americans (Williamson, Skocpol and Coggin, 2011, p. 26). Even though their appeal to the broader American public remains limited today, it nevertheless sharpens and refocuses conservative activism in the United States.

Meanwhile in Europe, the revival of conservatism is much more visible and started to be discussed in the aftermath of the century’s first decade. The 2009 elections for the European Parliament already showed signs that European voters were turning away from the left,⁷ and in the 2014 elections, “right-wing and Eurosceptic parties made significant gains, sending shock waves through Western Europe” (“Victory for Conservatives,” 2014).

Similarly, in this century, European countries start witnessing the election victories of center right parties one by one: Cameron’s Conservatives in the United Kingdom, Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union in Germany (CDU), and Reinfeld’s Moderates in Sweden. Diamond (2011) argues that today’s center-right powers have a new, progressive conservative agenda, redefining center-right politics throughout much of Europe and making center-right politicians more electable than before. This new type of conservatism operates under the unifying ideological rationale of modifying the commitment to liberal individualism while combining it with a “renewed skepticism about the role of the centralized state and the efficiency and efficacy of the public sector” (Diamond, 2011). The purpose is the creation of “a society where the leading

7 In the 2009 elections, socialist parties performed poorly almost everywhere, especially in the United Kingdom, France, and Austria. The Christian Democrats of the European People’s Party strengthened its place as the largest political group, securing 34.1 percent of the votes (Soley, 2009, p. 1).

force for progress is social responsibility, not state control” (Woodhouse, 2015, p. 4). It builds on the role of traditional values such as customs, morality, belonging to a community, and national identity in the context of contemporary society, and it suggests that these values should be “protected from the forces of modernity and marketization” (Diamond, 2011).

On the social and academic front, too, Europe is exhibiting signs of a new-found conservatism at the grass-roots level, with citizens increasingly showing their appreciation for limited government and personal responsibility; expressing concern about abortion, euthanasia, and immigration; and showing a willingness to defend marriage, the family, and religious belief (Fantini, 2014, p. 3). As the editors of the first European conservative publication, *The European Conservative* (2014), explain, in recent years, conservative intellectuals have also started to become more active. Before, those seeking conservative European thought had to refer to previous centuries for suitable examples and had to choose among reactionaries like Joseph de Maistre, or to rely on articles by individuals like Burke, the situation today has improved. While a decade ago the publication of collections of conservative essays was unusual, such collections no longer seem impolitic. New conservative publications have popped up across Europe,⁸ and institutions and intellectual circles named after Edmund Burke and Margaret Thatcher are being found.⁹ Given the chaotic environment of the world and current international relations, fueled by terrorist attacks and immigration crises, it is likely that conservatism will continue to be an important element of discussion on the future of Europe.

8 *New Wind Over Norway, Standpoint, The Salisbury Review, and The European Conservative* are among the few publications that regularly publish new conservative voices across Europe.

9 “In the Netherlands and Spain, foundations named after Edmund Burke teach students about the Anglo-American conservative intellectual tradition and make available (in translation) seminal works by Michael Oakeshott, Russell Kirk, and Lee Edwards, among others. In Italy, a group in the Veneto region has started a ‘Margaret Thatcher Circle,’ whose goal is nothing less than the creation of a new political movement with candidates that embody conservative Anglo-Saxon values” (Fantini, 2014, p. 3).

§ 2.3 Elements of Conservatism

Conservatism, in the broader sense, is not a fixed ideology, and the particular principles that conservatives bring to the fore at any given time or place have depended on the circumstances and necessities of that era, but there are still a few core principles that most conservatives would subscribe. Borrowing mostly Heywood's (2012) categories, these elements can be listed as the conservative ideas on: Tradition and continuity; the role of reason; human nature, society, anarchy, hierarchy, religion, and morality; and finally, private property.

2.3.1 *Tradition and Continuity*

The perceived virtues of tradition and continuity constitute the core of conservative thought. According to Kekes, a tradition “is a set of customary beliefs practices and actions that has endured from the past to the present and attracted the allegiance of people so that they wish to perpetuate it” (Kekes, 1998, p. 38). In the conservative view, tradition reflects collective historical wisdom, time tested by previous generations. In this respect, this interpretation of traditionalism differs slightly from its original meaning. Mannheim underscores that whereas traditionalism is an intuitive psychological characteristic of the human mind that he defines as holding firm to old ways without necessarily having any political undertone, tradition in conservative thought is a “structural configuration, a congruity of psychic and spiritual contents that is objective, spiritual, and historical and that is different from the ‘subjectivity’ of different individuals” (Kettler et al., 2016, p. 93).

The central theme of conservative thought is the collective effort to preserve a historically-given community with all of its inherited values, established institutions, conventions, and habits. “By preserving, defending and perpetuating the elements worth conserving, an instinctive sense of loyalty is created, and at the same time suspicion towards innovations – unfamiliar and strange things that may put loyalty at risk – is strengthened” (Nagy, 2011, p. 27). The attempt to preserve arrangements that provide a good life is intrinsic to human nature and psychology, and it provides the basis for traditionalism. In this view, continuity acts as the tool connecting one generation to the next and it is important for both society and the individuals as it gives the latter a

sense of social and historical belonging. Without such a connection to one's roots, life is meaningless, and therefore the continuity of society must not be interrupted. This, however, does not mean that conservatives are opposed to all forms of change. As Kirk (1993/2016) suggests, "Burke's reminder of the necessity for prudent change is in the mind of the conservative. But necessary change, conservatives argue, ought to be gradual and discriminatory, never unfixing old interests at once" (p. 176).

According to Scruton, tradition "springs from the mutual accommodation of individuals living within the same society for the benefit of social cooperation" (Nagy, 2011, p. 27). It is a fragile yet necessary system to ensure that individuals learn the customary course of things so that mediation between individual and society is well established. Tradition, in that sense is not created, "but taken over from ancestors, and has its self-justification, not in the future but in the past" (Nagy, 2011, p. 27).

Tradition enables people to live together peaceably; "it is through convention . . . that we continue to avoid perpetual disputes about rights and duties" (Kirk, 1993/2016, p. 176). Burke, for example, does not trust that reason would keep most men in line and therefore there must be sufficient mechanisms to control will and appetite. "He would rather trust common sense and the wisdom of ancient custom to guide the masses and restrain their more base appetites" (Kirk, 1953/2005, p. 5).

2.3.2 *Role of Reason*

Conservatives traditionally believe in the limitations of human rationality and are therefore ardent critics of the Enlightenment's irrational dismissal of tradition. Enlightenment intellectuals regard tradition as mere superstition and prejudice and see inherited values, institutions, and customs as the embodiment of ignorance. Instead, they propose that *reason* is the tool that would liberate man from the ancient fetters of oppression, "as individual 'reason' [is] considered to be endowed with a most profound and exclusive constructive authority" (Raeder, 2008). Conservatives argue to the contrary that the Enlightenment was a "destructive movement of the human intellect, . . . [an intellect] free from all social restraints, . . . [convinced it can] remodel society in any image it chooses" (Reader, 2017). They see constructivism as a threat to

the preservation of civilized order for believing in limitless authority and incompetence of human reason (Reader, 1997). Civilization, conservatives believe, is the outcome of enduring, irrational customs, institutions, values, and traditions rather than a creation of individual reasoning. Nevertheless, this neither means that conservatives have abandoned reason entirely nor that conservatism and reason are mutually exclusive. “The battle has been over the scope, meaning and application of reason, not over whether it is good or bad, desirable or undesirable, essential or inessential per se” (Garrard, 2006, p. 11). Reason, they warn, “is like a dangerous explosive which, handled cautiously, may be most beneficial, but if handled incautiously may blow up a civilization” (Hayek, 2014, p. 52).

2.3.3 *Human Imperfection*

The basis of the conservative critique of the Enlightenment’s “excessive” emphasis on reason is the belief that human intellect is limited. Indeed, as O’Sullivan also underscores, conservatism is in many ways a “philosophy of human imperfection” (O’Sullivan, 1976). Conservatives have a pessimistic view of human nature and believe that “human beings are limited, dependent, and security-seeking creatures, drawn to the familiar and the tried and tested, and needing to live in stable and orderly communities” (Heywood, 2012, p. 35). Individuals are also seen as selfish, greedy, and morally corrupt beings, motivated by non-rational impulses and desires. Conservative thought traces the origins of immoral and criminal behavior to human instincts and appetites rather than to society. “The maintenance of order therefore requires a strong state, the enforcement of strict laws, and stiff penalties” (Heywood, 2012, p. 35).

Whereas other ideologies such as liberalism assume that human beings are inherently good or they can be good provided their social circumstances are improved, conservatives believe that human nature suffers certain inherent faults. This view, according to Kirk (1993/2016), represents one of the core elements of conservatism:

Man being imperfect, no perfect social order ever can be created. Because of human restlessness, mankind would grow rebellious under

any utopian domination, and would break out once more in violent discontent. To seek for utopia is to end in disaster, the conservative says: We are not made for perfect things. All that we reasonably can expect is a tolerably ordered, just, and free society, in which some evils, maladjustments, and suffering will continue to lurk. By proper attention to prudent reform, we may preserve and improve this tolerable order. But if the old institutional and moral safeguards of a nation are neglected, then the anarchic impulse in humankind breaks loose: “the ceremony of innocence is drowned.” The ideologues who promise the perfection of man and society have converted a great part of the twentieth-century world a terrestrial hell. (p. 177)

2.3.4 *Organicism*

Perhaps one of the most common characteristics of conservative thought is the perception of the nature of society. Conservatives traditionally reject the idea that society is an artificial social construct of the individual and rather view it as an organic, living entity, the parts of which work together just as the organs of the human body. The body is made up of a complex network of coordinated veins, organs, and limbs the development of which follows certain biological laws in order to function effectively. In a society, too, it is only when the individual parts come together that they become a meaningful whole. Long-standing traditions, shared values, a common culture, and social institutions that constitute the fabric of society – such as families, churches, schools, and the nation – must have continued to exist because they were crucial to the functioning of the whole “body” by fulfilling some vital function and contributing to the health and stability of society.

The organic view of society also explains why conservatives favor stability and are inherently traditionalist: Radical changes to existing social institutions, they believe, should be avoided since the “body” may be allergic to unexpected, foreign substances, and they could interfere with the stability of society as a whole. For conservatives, therefore, social change should be gradual and organic rather than revolutionary, avoiding such unintended consequences.

2.3.5 *Hierarchy*

The conservative perception of hierarchy directly stems from the idea of a living society. According to conservatives, “gradations of social position and status are natural and inevitable in an organic society” (Heywood, 2012, p. 35). Political equality, therefore, is unnatural and unachievable, as some people are naturally superior to others and elements of power and status are never distributed equally. Disraeli, for example, proposes that “there [is] a natural hierarchy within society and that any political system [have] to reflect this social order, with each section of society having a distinct role to play in preserving the state” (Cole and Deighan, 2012, p. 95), implying that nature has ordained a hierarchy between teachers and students, parents and children, employers and employees, rulers and the ruled, the elite and the masses, and even between the rich and the poor that reaches across societies.

Another aspect of the conservative view on hierarchy is rooted in their attitude towards natural rights. Burke rejects the Enlightenment idea that man has naturally given rights and believes that the real rights of man concern what man owes to his Maker and vice versa. He rejects the teachings of Locke, Rousseau, Hume, and Bentham and defines “natural right as human custom conforming to divine intent” (Kirk, 1953/2005, p. 6). He surely believes that man has rights, but he argues that man has given up full freedom and autonomy to benefit from what society has to offer: Peace, security, and order. According to him, man does have rights within society (such as equality before the law, order or security of private property), but these rights have to be defined and confirmed by customs and traditions. “Social and political equality, however, [are] not among what Burke considered to be man’s real natural rights: He believe[s] that aristocracy and hierarchy [are] natural” (Kirk 1953/2005, p. 6). He therefore concludes that political equality is an artificial product as men are born unequal from the start; hence, not everyone has the same qualifications. “Nevertheless, in this view, hierarchy and inequality do not give rise to conflict, because society is bound together by mutual obligations and reciprocal duties. Indeed, as a person's 'station in life' is determined largely by luck and the accident of birth, the prosperous and privileged acquire a particular responsibility of care for the less fortunate” (Heywood, 2012, p. 35).

2.3.6 *Authority*

There is a strong connection between conservatism's emphasis on hierarchy and authority. Conservatives do not accept the liberal belief that authority arises from contact among free individuals pursuing their own benefit. Rather, conservatives hold that authority, like society, develops naturally and, as Heywood (2012) underscores,

[is always] exercised "from above," providing leadership, guidance and support for those who lack the knowledge, experience or education to act wisely in their own interests. Although the idea of a natural aristocracy was once influential, authority and leadership are now more commonly seen as resulting from experience and training. The virtue of authority is that it is a source of social cohesion, giving people a clear sense of who they are and what is expected of them. Freedom must therefore coexist with responsibility; it therefore consists largely of a willing acceptance of obligations and duties. (p. 35)

Conservatives support authority from above on a number of reasons related to their view of organic society, desire for social order, and importance they place on traditions and experience. They believe that authority provides people with stability as well as a sense of who they are and what their place is in any given society. Hence, they see it as an essential feature of organic society and its laws. Moreover, since individuals are morally corrupt, authority is a vital necessity for the preservation of order in the society; only the exercise of just authority can prevent societies from falling into chaos and disorder. They also tend to link authority and wisdom, meaning that it is through experience that those who have authority come to know what is best for the masses.

This final point has led conservatives to place special emphasis on leadership and discipline. Conservatives see leadership as a vital ingredient for every society because it is "the capacity to give direction and provide inspiration for others. Discipline is not just mindless obedience but a willing and healthy respect for authority" (Heywood, 2012, p. 76). Conservatives usually refer to the analogy of the family to explain the role of authority in politics. According to this analogy, authority develops naturally in a family. "It arises from the need to ensure that children are cared for, kept away from danger, have a healthy

diet, go to bed at sensible times and so on. Such authority can only be imposed from above, quite simply because children cannot know what is good for them” (Heywood, 2012, p. 76). Scruton (2001) uses the same analogy to emphasize the naturalness of discipline, power, and authority.

It is clear from the start that a child must be acted upon by its parents’ power. A child is what it is by virtue of its parents’ will, and consequently the parent has an indefeasible obligation to form and influence the child’s development. On this very process is power, and it is of necessity an established power, since it resides already with the parent at the child’s first coming into the world. (Scruton, 2001, p. 32)

2.3.7 *Religion and Morality*

The emphasis on religion and morality in conservative thought has grown stronger since the Enlightenment emphasis on reason over religion and divine order. For Burke, the ultimate foundation of civil society is a religious one. He believes that each person in society was put in their place by God, and it is only his order and plan that could maintain peace and stability among the inherently unequal members of any social order. What is more, he believes that only people who fear God are capable of possessing the power to govern, as they would be the ones to promote a moral, just order: “All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust; and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great master, author, and founder of society” (Dearborn, 1835, p. 496). He is convinced that religious consciousness is an indispensable part of the state and a requirement for its continuity. He insists, therefore, “that the whole great drama of national life should be reverently recognized as ordered by a Power to which past, present, and future are organically knit stages in one Divine plan” (Kirk, 2001, p. 32).

Religion provides an invaluable resource for the need individuals to believe that a higher order governs the world. It therefore gives people the sense that there is divine meaning in life. The acknowledgment that life has meaning provides the cornerstone for communal living. For conservatives, religion is an indispensable part of social life and allows people to live in harmony and

in line with the order, hierarchy, and laws of society. Morality and religion, therefore, is a collective practice and a unifying force – that is, “a ‘relationship of human beings’ in the ‘mutual recognition of certain conditions’” (Khan, 2012, p. 388) that preserves traditions, moral law, and wisdom.

2.3.8 *Private Property*

For conservatives, private property ownership is a sine qua non for the proper functioning of society. They argue that possession of private property gives individuals a measure of independence from the government and provides an important defense mechanism against excessive state power. In the conservative view, the private sector mechanism more efficiently allocates resources in accordance with consumer preferences than state planning. The latter is considered to ignore the needs and wants of consumers, leading to economic inefficiency and poorer living standards.

Apart from the efficiency of market mechanisms and private enterprise for the economy, conservatives see many benefits to the ownership of private assets on the psychological, social, and personal levels.

First of all, conservatives believe that private property ownership has the psychological advantage of giving people a sense of security. As they have a pessimistic, skeptical attitude towards life and believe that the world is unpredictable and uncertain, private property is an important asset – a safety net – that supports individuals in difficult times. It is for this reason that conservatives support the cautious management of money and encourage financial savings.

Private property is also favored by conservatives because they believe it promotes social values. It encourages people to respect the law and the property of others due to the fact that they have their own possessions to safeguard in society and so too have an interest in maintaining law and order.

Conservatives also maintain that private property is an extension of the individual’s personality, and there is a deep connection between private property and self-realization. “Through property, and the rights associated with it, the object is lifted out of mere ‘thinghood’ and rendered up to man. It bears now the imprint of human relations, and reflects back to its owner a picture of

himself as a social being” (Scruton, 2001, p. 100). English philosopher and conservative Robert Scruton explains this conservative rationale as follows:

For consider what man is without the institution of property. He cannot identify in the world any object as his own; hence he cannot freely avail himself of objects and expect others to accord him the use of them. Everything he desires he sees as the object only of desire, and not of right. Nor can he see any part of the world as connected (except by some accident of strength or interest) with anyone else. A man who wields power over woods and fields has no more authority to dispose of them than does his neighbor. The concepts of “right,” and “possession” fail to inform their common understanding of a world which, in consequence, remains alien to each of them, and a battleground for both. Nor can the battle be terminated by a gift, since gift supposes property. Objects can therefore play no part in establishing or reinforcing social bonds. Instead they stand wholly apart from the world of men, an inanimate, inhuman scenario to their unformed transactions. If a man is to awaken from this state into true self-consciousness – consciousness of himself as one of a kind – then he must see the world in different terms, terms of right, responsibility and freedom. The institution of property enables him to do this. (Scruton, 2001, p. 99)

Finally, private property as an extension of one’s self also has a significant importance for conservatives because it reinforces and strengthens the primary social bond of family. In the family, private property develops into something shared and creates a feeling of belonging, which is the essence of family life. It is for this reason that, according to Scruton, “conservatives have seen the family and private property as institutions which stand or fall together” (Scruton, 2001, p. 101).

Conservatism in Turkey

While many aspects of Turkish conservatism resonate with the classical Western conservatism explained above, there are differences. Whereas conservatism in the West owes its existence to the French Revolution and the ideas it brought forward, in the case of Turkey, the turning point for the history of conservatism, was the foundation of the modern Turkish republic (Çiğdem, 2003). In other words, conservatism began to crystallize in Turkish intellectual thought as a response to the Early republican period and the radical modernist policies it started to implement (İrem, 1997).

The nature of conservatism in the early republican, single-party period is a debated issue that is analyzed from many perspectives, Kemalism itself being the most popular. While, for example, some see Kemalism as a reformist conservatism (Çiğdem, 2003) or a conservative-modernization (Bora, 1998), others such as Zürcher (2007) oppose these ideas and argue that Kemalists cannot be considered conservatives because they did not support an organic society-legitimized through religion and tradition (p. 41). But despite differences on the relationship between conservatism and the Kemalist single-party ideology, scholars dealing with the issue agree that conservatism in Turkey is not political but cultural. Due to the single-party rule under the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* or CHP) from 1923 to 1946, the political life of the early republic lacked party activism and the influence of powerful interest groups except for two short-lived attempts to organize a political opposition

in 1924 and 1930. Consequently, as Çiğdem (2003) underscores, Turkish conservatism never positioned or expressed itself as a political ideology and in conservative criticism never evolved into a critique of the established order (p. 18).

For that reason, analyzing interactions among organized political groups would have limited heuristic value in terms of arriving at generalizations about the patterns of ideological strategies that gradually posed themselves as alternative political projects for molding the Turkish transformation. Thus, scholars that study earliest understandings of conservatism in Turkey focuses on the speculative ideological, literary, and scientific writings of a small group of intellectuals that comprised the prominent men of letters, academicians, and politicians of the new republic. (İrem, 2002, p. 88)

With respect to the various courses of this Turkish conservatism, Bora (1998) and İrem (1999) identify five pathways for Turkish conservatism that were led and represented by renowned figures of early Turkish intellectual thought. According to Bora, for example, the five types of conservatism that originated in Turkey includes classical cultural conservatism led by Yahya Kemal; Islamism as conservatism that can be traced back to Mehmet Akif Ersoy; nationalist-conservatism that can be identified with important figures such as İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu, Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver, Peyami Safa, and Remzi Ođuz Arık; conservative-revolutionary ideology led by Nurettin Topçu; and finally, conservative-liberals consisting of Ali Fuad Bařgil and Ahmet Ađaođlu. İrem has a slightly different list, including traditional culturalists led by İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu, conservatives like Peyami Safa, Turkish nationalist-liberals such as Ahmet Ađaođlu, moralists guided by Hilmi Ziya Ülken, and finally, those who embrace Bergsonism, such as M. řekip Tunç. “These intellectuals were part of the new republican cultural elites and were known for their self-defined ‘conservative’ stand on cultural matters and ‘modernism’ in politics in terms of being ardent supporters of the formal principles of the Kemalist republic” (İrem, 2002, p. 88).

Both İrem and Bora also underline that Turkish conservatism, from the beginning, is statist and nationalist. The nationalism that was incorporated

into Western conservative thought in the nineteenth century was always the core of Turkish conservatism, and conservative thought in Turkey was born with an inherent nationalist character (Akıncı, 2012, p. 127). The reason behind this is simple: As mentioned before, conservatism in Turkey was born as a reaction to the radical modernization policies of the new republic during the time of Turkey's nation-building process.

From the late 1920s onwards, the young republic launched an ambitious Westernization program. In the reform period between 1923 and 1935, the new regime under the guidance of the CHP started an intensive secularization program in areas including but not limited to the organization of the state, administration, law, and education. The sultanate and caliphate were abolished on 1 November 1922 and 3 March 1924, respectively. The Law on the Unification of Education came into effect on 3 March 1924 and closed down all madrasas; the abolishment of the monasteries of the dervishes took place the following year. "In 1926, the most significant step toward the modernization of Turkish life was taken with the adoption of a new civil code fashioned after Swiss civil law" (İrem, 2002, p. 97). In April 1928, the clause stating that Islam was the state religion was removed from the constitution, and Turkey legally became a secular republic. Later that year, a new Turkish alphabet was introduced replacing the previous Perso-Arabic script.

A social engineering project was put in place in the young republic aimed at creating a homogenous population with a shared identity: A new type of person with a new mindset shaped by and representing the values of the new republic. Conservative intellectuals supported the new regime's radical policies such as the Turkification of religion and language, but challenged the positivist and authoritarian factions and their "underlying scientist obsession for bringing everything that they perceived as traditional before the magistrate of apathetic 'objective reason.' Because of their historicist hostility to intellectualism and rationalism, conservatives accused other republican factions of reducing the complex Turkish Revolution to simple abstract formulas" (İrem, 2002, pp. 97-98). Republican conservatives also criticized the Islamists for their understanding of nationalism as a means to achieve a universal, Muslim solidarity.

According to İrem (2002), the most important aspect of Turkish modernism for the early republican conservative circle was the rise of the nation state. For them, the nation state was much more than a new political structure: It signified a whole new mindset. This new worldview was about providing citizens with a new, secular sense of individual identity and belonging that are free from fatalism (*kadercilik*). Conservative intellectuals such as Mustafa Şekip Tunç and İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu “emphasized the uniqueness of the Kemalist state and the authenticity of the national culture and sought to find new means for maintaining stability and order in a new national polity” (İrem, 2002, p. 98). Such strong support for nationalism (against Islamism) also gave them a certain degree of legitimacy in the eyes of ruling elites. Thus, even though they accepted that West was more technologically advanced than the young republic, conservative intellectuals of the time were inherently nationalist and had the primary aim to preserve the Turkish culture and protect it from Western culture and Islamism, as well as from the social engineering projects brought about by the radical, positivist Kemalist reform program.

The main concern for early republican conservative intellectuals was how to reconcile the means of modernity and the traditions of a Muslim society – in other words, how to properly modernize and Westernize Turkey without giving up on the deeply-rooted, traditional Turkish culture. Triggered by the fear of its extinction, cultural continuity was fundamentally important for the first generation of Turkish conservatives. Their main arguments were that traditions cannot be easily invented and society cannot without religion. The latter claim was the reason they were constantly charged with being reactionary, therefore compelling them to openly declare that they favored change.¹ According to them, advancements in science and technology did not substitute for the need for morality; in fact, they even created new crises. The key lay in not rejecting these advancements completely but rather reconciling technology and morality and seeking a balance between them (Safi, 2005a, p. 78).

For conservative intellectuals, modern conservative ideology was a search for reconciliation between the forces of change and order. Tunç and Safa, for

1 Ali Fuad Başgil therefore identified himself as a “progressive-conservative,” for example (Bora, 1998, p. 120).

example, regarded nationalism as the fundamental apparatus of social and political order in modern times – a necessity for preserving tradition and values. “On these grounds, they conceived Kemalism essentially as a conservative force in action symbolizing the Turkish search for a unique national tradition, which implied a unique style in politics and culture” (İrem, 2002, p. 98).

The fundamental issue for early republican conservatives was not to preserve the vestiges Ottoman Islam as the case for the Islamists and religious reactionaries, but to consolidate the necessities of modern nation state structures with the values and traditions of the nation. For them, religious faith had a part to play in the construction of a national tradition and ethics,² but “unlike the Islamists, republican conservatives argued that what might form a moral imperative for the republican citizen in modern society was not the institutional religion that the republic inherited from the preceding Ottoman Islamic civilization but the individual’s subjective experience of religiosity in his or her own way” (İrem, 2002, p.100). If Kemalism failed to consolidate the new national moral order, they believed, society could be dragged into a deep moral crisis that could make people vulnerable to the Ottoman Islamic religious communities of the past and eventually result in the fragmentation and polarization of society during its transition to modernity.³ The solution they proposed was in line with the Kemalist reform agenda: The creation of a “new” man – a wholly new national identity and mindset from the old, parochial Ottoman Islamic one. “They anticipated a new, modern Turkish citizen who was perfectly capable of absorbing a degree of religious activity without abandoning the secular spirit of the republic. . . . The names that these intellectuals have chosen for their journals, such as Baltacıoğlu’s ‘Yeni Adam’ and Hilmi Ziya Ülken’s ‘İnsan,’ hint at their radical solutions” (İrem, 2002, pp. 99-100).

These conservative modernists mostly remained and developed within a cultural sphere opposed to the dominant, positivist ideology of Kemalism. The opportunity for them to incorporate into the mainstream political sphere came with the transition from single-party to multi party politics in Turkey.

2 Folklore, myths, and fables of the nation were revisited by republican conservatives to derive a code of religiosity as part of a general, authentic system of national morality (İrem, 2002, p. 100).

3 Baltacıoğlu in *Sosyoloji* (1938) and Ülken in *Aşk Ahlakı* (1931)

In fact, the Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti* or DP) movement was the conservative interpretation of the republican revolution, which offered the masses a new identity with an emphasis on tradition as well as religious and cultural symbols and values in contrast with the radically secular definitions of national identity and nationalism promoted during the single-party period (Mert, 2002, p. 74). The DP, which received 53.3 percent of the vote in the 1950 elections, gave voice to the discontent with the republican revolution within the society on the political level.

Conservative intellectuals, who interpreted the single-party period as a dictatorship, saw the transition to multi party politics and the success of the DP as a victory. The initial practices of the DP government, especially the removal of the ban on the Arabic call to prayer and the reintroduction of religious education as an extracurricular elective, led Başgil, for example, to define the DP as a political party born out of a social reaction to the oligarchic party despotism of the single-party period. He praised the “government for the people” motto of the new government (Akıncı, 2012, pp. 291-292).⁴

Despite the endorsement of conservative intellectuals, according to Mert (2007), the DP did not have a clear-cut, political and intellectual conservative ideology (p. 134). The DP and its heirs always formed a loose “opposition umbrella” under which different reactions to the single-party policies are united. This partnership rests on the belief of economic liberalism, religious sensitivities, and nationalism. Conservatism as a modern political ideology has formed the intellectual background – the “gaseous state” (Bora, 1998) – of it which is understood and interpreted to be the effort to reconcile economic and technological development with national and moral values (Mert, 2007, pp. 134-135).

The DP era was also the time of Turkey’s full realignment toward the West, following the Truman Doctrine in 1947, the admission to NATO in 1952, the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957, and the memberships in major European re-

4 According to Akıncı (2012), the fact that they had such an interpretation of democracy centered on national will should be seen as a subtle confrontation against the assumptions of central Kemalist elites. These elites see illiterate public as an obstacle to modernization and democracy. (pp. 291, 295).

gional organizations such as the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Common Market. Turkey's pro-Western policy and its alliance with and expectations from the West in the post-World War II era had significant effects on the social, economic, political, and cultural structure of the country. "It was partly as the consequence of this policy that Turkey underwent a period of development and structural transformation which manifested itself in the rise of expectations . . . and search for a new social and political understanding and interpretation of the consequence of the association with the West" (Karpat, 1975, p. 1). This era of transformation, development, and perhaps most importantly, incorporation into the Western bloc also had profound effects on the agenda of conservative intellectuals, as anti-socialism and anti-Marxism became the core of the conservative ideological stance. Hilmi Ziya Ülken and Ziyaeddin Fahri Findikoğlu stand out as examples of conservative thought during this era. Putting an opposition against socialism, Marxism, and communism to the heart of their ideas, both intellectuals warned society of the Russian threat and Russia's expansionist policies while proposing that social balance and orderliness be maintained through proper industrialization policies and a modern, democratic political order.

Beginning with the breakdown of the regime by a military coup in 1960 and the implementation of 1961 constitution, Turkey entered the new decade with a fundamentally different political and ideological atmosphere. The Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi* or AP) was founded as a successor to the DP, "with the aim of 'bringing justice' to the DP" (Levi, 1991, p.136) and targeting its voting base. After its foundation on 11 February 1961, the AP easily organized itself as the process was "nothing more than putting up the previous DP signs in the provinces and districts, just under a different name" (Teziç, 1976, p. 300).⁵ The regime of the newly introduced constitution "provided a liberal democratic context for political participation, which produced a wide spectrum of associations, activists and activities married with a plurality of politi-

5 "A.P., kuruluşundan hemen sonra, bütün ülke çapında örgütlenebildi. Bu, aslında, indirilen D.P. levhalarının, değişik bir adla, il ve ilçelerde tekrar yerine konmasından başka bir şey değildi."

cal parties that spanned almost the entire gamut of left- and right-wing ideologies and interests in the 1960s and 1970s” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 7).

Throughout this time, the influence of leftist ideologies in Turkey gradually increased. This coincided with tense relations with the United States,⁶ giving rise to anti-Americanism in domestic politics. In the 1970s, the political situation in the country gradually deteriorated into a type of civil war between anti-American, communist left and ultranationalist, pro-American, anti-communist right.

Two important, simultaneous developments that fed one another and significantly affected the conservative ideology in the country also emerged in the 1970s. The first was the resurgence of Islam as a movement unto itself and its incorporation into the mainstream political system, for which anti-communism provided a suitable atmosphere (Bora, 1998, p. 130).⁷ “In 1973 the CHP obtained the plurality of the votes and seats in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi* or TBMM) and decided to form a government with the newly established political Islamist National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi* or MSP) on the grounds that both the CHP and MSP were anti-establishment parties (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 7). The United States also supported the spread of Islamic ideology in the region and promoted Islam in opposition to the Soviet Union’s atheist, Marxist-Leninist regime.

The second development concerned political instability in the domestic system. “From 1973 to 1980 coup, Turkey experienced difficulty in forming governments, when a host of shaky coalitions and minority governments

6 The 1963-64 Cyprus crisis had a significant impact on the Turkish-US relations. “When the Turkish government threatened to use force in Cyprus as a response to the developments there, US President Lyndon Johnson sent a letter to Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü in which he stated that Turkey could not use US equipment in such an operation, and also warned that if Turkish intervention in the island were to invite a Soviet attack, then NATO was not obliged to defend Turkey” (Altunışık and Tür, 2004, p. 107). The relationship was further strained when the United States imposed an arms embargo on Turkey after the Turkish military intervention on the island in 1974.

7 After 1969, for example, the MHP incorporated Islam into its official party ideology. And in 1970 Necmettin Erbakan formed the National Salvation Party.

came and went” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 7). This stressful atmosphere was also partly caused by political fragmentation in the right wing that, after the 1969 elections, which again resulted in victory of the AP, was the home to multiple political parties: The Nationalist Movement Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* or MHP) of Alparslan Türkeş, the MSP of Necmettin Erbakan, and the reconstituted Democratic Party that was formed by defectors from the AP. According to Ahmad (2010), this fragmentation within the right wing is also one of the main reasons of political instability in Turkey in the 1970s (p. 164). But despite these developments, conservatives managed to maintain a united front against communism throughout the Cold War. They redirected their criticisms to the extremism of Kemalism to the left-leaning ideologies and identified communism as a threat to the national will. The expansionist policies of the Soviet Union also triggered conservatives’ fear of extinction. Indeed, they saw the potential triumph of communism in Turkey as an existential threat, and consequently, as a catastrophic end to the young republic.

These circumstances along with the rising tide of leftist ideologies in cultural and political life created a group of conservative journalists, academics, and other intellectuals. Their primary aim was to reunite the right-wing power block and create an alternative to leftist ideas. “Their association called the Hearth of Intellectuals (*Aydınlar Ocağı*) began to gain prominence in the most important political talk shows and daily newspapers and popular journals of the country” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 9). Basically, their aim was to unite Turkish nationalism and Islamism, the two mainstream ideologies in Turkey. Popularly known as the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis (*Türk-İslam Sentezi*), the idea maintained that Islam is “an inherent characteristic of being an ethnic Turk . . . [and that there is] nothing incompatible between being a Turkish nationalist and an Islamic revivalist at the same time” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 10). This package would appeal to the military government of the 1980s, which desperately needed an alternative given the power vacuum that emerged once the leftists were silenced. Consequently, the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis would become the official ideology of the following decade.

So, the period from the 1950s to the 1980 military coup in Turkey was a time when “nationalist conservatism” dominated the official ideology, and the

trilogy of “religion-state-nation” became inseparably united. The international conjuncture of the Cold War and the introduction of communism as the sole enemy played an important role in making nationalist-conservative discourse the official, central ideology. Throughout this time, Turkish conservative intellectuals directed all their energy on promoting their anti-communist stance.

§ 3.1 From 1950 to 1980: The Increased Visibility of Conservatism in Everyday Life

The transition to a multi party system after 1946 and the victory of the DP in the 1950 elections were the corner-stones for the transformation of the Turkish society at all levels. Throughout this era in which effects of the World War II and Cold War conjunctures were heavily felt in Turkey, the country was also undergoing significant demographic, economic, and social change.

When the republic was first founded, Turkey was a rural country and its society was “relatively undifferentiated in terms of social class” (White, 2013, p. 192). With the DP era, however, things started to change. White (2013) narrates this transformation as follows:

[In early republican Turkey,] the political elites were characterized less by their economic standing than by their literate education and orientation toward an urban, secular Western lifestyle far from the lifestyle of the rural and provincial population, in which Islam played a fundamental role (Kasaba, 1997; Duben and Behar, 1991). The spread of mass education created career paths that drew people from the cities and provinces into the ranks of the secularist bureaucracy. It also created a cadre of technocrats, managers and other professionals drawn from the rural population, whose values and lifestyles were quite different from those of the Kemalist military-bureaucratic elite. With the introduction of competitive multi party politics in 1950, these social groups entered political life and took up positions in the bureaucratic administration of the state and cities. The values of these new social groups reflected their petty bourgeois and rural origins. They were on the

whole less Western and cosmopolitan and felt more comfortable with Islam as a frame of reference for daily life.⁸ (p. 192)

The DP supported the modernization of agriculture as well as rapid industrialization centered in the Marmara region, resulting in large-scale rural-to-urban migration. Even though those who benefited most from the DP's policies were large landowners and farmers, a mass migration of those in search for higher incomes and better health and education opportunities started from rural areas to the cities, particularly to Istanbul. Each year, the population of large cities increased by 10 percent. In 1950, the population of Istanbul was 1,166,477 and it almost tripled by 1970, reaching 3,019,032 (Lüküslü, 2015b, p. 25). However, cities did not have adequate infrastructure and employment opportunities to support such massive waves of migration, and shanty towns (*gecekondu*) started becoming a more prominent feature of these cities, especially Istanbul. "The capacity of those industries to accommodate this fast-growing but unskilled workforce was limited and as a result only a small proportion of the migrants found permanent jobs in industry" (Zürcher, 2004, p. 226). Those who could not find work turned to street vending, shoe shining, and other jobs, resulting in a widened socioeconomic gap in society. New migrants to the cities did not get accustomed to the anonymity of urban living, did not act like urbanites, and maintained their relationships to their hometowns (Büker, 2013) – meaning that they also preserved their local and Islamic identity.

The DP's economic policy was based on economic liberalization, supporting the private sector in cities, and employing an agriculture-based growth strategy in rural areas. Between 1946 and 1954, the government gradually started reversing statist and protectionist policies and started loosening the control over imports. The private sector was supported by the Menderes government which was promising to turn Turkey into a "Little America" with a millionaire in every district. It was at this time that Turkey started to turn into

8 "One of the most successful of this cadre, President Süleyman Demirel, who entered politics in the 1960s, told his party congress, 'I was born in a family that does not sit down to breakfast until the Quran has been read'" (White, 2013, p. 192).

a consumer society. Metin Toker (1971), for example, underscores that immediately after World War II owning an automobile was something a young man could not even dream about, by the 1970s, it was a matter of prestige and a way to flirt with young women (pp. 54-55).

The DP was widely supported by the Anatolian peasantry and small townspeople whose religious lives were less affected than those of city dwellers. The party, in turn, adopted a more religion-friendly approach and eased restrictions on the public visibility of religion by, among other things, increasing the number of imam hatip schools, building mosques, and reinstating Arabic as the language of prayer in order to gain support and win votes. The party leaders argued that it was not the revival of Islam but the revival of mass culture that was in opposition to Kemalist secular worldview.

§ 3.2 1980 onwards: The Incorporation of Islam into the Official Ideology

A military coup on 12 September 1980 once again led to the breakdown of Turkish democracy. Leftists and their activities were suppressed by the military junta of 1980-1983 while the new regime continued to tolerate increased religious activism. To fill the vacuum left by the left, “the military government felt the need for an ideology that could effectively mobilize the people against what they perceived to be the existential threat of communism, and Sunni Islam provided an immaculate contrivance: . . . from the early 1980s onwards, Islamic (Sunni) and ethnic Turkish nationalist ideas were systematically promoted in the media, press, and educational policies of the conservative party governments that came to rule Turkey between 1980 and 1991” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 9, 15). When Turkey reverted to multiparty politics in the 1983 elections, Turgut Özal’s Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi* or ANAP, 1983-89) had become the domestic standard-bearer of new-right policies represented by Thatcher and Reagan in the Anglo-American world. Throughout the decade known as the Özal period, “Islamic revivalism continued to be treated with the utmost sympathy (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 10), and as Bora (1998) suggests, religion, as a tool for maintaining social stability and order was inseparably incorporated into the official ideology (p. 127).

Özal defined the ANAP's understanding of conservatism as the conservation the customs and traditions that fit with the modern era as much as possible (Türköz, 2016, p. 113). More broadly, the liberal-conservative synthesis that the party leadership adopted sought to harmonize the liberal ideas of government for the people, economic liberalism, a free market economy, and decentralization, wherein traditionalism was understood as respect for the deeply-rooted traditional and moral values (mostly meaning religious values)⁹ of the nation. What defined the ANAP's party ideology was this attempt to reconcile liberal market values with the conservative and moral beliefs of society. Defining themselves as "modern conservatives," the ANAP leadership pushed Islamic conservative values in the cultural sphere on one hand, and adopted a rational-liberal stance in the economic sphere, on the other.¹⁰

When Özal became the eighth president of Turkey to be elected by the TBMM in 1989, Yıldırım Akbulut ruled ANAP under his guidance. Then Mesut Yılmaz became the head of the party in 1991. Yılmaz considered liberalism that is not balanced by conservatism to be "anarchy" and conservatism not balanced by nationalism to be a "religious state," and he defined Turkish-Islamic Synthesis as the perfect combination of liberalism, nationalism, and conservatism. Even though Yılmaz remained within the established boundaries of the discourse and policies of Özal's ANAP, he adopted a more pro-liberal stance when it came to selecting party leadership (Safi, 2005b, p. 178).

The hegemonic ideology of the Turkish right during the Cold War, namely national conservatism, gradually started to lose power in the mid-1980s, and Islam became inseparably incorporated into the official Turkish conservative ideology through the adoption of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis. According to Taşkın (2009), this digression in nationalism is closely related to three main

9 For example, Özal publicly attended Friday prayers as a symbol of his respect of traditional and religious values throughout his presidency.

10 "Yet while these changes were intended to consolidate rather than undermine secularization, they nevertheless opened the way to further conflict, as they increased the weight of religious sectors in a nation that defined itself as secular. If the center-right parties and pro-state religious communities were the intended beneficiaries of these reforms, Islamic circles and parties were the unintended victors. The Islamist votes rose from 8 percent in 1987 to 16 percent in 1991 and then passed 20 percent (whereas all other parties gradually came to be stuck below 20 percent)" (Tuğal, 2013, p. 116).

challenges that conservatism had to confront: Rising Kurdish nationalism that started to threaten the monolithic definition of the national will, the spread of popular culture vis-à-vis tradition as a result of liberal economic policies, and a political Islam that broke from the defined boundaries of Cold War national conservatism and found its own autonomous realm. Turkish ethnic nationalism became one of many alternative nationalisms that had to compete in the social sphere, and Özal's reconceptualization of nationalism as a positivist nationalism took Western values as a guide meant that traditional nationalist-conservative thought had to catch-up with the developments of the era (Taşkın, 2009, pp. 131, 138-39). By the time the bipolar international political structure that characterized the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union on 31 December 1991, "Turkey had already been robustly moving toward a new voter alignment in which the socially uprooted masses had come under the spell of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis' Islamic revivalist, traditionalist, and conservative teachings for at least a decade" (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 11).

The 1990s were times of rapid change, instability, and uncertainty in the spheres of both foreign and domestic policy in Turkey. At the international level, the Gulf War, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the situation of its Muslim minorities, and a new era of redrawing the borders in Europe created instability in Turkey. The sudden downfall of the Soviet Union also left Turkish conservatives without a common enemy and without an existential threat that are crucial for the survival of conservatism. At the domestic level, "in 1991 the ANAP lost the general elections and no other party emerged to obtain the majority of the seats in the Turkish Grand National Assembly and Turkey began to experience another period of coalition governments" (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 22). On top of the political instability of the 1990s, the economy experienced a downturn with crises in 1993, 1999, and 2000 and an eventual collapse in 2001.

By the mid-1990s, Turkey was increasingly under the pressure of the dispute around Kurdish nationalism. Established in 1978, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* or PKK) was already challenging the rule of the Turkish state in Southeastern Turkey, and "by the time Turkey went back to multiparty politics in 1983, the PKK had gained enough training to wage

war against Turkey. The military government had also launched a Turkification policy that not only alienated large segments of citizens of Kurdish origin in Turkey but also created sympathy for Kurdish nationalists, who had been resisting the Turkification policies of the military government” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 21).

The leftist and socialist policies that were voiced in the Turkish political system prior to the 1980 coup period attracted the Kurdish vote given the emphasis on class-based politics and inter-nationalist ideology. However, in the 1990s such ideologies were on the wane, and citizens of Kurdish origin started to lean towards other ideological calls, mainly towards Kurdish nationalism and political Islam. The emphasis political Islam placed on religious (Sunni Islam), internationalist (umma), and anti-republican symbols and values attracted Kurdish votes and provided an alternative route to solidarity in society (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 14).

The last decade of the twentieth century was characterized by the advent of identity politics at the global level, and Turkey was no exception. The Kurdish, Alevi, Islamic, and other identities that were previously ignored in the public sphere and that the discourse of the “great Turkish nation” had tried to unite were now publicly visible. Threatened by these newly emerging identities, conservatives and center-right parties increased their calls for unity under the umbrella of Sunni Turkishness, a policy that no longer resonated with the people. As a natural consequence, by the 1990s, the center-right in Turkey began to diminish and struggled to meet the 30 percent vote threshold (Taşkın, 2009, pp. 145-147).

In these times of instability and flux, society needed and demanded peace and tranquility, and a search for morality started in the country. It was the perfect time for the slogan Peace in Islam (*Huzur İslamda*) to become popular (Taşkın, 2009, p. 150), and therefore “when the political Islamist RP staged its election campaign on ‘Just Order’ (Adil Düzen), it touched upon a very sensitive public chord” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 14). In the 1995 general elections, the RP obtained 21.4% of the national vote and especially “attracted the Kurdish voters to its call of Islam as the bond that united the Kurds with the rest of Turkish society” (p.23).

So, “it seemed as if its neighbors, allies, citizens and even the nature¹¹ had turned against Turkey in the 1990s” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 23). Significant domestic and international challenges coincided with serious economic crises in the country, creating an atmosphere of instability and uncertainty. In the 1990s, “the Turkish population seemed to make a fundamental shift of their values toward a value system that would work as an anchor to which they could be tied” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 23), which resulted in the renewed appeal of conservatism in Turkey (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 26).

§ 3.3 From the 1980s to the 2000s: Growth of a Popular “Conservative Market”

The 1980s and 1990s were times of tremendous change and transformation for Turkish society. “In the aftermath of the coup, when most of the student leaders of the left were still in prison, a new culture of learning developed in universities, where students predominantly opted to study business administration, economic or marketing” (Yashin, 2002, p. 80). Making money and being financially comfortable became the main indicators of success, symbolized and achieved through marrying and owning a business, house, car, and domestic appliances. The main indicators of happiness came to depend on how comfortable one was with buying and consuming, and “television ads paraded families who had ‘made it’” (Yashin, 2002, p. 80). The expression “turning the corner” came to be commonly used to characterize the spirit of the period, “evoking images of the wanton display of ‘private’ lives and consumption-oriented lifestyles in the age of media and economic liberalization (Gürbilek, 1992)” (Neyzi, 2001, pp. 423-24). Restaurants, cinemas, shopping malls, bars and cafes in the city tripled throughout this period.

These developments, however, would not only affect the lives of secular urbanites. The military coup introduced the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis as an antidote to Kurdish separatism in the East as well as to feared socialist and

11 In August 1999, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake hit Turkey, killing around seventeen thousand people and leaving approximately half a million homeless.

communist designs from the north and from within Turkey's own borders. "The resulting policy decisions and the decimation of the Turkish left by the military and by the end of cold war, encouraged and legitimated the verbal and symbolic expression of Muslim conservatism in everyday practices" (White, 1999, p. 79). The budget of the Directorate of Religious Affairs increased significantly in this period, leading to the spread of mosques, religious schools, and seminaries. On one hand, the official state television loosened broadcasting restrictions on American soap operas and on sexual content to compete with private stations, but on the other, it allowed Islamic content (White, 1999, p. 78). While government continued to show support for women's issues, the publications and projects of some government departments started to endorse the traditional role for women that was favored by Muslim conservatives. State television, for example, broadcast weekly sermons, some of which emphasized the primary and traditional role of women as mothers and homemakers.

The economic policies of Özal were especially designed to work in favor of conservative capital holders in smaller Anatolian cities, a group for which the Özal family was also a member. Özal was the son of a conservative religious family from Malatya with strong ties to a branch of the Nakshibendi Sufi order. Özal's aim, therefore, was to "channel resources to this category of Turkish capital as well, to revive the market by bringing Muslim capitalists, businesspeople and small traders to compete with the secular bourgeoisie, who had longer enduring ties with Western-centered capitalism" (Yashin, 2002, p.81). So while a secular economy, advertising, and popular culture grew in this period, an extensive conservative market also started to develop under the management of small-town capital holders who grew to become urban shopkeepers and even the founders of holding companies. Soon, this new Muslim capital became strong enough to compete in almost all sectors of the economy and they created a market for their lifestyle and ideology. In Yashin's (2002) words; "when advertising certain products, such as food and clothing, these new or expanded companies introduced themselves as moral from an Islamic point of view. Some 'Muslim companies' presented themselves in the market by claiming higher values: Following the dietary prescriptions of Islam, not investing in interest, not serving food to employees during the month

of fasting, reserving money for charity (zekat), producing good quality products, and making ‘just’ profits” (p. 81).

In an atmosphere in which religious values were increasingly legitimate in popular culture and in the economic sphere, Islam became a credible route for upward social mobility in the city. “It has become not only acceptable to be openly devout and politically Muslim but it has also become chic to be politically (and increasingly economically) Islamic, and it has become associated with road to success” (White, 1999, p. 79).

Islamic groups leveraged this newly-found popularity and economic privilege. They prioritized the use of media to spread their messages, and they professionalized their networks to provide business contacts, social services, and create avenues for political and public expression as well as the opportunity of upward mobility to men and increasingly women. Women in headscarves (*türrban*) started attending college and became visible in the media. They owned their own magazines, wrote columns in pro-Islamic newspapers, and read the news on the spreading private Islamic television stations. As White (1999) suggests, “these activities would have been out of reach of many young women from restrictive traditional families before 1980. The new era of Islamic respectability made it possible” (p. 80).

This new publically-visible Islam also focused on reconciling Islamic intellectualism and popular culture as an expression of identity. “In this respect, since the 1990s, new radio stations, television channels, newspapers, magazines, music groups, novelists, and filmmakers that cater to Muslim youth have become ordinary players in the market for popular culture, as well as the publishers of Islamic cartoons and comic strips, and all kinds of ‘small media’ such as postcards, stickers, and posters” (Bayat and Herrera, 2010, p. 264). Islamic groups, especially Muslim youth, have made use of the new digital communication technologies to spread their culture and messages.

Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, Turkish society witnessed the expansion of religiosity in everyday life and the prosperity of “Islamic publishers, radio and television channels, and press; further growth of pious schools and dormitories; increasing numbers of mosques and Quranic schools, and an increasingly public struggle among Islamic groups regarding the correct definition and practice of Islam” (Bayat, 2013, p. 118). By the turn of the century,

modern secularists were no longer the only beneficiaries of public spaces and popular culture such as cafes, fancy restaurants, fashion shows, concerts, performance arts, and summer resorts.

§ 3.4 The AKP and the Introduction of a “Conservative Democracy”

The AKP was founded on 14 August 2001 by the group that called themselves Innovators (*Yenilikçiler*) within the Islamist Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* or FP) that was closed by the Constitutional Court on 22 June 2001. The party won a sweeping victory in the 3 November 2002 parliamentary elections, winning 34.3 percent of the vote and an almost two-thirds majority of seats, becoming the first party in eleven years to win a comfortable majority in the TBMM.

Analyses of the voter base of the AKP shows that the party is not just a descendant of the FP, but rests on a broader conservative and center-right coalition.

A 2002 pre-election survey showed that only 27.4 per cent of the AKP voters had voted for the FP in 1999; a surprisingly high 21.9 per cent had voted for the ultra-nationalist MHP, 9.2 per cent for the center-right ANAP, 7.3 per cent for the center-right DYP, and 6.9 per cent for the center-left Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti (DSP). Similarly, 57 per cent of former FP voters, 30.5 per cent of former MHP voters, 16.8 per cent of former DYP voters, 16.7 per cent of former ANAP voters, and 10.8 per cent of former DSP voters expressed their intention to vote for the AKP in the 2002 elections (Foundation for Social, Economic and Political Research [TÜSES] 2002, pp. 70–71). These findings are corroborated by those of two other survey research organizations, Ankara Sosyal Araştırmalar Merkezi, Ankara Centre for Social Research (ANAR) and Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi, Centre for Strategic Research (SAM), in surveys carried out in October 2002. Thus, the AKP seems to have received substantial support from the former voters of the two center-right parties (ANAP and DYP) and

those of the ultranationalist MHP, in addition to more than half of the former Islamist FP voters” (Hale and Özbudun, 2009, p. 37).

As a result of the closing of the RP and the FP, the AKP leadership seemed to have reached the conclusion that “challenging the secular state in Turkey is a dead-end” (Özbudun, 2009, p. 547) Therefore, in a search for a political identity that would dissociate the party from the Islamic National View (*Milli Görüş*) movement; legitimize them both in the eyes of the public, intellectuals, and the bureaucratic tradition; and thereby avoid being closed for being Islamist reactionaries, the AKP chose to distance itself from religious discourse and seek a share of the center-right. It introduced itself as the heir of the DP and ANAP.¹² In order to survive, the AKP pushed Islamic references into the background, grounded itself in a conservative ideology, and coined a new identity that they called conservative democracy.

The party’s views on conservative democracy were detailed in a document of the same name, written by the then advisor to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Yalçın Akdoğan which was prepared and distributed by the central headquarters of the party. Erdoğan wrote the introduction to this document, in which he states “the AKP’s opposition to the notion of ‘political community which radicalizes politics,’ a clear reference to the practice of the older Islamist parties . . . and claim[s] that the AKP has become ‘the undisputable single force of the center-right.’ He also [makes] it clear that the AKP’s understanding of conservatism [is] not against change, but that it advocate[s] change ‘in the sense of development and progress” (Özbudun, 2009, p. 549).

With the idea of conservative democracy, the AKP proposes a modern conservatism that is open to change and innovation. The AKP defines this new ideology by stressing common sense, prudence, and gradual, progressive, and evolutionary change in opposition to the two alternatives of socialism and lib-

12 In a survey conducted by Safa (2005), the majority of the party leadership and high-level representatives of the AKP regarded themselves as the descendants of the DP and ANAP line (26 percent) even though they started their political careers in the National View movement. Only 2 percent of respondents saw the AKP as a continuation of the National View movement.

eralism that promote ideological nationalism and rationalist utopias of radical, reactionary, top-down social engineering.¹³ “Erdoğan emphasized that the AK Party’s understanding of conservatism did not mean the conservation of established institutions and relations but implied the protection of important values and principles while pursuing progress” (Kuru, 2009, p. 178).

In his speech at the first general congress of the AKP on 12 October 2003, he “claimed that the AKP substituted a notion of politics based on compromise and reconciliation in place of a politics based on conflict, and described the AKP’s democratic conservatism as representing the ‘societal center’” (Özbudun, 2009, p. 549), meaning that he sees this ideology as a means of bridging the gap between the state and society and as a tool for uniting the center and the periphery.

In addition to the classical conservative emphasis on family, religion, the state, and society, these conservative-democrats also underline the significance of the nation, history, culture, tradition, solidarity and a firm identification with society. For example, they celebrate the rich, noble, and glorious history and heritage of the nation and its deeply-rooted state tradition, and they emphasize the party’s intent to fight against cultural degradation, violence, and vulgarity (AKP, 2002).

But despite these claims, the AKP falls short of offering a well-grounded theoretical and philosophical background for its image of conservative democracy, thus generating discussions about the nature and legitimacy of the concept. Critics claim that conservative democracy deliberately and completely lack ideological foundation, as it is “intended more for the consumption of intellectuals, the state establishment, and foreign policy-makers than as an ideology that will effectively mobilize its voter base (Fedayi 2004; Yıldız 2004, p. 46)” (Özbudun, 2009, p. 550).

The AKP managed to maintain its electoral success in subsequent general elections, receiving around 46 percent of the votes in 2007, 50 percent in 2011, and 49.5 percent in November 2015, and 42.6 percent in June 2018. Over this

13 Erdoğan states that “all efforts that impose or order certain principles and aim at a homogeneous society, or are based on social engineering are obstacles to a healthy democratic system . . . Our identity as conservative democrats make us oppose all kinds of social and political engineering” (Kalın, 2013, p. 428).

span of time, “the traditional center-right parties of Turkey almost completely evaporated from the political scene” (Dalay, 2014, p. 2) and the political socialization of the center-right and Islamic constituencies under the AKP umbrella culminated in the mutual reshaping of each other’s political dispositions. The weakening of the more radical, identity-driven political demands of the Islamists (such as their anti-EU posture), on one hand, led previously center-right voters to embrace a more religiously-flavored conservative political identity, on the other (Dalay, 2014).¹⁴

3.4.1 *The AKP Years: A Conservative Restructuring of Everyday Life*

On the social level, concerns and debates over whether Turkey is becoming more conservative under AKP rule is an ongoing debate. Some say that Turkey has always been conservative, but due to the dominant Kemalist ideology, this fragment of society was repressed until the AKP gave them a voice (Candansayar, 2009; Ertit, 2015). Others claim that while it is true that Turkish society and the youth were conservative before, the attitude, policies, and cadreization (the practice of favoring party supporters and people of the same opinion for cadres) of AKP rule encouraged people to become more proactively conservative (Toprak et al., 2009).

Private research companies, academic circles, institutes, and various NGOs have also started paying attention this matter, especially after the 2007 elections that once again resulted in a victory for the AKP. In 2007, for example, the private research company KONDA published a report called *Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life Survey*, which found out that from 2003 to 2007, the number of women in Turkey wearing a *türban* had increased by a multiple of 4.7 (from 3.5 percent to 16.3 percent). Even more striking, the increase among those wearing a *türban* was highest among the younger population. While 4.1 percent of youth were wearing a *türban* in 2003, this had increased to 19.7 percent by 2007 (KONDA, 2007, p. 9). Overall, between 2003 and 2007 the total percentage of veiling (*türban*, headscarf and chador combined) in the 18-28 age group also increased from 46.9 percent to 53.1 percent.

14 According to Tuğal (2013) with AKP “we have been witnessing the absorption of Islamism into a conservative project” (p. 128).

Similarly, in 2008, Professor Binnaz Toprak published research entitled *Being Different in Turkey: Religion, Conservatism and Otherization* that touched on the issue from a sociological perspective in which she argues that Turkey is in a phase of repressive conservatism in which “Alevi, the Roma, secularists and other individuals with different identities feel themselves excluded from the privileged world of Sunnis which seems to solidify with the AKP government as a result cadre-ization on the one hand, and the automatic reflex to support the powerful on the other” (Toprak et al., 2009, p. 129).

The analysis of the lifestyle politics of the AKP, its public space regulations, and the reflection of its conservative-democracy discourse in everyday life – especially in terms of the party’s mainstream attitude towards family, women’s rights, body politics, and education – can contribute to this debate.

3.4.1.1 Family and Women

Since its foundation, family holds a significant place in the AKP’s ideological stance. In line with the classical conservative view of society as a living organism, the AKP portrays the nation as a barge, extended family that shares the same values, respects traditions, and lives in harmony. The party’s 2003 government program, for example, describes the role of family in the AKP’s conservative ideology as follows:

The major philosophical and political concern of our conservative identity is to keep intact and healthy the social organism of the family that is capable of protecting the individual. . . . The family is the foundation of society and it is an important institution that plays a role in societal solidarity. Societal happiness, solidarity, peace, love and respect depend on the family. In spite of all the negative experiences and economic hardships we have been through, if we as a society are still intact, we owe it to our strong family structure.¹⁵ (AKP, 2003, pp. 2, 17)

15 “Bizim muhafazakâr kimliğimizin temel felsefi ve siyasal kaygısı, bireyi koruyabilecek bir aile olan toplumsal organizmayı sağlıklı ve bir arada tutabilmektir. . . . Aile, toplumun temeli ve toplumsal dayanışmanın oluşmasında rol oynayan önemli bir kurumdur. Toplumsal mutluluk, dayanışma, barış, sevgi ve saygının yolu aileden geçer. Yaşanan bütün olumsuzluklara ve

Family and community are key to the AKP's conservative ideology and its interpretation of the ideal nation based on organic coherence, and this rhetoric is often used as an instrument to underline "our" differences from the "West" and as a point of criticism of "other," secularist families. "It is this secularist and laicist group of people, according to Erdoğan, who have chosen in the name of modernity to neglect their duties towards the extended three-generational family" (Yazıcı, 2012, p. 114).

For Erdoğan, family is a natural, God-given social order that constitutes the cell of the nation. The family has an exclusive importance vis-à-vis individuals in general and women in particular. "His upbringing and his own family simply reflect the proper roles family members are supposed to play" (Değirmencioğlu, 2012, p. 183) and he considers alternative social arrangements to be moral deficiencies. Single women are simply women without husbands and single men are potential hazards full of desires that could interrupt the proper functioning and order of the society if not brought under control (Değirmencioğlu, 2012).¹⁶ "The society, thus, needs proper body politics, and the AKP should promote the family, sexual abstinence and strict gender roles" (Değirmencioğlu, 2012, p. 183).

In the party discourse, the family is the primary unit and the issues of women's rights and empowerment are discussed as part of it. "The party, in its election declaration in 2002, had already demonstrated its approach to women's issues in terms of the woman's essential role of 'bringing up the next generations and ensuring happiness in the family'" (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 565). It considers family and marriage to be the natural locus of women, and women's education is supported and emphasized in order that they can fulfill their natural, domestic responsibilities as mothers and wives.

Erdoğan bases his argument on the problem of an ageing population that Turkey is likely to face in the near future and uses every opportunity (public speeches, wedding ceremonies, and press conferences) to remind women of their reproductive capacity and his ideal for the Turkish family with an average

ekonomik sıkıntılara rağmen toplum olarak ayakta duruşumuzu, büyük çapta sağlam aile yapımıza borçlu olduğumuz açıktır."

16 "Erdoğan presents himself as an example: He was able to manage his youthful urges through early marriage" (Değirmencioğlu, 2012, p. 183).

of three children (Kaya, 2015, p. 60). Along similar lines, Erdoğan has repeatedly told families and particularly women that family planning and contraception are “not for Muslim families” (“Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: No Muslim family,” 2016) and that abortions are “a sneaky plan to wipe the country off the world stage” (Vela, 2012). Moreover, they amount to murder. “Although the government failed to amend the legislation on abortion in 2012, it strove to assert control over women’s bodies with laws passed via statutory decrees” (Kaya, 2015, p. 61). Even without a new abortion law, accessibility has decreased dramatically. Women’s rights groups in Turkey have established that most Istanbul hospitals, especially state hospitals, are violating the law by refusing to carry out abortions. Also, “hospitals introduced a messaging system that informed fathers about the pregnancies of their daughters, adding further pressure on women in a country where sex outside of marriage is considered largely unacceptable” (Letsch, 2015).

The emphasis on family in the AKP discourse is also reflected on the government’s body politics and the regulation of public spaces. Police presence in public parks, for example, has gradually increased throughout the AKP era, as parks are being portrayed strictly as a family domain. “This means heavy pressure on single men – young men under 30 – who are portrayed as potential hazards. If a park is to be a family place, women should feel comfortable and safe – particularly safe from moral hazards. Only if single men are kept at a distance, women –young and/or old – can be at peace” (Değirmencioğlu, 2012, p. 184).

3.4.1.2 Youth and Education

Since its first years in power, education has become a battlefield between the AKP and secularists. “It is indeed very remarkable that there were only two top Islamic priorities of the AKP during the 2002 electoral campaign, which were promises to lift the ban on headscarves, and to equate religious and secular degrees, i.e. to bring to an end the discrimination against imam hatip students in the university entrance exam” (Kaya, 2015, p. 55).

The ban on women wearing the headscarf from entering the University or holding a job in a state office, has long been a popular point of discussion be-

tween religious conservatives and more secular members of society and became “one of the tools with which pro-Islamist parties including the Welfare Party and the AKP have sought to win the public” (Kaya, 2015, p. 55). The AKP leadership often utilize headscarf rhetoric to mobilize its conservative voter base around the government’s policies, yet in the first term of an AKP majority (2002-2007), the AKP backed away from controversial measures in order not to provoke the reaction of the Turkish military. After the AKP’s landslide victory in the 2007 elections, however, things began to change dramatically. In early February 2008, with the support of the MHP, the governing AKP passed changes to the constitution citing the principle of equality before the law and the right to education for all. Even though the headscarf ban was not specifically mentioned in the amendment, the parliament’s primary intention was indeed to end the ban at universities. “In response, the opposition CHP (Republican People’s Party) and the DSP (Democratic Left Party) applied to the Constitutional Court for the annulment of these changes on the grounds that they violated the principle of secularism in Article 2 of the Constitution” (Kaya, 2009, p. 396), and the Constitutional Court decided to annul the amendments in June 2008. However, in a September 2010 directive from the Council of Higher Education (*Yükseköğretim Kurulu* or YÖK) called on universities to lift the ban after the government issued a formal statement saying it would support any student expelled or disciplined for wearing a headscarf on their campus.

In September 2013, following the headscarf regulation for higher education, the AKP government lifted the ban on headscarves in civil service except for the judiciary, military, and police as part of broader package of reforms driven by the European Union integration process. In August 2016 and November 2016, respectively, the headscarf ban for Turkey’s police and military forces was also lifted following amendments made to their dress codes which referred to the same reform package passed by the government in 2013.

The situation of imam hatip schools (religious vocational schools or IHLs) is another point that has been explicitly put forward by the AKP since 2002. While the AKP government has been making attempts to popularize IHLs since its first years in power, the most notable educational reform to significantly impact the situation of IHLs came in 2012 with a new law that extended

compulsory education from eight to twelve years –popularly known as “4+4+4” – meaning four years each of primary, middle, and high schools. This founded the basis for reopening imam hatip middle schools by allowing and encouraging families to choose among different types of secondary schools, including IHLs. “After the passage of 4+4+4, the number of imam hatip high schools soared, almost doubling within three years: 708 in the 2012-2013 school year, 854 in the 2013–2014 school year; and 1,017 in the 2014-2015 school year” (Makovsky, 2015, p. 10).

In addition to ideological battles with respect to the headscarf ban and the status of IHLs in the Turkish education system, the AKP also intervened in the standardized national curriculum by authorizing the availability of elective religious courses (“Quran,” “Fundamentals of Religion,” “The Life of our Prophet”) in all public and private middle and high schools and in “the transformation of the school textbooks on Religious Culture and Morality in 2007 and 2008” (Kaya, 2015, p. 57).

Education is one of the most important spheres used by the AKP to indoctrinate youth. The abolishment of laws restricting religious education, the increase in the number of Quran courses, the reforms in 2010 that made it possible to transform regular high schools into religious vocational high schools, and the 4+4+4 reform program launched in 2012 that also made considerable changes to the Quran courses offered by the Directorate of Religious Affairs,¹⁷ are among the changes made to achieve this aim.

The AKP’s youth policies are not limited to the changes in education system. In 2012, Erdoğan openly expressed his mission to foster a pious generation and took steps to regulate areas that directly impacted the everyday lives of youth – including regulations on sales of alcohol and living conditions of university students. These had significant impact on the Gezi Park protests in summer 2013 in which young people protested against the AKP government’s policies regarding freedom of expression and lifestyle.

17 The Quran courses were previously co-managed with the Ministry of Education; the directorate now manages them alone. Also, the minimum age of twelve to attend Quran courses was abolished, and in 2013, a special project was launched for the provision of Quran courses to preschoolers (Cornell, 2015).

3.4.1.3 The Restructuring of the Public Spaces

For secularist urbanites, AKP rule means the gradual curtailment of their social and public sphere. Practices associated with a secular way of life have been slowly regulated. “The sale of alcohol was banned within a designated distance around mosques; drinking has been restricted at open air events and at public concerts and exhibitions; restaurants have been forbidden from advertising alcohol; the sale of alcohol along highways was banned, ostensibly for fear of accidents; and its sale in many coastal vacation spots was restricted, purportedly based on fears of violence” (Ze’evi, 2013, pp. 5-6).

From the beginning, the AKP’s ideal cultural scene is marked by nostalgia for the Ottoman period in which traditional and conservative values dominated the everyday life. “Even before 1997, Mayor Erdoğan had been using Istanbul’s religious heritage as a means of attracting global capital and tourism” (Tuğal, 2013, p. 124).¹⁸ The process accelerated following the victory of the AKP in 2002. Municipalities began to organize nightly Ramadan festivities and shopping malls designed with neo-Ottoman and Islamic architectural aesthetics flourished in major cities, particularly in Istanbul. “In commemoration of the Ottoman ‘Tulip Era’ of the 1720s, the AKP has taken to decorating the city with the flowers” (Tuğal, 2008, p. 76). The social and spatial transformation initiated by the AKP is also evident in the Turkish media, where control and consent have been achieved either through partisan entrepreneurs taking over or founding new mainstream media channels or through direct pressures on media with anti-government stances. “The ways in which the AKP has manufactured consent have not been limited to the ideological venues of popular culture: Scientific journals have also been published in order to disseminate the ideas and perspectives of the party” (Kaya, 2015, p. 51). Especially since the 2007 elections, professional Islamic intellectuals have dominated public space by means of the press and media.

To reiterate, conservatism in Turkey has its own unique history over the lifespan of the republic. Conservatism as a reaction to the radically positivist

18 “The commodification of Islam as a marketing strategy incorporated into ‘Brand Turkey’ through Turkish Airlines and ‘Ramadan in Istanbul’” (Kaya, 2015, p. 51).

policies of the single-party found the opportunity to incorporate into the official ideology following the transition from single-party to multi-party politics.

The Cold War and the gradual rise of the left in the country in the 1960s and 1970s played an important role in further incorporating a nationalist conservatism based on the trilogy of religion-state-nation into the official ideology and politics of Turkey. Seeing communism as an existential threat and the most dangerous enemy of the republic, conservatives united to fight communism and gained popularity in both the political and the social sphere. The 1980-83 military junta fed this trend and leveraged Sunni Islam as an antidote to communism by further adopting the Turkish-Islam Synthesis as an official project.

The last decade of the twentieth century was a traumatic, catastrophic experience for Turkey. The country simultaneously faced devastating domestic and international crises, which caused anxiety among the public about the future of the country's wellbeing. "A deep sense of socioeconomic frustration began to show in the everyday interactions of people," and "economic liberalism, relaxation of government controls and regulations over domestic and foreign trade, and privatization were perceived as not providing for a fair playing field" (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 24). This coincided with the appearance of Kurdish nationalist and terrorist networks, corruption scandals, unstable coalition governments, and an increasingly insecure international environment, which created a determined search for a moral and just order.

In this catastrophic environment when the masses were deeply alienated from existing political parties and coalitions, the AKP swept the vote in 2002. The party came into the political scene at the perfect time when there was a cry for "restitution of the moral order of the past in place of the decadent practices of globalization. . . . In two national surveys conducted during April and May 2006 and June and July 2007, it was unearthed that the most important demand for change among the Turkish population was a return to a revered moral past" (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 24) from the society.

By pushing a conservative democratic identity, the AKP distanced itself from the Islamist National View movement and sought the support of intellectuals and the state establishment. By focusing on the democratic aspect of their conservative-democracy rhetoric, the AKP endorsed the DP-ANAP line

and positioned itself to the right of center. It immediately became a mass party during a period when “the masses [also] seemed to shift toward a more traditional and religious society that promoted values stressing respect for the extended family and blood ties, religious solidarity, the elderly, the local customs, and territorial solidarity, and suspicion of foreigners and foreign cultures” (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 24).

The AKP met the challenge of proving it could perform better than the alternatives and promised the moral, just order for which society was longing for, which won them an even a higher percentage of the popular vote in the 2007 election. But after AKP victories in the 2007 and 2011 elections that perpetually resulted in the victory of the AKP, the emphasis on religion (Sunni Islam) in its understanding of conservatism has intensified in its policies and practices.

According to Tuğal (2013) especially after the AKP’s second election victory, “we are witnessing the absorption of Islamism into a conservative project” (p. 128). From 2002 to 2007, the AKP won the hearts and votes of the public by pushing a “conservative democracy” ideology that emphasized freedoms and pluralism. But after the 2007 elections – and especially in the post-2012 election period – conservatism started to signal Sunni Islam. Conservatism and religion is now used interchangeably, and with initiatives like the Kurdish-Turkish peace process, the other mother lode of Turkish conservatism, namely nationalism, fades into the background. In the general elections on 7 June 2015 the AKP lost its majority when the Peoples’ Democracy Party (*Halkların Demokratik Partisi* or HDP), which focused on the problems of Kurds, surpassed the election threshold. The incident is another milestone in the history of Turkish conservative discourse as the AKP immediately brought out the nationalist feature of Turkish conservatism and waged a war against the PKK, the HDP, and Kurdish nationalism. Reminding the masses of nationalism proved effective in the November 2015 elections when the AKP regained its parliamentary majority in the legalization of military operations in the southeast of Turkey, and in the legitimization of a crisis of strained relations with Russia after Turkey downed a Russian military jet in December 2015.

As Bora (1998), Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu (2009), and Mert (2007) suggest, the Turkish conservative mindset rests on the two main pillars of nationalism and religion. It is based on “an acceptance of modernization (and indeed partial Westernization), but it reacts against the top-down modernization of the secular elite. . . . In this imaginary, the nation is constructed quite monolithically, as the holder of the true Turkish and Islamic values” (Tuğal, 2013, p. 109).



News as Ideological Discourse: The Social Power of the News Media

One of the most enduring debates in the study of mass communication is the effect of the media on the public and its behavior. The literature on this influence and the effects of the mass media is rich. Early research from the 1940s and 1950s emphasized the power of the media, and these decades were “a time when propaganda was thought to work like a ‘magic bullet’ to change people’s attitudes, beliefs, and even behavior” (Coleman et al., 2009, p. 148). This position, however, started to reverse in the 1960s and 1970s, giving way to a more cynical approach to the effects of the mass media as more and more research done in the field showed that the media had little effect on people’s behavior.¹ “This was the era of the ‘limited media effects’ paradigm, and it was then suggested that the media especially have agenda-setting and framing functions” (Coleman et al., 2009, p. 148).

Rooted in Lippmann’s (1922) discussion of the influence of media messages on mental representations, agenda setting refers to “the process of the mass media presenting certain issues frequently and prominently with the result that large segments of the public come to perceive those issues as more important than others” (Coleman et al., 2009, p. 147). Contemporary scholars

1 See, for example, Barelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee (1954) and Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1948).

such as Gregory Bateson and Erving Goffman expand on this idea and argue that for individuals, social events and situations are defined and built up according to principles of organization – frames – that are the primary means through which people make sense of the complex world in which they live. To put it more simply, the agenda setting and framing approaches to mass communication propose that the press and the news media in general have rather indirect effects on people's attitudes and behavior. They "do not tell people what to think, but rather what to think about" (Gregory and Miller, 2000, p. 359).

As Van Dijk (2009) suggests, classical studies of news and news making up until the 1980s mainly focused on organizational and social dimensions of news, such as news gathering routines, journalistic interactions, and the structural organization of newspapers.

Some of the classical books published since the end of the 1970s and early 1980s started featuring sections on the ideological nature of news, but in those studies such accounts of ideology are more general, largely limited to a relatively brief account of ideologies in the newsroom and of journalists, rather than the properties of the coverage itself. Fieldwork observations were the basis of the account of the general ideological consensus in the newsroom, and of the boundaries of the possible variation under hegemonic influence of the newspaper as a bureaucracy and a business enterprise. These newsroom observations remained rather general, and hardly inquire into the ideological details of news values, news beats, interactions with news sources, news formats, styles and contents, among other aspects of news making. In that sense, most investigations are contemporary studies of the sociology of bureaucratic and organizational routines and taken for granted knowledge and values, rather than integrating the notion in detailed and systematic ideological analyses of news in the press. (p. 196)

The first systematic discursive and cognitive approaches to news structures, news production, and news comprehension and to the indirect, overall, and ideological influences of the media appeared in the late 1980s, particularly in the work of Teun A. Van Dijk. Van Dijk criticizes the existing studies about

news and news production for remaining theoretically incomplete when it comes to providing a detailed account of the ideologies involved and the structures of news that are controlled by them. Rather, he proposes a more systematic, sophisticated, multidisciplinary theory of news production, news structures, and news reception, combined with new theories of ideology as social cognition and of news reports and news production as specific social and discursive practices that are able to account for the detailed mechanisms of the reproduction of ideologies by the mass media. Van Dijk argues that the (social) power of the news media must be analyzed within a broader framework of the social, cultural, political, and economic power structures of society. He believes that the influence, effect, and power of the news media should not be confined to audiences. In order to understand the role of the news media and their messages, he argues, “one needs to pay detailed attention to the structures and strategies of such discourses and the ways these relate to institutional arrangements, on one hand, and to the audience, on the other hand” (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 10).

Van Dijk (2009) also proposes a more intertwined relationship between the media and society. According to him, the news is not immune from ideology² and in fact plays a critical role in the production and reproduction of them in any given society.

As in the case of most public discourse, the news is also imbued with ideologies, and a detailed study of such ideologies in the mass media and other forms of public elite discourse contributes to our insights into their very reproduction in society. News media plays a prominent role in the (re)production of ideologies in society. The elites that control the access to, and the contents and structures of public discourse, and that of the mass media, in particular, thus be able to control the formation and reproduction of the very ideologies that help to sustain their power. (p.202)

2 He defines ideology as “the basic mechanism of the social cognitions of a group, that is, as systems of norms and values that control the coherence and the development of more specific social attitudes” (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 16). For a comprehensive study of ideology as a concept, see Van Dijk (1998).

Van Dijk (1996) touches on the relationship between media and power and acknowledges that the power of the media is mainly indirect, “symbolic and persuasive, in the sense that the media primarily have the potential to control to some extent the minds of readers or viewers, but not directly their actions” (p. 10). This argument suggests that media power is most effective when the recipients of the messages do not realize the nature of the process and believe that they are changing their minds of their own free will by accepting that news reports and journalistic opinions are true and free of manipulation and control.

Once such fundamental patterns of knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies are firmly in place due to repeated news reporting and other forms of public discourse (e.g., in education), they will further act on their own when people have to evaluate news events. After some time, there is little need for conspicuous manipulation of specific knowledge and opinions of the readers for each case. Once given the (carefully selected) facts, although presented in a seemingly objective fashion, the readers will themselves produce the preferred models of the elites and may even act accordingly: An active consensus will replace passive or tacit consent. Ideological control in that case is virtually total, or hegemonic, precisely because persuasive text and talk are no longer seen as ideological but as self-evidently true. (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 16)

Van Dijk suggests that social researchers must expand their narrow social and political approaches to power and adopt a more cognitive approach in their analyses. He therefore introduces a “sociocognitive theory” to deal with the beliefs and social cognitions such as attitudes and ideologies that are shared by groups of readers or viewers. He also acknowledges that the ideologies and opinions of newspapers are social, institutional, and political, which requires an account of social structures (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 22). With this unique, critical perspective on the study of social power in general and media power in particular, he argues, researchers can give precise meaning to abstract issues

such as manipulation and influence that are usually evaluated in negative terms³ (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 11).

In sum, Van Dijk believes that the mainstream news media are not passive recipients or victims of economic or political control and manipulation, but also manufacturers and producers of ideology and public opinion. In this perspective, “the news media generally do not act as major opponents of political or corporate policies and interests is not because of their powerlessness, but because of the fundamental similarities of ideological positions” (Van Dijk, 1996, pp. 28-29).

The argument that the social power of news media cannot be analyzed in isolation from the relevant aspects of the social, political and ideological context requires a context-bound research on national and regional media systems, media ownership patterns and media’s relationship with political elites. This is because media “reflects and embodies the historical processes within which it was developed and the contemporary social conditions within which it was made” (McNair, 1998, p. 64). As Papathanassopoulos (2001) echoes, micro-level analyses are required in turn to fully analyze the media structures and systems of a particular country or region.

Although there are similarities in the issues concerning media systems around the globe, . . . each national system still differs in many respects when compared to others. The same applies to journalism, its practices and its professional culture, since media organizations reflect the differences between political systems, political philosophies, cultural traits and economic conditions. (Papathanassopoulos, 2001, pp. 505-506)

Even though Van Dijk’s discursive, sociocognitive approach to news production, news structures, and news reception and Hallin and Papathanassopoulos’ notion of a regionally-grounded understanding of media systems are not new phenomena, so far, there are no studies that combine these two theories

3 To distinguish between legitimate, acceptable power and abuse of power, Van Dijk uses the term “dominance” for the latter (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 11).

to evaluate the news media of Turkey. In fact, there are only a handful of research about the media system and structure in Turkey, and they mainly focus on the political economy of the media in Turkey,⁴ the main characteristics of the Turkish media structure in comparison with other parts of the world – especially with Southern Europe and Latin America⁵ – and the effect of the proliferation of broadcast media in the 1980s, particularly the effect on news media.⁶ In these analyses, the mainstream news media are considered to be passive objects of economic or political control, and their role as the reproducers of (dominant) ideologies is almost always ignored.

This, however, does not mean that the existing studies on Turkish media are fruitless or a waste of time. On the contrary, these foundational works vitally place Turkish news media in the broader context of the social, cultural, political, and economic power structures of the society, which is an integral part of Van Dijk's approach to the study of news media.

§ 4.1 Media Structure in Turkey

In their numerous works on journalism and the media systems of Southern Europe and Latin America, particularly of Greece and Spain, Halinn and Papathanassopoulos argue that these two regions have fundamental similarities when it comes to their media systems. There are five main, common features: “low levels of newspaper circulation, a tradition of advocacy reporting, instrumentalization of privately-owned media, politicization of public broadcasting and broadcast regulation, and limited development of journalism as an autonomous profession” (Halinn and Papathanassopoulos, 2002, p. 3).

According to Halinn and Papathanassopoulos (2002), the most obvious distinction between the media of Southern Europe and those of the rest of Western Europe is their low level of newspaper circulation. According to the World Press Trends 2014 report published by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers, newspapers reach only 40.3 percent of the adult

4 See, for example, Çağlar and Çakar-Mengü (2009) and Sönmez (1996).

5 See, for example, Christensen (2007) and Öncü (2011).

6 See, for example, Bek (2004), Öncü (2011) and Ergül (2000).

Mexican population, 24 percent of the adult Brazilian population, 40.3 percent of the adult Italian population, and 32.4 percent of the adult Spanish population. Another striking commonality that Halinn and Papathanassopoulos (2002) mention is that most of these countries have long standing traditions of advocacy reporting. “In contrast with the Anglo-American model of professional neutrality, journalism in Southern Europe and Latin America tends to emphasize commentary from a distinct political perspective” (p. 3) – a characteristic that is valid for most of continental Europe but is stronger in Southern European countries like Greece and in Italy “where strong and highly polarized political parties have existed for all or much of the post World WarII period, than in countries like Spain, Portugal and Brazil, where long periods of dictatorship suppressed the development of political parties” (p. 3).

Halinn and Papathanassopoulos (2002) also note that in almost all Southern European and Latin American countries, there is a tendency of large conglomerates and individuals involved in politics to leverage and control the media for private economic and political interests. To support this argument, they cite the example of Italy where one of the national daily newspapers *Il Giorno* was established by the Italian multinational oil and gas company Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi to support the interests of the sector. Meanwhile, private television in Italy is dominated by media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi, who served as the Prime Minister of Italy for four terms. The media structure in Greece is similar. Large conglomerates and businessmen operate in the shipping, travel, construction, telecommunications and oil industries dominate media ownership and use the media as a means to further political interests. “As Papathanassopoulos (2000) notes, ‘give me a ministry or I will start a newspaper’ is a traditional political threat in Greece” (Halinn and Papathanassopoulos, 2002, p. 4).

Advocacy reporting and the instrumentalization of privately-owned media is also evident in the majority of Latin American countries. Whereas in Brazil, this is most visible in regional media, large business groups in Colombia began to invest in media the industry in the 1960s and 1970s motivated by

political and economic interests, and hence the media became strongly dependent on state patronage.⁷

The politicization of public broadcasting and broadcast regulations is another feature of Latin American and Southern European media systems. While most countries in Western Europe have established the necessary institutions to separate public broadcasting from the direct control of the government, Halinn and Papathanassopoulos (2002) argue that countries in Southern Europe, especially Spain and Greece, have failed to do so.

The ruling party directly controls public broadcasting in these countries, and “the management of the news divisions of public television changes with a change in government, and the news is at important moments mobilized to support the government politically” (Bustamante, 1989; Díez Nicolás and Semetko, 1995; Rospir, 1996). In Greece news and editorial judgements are expected to be in close agreement with, if not identical to government announcements across a whole range of policies and decisions. . . . In Mexico, the Office of Radio, Television and Cinema is a branch of the Interior Ministry (Secretario de Gobernación) and thus under direct political control. In Brazil, similarly, broadcast regulation is under the control of the Ministry of Communication, and recent presidents have used broadcast licenses as an important form of political patronage, doling out hundreds to politicians in return for support on key political initiatives (Costa and Brener 1997; Motter, 1994).” (pp. 6-7)

Such instrumentalization of the news media for political and economic ends obviously indicates that the media has limited journalistic autonomy in South-

7 “In Colombia, the press which was originally born as privately-owned united family control with political affiliation in an almost indissoluble manner (Rey, 1998: 164; Fonnegra, 1984; Santos Calderón, 1989). The families that owned the newspapers were the same that dominated the Liberal and Conservative parties, and the press was first and foremost a vehicle of party politics. Most Colombian presidents have had backgrounds in journalism; the most legendary figure in Colombian journalism is Eduardo Santos, publisher of *El Tiempo* and President from 1938-42” (Halinn and Papathanassopoulos, 2002, p. 5).

ern European and Latin American societies. Intervention by owners is not unexpected in any modern media systems, but tensions and conflicts over direct interference are usually rare in part because “journalists accept as natural the fact that different media have different political positions, to which they must adapt” (Halinn and Papathanassopoulos, 2002, p. 8). Moreover, the majority of journalists, especially senior ones, already share the political orientation of the organization for which they work.

Apart from the common features discussed above, Halinn and Papathanassopoulos (2002) also touch on the concept of clientelism and the relevance of this tradition for understanding media structures in these countries and regions. They suggest that even though this relationship is not yet on the agenda of researchers, clientelism, defined as “a pattern of social organization in which access to social resources is controlled by patrons and delivered to clients in exchange for deference and various kinds of support” (p. 11), is a relevant concept for “understanding the political economy of media not only in Southern Europe and Latin America but also in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and much of Africa and Asia” (p. 10). A persistent clientelist culture, they suggest, “tend[s] to break down the autonomy of social institutions and journalism is no exception [as] it forces the logic of journalism to merge with other social logics – of party politics and family privilege, for example” (p. 15). It also encourages the “instrumentalization of the news media” (p. 12) in which information is treated as a privately-held resource, and it “tend[s] to blur the lines between public and private domains, privileging the private, with the result that politicians in cultures tending to clientelism will tend to see as intrusions into private affairs kinds of reporting that would be taken for granted in more liberal societies” (p. 15).

As Bek (2004) and Öncü (2011) also underline, the aforementioned features of Southern European and Latin American media systems are remarkably similar to the main characteristics of the Turkish media structure. Öncü (2011), for example, argues that “contemporary media markets in Turkey can be described in terms of a number of salient features including: 1) a very narrowly based but politically active press; 2) overwhelming dominance of commercial/tabloid television in the public arena; 3) media conglomerates with links in diverse sectors of the economy, most notably banking; and 4) political

polarization in the public domain, with continuing struggles over media ownership and regulation.” But while these features are similar to those of Southern Europe, she adds, “they have interacted with one another in historically specific ways within the wider context of political conflicts in Turkey, yielding a distinctive configuration” (p. 125).

With the rapid neoliberal redevelopment and transformation of the Turkish economy under the leadership of Turgut Özal in the early 1980s, Turkey experienced radical, significant changes in economic, social, and political spheres, and the media environment was not immune to this process. With the adoption of liberalization and privatization policies, the Turkish media landscape experienced an important “transition from a highly centralized economy, heavy military influence and a state-run media, to a more free market economy with privately owned newspapers and television stations” (Christensen, 2007, p. 182).

The market-based neoliberal economic policies of the Özal government indeed required an information-based society and economy and resulted in rapid, massive investment in the information sector, especially in the area of telecommunications infrastructure.⁸ Özal personally encouraged large conglomerates to invest in the media industry, which created a win-win situation for both parties. While these family-owned corporate holding companies benefited from close ties with the government and started using small, unprofitable but effective media investments to advertise and promote the financial interests of their brands, the government used these relationships to gain the unconditional support of the mainstream media and consequently to receive public support.

The effects of this transformation and the boom in broadcasting had profound implications for the print press. In fact, the newspaper-reading public already constituted a small proportion of society even before the advent of commercial television; the total circulation of the daily newspapers was only around four million. According to a national survey conducted in 1990 by PIAR-Gallup, only around 30 percent of the adult population surveyed when

8 “By 1990, more than 60 percent of Turkey’s 12 million households had acquired color television sets. In large metropolitan centers this figure had reached up to 99 percent” (Öncü, 2011, p. 126).

a newspaper at least once a week. “To be specific, 67.6 percent never read newspapers . . . [and] among women, the percentage responding to never was 79.9 percent, in contrast to 56.4 percent among men” (Öncü, 2011, p. 133). The expansion of television would only contribute to this poor picture.

The rapid transformation of the press in the 1980s wiped highly-respected families (the Simavis, Nadis, and Karacans) out of the field of publishing in Turkey.⁹ It was the consolidation of large media conglomerates – owned by businesses whose capital accumulation came from other fields, particularly banking and construction – that prolonged the life of the country’s daily newspapers.

These major shifts in the economic outlook of the country were also accompanied by drastic changes to newspaper ownership structures. The diffused, decentralized print press – which was composed of small, independent publications before the changes of the early 1980s – gave way in the course of a decade to concentrated ownership by large corporations with cross ownership in daily newspapers and other periodicals, corporations often having interests in commercial broadcasting. On one hand, these links “lent enormous economic-cum-political power to dominant actors in [the] media markets. But at the same time, it . . . made them immediately vulnerable to financial crises in the domestic economy” (Öncü, 2011, p. 129), as the financial crisis of 2001 clearly showed.¹⁰

The changes that occurred in the 1980s and early 1990s, namely the concentration of media ownership in the hands of large, private conglomerates and the fierce commercialism promoted by warring private television channels, had far reaching repercussions for the country’s media structure. Ac-

9 Öncü (2011) suggests that “despite their enormous intellectual prestige and political influence, they were never able to accumulate the kind of wealth and economic power associated with the rising industrial tycoons of the post- World War II decades” (p. 125).

10 “Dinç Bilgin was wiped out during the financial crisis of 2001, following the collapse of his Etibank and his imprisonment on the charges of fraud. Similarly, İhlas Finance, the linchpin of Enver Ören’s İhlas conglomerate, collapse and left behind a much-weakened media group. Doğu Holding ended up selling its influential 24-hour news channel NTV” (Öncü, 2011, p. 129).

According to Kaya and Çakmur (2010), these developments had three main consequences. First, especially as a direct result of the “media wars” among television channels, scandal, sports and popular entertainment started to dominate the content shown on television and covered by the news media. The news media in Turkey came to be identified with tabloidization and infotainment. “Second, the journalistic autonomy has even reduced compared to earlier periods as the means of suppression has doubled with the entrance of the business interests in addition to favoring the political” (Yavçan and Ongur, 2014, p. 4). And third, there was a rapid increase in conservative, Islamist media (Kaya and Çakmur, 2010, p. 529). In fact, as Ayata (1993) suggests, communication is the area where the rise of religiosity is visible most visible (p. 52). Saktanber (2013) makes a similar argument, underlining that the commercialization of Turkish broadcasting that accompanied the ending of the monopoly of Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) in 1990 was the most important social rupture experienced in Turkey in that decade. It played a vital role in the “dissemination of Islamic messages and the creation of its popular cultural forms” (p. 267). From the 1990s onwards, “Islamic’ radio stations, newspapers, magazines, music groups, novelists, and filmmakers that cater to Muslim audiences have become a thriving cultural market in Turkey” (Öncü, 2011, p. 131). Television serials, cartoons, “as well as the ‘small media’ like Islamic postcards, graffiti, stickers and posters started to appear in the market, thereby constituting an important aspect of Islamic popular culture” (Saktanber, 2013, p. 264). This was coupled with the proliferation of the Internet and Islamic, conservative online discussion groups and websites in the 2000s.

Despite all this, Öncü (2011) makes the critical point that these conservative media, especially television channels, failed to accomplish their initial aim of luring pious audiences away from seductive infotainment broadcasting.

The first experiments with “Islamic” broadcasting in the mid-1990s revealed that Turkish audiences – devout or not – were not interested in religiously edifying programs on television. Since then, the dilemma of reconciling light entertainment with the cultural codes of “Islamic modesty” on the visual landscape of television has been the Achilles heel of alternative-Muslim channels. They have either undergone

mainstreaming, or remained restricted to a very narrowly based audience. (p. 132)

Saktanber (2013) makes a similar argument and points out that the elements that constitute commercial forms of popular Islamic culture are not innovations but rather “appear to be duplications of the forms prevalent in general youth culture” (p. 264). This, in turn, supports the assumption that conservatism was gradually mainstreamed in Turkish popular culture in general and in the media in particular, especially after the AKP’s rise to power in the early 2000s.

When the AKP came to power in 2002, the party made “centralized control of communications and “proactive information management” one of its top priorities” (Öncü, 2011, p. 132). Hence, it dedicated significant energy to reshaping the media structure and the pattern of media ownership in the country. According to Akser and Baybars-Hawks (2012), developments surrounding the Uzan Group, one of the major business conglomerates in Turkey in the 1990s with investments in the media sector, can be regarded as a perfect example of the AKP’s imagining of the media sector in Turkey when it first came to power in 2002.

The Uzan family was known for its lavish lifestyle and together with very powerful media outlets they also owned the second largest GSM Company (TELSIM) in Turkey that was in business with the cell phone manufacturer Motorola. The family group benefited greatly from the privatization tenders in the 1990s. Most of the Uzan family were already being investigated by the previous governments for the mismanagement of their banks and not paying Motorola its share of billions of dollars of cellphones sold. Cem Uzan entered two consecutive elections in 2002 and 2007 and his party attracted an unprecedented voter turnout (around 7 percent of all of the popular vote). Uzan was critical of the AKP in the 2007 elections and targeted the prime minister in every public speech he made. Lawsuits followed after the election and Uzan family members fled the country and their companies were seized by the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF). The media assets of the Uzan Group were sold to either international corporation, such as

the Canadian company, CanWest, or to groups friendly to the government. The Uzan Group lost Star TV, Star Newspaper, Metro FM, Rock FM and Joy FM along with its national GSM operator license (Adaklı 2010: 591-595). The Doğan Group, which was on good terms with the AKP at that time, acquired Star TV and became the most powerful media conglomerate. (pp. 307-308)

The AKP's second election victory in 2007 marked a significant change to the structure of the media and to the government's relationship with media groups. As Tunç (2010) underlines, after 2007 "the structure of media changed radically with the increase of media outlets openly supporting government policies and with the AKP's move toward a more authoritarian control of the media" (p. 645). Corke et al. (2014) also confirm Tunç's observation with reference to the acquisition of *Sabah*-ATV by a pro-government conglomerate, Çalık Holding, and to the massive fine issued to the Doğan Media Group in 2009.

As the AKP strengthened its political position, it began to assert more control over the media sector, and the old red lines were replaced with new ones. An important step came in 2007 when the country's second-largest media group, *Sabah*-ATV, was sold to Çalık Holding – the company where Erdoğan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak was the CEO of the company. That same year, the government took aim at the largest media owner in the country, Doğan Media Group. Doğan had enraged PM Erdoğan when its flagship papers, *Hürriyet* and *Milliyet*, gave extensive front-page coverage of a German court case, accusing several prominent Turkish citizens with ties to the top of the AKP of embezzling tens of millions of dollars from a Turkish charity. Erdoğan responded by calling for a boycott of the entire media group [and in February 2009, the group was] hit with a \$500 million tax fine, raised in September of the same year to \$2.5 billion, four-fifths of the market capitalization of the entire company. (p. 7)

The duration of the AKP's second term was filled with equally controversial practices with respect to the transformation of media structures and the de-

cline of journalistic freedom. The launch of the Ergenekon case in 2008 resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of ten journalists, and YouTube was banned in the country from May 2008 to October 2010 due to complaints about videos insulting Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. In September 2010, two weeks after his constitutional referendum victory, then Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan met with Turkey's top media executives and called for a new era of responsible journalism.

But the most fundamental event that cemented government ties to the conglomerate-dominated media was the Gezi Park events in 2013. Şanlı (2015) summarizes the role played by the media during the events as follows:

The government's influence on the mass media in Turkey has been unequivocally brought to the forefront by the Gezi events of mid-2013. At the beginning of the events, on 31 May 2013, when a major clash between the protestors and police forces was taking place on Istanbul's famous Taksim Square, CNN's Turkish affiliate, CNN Türk was showing a documentary about penguins, and other popular news channels, like NTV were similarly turning a blind eye. Throughout the summer of 2013, major news and mainstream channels continued to show little interest in the massive anti-government protests surrounding the Gezi movement, while devoting ample live coverage to the prime minister's public appearances and speeches. As a result, social media outlets Twitter and Facebook, as well as small independent television networks such as Halk TV, gained the upper hand in informing the public about the events. (Şanlı, 2015)



Figure 4.1 The broadcast of CNN Türk alongside the broadcast of CNN International on 2 June 2013 at 1:06 a.m. Reprinted from “Lessons from last weekend: Press chill,” by J. Meyer, 2013, Retrieved from <http://blog2.jhmeyer.net/2013/06/media-chill-in-turkey-news-from-penguin.html> . Copyright 2008-2016 by James H. Meyer.

It is difficult to assess the number of media representatives affected by their coverage of and position on the Gezi Park protests. The Journalists Union of Turkey declared that fifty-nine journalists were fired or forced out between 31 May and 22 July 2013. This number increased to around eighty by August, including veteran journalists like Can Dündar (who was fired from *Milliyet* newspaper), Can Ataklı (who resigned from *Vatan* newspaper), Nilay Örnek (who was fired from *Akşam* newspaper), Ayhan Bölükbaşı (who was put on compulsory leave by Show TV news) and Yavuz Baydar (who was fired from *Sabah* newspaper). The entire staff of the *NTV Tarih* magazine was fired for preparing a special edition dedicated to the Gezi Park protests. “The AKP mayor of Ankara, Melih Gökçek, started a Twitter campaign against BBC reporter Selin Girit with the hashtag “#Don’t be a spy in the name of England Selin Girit” (Corke et al., 2014, p. 9). In November, two employees of the public television channel *TRT* were fired for sharing pro-Gezi content on their personal social media accounts.



Figure 4.2 Cover of the censored edition of NTV's *Tarih* magazine. Reprinted from "How a history magazine fell victim to self-censorship," by A. Finkel, (n.d.), Retrieved from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/democracy-crisis-corruption-media-and-power-turkey/how-history-magazine-fell-victim-self>. Copyright 2018 by Freedom House.

Less than six months after the Gezi Park protests, Turkish media underwent yet another historical development with the revelation of the most serious corruption scandal in the country's recent history. Following the leak of wiretapped conversations among Erdoğan, several other leading figures of the AKP, and businessmen including media owners, YouTube and Twitter were temporarily blocked, and the attacks on Gülenist media began. Initially, over twenty journalists and staff members from *Zaman* newspaper and Samanyolu TV were arrested. The arrest of the paper's editor-in-chief, Ekrem Dumanlı, the government takeover of the newspaper in early 2016, and its eventual close on 27 July 2016 followed along with the closure of other pro-Gülenist media outlets including Mehtap TV, Samanyolu TV, Yumurcak TV, and Cihan News Agency in the aftermath of an attempted coup on 15 July 2016.

The failed coup of 15 July 2016 is also a milestone for the Turkish media landscape. The Turkish government declared a three-month state of emergency five days after the incident and extended it for an additional ninety days that October. As of December 2016, 170 media outlets have been shut down

and 144 journalists have been imprisoned, including veteran conservative writers and academics such as Nazlı Ilıcak, Şahin Alpay, and Ali Bulaç, under the rule by decree.

Media outlets targeted for shut down by decree included Kurdish media along with publications with ties to the Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organization (*Fethullah Gülen Terör Örgütü* or FETÖ), which raised criticism that the government leveraged the coup attempt as an excuse to crack down on all journalists and publications that were critical of the government (Malsin, 2016).

Turkey has never had a good international record with respect to media literacy and freedom, and recent developments under the state of emergency have only contributed to this poor picture. According to the World Press Trends 2014 report, newspapers reach only 25.35 percent of the adult population in Turkey, significantly below the average and even below the countries such as Egypt (49.9 percent), Lebanon (34.8 percent), Malaysia (56.24 percent), Serbia (38 percent) and South Africa (29.80 percent). “Since 2007, there has been a consistent drop in Turkey’s place in global human rights watch lists concerning freedom of the press” (Akser and Baybars-Hawks, 2012, p. 309). Turkey currently ranks 157th of the 180 nations in the 2018 World Press Freedom Index, a drop of six places when compared to 2016. Given the number of arrests of journalists after the coup attempt, Turkey is being criticized for becoming “the world’s largest prison for journalists” (“EU lawmakers criticize Turkey,” 2016).

4.1.1 *The Current Media Landscape in Turkey: Major Media Groups and Political Affiliations*

Prior to March 2018, mainstream media groups operating in Turkey could be grouped in three main categories: Those whose owners were affiliated with the government (popularly known as the “pool media” or “partisan media”), the Doğan Group with its efforts to stay neutral, and the opposition, which included outlets such as *Sözcü* and *Cumhuriyet* newspapers and a few key online

portals (bianet.org, t24.com.tr, and diken.com.tr) not owned by conglomerates but which are critical of the government.¹¹ In March 2018, however, the Doğan Group was sold to the Demirören Group, a renowned pro-government conglomerate in the country which annihilated the second category.¹²

4.1.1.1 The Partisan and “Pool” Media

The pool media became a term to describe conglomerates whose media properties are in the service of the government after phone conversations, which included conversations between then Minister of Communications and Transport Binali Yıldırım and the owners of major construction firms seeking to win contracts for Istanbul’s multibillion-dollar third airport, were leaked on 17 December 2013. The owners were encouraged by Yıldırım to contribute money to a “pool” to buy one of the country’s largest media companies, *Sabah-ATV*, from Çalık Holding. This led to the expression “the pool media” (*havuz medyası*), a term used today to refer to pro-government media companies in general which are financed by a number of conglomerates. These conglomerates, which also operate in sectors such as construction, energy, mining, and tourism and have won huge government tenders, include the Albayrak Group, Ciner Group, Demirören Group, İhlas Group, Doğu Group, Kalyon Group, and the Ethem Sancak companies.

11 Because the main subject of analysis of this dissertation is the mainstream print press, the focus is on national daily newspapers and their ownership.

12 This categorization was previously much more exhaustive and included conglomerates that had an organic relationship with the Gülen movement (popularly known as the “parallel media”) as well as Kurdish outlets such as the DIHA and JINHA news agencies and dailies including *Azadiya Welat* and *Özgür Gündem*. With respect to the former, after the relationship between the Gülen movement and the AKP fell through and the AKP labeled it as a terrorist organization, Gülenist press outlets such as *Zaman* newspaper were either closed down or transformed into pro-government outlets. The same process was applied to Kurdish media outlets as well. Majority journalists who worked for publications that focused on the Kurdish question have been arrested and charged with terror propaganda.

ALBAYRAK GROUP AND *YENİ ŞAFAK* (“NEW DAWN”) NEWSPAPER:

Albayrak Group, which owns Albayrak Media Group, was established in 1952 as a construction company. Since 1982, it has expanded into other sectors including machinery, production, media, logistics, waste management, and sea-port management. The company was founded by Ahmet Albayrak, and until his death in 2010, it was run by him and his six sons: Ahmet, Nuri, Bayram, Kazım, Muzaffer, and Mustafa Albayrak. The group has won dozens of public tenders since the 1990s, especially from local municipalities, ranging from the construction of the Istanbul metro to the production of tanks for the Turkish army. The Albayrak family has close ties to the AKP, and President Erdoğan was a witness at the wedding of Nuri Albayrak in 2002 and attended his son's engagement ceremony in 2012. Berat Albayrak married the president's eldest daughter in 2004 and became a member of the parliament after the elections of 7 June 2015. On 24 November 2015, he was appointed as Minister for Energy and Natural Resources in the sixty-fourth government of Turkey.

Albayrak Media Group has owned *Yeni Şafak* daily newspaper since 1997, but *Yeni Şafak* was first founded in 1994 by a medical doctor Yakup Yönten (who was head of the Doctors Union Foundation), and Tufan Mengi. After only one and a half months, the Doctors Union Foundation had to cease publication of the newspaper due to economic difficulties. The newspaper was subsequently acquired by the head of the Ensar Foundation, Ahmet Şişman. Daily publication of *Yeni Şafak* resumed on 23 January 1995 under İz Publishing, and it was published by the company until March 1998. The editors-in-chief of the newspaper included prominent conservative figures such as Nabi Avcı, Mehmet Ocaktan, Akif Emre, and Yusuf Kaplan.¹³

After acquisition by the Albayrak Group, the newspaper maintained its Islamic-conservative editorial line and became a safe harbor for Turkish journalists such as Mehmet Barlas, Nazlı Ilıcak, and Cengiz Çandar following the military memorandum of 28 February 1997. *Yeni Şafak* is currently one of

13 The editors-in-chief of *Yeni Şafak* in chronological order are: Zakir Barutçu, Mehmet Ocaktan, Nabi Avcı, Mehmet Ocaktan, Akif Emre, Yusuf Kaplan, Selahattin Sadıkoğlu, Mustafa Karaalioğlu, Yusuf Ziya Cömert, İbrahim Cömert, and İbrahim Karagül (since 2015).

the ten most read daily newspapers in Turkey with a circulation of over 111 thousand.

CINER GROUP

Ciner Group was founded in 1978 and focused on the trade of replacement car parts, but in the 1990s, the group started conducting business in a vast variety of domains ranging from energy, mining, media, and textile production to services and media – sectors that require an ongoing relationship with the government.¹⁴

In September 2007, Ciner Publishing Holding, which currently manages Haberturk.com, Haberturk Radyo, Haberturk TV, and Ajans Haberturk, was founded under the Ciner Group. A print newspaper which was in circulation until March 2009 shifted to an online-only format in July 2018. The holding's portfolio also includes international television and radio channels and journals, including Bloomberg TV, Bloomberg HT Radyo, and local editions of *Newsweek*, *FHM*, *Marie Claire Maison*, *Marie Claire*, *Food and Travel*, *GEO*, and *Mother and Baby*.

KALYON GROUP AND SABAH (“MORNING”) NEWSPAPER

Kalyon Group is a Turkish conglomerate founded in 1974 by Hasan Kalyoncu, a close friend of former Prime Minister Turgut Özal. Kalyon Group started operating in the construction sector and gradually expanded its operations into the energy and infrastructure sectors, winning major public contracts including Istanbul's Metrobüs system and the redevelopment of Taksim Gezi Park involving the construction of the Taksim Military Barracks. On the media front, the group has own in the Turkuvaz Media Group since 2013.

Sabah newspaper has a long history dating to the late Ottoman period. “The founder of the newspaper was Professor Diran Kelekian, a mentor of many of the Young Turks who went on to lead a nationalist revolution in 1908” (“Sabah,” n.d.); consequently, *Sabah* became a mouthpiece of the Young Turks. In 1985, Dinç Bilgin re-founded the newspaper with a new editorial line

14 In leaked wiretaps from 2014, “then Prime Minister Erdoğan called M. Fatih Saraç (deputy head of the Board of Directors of HT) and asked him to remove controversial media coverage from the newspaper” (Bıçakçı et al., 2016).

and style. The Bilgin Group peaked in the 1990s with investments in the television broadcasting and financial sectors (with the purchase of Etibank together with the Çağlar Group), but the group was seriously affected by the 2001 financial crisis. Etibank and the media companies were confiscated, and after negotiations with the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund of Turkey (*Tasarruf Mevduatı Sigorta Fonu* or TMSF), these companies were leased to Ciner Group. “The Ciner Group bought the media companies with an agreement it signed with TMSF in 2005, on payment conditions extending over 10 years. However, due to allegations of a secret agreement between Dinç Bilgin and Turgay Ciner, on 1 April 2007 TMSF confiscated the media enterprises held by Ciner with the intent to sell” (Sözeri and Güney, 2011, p. 47). At that time, these media companies were grouped together under the name *Turkuvaz Radyo Televizyon Gazetecilik ve Yayıncılık* – a joint stock company owned by a group of pro-AKP companies and individuals including Çalık Holding A.Ş. (58%), Çalık Turizm Kültür İnşaat Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş. (25%), Gapyapı İnşaat A.Ş. (15%), Ahmet Çalık (1%), and Serhat Albayrak (the brother of Erdoğan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak) (1%). Zirve Holding (a company of the Kalyon Group owned by Ömer Faruk Kalyoncu) bought the *Turkuvaz Media Group* (*Sabah-ATV*) in 2013. Serhat Albayrak, the brother of the Minister of Energy Berat Albayrak, is vice chair of the *Turkuvaz Media Group*. “The Group holds the TV channels *ATV* (national) and *ATV Avrupa* (satellite), in addition to four newspapers, namely *Sabah*, *Yeni Asır*, *Takvim* and *Fotomaç*, and a total of 19 magazines, 14 of which are monthly and 5 weekly” (Sözeri and Güney, 2011, p. 47).

Sabah is currently among the top three most-read newspapers in Turkey with a circulation of over 300 thousand. As its ownership makes clear, it has a pro-government, anti-opposition editorial line.

DEMİRÖREN GROUP

Demirören Holding is a Turkish conglomerate owned entirely by the Demirören family with interests in media, energy, mining, and construction. It openly supports the ruling AKP and has close ties to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The group's journey into the media sector began in May 2011 with the purchase of *Milliyet* and *Vatan* daily papers from the Doğan Group.

The daily *Milliyet* was founded in May 1950 by journalist Ali Naci Karacan, and the newspaper and Adnan Menderes' DP mutually supported each other economically and politically. In a short period, *Milliyet* became one of the most important, effective, upmarket newspapers in Turkey, particularly due to its legendary editor in chief, Abdi İpekçi. İpekçi made his mark on the paper with his high ethical and journalistic standards. On 1 February 1979, İpekçi was murdered, and Ercüment Karacan, the son of Ali Naci Karacan who had taken over the newspaper after his father's death in 1955, sold the newspaper to Aydın Doğan. After the Doğan Media Group was issued a massive fine in 2009, *Milliyet*, together with *Vatan*, was sold to the "Demirören–Karacan joint venture for US\$ 74 million: US\$ 47.96 million and US\$ 26 million for *Milliyet* and *Vatan*, respectively" (Tunç and Görgülü, 2012, p. 57) in May 2011. In February 2012, the Karacan Group sold its shares to Demirören Group, making the Demirören family the sole owner of *Milliyet* (and *Vatan*) newspaper. In March 2018, Demirören bought the remaining media assets of the Doğan Media Company for \$916 million.

After the transfer of the newspaper to the Demirören Group, *Milliyet* gradually adopted a pro-government editorial line. In early 2012, two renowned female journalists and academics, Ece Temelkuran and Nuray Mert, were fired from *Milliyet*. Hasan Cemal and Can Dündar followed in 2013 after taking critical stances against the AKP with respect to the Gezi Park protests. In 2015, Kadri Gürsel and Meral Tamer were also fired after the management censored columns critical of the government. Since the acquisition of the other media assets of Doğan, the dailies *Hürriyet* and *Posta* and the mainstream television channels Kanal D and CNN Türk have also undergone a major restructuring, and veteran journalists including Taha Akyol, Fikret Bila, Deniz Zeyrek, and Mehmet M. Yılmaz have parted ways with the new owners.

İHLAS GROUP

The history of İhlas Holding began with the foundation of *Hakikat* newspaper in 1970. In 1972 the conservative national daily was renamed *Türkiye* newspaper and is still being published.

The holding itself was created in 1993 and soon turned into a conglomerate with assets in construction, trade, energy, mining, health, education, and

home appliances in addition to media. *Türkiye* newspaper and TGRT television are İhlas Holding's flagship media assets, but the group also has magazines focusing on specific market segments. These include children's magazines, food culture and women's magazines, textile and interior design magazines, automotive magazines, building and construction magazines, and economy magazines.

ESMEDYA/ETHEM SANCAK

Born in Siirt in 1958, Ethem Sancak started a small pharmaceutical business in the 1980s which grew into a conglomerate that operated internationally and included a hospital chain. His presence in the media sector began in 2013, when the TMSF seized *Güneş* and *Akşam* newspapers, SkyTurk 360 along with two radio channels and various magazines, as well as websites after Çukurova Holding failed to make payments on its debt. In June 2013, the TMSF sold the Çukurova Group's Show TV to the Ciner Group conglomerate for \$402 million, and in November 2013, Sancak reached a deal with Çukurova Holding to buy the Türkmedya group for \$62 million. "In 2014, he also acquired all shares of the Star Media Group (that owns Star Newspaper and 24 TV) from businessman Fettah Tamince" ("Ethem Sancak Group," n.d.).

Sancak is a passionate supporter of the AKP and particularly of President Erdoğan himself. "He has famously said he was 'in love' with Erdoğan and would sacrifice his family for him, and has admitted to having entered media to support him" ("Ethem Sancak Group," n.d.). In addition to media investments, Sancak also holds an advisory role in the AKP organization, and in 2014, as the only participant in the public tender, he acquired the company BMC, which produces heavy vehicles (tanks and water cannons) for the Turkish armed forces.

DOĞUŞ GROUP

Doğuş Holding is a family business owned by the Şahenk family. It was founded in 1951 and has become a leading Turkish conglomerate active in sectors ranging from the financial services, construction, and automotive sectors to real estate, energy, and entertainment. Doğuş Media Group, a company of

Doğuş Holding, was established in 1999 with the acquisition of NTV. It currently holds seven television channels, various online brands, four radio stations, and seven monthly magazine licenses including *Vogue Turkey*, *Conde Nast*, *National Geographic*, *Glamour*, and *GQ*.

The group, especially NTV, was criticized for its muted response to the Gezi Park protests in 2013. In leaked wiretaps released in December 2014, the editor-in-chief of the media group, Nermin Yurteri, “was heard having a conversation with then the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s chief advisor Yalçın Akdoğan . . . [who pressured] her to have pro-government quests on air among various other editorial interferences” (“Doğuş Group,” n.d.).

4.1.1.2 Failed Efforts to Stay Neutral: The Doğan Group and *Hürriyet* Newspaper

The Doğan family entered the media sector in 1979 with the acquisition of the popular daily *Milliyet* from the Karacan family, and they expanded their media portfolio with the acquisition of *Hürriyet* and Kanal D in 1995 and CNN Türk in 1999. The Doğan Group also operates in other domains, including the energy, tourism, insurance, banking, and automotive sectors. Before the acquisition of its media assets by Demirören in early 2018, the Doğan Group organized “its operations in the telecommunications, finance, and media sectors in such a way to create a synergy between them and aims to attain its goals by making its operations in different industries mutually benefit from one another” (Alver and Çağlar, 2013, p. 28). The holding’s media wing was active in publishing (Doğan Kitap), music (DMC), and film-production (ANS, *Hürriyet Yapım*, D Prodüksiyon). It had four newspapers (*Hürriyet*, *Posta*, *Fanatik*, *Hürriyet Daily News*), numerous magazines, one news agency (*Doğan News Agency* or DHA), five television channels (Kanal D, Star, CNN Türk, Interaktif TV and Shopping TV), one digital television platform (D-Smart), and four radio stations (Radyo D, Slowturk, Radyo Moda, and CNN Türk Radyo).

Doğan Media Group was an early supporter of the AKP and was enthusiastic about the AKP’s commitment to European Union membership and its emphasis on freedoms, individual rights, and liberties. This, however, started to change after the AKP’s second election victory, especially after 2008. After a year long confrontation, the relationship broke down when *Hürriyet* and

Milliyet newspapers gave extensive front-page coverage to the Deniz Feneri case, “accusing several prominent Turkish citizens with ties to the top of the AKP of embezzling tens of millions of dollars from a Turkish charity” (Corke et al., 2014, p. 7). The AKP government, most notably Erdoğan, responded by calling for a boycott of the media group and accused Aydın Doğan of being a supporter of terrorism. In February 2009, “Doğan Media Group was hit with a \$500 million tax fine, raised in September of the same year to \$2.5 billion, four-fifths of the market capitalization of the entire company” (Tunç, 2015, p. 208).¹⁵ The extensive court proceedings forced the Doğan Group to downsize its media investments, which resulted in the sale of two newspapers, *Milliyet* and *Vatan*, to Demirören Holding in May 2011.

The remaining media outlets of the Doğan Group toned down criticism of the AKP government after the fine was levied, but the relationship between the Doğan family and President Erdoğan remained sour. The family “continued to face government pressure, including attacks on (Aydın Doğan) in pro-government media and a series of lawsuits” (Pitel, 2018). Finally, in March 2018, it was announced that Doğan had agreed to sell his media businesses to the Demirören Group. The acquisition was confirmed soon after, and in April 2018, the Demirören Group became the new, formal owner of the Doğan Media Group’s assets. Foreign press including the *Economist* and the *Financial Times* commented that the sale of the Doğan Group outlets consolidated government control over the mainstream Turkish media and represented “the departure of one of the remaining media owners who was not intimately linked to Mr. Erdoğan’s circles” (Pitel, 2018).

4.1.1.3 The Opposition: *Sözcü*, *Cumhuriyet*, and Internet Media as an Alternative

There are only a handful of newspapers and media outlets that can be regarded as having an oppositional stance. When newspapers critical of the government were closed one after another, a few online news portals emerged, the most notable ones being bianet.org, [T24](http://T24.com.tr), and diken.com.tr.

15 “The fine was based on an allegation that the company had sold 25% of the shares of Doğan Media to Alex Springer earlier than it was stated” (“Doğan Group,” n.d.).

SÖZCÜ NEWSPAPER

Sözcü newspaper, published since 2007 by Estetik Publishing which is owned by Burak Aksoy, is a popular, independent daily known for its staunch support of the republican, Kemalist tradition and its anti-government stance.

As pressures on media gradually increased under the AKP, *Sözcü* slowly became a meeting place for renowned columnists known for their opposition to the government, including Can Dündar, Emin Çölaşan, Yılmaz Özdil, Bekir Coşkun, and Soner Yalçın.

CUMHURİYET NEWSPAPER

Cumhuriyet newspaper began to be published in May 1924 with the efforts of Yunus Nadi Abalıođlu, a renowned journalist with close ties with Atatürk. Naturally, the newspaper adopted a tenaciously republican, secular editorial line – a course that has been maintained to the present. The newspaper continues to advocate for secular values, a free market, and democracy. After the death of Yunus Nadi in 1945, his son and daughter-in-law, Nadir and Berin Nadi, took over the publication of the newspaper. Since 2001, following Berin Nadi's death, the newspaper has been published by the Cumhuriyet Foundation.

Since the AKP's rise to power, *Cumhuriyet* has taken an oppositional stance, critical of the government and its policies, and slowly became a target of the government. *Cumhuriyet's* editor-in-chief, Can Dündar, and the daily's Ankara bureau chief, Erdem Gül, were sentenced to five years in prison “on charges of collecting and revealing secret documents for espionage and supporting terrorist organization (but not being a member) as the accusations were based on reports in Cumhuriyet regarding Syria-bound trucks sent by the National Intelligence Agency (MIT)” (“Turkish prosecutor seeks arrests,” 2016). The two journalists were released but banned from overseas travel after more than three months in prison when the Constitutional Court ruled that

Dündar and Gül's fundamental rights were violated.¹⁶ In early 2015, the newspaper reprinted cartoons from *Charlie Hebdo*, the French magazine that was attacked for depicting the prophet Muhammad in its cartoons. The newspaper was placed under a continuous police watch due to serious threats that staff regularly receive.

In 2016, Turkish police detained editor-in-chief Murat Sabuncu and fifteen other senior staff members based on suspicions that they committed crimes on behalf of both the Gülen movement, which masterminded the coup attempt on 15 July 2016, and the PKK.

Table 4.1 Major Media Conglomerates in Turkey, November 2018

Company Name	Owner	Media Portfolio	Political Affiliation	Company Activity Areas
Albayrak Group	Albayrak Family	<i>Yeni Şafak</i> , TV Net, Tempo TV, <i>Derin Tarih</i> , <i>Lokma</i> , <i>Nihayet</i> , <i>Derin Ekonomi</i> , <i>Cins</i> , <i>Gerçek Hayat</i> , <i>Kırmızı Beyaz</i> , <i>Skyroad</i> , <i>Bilge Çocuk</i> , <i>Bilge Minik</i> , <i>yenisafak.com.tr</i> , <i>tvnet.com.tr</i> , <i>gazetemanset.com</i> , <i>dergilik.com</i> , <i>nerdesiniz.com</i> , <i>derintarih.com</i> , <i>lokmadergisi.com</i> , <i>derinekonomi.com</i> , <i>gercekhayat.com.tr</i> , <i>cins.com.tr</i> , <i>skyroad.com.tr</i> , <i>bilgecocuk.com</i> , <i>bilgeminikdergi.com</i>	Pro-government	Construction, industry (textiles, paper, on-vehicle material, tractors and motors), logistics, services (IT, waste management, personnel services, hotel management)

16 Dündar went abroad after his release. In late 2018, Turkish authorities issued an arrest warrant for him as part of an investigation into Gezi Park protests. "Prosecutors said he played an active role in the protests and provoked public unrest through social media. They also said he supported members of a terrorist organisation against the police" ("Turkish authorities seek arrest," 2018).

Company Name	Owner	Media Portfolio	Political Affiliation	Company Activity Areas
Ciner Group	Turgay Ciner	Habertürk TV, Show TV, Bloomberg HT, Show Max, Show Turk, Habertürk Radio, Bloomberg HT Radio, haberturk.com, businessht.com.tr, hthayat.com, bloomberght.com <i>Print daily went online-only as of July 2018.</i>	Pro-government	Energy and mining, construction, medical, tourism, ports, sea and air transport, insurance, glass manufacture
Kalyon Group	Ömer Faruk Kalyoncu	<i>Sabah, Takvim, Fotomaç, Yeni Asır, Sabah Avrupa, Sabah USA, İşte İnsan, Sabah Emlak, Sabah Sarı Sayfalar, Cafe Ruj, ATV, A Haber, Yeni Asır TV, Minika, ATV Avrupa, A Haber Radio, Radio Turkuvaz, Radyo Romantik, Turkuvaz Efsane, Vav Radio, A Spor Radio, www.sabah.com.tr, www.takvim.com.tr, www.ahaber.com.tr, www.ahber-radyo.com.tr, www.atv.com.tr, www.turkuvazradyolar.com</i>	Pro-government	Construction, energy
Demirören Group	Demirören Family	<i>Milliyet, milliyet.com.tr, milliyet.tv, gazetevatan.com, skor.com</i> <i>Vatan newspaper went online-only as of November 2018.</i>	Pro-government	Energy, manufacturing, tourism, ports, construction, education
Demirören Group (former Doğan Group publications)	Demirören Family	<i>Hürriyet, Posta, Fanatik, Hürriyet Daily News, Kanal D, CNN Türk, tv2, Dream TV, Kanal D Romanya, Euro D, Radyo D, Slow Turk, CNN Türk Radio, DHA, www.hurriyet.com.tr, www.fanatik.com.tr, www.posta.com.tr, www.cnnturk.com, www.kanald.com.tr, www.netd.com, www.hurriyetaile.com, www.bigpara.com,</i>	Previously neutral. Pro-government after acquisition by the Demirören Group	Energy, manufacturing, tourism, ports, construction, education

(RE)PRODUCTION OF CONSERVATISM IN CONSERVATIVE MEDIA

Company Name	Owner	Media Portfolio	Political Affiliation	Company Activity Areas
İhlas Group	Ahmet Mücahid Ören	<i>Türkiye</i> , TGRT Haber TV, TGRT Belgesel TV, TGRT FM, İhlas News Agency, www.ihlas.net	Pro-government	Construction, mining, production and trade (marketing, home appliances, bicycle, logistics, catering), health, education
Esmedy	Ethem Sancak	<i>Akşam</i> , <i>Güneş</i> , <i>Star</i> , <i>Alem</i> , <i>Platin</i> , TV360, 24 TV, TV 4, Alem FM, Lig Radio, ligradio.com.tr, aksam.com.tr, gunes.com, star.com.tr	Pro-government	Vehicles, military vehicles
Doğuş Group	Şahenk Family	NTV, Star TV, NTV Spor, KRAL TV, Kral Pop TV, NTV Avrupa, Eurostar, NTV Radio, Kral FM, Kral Pop Radio, Kral World Radio, ntv.com.tr, ntvpara.com, ntvspor.net, startv.com.tr, tvyo.com, kralmuzik.com.tr, vogue.com.tr, glamour.com.tr, gq.com.tr, cntraveler.com.tr, nationalgeographic.com.tr	Pro-government	Banking and finance, automotive, construction, tourism, real estate, energy, food and beverages, retail
Estetik Publishing	Burak Akbay	<i>Sözcü</i> , sozcu.com.tr, <i>Gırgır</i> , <i>AMK</i> , <i>Korkusuz</i>	Anti-government	
Cumhuriyet Foundation		<i>Cumhuriyet</i> , cumhuriyet.com.tr	Anti-government	

Table 4.2 Top Mainstream National Newspapers in Turkey (18 - 24 February 2019)

Title	Average Daily Circulation	Owner
<i>Sabah</i>	274,640	<i>Kalyon Group</i>
<i>Hürriyet</i>	257,275	<i>Demirören Group</i>
<i>Sözcü</i>	245,972	<i>Estetik Yayıncılık</i>
<i>Posta</i>	185,253	<i>Demirören Group</i>
<i>Türkiye</i>	135,343	<i>İhlas Group</i>
<i>Milliyet</i>	126,717	<i>Demirören Group</i>
<i>Yeni Şafak</i>	109,488	<i>Albayrak Group</i>
<i>Takvim</i>	103,962	<i>Kalyon Group</i>
<i>Güneş</i>	103,511	<i>Ethem Sancak</i>
<i>Akşam</i>	102,547	<i>Ethem Sancak</i>

SOURCE medyatava.com

INTERNET PORTALS AS AN ALTERNATIVE: T24, DİKEN AND BİANET

As financial and political pressure on media that is critical of the government increased and the remaining face significant attacks, a handful of internet portals have emerged to take up the role. In terms of pluralistic content, Bianet (bianet.org), Diken (diken.com.tr), and T24 (t24.com.tr) are relevant news portals, though they do not rank among the top ten because of their efforts to provide a critical view that contrasts most mainstream media. These portals operate in a “partly free” (Corke et al, 2014) internet environment, but still face significant government pressure and are subject to various mechanisms and decisions to block them.

T24 is one of the most popular portals and is known for its quality journalism. The portal was founded by Doğan Akın with the aim of “making a big change in Turkish journalism” (Akın, 2013), and features content from various renowned academics, authors, and journalists including Murat Belge and Yalçın Doğan. The portal is a partner of the German *Deutsche Welle* and it was one of the publications with which WikiLeaks shared confidential documents. It is also a target of the government. In February 2016, AKP Ankara Deputy Aydın Ünal said, “Cumhuriyet daily and news portals like T24 should definitely be closed down. What they are doing is not journalism but making

propaganda for the [PKK] terrorist organization” (“Hoş geldin darbeci kafası,” 2016).

Bianet.org is the oldest of the three and was founded in 1997 for “monitoring and covering media freedom and promoting independent journalism in Turkey” (Tunç, 2015). Apart from publishing news, Bianet also provides training to relevant stakeholders and organizes conferences as well as national and international forums and exchange programs.

Lastly, Diken (thorn) was launched in January 2014 by Harun Simavi, the grandson of the legendary Turkish journalist, author and cartoonist Sedat Simavi. He summarized Diken’s mission “to become the thorn of the Turkish media – an industry that is trying to be turned into a rose garden – and protect and advocate our tenuous democracy, fundamental freedoms and secularism” (Kaynak, 2015). Diken became one of the alternative news media for Turkish readers in a relatively short time and is home to several renowned journalists that were forced to leave the mainstream media, including Levent Gültekin, Amberin Zaman, and Nuray Mert.

Conservative Media and National Education: An Ideological Battlefield

For conservative media, education is a central topic of discussion and a battlefield of ideological transformation. Conservatives leverage the Turkish education system and the problems related to it as a criticism of secularists and the republican tradition. Their criticism focuses on the Turkish education system in general, the issue of religious education and the IHLs.

§ 5.1 The Turkish Education System: “Educational Imperialism” and “Intellectual Genocide”

The conservative reaction to the Turkish education system has deep, fundamental roots that go back to the policies adopted during the foundation of the Turkish republic. According to conservative columnists, the republic founded in 1923 put the education system – and consequently the Turkish youth – in a hornet’s nest. The top-down Turkish modernization project created an education system that deliberately failed the majority so that the minority intelligentsia could continue its tyranny over the masses. In 2006, *Yeni Şafak* columnist Sami Hocaoğlu calls this intellectual genocide and argues that the oligarchical system that the new Turkish republic created in 1923 paved the way for a caste system in education.

The Turkish education system provides a good education only to a very small portion of the students; it fails majority of them. The system does not only educate the children of the hand-picked, placeless “white” men, but also deliberately fails the children of the “locals.” This murder is done willfully. The system was set up this way. . . . You see, it is not coincidence that the education system was cleared out, it is deliberate. Currently, the job to protect and preserve this caste system in education belongs to YÖK. This is the reason why ideological bigotry – not merit and competency – is the measure for everything. As long as this nation is not freed from YÖK and from the known mindset that labeled education “oligarchical service only,” we neither can solve the problem of quality education nor ensure equal opportunity in education – a requisite of social state. Now, you tell me: Isn’t this “intellectual genocide” or what?¹ (Hocaoğlu, 2006)

This attitude towards the Turkish education system has not changed much over the years. Criticisms began to be expressed more openly and courageously, especially as of the AKP’s third election victory. The Gezi Park protests in summer 2013 put the issue of youth on the agenda of the media, and the Gezi generation was accused of being the product of the existing imperialist, alienating, and destructive national education system (Kaplan 2013b). Yusuf Kaplan, for example, blames universities for the cultural and moral disintegration among the youth and society in general. According to his view,

1 “Türk eğitim sistemi, çok az öğrenciyi iyi eğitiyor, öğrencilerin çoğunu başarısız kılıyor. Zira, bunu hedefliyor. Sadece devşirilmiş ve yersizleşmiş “beyazların” çocuklarını iyi eğitmekle kalmıyor, “yerlilerin” çocuklarını da kast-ı mahsus ile başarısız kılıyor. Taammüden işleniyor bu cinayet. Sistem başından böyle kurulmuş. . . . Anlayacağınız, eğitimin içinin boşaltılması tesadüf değil, kasıtlı bir uygulama. Eğitim alanındaki bu kast sistemini koruma ve tahkim etme işi de YÖK’e havale edilmiş durumda. Liyakat ve ehliyet yerine ideolojik yobazlığın ölçü alınmasının nedeni de bu. Bu milletin yakası başta YÖK olmak üzere, eğitimin alınma “oligarşik hizmete mahsustur” yazan malum zihniyetin elinden kurtarılmadıkça, ne eğitimdeki kalite sorunu halledilebilir, ne de sosyal devlet anlayışının bir gereği olan “eğitimde fırsat eşitliği” sağlanabilir. Şimdi siz söyleyin: Bunun adı “entelektüel soykırım” değil de nedir?”

universities do not provide a good education and were the worst, most enduring source of fallen youth. Universities in Anatolia are causing even the smallest of cities in the region to degenerate culturally and morally (Kaplan, 2013b).

In addition to the Gezi Park protests, education was a popular discussion in the media in late 2013 due to the AKP government decision to close private tutoring schools (*dershanes*), “suggesting that such schools violate the principle of equal opportunity in education” while raising “mentally depressed test-solving machines” (Berber, 2013, p. 25). The issue was on the agenda of several conservative columnists including Rasim Özdenören, Özlem Albayrak, Mehmet Barlas, Sevilay Yükselir, and Yusuf Kaplan. Again, Özdenören approaches the issue starting with the problems of the Turkish education system set up in 1923, which he claims was borrowed from an eighteenth-century French education system designed to foster “ballroom elites” (Özdenören, 2013, p. 12). This education system, the legal framework of which was set up with the Law on the Unification of Education that came into effect on 3 March 1924, created a culture of submissiveness and fostered monotype citizens. Instead of celebrating the varied interests and talents of children, this law forced every student to have an established standardized education and put university education as an ultimate ideal, creating the need for *dershanes*. He argues that “[the Law on the Unification of Education] that the totalitarian system put into effect to raise monotype individuals and curb multivocality is the largest obstacle in the Turkish education system”² (Özdenören, 2016, p. 16). In order to create a system that does not need *derhanes*, the number of high school graduates should be limited and students should be motivated to enroll in art and vocational schools. The opening of private schools should be allowed through a change to the Law on the Unification of Education and hence to the constitution.

Sabah was also deeply involved in this discussion and took a strong stance on the issue, supporting the government’s decision to close down *dershanes*. *Sabah*’s editor-in-chief Erdal Şafak even wrote a letter on behalf of the news-

2 “Totaliter sistemin tek tip insan yetiştirmeye ve çok sesliliği önlemeye matuf olarak koyduğu bu yasa Türk eğitim sisteminin önündeki en battal engeldir.”

paper listing the reasons it supported the government on the issue and accusing the *dershanes* of being the “master gear” of an overarching system of exploitation (Şafak, 2013).



'Ha dershane ha gecekond'u'

Hükümetin dershane reformuyla ilgili çalışmasında, gecekondu benzetmesi yapılarak, "Bir tampon mekanizma olan dershanelerin illebet var olması gecekondulaşmayı kutsamaktır" ifadesi kullanıldı

Hükümetin dershane reformunun akasındaki çalışmaya SABAH ulaştı. Başbakan Tayyip Erdoğan'a sunulan çalışmada en dikkat çeken unsurlardan biri gecekondulaşma ile dershaneler arasında kurulan bağlantı oldu.

Gecekonduların, anti komut talebati karşılamak için kendiliğinden ortaya çıkan fakat geçici olmasına gereken bir yin-yang tem olduğu ifade edilerek, "Öğretim kurumlarının ve eğitim sisteminin yeterlilikleri sebebiyle ortaya çıkan ve aslında bir tampon mekanizma olan dershanelerin illebet var olması gerektiğini savunmak, gecekondulaşmayı kutsayarak modern ve insanı geliştirilmeye ayak dirmeye benzemektedir" denildi. Çalışmada, dershaneler için "okulların rolüne büründü, tali öğretim kurumu olmaktan çıktı ve asli öğretim kurumuna dönüştü. Dershane eğitiminin asli unsur haline gelmesi bir hastanede yataklı tedavi gören hastanın hafta sonları da başka hastaneye yatarak ek tedavi almasına benzer. Çözüm ek tedavi değil, daha iyi hastane paralarını sağlamak" ifadeleri kullanıldı.

Okulların yeniden "öğrencileri hem sınavları hazırlayacak hem de sadece öğrenim görülen değil 'çok yönlü eğitim' yapılan okullar" haline getirilmesi gerektiğini vurgulandı. Çalışmada şu tespitler ortaya konuldu:

■ **TEST ÇÖZME MAKİNELERİ:** Test çözüme makinesi haline getirilmiş bir öğrenicilik gençleri geleceğe hazırlamaz. İyi eğitimin anlamı üniversite sınavında başarıya indirgenmiş. Temel amaç çocuğun bilgi birikimi ve karakter gelişimi ile hayata hazırlanması değil mutlak bir yükseköğretim kursunu kazanması oldu. Valiler arasında da yarış ortamı oluştu, öğrenciler üzerine ciddi baskıya düştü.

■ **EĞİTİM TEKNİK FAALİYET:** Eğitim teknik faaliyetleri bile dershanelere arasında yarışa dönüştü. Bu yarışta dershanelere harcanan para 2.5 milyar dolar.



'Hükümet kimseyi mağdur edecek tavır içinde değil'

ESKİ MİLLİ Eğitim Bakanı ve AK Parti İstanbul Milletvekili Ömer Dinçer partisinin Kocaeli İl Başkanlığı'na düzenlenen 4. Sıra Toplantısı'na katıldı. Dinçer gazetecilerin dershanelerin özel okula dönüştürülmesinin kolaylaştırılması

tartışmasına ilişkin soruları üzerine, "Bugünkü tartışmaların kısır ve ve yüzeysel perspektifle yapıldığı kanaatindeyim. Olmamasını diliyorum, hükümetin bu konuda kimseyi mağdur edecek tavır içinde olacağı kanaatinde değilim dedi.

■ PSİKOLOJİSİ BOZUK

GENÇLİK: Dershaneye dayalı eğitim, hoy zamanların tamamen emiltiler ile geçirilmesinden dolayı psikolojik bakımdan sorumlu bir gençlik neden oluyor. Gençler sosyalleşmiyor, yüksek skordan başka bir amaçları bulunmuyor. Aileler tarafından sürekli aşağılanmaya neden oluyor.

■ HALK PARA DÖKÜYOR:

Eğitime ayrılan kaynakların milli gelire oranı son 10 yılda yüzde 2.7 civarında gerçekleşmiştir. Bu oran OECD ülkeleri arasında en düşük düzeyi ifade etmekte. Hane halkının eğitime yaptığı harcamaları eğitime harcanan kaynağın milli gelire oranı yüzde 7'ye çıkmakta. Eğitime kamunun harcadığı kaynak özel sektörün 8 katıdır. Yani

eğitim harcamalarının daha fazla kısmı özel sektörün hizmetlerine harcanırken, özel sektörün eğitime ayrdığı kaynak kamunun sadece sekizde biri. OECD tarafından ülke öğrenci performanslarına yönelik yapılan sınavlarda eğitime harcanan bu kaynağa rağmen Türkiye, okuma becerisi, matematik becerisi, bilişsel yetenekler bakımından ortalamamız altında kaldı. Okuma becerisinde 34 ülke arasında 32, matematik ve bilişsel becerilerde 32'nci oldu.

■ SOSYAL ADALETSİZLİK:

Dershaneye gitme imkanı bulan çocuklar ile bulamayan çocuklara karşı avantajı yakalarken, üniversite eğitimi almaya hak kazanmaya da yarışıyan bu durum fırsat eşitliğine engel oluyor.

SABAH'TAN MEKTUP Duruşumuz çizgimiz

SABAH'ın eğitimde köklü reform ve dershaneler tartışmasında sergilediği duruş, kamuoyunun çok geniş bir kesiminin desteğini aldı.

Bununla birlikte, az da olsa, "Niye bu kadar açıkça ve olanca gücünüzle taraf oldunuz" eleştirileri de kulağımıza geldi.

Cevaplayayım. **Bir:** Toplumun, dolayısıyla Türkiye'nin geleceğini belirleyecek böylesine stratejik, bu kadar hayatı bir konuda "Devekuşu politikası" izleyemeyiz. Asla!

İki: "Bitaraf olan bertaraf olur" deyişini veya kuralını hiçbir zaman unutmuyoruz. Asla!

Üç: Hükümetin planladığı köklü eğitim-öğretim reformunun Türkiye'nin hayrına olduğuna içtenlikle inanıyoruz.

Dört: Başbakan Erdoğan'ın da dün Trabzon'da belirttiği gibi, çocuklarımızın yanış atna döndürülmeleri vicdanımıza sıziyatıyor.

Beş: Dershanelerin geniş bir sönürü çarkının ana dişlisi olduğu görüşünü taşıyoruz.

Altı: Dershanelerin sadece sönürü çarkının ana dişlisi değil, onun yanı sıra, belki ondan da önemlisi, hem aileler, hem de çocuklar için "Umut taciri" rolünü oynadıklarını ayan-beyan görüyoruz.

Yedi: Böyle bir eğitim sistemiyle Türkiye'nin yamllarının sağlığı ve güvenli olmayacağını düşünüyörz.

Ve son söz:

SABAH olarak sonuna kadar bu çizgimizi koruyacağız.

SABAH olarak Türkiye'yi çağdaş eğitim sistemine taşıyacak, çağdaş uygarlık düzeyine yükseltecek reform girişimini sonuna kadar savunacağız.

Sağlıklı ve mutlu bir hafta dileğiyle.

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Erdal ŞAFAK

Figure 5.1

(Left) *Sabah* report on former AKP deputy Ömer Dinçer's statement on the dershane reform, which drew an analogy between dershanes and squatter houses, both of which prevent the modernization and humanization of the respective systems. Reprinted from "Ha dershane ha gecekond'u," by M.A. Berber, 2013, *Sabah*, p. 25. (Right) *Sabah* editor-in-chief Erdal Şafak's letter to *Sabah* readers about the newspaper's firm po-

sition regarding dershanes. Reprinted from “Duruşumuz çizgimiz,” by E. Şafak, 2013, *Sabah*, p. 5. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Albayrak, Kaplan, and the former Minister of Education and *Sabah* columnist Hasan Celal Güzel, on the other hand, approach the *dershane* issue from a moral perspective and raise concerns about the government’s decision. They argue that contrary to common claims, dershanes were more than just a source of income for the Gülen community. They filled a moral, social, and cultural void that the corrupt education system in Turkey had failed to fill. In fact, they claim, dershanes pioneered the principle of equal opportunity in education (Güzel, 2013, p. 6). So they argue that while the *dershane* system did have its problems, closing them entirely was not the best option. Kaplan goes a step further and argues that instead of closing the *dershanes*, it would be better to close down official state schools that weaken children’s moral and mental qualities (Kaplan, 2013a). Of course, this moderate media approach to *dershanes* is absent from 2014 onwards after the relationship between the government and the Gülen movement soured and the latter was declared a terrorist organization. After that, *dershanes*’ harm to society and the education system in general is undisputedly in the conservative media. These institutions are considered imperialist incubation centers of FETÖ to lay siege to the country (Öztürk, 2016).

§ 5.2 What Kind of an Education System?

On 2-6 December 2014, the National Education Council held its nineteenth meeting in Antalya and made the headlines of almost all mainstream newspapers. “The council’s agenda was laden with rather unconventional topics such as segregating schools by gender, banning cocktail-mixing classes in tourism courses and introducing religious classes for kindergarten and the first three years of elementary school. The debates became so heated that on Dec. 4, Minister of Education Nabi Avci declared the council off-limits for the press, which raised further curiosity and tension” (Tremblay, 2014).

The National Education Council meeting coincided with the organization of the first Education Congress (28-30 November 2014) and the third Morality Congress (21-23 November 2014) organized by the Educators Trade Union (*Eđitim-Bir-Sen*) and the Writers Union of Turkey. These events had broad repercussions in the press. Yusuf Kaplan, a prominent columnist at *Yeni řafak*, dedicates his column to a discussion of problems and opportunities in the current educational system and puts forward a roadmap for the reform of national education that summarized the conservative ideal.

Kaplan argues that the current education system in Turkey is built upon an inferiority complex, acts as the replica of Western universities, and ignores local culture and moral values. Hence brilliant graduates are turned into “slaves of the West” (Kaplan, 2014c, p. 10). According to him, as Turkey is a Muslim country, the education system should reflect the community’s needs and values of what is good and right; it should not deny its cultural roots and values but thrive on them. To do this, the current system needs revolutionary reform and should rest on three main pillars: Science (*ilim*), knowledge (*irfan*), and wisdom (*hikmet*). In order to achieve this ideal, Kaplan proposes the reintroduction of the Islamic madrasa system (Kaplan, 2015a) but ironically he puts forward prominent Western universities as examples of successful madrasas and quoted American philosopher John Dewey to legitimize his approach.

I propose the madrasa system. When people hear this, they get scared because they do not know much about it. John Dewey is the man behind the American education system, and he is one of the top three philosophers in the United States. In the 1930s, Turkey invited John Dewey and asked him to create a modern educational system. After careful research, Dewey published a report that says: “You are wrong to ask for a new educational system. You have the real system. What

you need to do is to renovate your madrasas.” . . . Today, Chicago University in the United States is run by madrasa system.³ (Kaplan, 2014c, p. 10)

Kaplan regularly expresses these arguments on his column and raised similar points at least yearly in the paper from 2013 to 2016.⁴ Similar views are raised by other conservative journalists, including Süleyman Seyfi Öğün (2016), Nazif Gürdoğan (2016), and Hasan Öztürk (2016). They all see the current education system as imperialist and call for systemic reform to reflect local and religious culture and values and enable specialization and diversity.

Another common reform agenda of conservatives is the adoption of a system that gives weight to vocational education and training. In this system, obtaining a university education should be an option for those who are interested; the basic purpose of primary education should be to educate children based on their specific talents and aptitudes, as in the case of the Enderun Collage (palace school) system in the Ottoman Empire. To achieve this aim, conservatives propose to open additional vocational education schools and create a curriculum that promotes specialization throughout the 4+4+4 span. Hayrettin Karaman, in his column on 11 September 2016, touches on this issue and argues that such a system would be a role model for the world and would help foster talented, qualified individuals that are competent in every area from the automotive industry to law, religion, and genetics (Karaman, 2016a).

Overall, the conservative attitude towards the education system in general is consistently represented by the way the issue is covered in the conservative

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- 3 “Ben medrese sistemini öneriyorum. İnsanlar bu konu hakkında bilgi sahibi olmadıkları için korkuyorlar. Amerikan eğitim sistemini kuran John Dewey, Amerika’daki 3 büyük filozoftan birisidir. Türkiye 1930’lu yıllarda John Dewey’i ülkemize çağırıyorlar ve modern bir eğitim sistemini kurmasını istiyorlar. John Dewey inceleme yaptıktan sonra bir rapor yayınlıyor. Raporda diyor ki: “Siz yeni bir eğitim sistemi istemekle hata ediyorsunuz. Asıl eğitim sistemi sizdedir, sizin yapacağınız şey medrese sistemini update yapmak, güncellemektir.” . . . Bugün Amerika’daki Chicago Üniversitesi medrese sistemi işlemektedir.”
- 4 Articles by Kaplan include “3 Büyük Paralel Devrim” (2013), “Okulları Kapatın, Dershaneleri Değil!” (2013), “İlk Milli Eğitim Kongresi: Medeniyet Ufku ve Yolculuğu” (2014), “Yeni Bir Eğitim Sistemine Doğru” (2014), “İlâhiyât’ların ve Eğitimin Zihniyet ve Sistem Sorunu” (2015), “Nasıl Bir Eğitim Sistemi?” (2015), “Sömürgeci Eğitim Sistemiyle Nereye Kadar?” (2016), and “Eğitimde Çıkış Yolu: Pergel Metaforu” (2016).

media. From the beginning, the reforms of the new republic are blamed for the problems of the present Turkish education system, and YÖK is named as the modern representative of the misguided policies that the republic insisted on implementing. Educational policies are presented as a history of wrongdoings, which today have created an imperialist and morally and culturally deprived system that is rigidly closed to varied artistic and vocational paths for students. Conservative media argues in common that the present system should be reformed and that the new education system should be based on local culture, values and morality. The monolithic idea that “everyone must be a university graduate” should be revised and vocational schools should be supported. In the words of Kaplan (2015a), if only the education system embraced local and Islamic civilization, the nation would foster the next Yunus Emre, Mevlana, or İbni Sina.

§ 5.3 Religious Education: A Constitutional Right

At the European Council meeting of 16-17 December 2004, the heads of states and governments of the European Union agreed that accession negotiations with Turkey would start in October 2005. This decision became the beginning of a process in which the media started discussing national matters in the context of European Union membership, and education was no exception. While conservative media is traditionally critical of Western culture and educational policies, it leverages the council’s decision and the prospect of future membership as a means to reform religious education in Turkey. In early 2005, columnist Nazif Gürdoğan touches on this in his column and argues that the adoption of a new, improved, content-rich religious education would help Turkey’s European Union integration process.

In the process of lifting the economic, political and cultural borders between the European Union and Turkey, religion and values education in Turkey will become even more important. This is because the capital and the freedom of skilled and unskilled labor would force people from different religions to work in the same institutions and live in the same neighborhoods. In order for Muslims, Christians, and Jews

to create an unprejudiced environment of trust, the guidance of holy scriptures is needed.⁵ (Gürdoğan 2005a, p. 13)

Similarly, Hayrettin Karaman (2005a) compares Article 24 of the Turkish Constitution to Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on religious freedoms. He argues that while Turkey is trying to become part of the West and signed the UDHR in 1949, it defines religious freedoms narrowly and does not comply with European standards by limiting the right to religious education.

Discussion of religious education became heated and dominated the agenda of the media in the first half of 2005 when the Council of State decided to take to the Constitutional Court a regulation that increased the period of Quran courses from three to five days a week and allowed students to attend summer Quran courses once they graduated from the fifth grade, which was followed by the government's last minute change to the new Turkish Penal Code – due to go into effect on 1 June – in May, “decreasing the maximum penalty on those convicted of teaching and operating illegal Koran courses from three years' imprisonment to a year of imprisonment” (“TCK controversy heats up,” 2005), or payment of a fine.

The aforementioned developments are covered by the conservative media within a legal framework of religious educational freedom in Turkey. Conservative media argues that the Council of State's decision to take the new regulation to the Constitutional Court is itself unconstitutional, as these amendments were put on the agenda in the first place to correct a de facto infringement of the Turkish Constitution: The right to religious education. According to these claims, Article 24 of the 1982 Constitution allows minors to obtain a religious education as long as their legal representatives approve.

ARTICLE 24 – Everyone has the freedom of conscience, religious belief and conviction. Acts of worship, religious rites and ceremonies

5 “Avrupa ülkeleriyle ekonomik, siyasal ve kültürel sınırları kaldırma sürecinde Türkiye’de din ve değer eğitimi geçmişte olduğundan çok daha büyük önem kazanacak. Çünkü sermaye, nitelikli ve farklı dinlerden insanları aynı kuruluşlarda çalışmaya ve mahallelerde birlikte yaşamaya zorlayacaktır. Müslüman, Hristiyan ve Yahudilerin önyargısız bir güven ortamı oluşturmaları için, kutsal kitapları yol göstericiliğine ihtiyaç vardır.”

shall be conducted freely, as long as they do not violate the provisions of Article 14. No one shall be compelled to worship, or to participate in religious rites and ceremonies, or to reveal religious beliefs and convictions, or be blamed or accused because of his religious beliefs and convictions. Religious and moral education and instruction shall be conducted under state supervision and control. Instruction in religious culture and morals shall be one of the compulsory lessons in the curricula of primary and secondary schools. Other religious education and instruction shall be subject to the individual's own desire, and in the case of minors, to the request of their legal representatives.” (Turkish Const.)

Despite this clear statement, the conservative media argues, the state has deliberately constructed this right in a way that is against the principles of secularism.

According to this clear and definite law, children in their primary school years are minors and the Constitution gives the right to religious education to minors without defining an age limit. It is against the law to limit this right with an incoherent and ideologically biased interpretation. Especially if you define “secular education” as “an education that does not allow people to learn their religion,” then secularism becomes contrary to the universal religious freedom rights and means nothing more than “anti-religiosity.”⁶ (Karaman 2005b, p. 2)

6 “Kanunun açık ve kesin tanımlamasına göre ilköğretim çağındaki çocuk küçüktür ve anayasa yaş sınırı koymadan küçüklere din eğitim ve öğretimi verme hakkı tanımaktadır. Bu hakkı tutarsız ve ideolojik taraflılık yansıtan bir yorumla sınırlamak hukuka ters düşer. Hele de ‘laik eğitim,’ ‘isteyenlerin dinlerini öğrenmelerine imkan vermeyen bir eğitim’ olarak anlaşılır, böyle yorumlanırsa kesinlik olarak laiklik, evrensel bir hak olan din özgürlüğüne aykırı olur ve ‘din karşıtlığı’ manasına gelir.”

Bardakoğlu: Kur'an eğitimi erken yaşlarda verilmeli

Bardakoğlu, 15 yaşından önce hafızlık, 12 yaşından önce ise Kur'an eğitiminin verilmesini hatırlatarak, "Yaş sınırı nedeniyle boşluk ortaya çıkıyor. Kur'an ve din eğitimi erken yaşlarda başlamalıdır" dedi.



■ KURAN EĞİTİMİ ANKARA
Din eğitiminin pratik ve kurumsal olarak yapılması için 12 yaşından önce hafızlık eğitimi yapılmalıdır. Kur'an eğitimi erken yaşlarda verilmeli. Bardakoğlu, 15 yaşından önce hafızlık, 12 yaşından önce ise Kur'an eğitiminin verilmesini hatırlatarak, "Yaş sınırı nedeniyle boşluk ortaya çıkıyor. Kur'an ve din eğitimi erken yaşlarda başlamalıdır" dedi.

12 yaşından küçükler Kur'an öğrenebilmeli

Yaş Kur'an kurslarında 12 yaş sınırında karar verildiği bilgileri kullandıkları bilinen Diyanet başkanı Bardakoğlu, "Küçük çocuklar da Kur'an öğrenebilmeli. Velilerden bu konuda uygun talep olursa, bu sınıklaştırılmamalı" dedi.



■ KURAN EĞİTİMİ ANKARA
Din eğitiminin pratik ve kurumsal olarak yapılması için 12 yaşından önce hafızlık eğitimi yapılmalıdır. Kur'an eğitimi erken yaşlarda verilmeli. Bardakoğlu, 15 yaşından önce hafızlık, 12 yaşından önce ise Kur'an eğitiminin verilmesini hatırlatarak, "Yaş sınırı nedeniyle boşluk ortaya çıkıyor. Kur'an ve din eğitimi erken yaşlarda başlamalıdır" dedi.

'Çocukta din eğitimi anaokulunda başlamalı'

TİMAV, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na, din eğitiminin vazgeçilmezini, eğitime anaokulundan başlanması gerektiğini belirterek, bir dizi öneride bulundu.

■ KURAN EĞİTİMİ ANKARA
TİMAY, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na, din eğitiminin vazgeçilmezini, eğitime anaokulundan başlanması gerektiğini belirterek, bir dizi öneride bulundu.

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Okullardaki din eğitimi yetersiz

■ KURAN EĞİTİMİ ANKARA
Okullardaki din eğitimi yetersiz. Okullardaki din eğitimi yetersiz. Okullardaki din eğitimi yetersiz.

Figure 5.2 Yeni Şafak was a staunch supporter of religious education for children under twelve and the expansion of summer Quran courses across country. (Top-Left) Reprinted from "Bardakoğlu: Kuran eğitimi erken yaşlarda verilmeli," by Çetin, B., 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 15. (Top-Right) Reprinted from "12 yaşından küçükler Kur'an öğrenebilmeli," 2006, *Yeni Şafak*, p.11. (Bottom Left) Reprinted from "Çocukta din eğitimi anaokulunda başlamalı," by Bülbül, K., 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 15. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

After setting up the legal justification of the regulations that abolish age limits for Quran courses, a six-step plan of action is presented to Muslim citizens in case the Constitutional Court agreed with the Council of State's petition, calling "Muslim" citizens to civil disobedience.

1 The legislature should be pressured until a solid law is introduced that cannot be reversed by the judiciary.

- 2 Citizens should officially appeal to relevant institutions (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs, ...) to have their children (if they are primary school age – when they are not in school) receive an Islamic education. They have to say, “I am a Muslim, I want my child to have an Islamic and religious education. Inform me on where, by whom, and how.” Adults should make the same demand for themselves.
- 3 In case the answer is negative or insufficient . . . they should exhaust domestic remedies.
- 4 In case they cannot agree on a solution that is in line with universal and European human rights declarations, they should apply to both the European Court of Human Rights and to the relevant branches of the European Union.
- 5 A simple application is not enough. The case should be appropriately followed and they should forge public opinion in relevant environments.
- 6 Until their rightful demands are met, citizens should use their rights of democratic resistance and civil disobedience.⁷ (Karaman, 2005b, p. 2)

The controversial Article 263 of the new Turkish Penal Code was vetoed by President Ahmet Necdet Sezer on 3 June 2005, but in spite of the veto, the article was pushed through the TBMM by AKP representatives and came into

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- 7 1 Yasama organına baskı yaparak yargı tarafından bozulması mümkün olmayan bir çerçeve ve sağlamlıkta bir kanun çıkarılması sağlanmalıdır.
 - 2 Vatandaşlar küçük çocuklarına (eğer bunlar ilköğretim çağında iseler resmi öğretim saatleri dışında) İslam eğitim ve öğretimi verdirmek için ilgili mercilere (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı'na...) resmen başvurmalıdırlar. ‘Ben Müslümanım, çocuğuma İslam bilgisi ve dinin eğitimini verdirmek istiyorum, nerede, kimler tarafından, nasıl verileceğinin tarafıma bildirilmesi’ demelidirler. Büyükler de aynı talebi kendileri için dile getirmelidirler.
 - 3 Eğer bu talebe olumsuz veya yetersiz . . . cevap verilirse, iç hukuk mercilerine başvurmalıdırlar.
 - 4 İç hukukta evrensel ve Avrupa insan hakları belgelerine uygun bir çözüm elde edilemediği takdirde hem AİHM'ye hem de AB'nin ilgili birimlerine başvurmalıdırlar.
 - 5 Yalnızca başvurmakla kalmamalı, davayı sıkı ve usulüne uygun bir şekilde takip etmeli, gerekli ortamlarda, lehte kamuoyu oluşturmaya çalışmalıdırlar.
 - 6 Haklı talepleri karşılanıncaya kadar demokratik direniş ve sivil itaatsizlik hakkı kullanılmalı, evrensel hukukun ve TC. Anayasası'nın verdiği ama haksız olarak engellenen bu eğitim ve öğretim hakkı, mümkün olan her şekilde uygulanmalı, yönetimin müdahalesine ve yaptırımlarına göğüs gerilmelidir.”

effect on 8 July 2005. “Erdoğan defended the new law and the right to teach the Qur’an to children. He said that children should be as free to read the Qur’an as they are free to read ‘Teksas-Tommiks’ (i.e., comic books)” (Kuru, 2009, p. 198). In April 2013, the law was again amended in order to forestall judiciary investigations into illegally-operating educational institutions and to remove jail time for those who manage them. As for summer courses, the Council of State’s application to the Constitutional Court regarding the regulation that allowed students to attend summer Quran courses once they graduated from the fifth grade was rejected by the majority in March 2009. The conservative media remains silent on these results in their favor.

§ 5.4 A New Curriculum?

In the 2005-2006 academic year, the Turkish primary education curriculum underwent one of the largest reform processes in its history. “In 2005 the Turkish Ministry of Education announced that all the school curriculum subjects will be changed in line with the constructivist theory” (Kaymakcan, 2007, p. 459). The pilot implementation of the new curriculum started in 2004-2005, and it went nationwide in 2005-2006.

One of the largest media discussions about the new curriculum occurred around changes made in the area of religious education. In the new curriculum, seven teaching areas were determined for the compulsory religious culture and moral knowledge course: Faithfulness, religious service, the Prophet Muhammad, revelation and mind, morality and values, religion and secularism and religion, culture and civilization. In addition, the Ministry of National Education also initially proposed changes that foresaw hands-on teaching in the high school religious curriculum, including a demonstration of ritual of prayer in mosques, reading of the Quran, and screening of the film *The Message*.

While the government is accused of promoting Islamic conservatism and “taking a permissive approach towards the encouragement of Islamic practice in public schools” (Düzgüt and Çakır, 2009, pp. 91-92) in the mainstream secularist media, the conservative attitude towards the issue is radically different and more moderate. Conservative media reacts to such accusations in the

mainstream and develops a counter narrative that these criticisms are attempts to use the principle of secularism to limit religious freedom. In opinion pieces and commentaries, it argues in favor of the hands-on teaching approach for religious education on the basis of the right to education. For example, on December 2005, *Yeni Şafak* dedicates a half page to the commentary of Ahmet İnam, co-chair of the Department of Philosophy at Middle East Technical University (METU), who underlined that religious education would only be successful if it created an aura of spiritual excitement; hence, it is acceptable for teachers to take their classes to mosques for students to experience such spiritual love. The workplace of the interviewee in this particular news story is chosen deliberately, as METU has a long history of political dissent and is seen as the castle of “Western imperialism” by the conservative media. While eventually the Ministry of National Education backed down from the hands-on approach to religious education, “courses on religion and morality [nevertheless] began to incorporate specific lessons on how to conduct daily life according to Sunni religious principles” (Buğra and Savaşkan, p. 62).

Din eğitiminde aşk olmalı

"Manevi aşk ve heyecandan mahrum bir din öğretimi dine zarar verir" diyen ODTÜ Felsefe Bölüm Başkanı Yardımcısı Prof. İnam, öğretmenlerin çocuklara bu heyecanı verebilmek camiyeye götürebileceğini söyledi

Yalova'da Atatürk İlköğretim Okulu öğrencilerini Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi'nde camiyeye götürerek toplu halde abdest aldırıp namaz kıldırarak bir öğretmen hakkında Valilik tarafından inceleme ve Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından soruşturma başlatılırken, Türkiye Felsefe Derneği Başkanı Yardımcısı, ODTÜ Felsefe Bölüm Başkanı Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam uygulamayı savundu. "Manevi aşk ve heyecandan mahrum bir din öğretimi dine zarar verir" diyen İnam, çocuklara bu heyecanı verebilmek için öğretmenlerin camilere götürebileceğini belirtti.

'FİLM VE MÜSİKİ DE KULLANILMALI'

Prof. İnam, son günlerde din eğitimi konusunda medyada çıkan tartışmaları Yeni Şafak'a değerlendirdi. Prof. İnam, din eğitimi veren öğretmenlerinin hayata büyük bir sevgiyle, büyük bir teslimiyetle bakabilen, her türlü yakm ve felaket karşısında sonsuzlukta olan münasebetini hiç kaybetmeyen çok güzel insanlar olması gerektiğini belirtti. Öğretmenlerin öğrencilere "Siz dini öğrenerek güzelleştirdiniz arkadaşlar" diyecek şekilde yaklaşması gerektiğini belirten İnam, "Bu atmosferi vermek lazım. Belki o atmosferi musikiyle verebiliriz, belki o atmosferi filmler yardımıyla verebiliriz. Belki o atmosferi öğrencileri bizim camilerimize götürerek verebiliriz. İslam'ın çok büyük bir tehdit altında olduğu da düşünülürse, Müslümanlar çok akıllı olmalı. Yaratıcı atımlar, buluşlar yapması lazım, kendi inançlarını ve maneviyatlarını muhafaza etmek için. Bu yapılamaz birşey değildir. Bunun işaretleri yok değildir" dedi.



Dinlerin yaşanmasını da değerlendiren Prof. İnam, "Yahudilik de Hıristiyanlık da çok ayrılmıyor, dünyayı ele geçirmekle ilgili birtakım tasarıları yaşıyoruz. İslam'ın durumu ise birçok açıdan çok tuzaklı" dedi.

'İSLAMIN ULVİYETİ İDRAK EDİLEMİYOR'

İslamın içinde yaşadığı ulviyeti değişik sosyoekonomik-politik nedenlerle temiz,

saf bir Müslümanın çoğu zaman idrak edemediğini belirten Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam, "Çünkü dünyanın birçok yerinde zaten ekonomik olarak kötü durumdadır, mazlumdur, sınımtır, korku içindedir. Dolayısıyla o güzelliği, sonsuzluğu, bizi dünyanın ötesine götürebilecek o ilahi güçle karşı karşıya sokabilecek, onla gönlü bağı tesis edebilecek gücü tam olarak idrak edememekte ve yaşayamamaktadır" diye konuştu.

Eğitimi özgür olan Cumhuriyet asla yıkılmaz

Türkiye'de din eğitiminin daha da özgürleşmesi gerektiğini vurgulayan Prof. İnam, "Eğitim alanı özgür olmalı. İslami tanıtma başarısını elde edemedikçe, korkuların, baskıların ortadan kalkma ihtimali de yoktur. Dindeki manevi aşkı yaşayabilen örnek insanlar bu aşkı gençlere aktaracaklar, örnekleri göre göre iç insan manevi insan sayısı artacak" dedi. Prof. İnam şöyle devam etti: "Türkiye'de din eğitimi ve eğitimi konusunda insanları özgür bırakmak lazım. Kendi çocuğuna bildiği gibi eğitim vermeli. Bundan korkuyoruz. Sanıyoruz ki böyle olursa Cumhuriyet yıkılır. Devletimizin temellerine dinamit konulur. Ben burada bir tehlike görmüyorum. Tehlike tamamen bunun aksini yapmaktır. Çünkü yasakladığımız zaman yer altına giren faaliyetler gizli olduğu için daha tehlikeli olacak. Halbuki bunlar aheni olacaktır. Belki biraz daha düzen verilebilir, denetimden geçirilebilir. Okulda belki bu genel metafizik boyutu kalmı çizgilerle anlatılabilir ama İslam'ın kendine özgü ritüelleri, daha ince yanları eğitimde verilebilir. Okulda mana alemi hissettirmek gerek."

Figure 5.3 Yeni Şafak newspaper dedicated a half page to the commentary of Ahmet İnam, co-chair of the Department of Philosophy at METU. Reprinted from "Din eğitiminde aşk olmalı" by Y. Bulut, 2005, Yeni Şafak, p. 11. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

§ 5.5 The Case of Minorities and the Issue of Compulsory Religious Education

In 2011, Mansur Yalçın, Yüksel Polat, and Hasan Kılıç, who are adherents of the Alevi faith and whose children were in secondary school at the time, applied to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) claiming that the content of the compulsory high school religion and ethics course violated Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights by being based exclusively on the Sunni understanding of Islam.

In September 2014, the European Court of Human Rights reached a decision on the case and agreed that it was indeed a breach of Article 2. The court asked Turkey “to remedy the situation without delay, in particular by introducing a system whereby pupils could be exempted from religion and ethics classes without their parents having to disclose their own religious or philosophical convictions. . . . The court noted that almost all European Convention signatory states must offer at least one route by which pupils could opt out of religious education classes, by providing an exemption system or the option of studying an alternative subject, or by making attendance at religious studies classes entirely optional” (“Euro court calls Turkey,” 2014).

Even though the Turkish government did not follow the decision and reacted harshly to it, the court’s decision was instrumental in shaping public debate. After the ruling, debate over the compulsory nature of religious education dominated the columns of several conservative journalists.

Opinions about compulsory religious education vary even within a single media group. After the court’s decision was announced, columnists Ali Bayramoğlu, Fatma Barbarosoğlu, Atilla Yayla, and Özlem Albayrak, all *Yeni Şafak* writers, shared their views on the compulsory nature of religious education. Bayramoğlu and Yayla take a stance against compulsory religious education and argue that Turkey should not see the decision as an intervention but “an invitation to a democratic execution” (Bayramoğlu, 2014, p. 3). Yayla (2014) expresses his view on the debate as follows:

The second mistake a government can make concerning religious education is to organize it in a compulsory and centralized manner and take the sole control of it. This is wrong for several reasons. First, as a compulsory, centralized education should be standardized, religious education ultimately becomes the teaching of the dominant religion or religious interpretation. Second, a compulsory, centralized religious education under the guidance of the state can cause misinterpretation of the dominant religion. . . . My opinion about this long debate is this: Religious education should be freed from the monopoly of the state and should be left to society. The state should not discriminate against

religions or religious interpretations and should provide equal opportunities to every group that wants to receive religious education.⁸ (p. 14)

Similarly, *Sabah* columnist Hasan Bülent Kahraman argues that in order for religious education to be compulsory for all students, the curriculum of the course should be designed in a neutral way (Kahraman, 2014).

Contrary to Bayramoğlu, Yayla, and Kahraman, Barbarasoğlu and Albayrak argue in favor of compulsory religious education and share the AKP government's reaction to the court's decision. Albayrak (2014) expresses her views as follows:

It is true. We should discuss the problem that only Sunni Islam is mentioned in the compulsory religious education curriculum and that Alevism is defined through the resources of Sunni Islam in a country where there are also Alevi citizens. . . . [However,] the issue is this: Why does the ECHR insist on making religious education elective while this problem could easily be solved with a curriculum change? Here is the answer: Because Europe's historical experience is different from Turkey's experience. . . . [In Turkey] religion is at the heart of everyday lives, it is very decisive. That is why I think it is necessary not to force this culture but to get to know it.⁹ (p. 10)

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- 8 "Din eğitimi bakımından devletin düşebileceği ikinci hata, din eğitimini zorunlu ve merkezîyetçi hâle getirip kendi üzerine almasıdır. Bu birkaç sebeple yanlıştır. İlk olarak, merkezîyetçi ve zorunlu eğitim standardize edilmek zorunda olduğu için, din eğitimi sonunda egemen dinin veya dinî yorumun eğitime dönüşür. İkinci olarak, devlet güdümünde zorunlu ve merkezîyetçi din eğitimi, egemen dinin bile çarpıtılmasına yol açar. . . . Bu uzun tartışmayla ilgili görüşüm kısaca şudur: Din eğitimi devletin tekelinden çıkartılmalı ve topluma bırakılmalıdır. Devlet, dinler ve dinî yorumlar arasında hiçbir ayırım yapmadan, din eğitimi yapmak isteyen tüm grupları kamusal imkân ve araçlardan eşit şekilde yararlandırmalıdır."
- 9 "Doğrudur, Alevilerin de yaşadığı bir ülkede zorunlu bir din dersinde sadece Sünnî İslam'dan söz etmek alevî inancını da Sünnî kaynaklar üzerinden tanımlamak tartışılmalı. . . . [Ancak] Mesele şu; sorun müfredat değişikliğiyle düzeltilebilecek durumdayken AİHM neden Türkiye'de din eğitiminin seçmeli olması konusunda ısrar ediyor? El cevap: Çünkü, Avrupa'nın

While the media gradually lost interest in the debate after the court's ruling, the media narrative provided an important exception to the generally unified conservative media front on matters related to religious education.

§ 5.6 An “Endless Ordeal”: İmam Hatip Schools

After the 28 February 1997 postmodern military coup, YÖK rendered a decision that “secondary-school graduates who took the university entrance examination would earn higher scores if they applied for programs that coincided with the type of secondary school they attended” (Rabasa and Larrabee, 2008, p. 63). This decision was directly related to imam hatip schools and deliberately prevented graduates of those schools from entering into faculties other than theology. With the new amendment, IHL graduates would have to achieve higher scores than graduates of other schools to compete for entrance into non-theology faculties (Rabasa and Larrabee, 2008, p. 62).

When YÖK issued the new decision, parents started taking their children out of these schools and transferring them to formal or open high schools so that they would have a fair chance at the university entrance exam. These avenues, however, were also blocked by the state shortly after the law came into effect. In September 1998, the right of imam hatip students to transfer to formal and open high schools was restricted by the Board of Education and Discipline with the approval of the Ministry of National Education. What is more, just before the 2002 elections, YÖK changed how grade-point averages would be adjusted for the 2003 university entrance exam. “In this new estimation, the scores of imam hatip graduates were multiplied by 0.3, while those of general high school graduates were multiplied by 0.8 . . . making imam hatip school graduate's entrance to a university almost impossible” (Yılmaz, 2013, p. 86).

In September 2003, during the meeting of the AKP's Central Decision and Executive Board (*Merkez Karar ve Yönetim Kurulu* or MKYK), Prime Minister

tarihsel tecrübesiyle Türkiye'ninki farklı. . . [Türkiye'de] din hayatın tam göbeğinde, son derece belirleyici. Dolayısıyla bu kültüre zorlanmak değil ama bu kültürün ne söylediğini bilmek bendenize lüzumlu gözüküyor.”

Erdoğan expressed the government's desire to revoke the related law, and the AKP deputies immediately proposed a bill to the assembly. Yılmaz (2013) summarizes the nature of the bill as follows:

There were two main purposes for the suggested bill: Increasing the power of the government over the executive board of YÖK and reducing the effect of the coefficient factor for vocational school graduates. This legislation suggested dividing all high school programs into three categories: Science, social science, and equal weight – which includes both science and social science in balance. If a student chose a university program related to their high school field, the coefficient factor would be 0.8; if not, then it would be 0.45. Thus all imam hatip school students were considered to have received an education in the social sciences; if they chose a university program also related to social science, they would have equal opportunity with general high school graduates. (p.88)

The proposed bill met with harsh resistance from the military, forcing the AKP group to go back on the deal. The bill was sent back to the subcommittee of the TBMM's National Education Committee, with a vision to reawake the bill within the framework of a broader change in the YÖK law in the near future.

After this first tryout in October 2003, the suggested bill reappeared on the agenda of the AKP government in May 2004, and again it faced objections from YÖK. "Just before the AKP government finally passed this law in the National Assembly on 13 May 2004, YÖK, under its new president Erdoğan Teziç, who was appointed by President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, released a public statement insisting that only YÖK was permitted to set the coefficient factor; thus, imam hatip school graduates should not apply to any university programs other than theology (Hurriyet 04/27/2004)" (Yılmaz, 2013, p. 89). Despite these objections, the AKP government nevertheless passed the bill thanks to its majority in parliament, but President Sezer vetoed it and returned it to the legislature.

After these consecutive attempts in 2003 and 2004, the AKP government initiated a third assault to resolve the issue a year later. This time, at the end of

2005, the Ministry of Education released a notice giving IHL students the right to transfer to a distance education program after their graduation. “Since IHL curriculum covered all general high school curricula, by transferring their credits, these students would need to take few, if any, additional credits; thus, they would earn distance education high school diplomas with little more effort and would be able to take the university entrance exam with the same coefficient factor as other general high school students” (Yılmaz, 2013, pp. 98-99). The notice by the ministry once again had to confront YÖK, which sued the Ministry of Education on the grounds that it was eliminating the existing coefficient factor that had been in place since 1999. The case was decided in favor of YÖK in March 2007.

In August 2007, Abdullah Gül became the eleventh president of the Republic of Turkey, changing the entire dynamics of the government-YÖK-Council of State triangle. Gül appointed Professor Yusuf Ziya Özcan as the new president of YÖK along with new executive members. This new, pro-government administration clearly favored removing the disparities in the coefficient factor. But “when YÖK stopped requiring different coefficient factors on 21 July 2009, the Council of State on 11/20/2009 ordered a stay of implementation of the new ruling” (Yılmaz, 2013, p. 99), claiming that YÖK did not have the jurisdiction to revoke its own, initial decision.

YÖK took the decision of the Council of State to court, but failed to win initial lawsuits. After defeats in court, “then-YÖK President Yusuf Ziya Ozcan stated in his press release in December 2009, “We have contingency plans already drawn up, including options B, C, D, and E on the table” (Today's Zaman 12/12/2009)” (Yılmaz, 2013, p. 100). First, in December 2009, YÖK made a move to reduce the coefficient factor to 0.13 for vocational schools and 0.15 for general high schools, which resulted in two successful lawsuits against YÖK. “Afterwards, YÖK moved on to its Plan C on 17 March 2010, when it increased the effect of the coefficient factor a little more than in its previous decision, to 0.12 for vocational high school graduates and 0.15 for all other high school graduates. This time the Council of State did not order a stay of implementation, finding YÖK’s decision correct on 16 April 2010 (Council of State, 8. Chamber, App. No. 2010/2304)” (Yılmaz, 2013, p. 100). Finally, in November

2011, for the first time since 1999, YÖK removed all discrepancies between vocational high schools and general high schools and in June 2012, IHL students competed equally with general high school students in the university entrance exam.

The issue of IHLs briefly summarized is a flagship topic that regularly dominates the agenda of conservative media. The media perceives the problems of IHLs as a consequence of the post-February 28 process, and the unfair treatment of these schools by the state is thereafter harshly criticized as it took the right to an education away from many young, bright minds.

The conservative media narrative on the subject up until the removal of the coefficient factor in late 2011 rested on two core arguments: That IHLs are not religious schools but rather institutions that teach young people to be moral, culturally aware, and just citizens while protecting them from moral degeneration and the negative, individualistic influences of the West. IHLs also have tremendous impact on increasing the schooling of girls.

§ 5.7 İmam Hatip Youth: An Exemplary Generation

Conservative media sees the “IHLs only train religious officials” argument as a common fallacy about IHLs in society and argues that, in the words of Yusuf Kaplan (2005), these schools exist to foster creative, enthusiastic, confident, and bright generations by providing them with a sense of Islamic culture, art, philosophy, as well as a sense of science, culture, and arts of the modern world. It sees IHLs as castles to protect the new generation from the deleterious affects of materialist culture. Before YÖK’s unfair treatment of them, IHLs were a step ahead of other schools in terms of both the quality of the education and of the way they discipline young generation (Karaman, 2006). In fact, conservative media sees IHLs as “too much” for a wannabe Western society that wants everything readily handed to it (Ökten 2007). In 2006, Yusuf Kaplan (2006a) summarizes these arguments in his column.

(But) IHLs are an exemplary generation. Theft, corruption, murder, sexual deviations, drugs – these are things that IHLs do not even know about. . . .

IHLs are not religious schools. This is an indirect argument. IHLs are schools that plant the seeds of role models. In these schools, despite all their weaknesses, a generation is being fostered that is simultaneously learning Islam and the West. Children are provided with a sense of history, culture and generation. . . .

This country moved forward at least 50 years with the IHL generation. IHLs, in essence, are the past and future of this country. What needs to be done is to not destroy theology schools but to equip them with strong opportunities and quality education. Otherwise we cannot save our schools from becoming cursed, alarming institutions filled with soulless little monsters that go after drugs, perversions, selfishness, desires and thirty interests. These little monsters will always be one step away from committing murder and will legitimize all kinds of violence in order not to drown in the vortex of the emptiness of meaning.¹⁰ (p.15)

After the removal of the discrepancies of the coefficient factor, IHLs continue to be a popular media narrative for conservative journalists and publications, though not as much as in the previous era. Again, the focus is on the distinctive qualities of these institutions and the moral and cultural education they promised young generations. The media continues to underline that IHLs provide a better education than regular schools, foster generations who are conscious of their national identity, all the while keeping them away from bad

10 “(Oysa,) İHL'ler, örnek bir kuşaktır. Hırsızlık, yolsuzluk, cinayet, cinsel sapıklıklar, uyuşturucu İHL'lerin bilmediği şeylerdir. . . . İHL'ler, din eğitimi veren okullar değildir. Bu, çok yanlış bir algılama biçimidir. İHL'ler, "örnek insan tipi"nin en azından tohumlarının atıldığı okullardır: Bu okullarda, bütün zaaflarına, eksikliklerine rağmen, hem İslâm'ı, hem Batı'yı aynı anda öğrenen, tanıyan bir kuşak yetiştirilir. Tarih, kültür ve medeniyet bilinci ve sevgisi kazandırılır çocuklara. . . . Bu ülke, İHL kuşağıyla en az 50 yıl kazanmıştır. İHL'ler, özü itibarıyla, bu ülkenin hem geçmişi, hem de geleceğidir. Yapılması gereken şey, İHL'leri, İlahiyatları yok etmek değil, güçlü imkânlarla donatmak, eğitim kalitelerini yükseltecek adımlar atmak, önünü açmaktır. Aksi takdirde, temel eğitim kurumlarımızı, uyuşturucunun, cinsel sapıklıkların, bencil, arzularının ve küçük çıkarlarının peşinde koşuşturan, her tür cinayeti işlemeye ramak kalmış, ruhlarını yitirmiş, anlam boşluğunun girdabında boğulmamak için her tür şiddet biçimini normal görmeye başlayan küçük canavarların cirit attığı her bakımdan SOS veren lanetli kurumlara dönüşmekten kurtaramayız.”

habits such as drugs and addictions (Sönmezışık, 2013). And with courses such as Arabic, Ottoman Turkish, history, hermeneutics, and hadiths, they helped foster successful poets, writers, speakers, and politicians of the future (Akkuşak, 2014).

While the distinctive qualities of IHLs are always underlined in the conservative media, in the last two years, conservative opinion leaders have started to talk about the problems of IHLs within the overall framework of the problems of the Turkish education system. Whereas IHLs and the graduates of these schools were previously treated as “privileged,” “exemplary” generations, conservative media has gradually started to voice concern about the diminished enthusiasm observed among IHL students due to the increasing popularity of materialistic, earthly pleasures like video games, cell phones, and other self-indulgent, modern technologies (Beşer, 2014b; Karaman, 2016b). As central problems like the coefficient factor were gradually resolved and IHLs became the new normal, the conservative media starts to embrace them as mainstream and slowly feels secure enough to talk about their problems as one of the issues of the national education system.

5.7.1 *“İmam Hatips Increase the Schooling of Female Children”*

Before the removal of the discrepancies of the coefficient factor in late 2011, IHLs increased the schooling of girls is one of the most common arguments in the conservative media to criticize the unfair treatment of these schools. In regular opinion articles and commentaries by relevant opinion leaders, it was constantly recalled that thanks to IHLs, conservative families became more tolerant of their female children’s education after elementary school and even of their university education.



Figure 5.4 *Yeni Şafak* quoted the head of the Turkey İmam Hatip Alumni Foundation, Mehmet Emin Parlaktürk, underlining İHLs' role in the schooling of girls. Reprinted from "İHL'ler kızları okula çekiyor," by Sağırkaya, H., 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 14. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

A.Ü. İLAHİYAT FAKÜLTESİ EMEKLİ ÖĞRETİM ÜYESİ BEYZA BİLGİN

'İmam-Hatip'ler sayesinde kızlar üniversiteli oldu'

Prof. Dr. Beyza Bilgin, İmam-Hatiplerde başörtüsüyle okunabilmesi ve üniversite yolunun açılması sayesinde kızların okullu olma hayallerini gerçekleştirdiklerini söyledi.

Türkiye'de kız çocuklarının okutulması yönünde önemli çabalar harcayan ve bunu sık sık dile getiren Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi emekli Öğretim Üyesi Prof. Dr. Beyza Bilgin de sorularımıza cevapladı.

Kız çocuklarının okutulması noktasında İmam Hatiplerin bir fonksiyonu olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?

Benim İmam Hatip Okuluna öğretmen olduğum yıl kız öğrenci kayıt edilmeğe başlandı. Önce, imam hatip yetiştirecek bir okula kız öğrenci alınmayacağı ileri sürülmüş, sonra okulun yazılı kabul şartlarında cinsiyet bildirilmediği fark edilmiş ve kızların kaydı yapılmış. Ben Yozgat'ta iken üç kız öğrenciyi hatırlıyorum. Ben o yıl hastalandım ve sağlık sebebi ile Ankara'ya ailemin yanına tayin edildim. Benim arkamdan, yani bir yıl sonra veliler, kızların büyüdüğünü, erkeklerle baş açık okuyamayacaklarını ileri sürüp, başörtüsü isteğinde bulunmuş. Zaman içinde kızlar için özel sınıf açan İmam Hatip okulları oldu, hatta okulu böldüler, bahçeyi böldüler, kapıları ayırdılar, bununla birlikte kız öğrenci sayısı da arttı. Benim kanaatim o kızlar, İmam Hatip okulu olmasaydı, orta okula gönderilmeyecek olan kızlardı. Bu kızlar sadece Kuran Kursu öğretmeni olmakla kalmadı, lise fark dersleri sınavlarını verebilenler veya daha sonra, İmam hatip okullarına Lise hakkı verildikten sonra üniversite sınavlarında başarılı olanlar üniversiteye de gidebildiler. İmam



Prof. Dr. Beyza Bilgin

Hatipler ve kızların başörtülü olarak devam edebilmesi sayesinde kız öğrenci kaydı arttı ama istenmeyen olaylar da yaşandı.

Bir zamanlar kızlar üniversiteye yolanmazdı. Bu durumun aşılmasında İHL'lerin bir katkısı oldu mu sizce?

İmam hatiplere üniversiteye gidebilme hakkı verilmesi ve tabii başörtüsü sayesinde olmuştur. Başörtüsü sayesinde okullu olacak kızların hevesleri yerine gelebilmiştir. Ancak bunu art niyetli kullananlar da olmuştur. Bugün durum eskisi gibi değil. Meslek liseleri ile düz liseler üniversite sınavında aynı şartlarda

yaşamıyor. Meslek liseleri mezunlarının biraşları doğrultusunda yüksek tahsil yapması ilkesi yürürlükte. Kızlar daha çok İlahiyat fakültelerine girebiliyor. Kızlar çok çalışkan olduğu için de erkekleri geçiyor ve İlahiyat Fakültelerinde, özellikle öğretmenlik bölümünde kız sayısı erkek sayısını aşiyor. Bu kadınlar açısından iyidir. Bin yıllık mazimizde İslam alanında hep erkekler öğrenim gördü ve kadınların evin içi ile sınırlayan fetvalarla şöhret yaptılar. Şimdi kadınlar İslam'ın kendileri ile ilgili haberlerini, bizzat Allah'ın sözlerini okuyarak öğreniyorlar. Bir süre böyle gitmesi iyi olur, kanaatindeyim.

Özellikle köylerde yaşayan vatandaşların İmam Hatip liselerine yoğun ilgisinin sebebi nedir?

O zamanlar İmam Hatip Okuluna erkek öğrenciler de ağırlıklı olarak köylerden veya küçük yerleşme bölgelerinden geliyordu. Dışında Kuran Kursuna gitmiş, Kuran öğrenmiş, tam veya yarı hafız olmuş gençler, ya öğrenci olarak geliyor, din görevlisi olmak için okuyordular, ya da dışardan tek tek bütün derslere hazırlanıp sınıflara göre sınavlara giriyor ve diploma alıyordular. Bu bir meslekti. Lise hakkı verilince veliler şöyle düşünmeye başladılar: Nasıl olsa diğer liseler gibi bunların da öntü açık, düz liseye gideceğine İmam Hatip Lisesine gitsin gençler, böylece Kuran bilgisini de öğrenmiş olurlar. Anarşi döneminde bu okullarda hadise olması da onlara rağbeti arttırmıştı.

Figure 5.5 Professor Beyza Bilgin commented to *Yeni Şafak* that IHLs played a pioneering role in increasing the number of female university students. Reprinted from "İmam hatip'ler sayesinde kızlar üniversiteli oldu," 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 4. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (*Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı* or TESEV) research project titled *İmam Hatip High Schools: Legends and Realities* also contributes to this narrative and provides a scientific grounding for these arguments. In July 2005, *Yeni Şafak* publishes a series on the past and present of IHLs, written by journalist Recep Yeter. On 3

July 2005, *Yeter* covers TESEV's research extensively but particularly focuses on the female students of IHLs. The journalist argues that IHLs undoubtedly had a tremendous impact on the education of girls; without IHLs, more than 500 thousand female students would have been withdrawn from school by their parents. Quoting the TESEV findings, *Yeter* underlines that half of the female imam hatip students interviewed said they would not attend any school other than an IHL, and none regretted the education they are receiving from these schools.

Turning also to the parents of female students, *Yeter* states that parents send their girls to IHLs not just for religious education, but out of moral concern. In support of TESEV's study, *Yeter* also interviews the parent of two daughters, Sultan Zozik, who *Yeter* reports, confirmed TESEV's study with the following conversation:

Sultan Zozik is also a parent who decided to send her children to an IHL. Zozik, whose two daughters are students at the IHL of Ankara's Demetevler district, says, "I have another daughter and I will also send her to the IHL." We ask why and she responds: "First of all, I would like to point something out: At the school they attended until the eighth grade, my daughters grew away from me. There were mountains between us. After the eighth grade, I chose the IHL so that they would grow up in line with my faith [and] lifestyle, and that there would no longer be distance between me and my children." . . . Zozik, whom we asked whether she should have sent her daughters to regular high schools if there were no any IHLs, confirmed the TESEV's study: "No, I wouldn't consider that. Because it was inflicting deep wounds. Even though as parents we showed them what is right and what is wrong, there were still mountains between us. Then I thought, if we are dealing with these problems in primary school, my children will be estranged from me when they go to high school because the education

they were receiving there was taking them away from me. That is why I wasn't thinking of sending them to high school.¹¹ (Yeter, 2005, p. 4)

İHL'ler olmasaydı biz okuyamazdık

TESEV'in yaptırdığı "Efsaneler ve Gerçekler: İmam Hatip Liseleri" başlıklı araştırmaya katılan kız öğrencilerin yarına yakını "İHL'ne gitmeseydiniz başka okula gider miydiniz?" sorusuna "Hayır gitmezdim" karşılığını verdi.



İmam Hatip Liseleri'nin Türkiye'ye en önemli katkılarından birisi şüphesiz ki kız çocukların eğitimi alanında oldu. Bu genç kızlar olmasaydı baskınlar tarafından hile tilah edilirken, kamusuz ararımın da imam hatip liseleri olmasaydı, yaklaşık 500 bin kız çocuğunun okuyamayacağı ortaya çıkardı.

Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etütler Vakfı'nın (TESEV) Türkiye genelinde Adana, Erzurum, Ünye'deki Samsun İmam Hatip Liseleri ile İstanbul'da Kağıthane ve Üsküdar Anadolu İmam Hatip Liseleri'nde 50 öğrenci ve 14 öğretmenle yaptığı araştırmaya katılan 24 yaşlı öğrencinin anlatımlarıyla yapılan araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin "Efsaneler ve Gerçekler: İmam Hatip Liseleri" başlıklı araştırmaya katılan kız öğrencilerin eğitimi ile ilgili sorularına "Kız öğrenciler 'İHL'ne gitmeseydiniz başka okula gider miydiniz?' diye sorulan TESEV araştırmasında kız öğrencilerin yarına yakını "Hayır gitmezdim" karşılığını veriyor. Hayır cevabının büyük bir kısmında daha fazla okula gidebilirdim, aynı zamanda öğrenciler arasında İHL'nde öğrenim gönmeye için program olan kamusuz bulmadığı ifade ediyor.

Kızlar neden İHL'ne gitmek istiyor?

TESEV araştırmasında Neden imam hatip liselerine gittiniz diye sorulan kız öğrencilerin verdiği cevaplar ise şu şekilde oldu:

Özellikle sekiz yaşla birlikte eğitime geçmeye başlıyoruz, ben muhtemelen okula gitmek istiyordum. Benim için imam hatip liseleri çok önemliydi. Çünkü imam hatip liselerinde okuduğumuz dersler bizim için çok önemliydi. Özellikle İHL'nde okuduğumuz dersler bizim için çok önemliydi. Özellikle İHL'nde okuduğumuz dersler bizim için çok önemliydi. Özellikle İHL'nde okuduğumuz dersler bizim için çok önemliydi.

'İnancım ters düşmeyecek eğitim alsınlar'

Çocuk Zozik de İHL'ye yollayan velilerden biri. Ankara, Demetevler İmam Hatip Lisesi'nde kız öğrenci Zozik, "Bir kızım daha var onu da imam hatibe yollayacağım" diyor. Sultan Hanım'a "Neden? diye soruyoruz", o da şu cevabı veriyor. "Öncelikle şunu belirtmek istiyorum. Kızlarım İHL'ne gitmeseydi başka okula, her geçen gün benden uzaklaşıyorlardı. Kızlarım arama kurumlarına girerdi. Sekizinci sınıfın ardından, benim inancımın, yaşantımın ters düşmeyecek, çocuğumla arama girmeyecek bir şekilde yetişmelerimin imam hatibi tercih ettim."

Zozik, "Kızlarım bu okula var olmaları için çok önemliydi" dedi. Zozik, "İHL'ne gitmeseydiniz başka okula gider miydiniz?" diye sorulan Zozik, "Hayır gitmezdim" karşılığını veriyor. Zozik, "İHL'ne gitmeseydiniz başka okula gider miydiniz?" diye sorulan Zozik, "Hayır gitmezdim" karşılığını veriyor.

Figure 5.6 From the news series on the past and present of IHLs, written by journalist Recep Yeter. Reprinted from "İHL'ler olmasaydı biz okuyamazdık," by R. Yeter, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 4. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

11 "Sultan Zozik de İHL'ye yollayan velilerden biri. Ankara, Demetevler İmam Hatip Lisesi'nde iki kızını eğitim gören zozik, 'Bir kızım daha var onu da imam hatibe yollayacağım' diyor. Sultan Hanım'a 'Neden?' diye soruyoruz, o da şu cevabı veriyor. 'Öncelikle şunu belirtmek istiyorum. Kızlarım S. sınıfı bitirinceye kadar gittikleri okulda, her geçen gün benden uzaklaşıyorlardı. Kızlarımı arama kurumlarına girerdi. Sekizinci sınıfın ardından, benim inancımın, yaşantımın ters düşmeyecek, çocuğumla arama girmeyecek bir şekilde yetişmelerimin imam hatibi tercih ettim.' . . . İHL olmasaydı düz liseye yollar mıydınız? diye sorduğumuz Zozik, TESEV'in araştırmasını teyid ediyor: 'Hayır vermeyi düşünmüyordum. Çünkü derin yaralar açıyordu. Biz aile olarak, doğru yanlışı göstermemize rağmen, uçurumlar girdi çocuklarımızla arama. Düşündüm henüz daha ilköğretim safhasında biz bu uçurumlarla uğraşıyorsak, lisede çocuklarımız bidden tamamen kopacaktır. Çünkü verilen eğitim çocuklarımızı benden koparıyordu. Bu yüzden liseye göndermeyi düşünmüyordum.'"

After the coefficient factor problem was solved and with growing AKP government support for IHLs, the narrative about the schooling of girls also gradually faded from conservative media. The lifting of the ban on the headscarf in schools by a ministry circular in 2014 (“Court clears lifting of headscarf ban,” 2015) also contributed to this circumstance. Prior to these changes, conservative media put forward the headscarf ban in public schools as one of the largest obstacles to the schooling of young girls and argued that families, especially in the eastern regions of the country, were open to sending their female children to school if girls in the fifth grade and upwards were allowed to cover their hair at school (Karataş, 2005). After these problems are solved, there is indeed an increase in both the overall number of female students and in girls enrolled in IHLs. In 2011-2012 educational year, the total number of female students in formal education was 8,149,002, and the number of female students enrolled in IHLs was 141,816. According to corresponding statistics for the first semester of the 2016-2017 educational year, the total number of female students in formal education has increased by 2.58 percent to 8,3594,22, while the latter saw a nearly 150 percent increase, reaching 353,379.¹² While other variables such as socioeconomic conditions, increases in income, and the number of schools need to be factored in to explain the increase in the schooling of girls, the overwhelming increase in the number of female students enrolled in IHLs clearly shows that these schools have indeed contributed significantly to the schooling of young girls.

12 Ministry of Education. (2012). *National Education Statistics; Formal Education 2011-2012*. Retrieved from <http://sgb.meb.gov.tr/www/milli-egitim-istatistikleri-orgun-egitim-2011-2012/icerik/68> and Ministry of Education. (2017). *National Education Statistics; Formal Education 2016-2017 (1. Semester)*. Retrieved from http://sgb.meb.gov.tr/www/icerik_goruntule.php?KNO=257

Fostering Pious Generations: The Conservative Myth of Youth

The notions of youth and generations are often treated as biological-genealogical phenomena, natural stages in human development. But, in fact, youth as a social category is an essentially modern, urban phenomenon – “a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood that, in its contemporary form, is a product of modernity” (Swedenburg, 2012, p. 285).

While the rapid industrialization of Western Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century contributed to the acknowledgment of the concept of a generation as an important historical phenomenon, real interest in historical generations emerged as a scholarly field in the twentieth century, first between 1920 and 1933 and then in the period after World War II. During the first period, the works of German scholars dominated the field and social research by American scholars increased. During this period, the interest shifted from a “theoretical and holistic treatment of the topic to an intensive empirical one, looking at distinct periods in time and at concrete generational phenomena” (Jaeger, 1985, p. 277).

But despite this history dating to the first half of the nineteenth century, the notion of generations entered sociological debate in Karl Mannheim’s essay *The Problem of Generations* (1927), as he is the first to “attempt a systematic, comprehensive treatment of the state of research using social scientific methods as they had developed during the twentieth century” (Jaeger, 1985, p. 278).

He expands the meaning of the term beyond biology and kinship. Mannheim insists on solving the problem by sociological analysis and aims to draw attention to the role of generations in historical change. He defines a generation as a group that shares “a common location in the social and historical process . . . [which exposes them] to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain characteristic model of thought and experience, and a characteristic type of historically-relevant action” (Kecskemeti, 1952, p. 291). Since members of this group are likely to experience similar historical conditions during their formative years, they belong to the same “generation status” – a potential bond that can be an inclination towards behaviors, feelings, actions and thought models. Mannheim stresses the importance of location, as the unintentional consequence of being at a certain point along a timeline results in the exhibition of common features by certain individuals that share the same location. But, still to him, belonging to the same age group or sharing the same continuum is not the only determinant of a generation. Members of a group must first belong to the same culture and the same society, as generations occur only through the overlap of other historical and cultural factors. Moreover, even within one historical community, a single age group may be split up into sharply differentiated sub-groups in times of social struggle, becoming polarized into what he calls antagonistic generation units. (Kecskemeti, 1952, pp. 23-24).

World wars intensified the study of generational disruptions after 1945. A well-known scholar of the time, Helmut Schelsky, describes the adolescent generation of the first decade of post-war Germany as a “‘silent generation’ of individuals who were cautious, conforming and concerned with the commonplaces of life . . . whereas in the US, David Riesman’s assumption of a change from an inner-directed to an outer-directed personality in industrial societies of this century contained many elements of a generational approach to history” (Jaeger, 1985, pp. 279-80).

In parallel with the general interest in generation studies, youth as a social category is an essentially modern, urban phenomenon that began to be studied after World War II. According to Hall and Jefferson (1976/2003), there were a few aspects of social change immediately after World War II that were responsible for the emergence of “youth culture.” These included the disruptive

effects of the war on children born during that period (absent fathers, evacuations, etc.); the increased importance of the market and consumption and the emergence of the “teenage consumer,” the arrivals of mass communications, mass entertainment, mass art, and mass culture; developments in the educational sphere (secondary education for all, massive expansion of higher education); and the arrival of a range of distinctive styles and musical genres. With “the economic growth in the United States, Britain and other European states in the 1950s and 1960s, . . . commodities such as fashion, accessories and music . . . become available to majority of young people and consequently, consumerist and expressive subcultures increasingly became the subject of sociological studies” (Herding, 2013, p. 28).

The capitalist boom of the 1960s witnessed the widespread mobilization of young people in Europe and the United States, falsifying Schelsky’s “silent generation” theory and persuading observers to believe that youth were a new, revolutionary force of social transformation in Western societies that was taking the place of the proletariat as the major agent of political change (Bayat, 2010, pp. 117-118). The political conservatism of the many young people in the West immediately after the 1960s, however, “shattered the myths of youths as a revolutionary class” (Bayat, 2010, p. 118).

The problem with the youth culture studies of the time was that they “appropriate[d] the situation of the young almost exclusively in terms of the commercial and publicity manipulation and exploitation of the young” (Hall and Jefferson, 2003, p. 16). In other words, research studies did not see youth culture as an agent and explained the cultural pursuits of the post-war youth by looking only at the activities and things offered to them by adults. They overlooked the fact that youth and youth cultures are comprised of a more complex set of categories and have deeper socioeconomic and cultural roots than a mere market phenomenon. Starting in 1970s onwards, research in this field acknowledges these claims and focuses on alternative ways to study youth and youth cultures. Pierre Bourdieu’s work on social and cultural change provides an important connection between sharing a generational experience the production of self-conscious generations that act to bring about change. Bourdieu sees generational struggle as an integral determinant of cultural transformation and argues that intergenerational competition over economic, social,

and especially cultural resources produces significant social change. But “even for P. Bourdieu, inter- and intra-generational relations are potentially conflictual, since each generation has its own habitus ‘which have been produced by different modes of generation, that is, by conditions of existence which, in imposing different definitions of the impossible, the possible and the probable, cause one group to experience as natural or reasonable practices or aspirations which another group finds unthinkable or scandalous, and vice versa. (1972:78)” (Aroldi and Colombo, 2013, p. 177).

Inspired by Bourdieu’s work, Birmingham’s Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) (1964 – 2002) came to be a hub of youth research, particularly via two publications; *Resistance through Rituals* and Hebdige’s *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. CCCS established subculture as a substantial part of youth culture research. It shifted the focus towards style-based youth cultures and interpreted the deviance of subcultures to be collective resistance to the standards and values of the dominant culture of the post-war period. It underscored that the motivations, origins, and goals of the participants in a particular subculture must also be considered in analyses. To the CCCS scholars, the adoption of distinctive styles, languages, images, music, and ideologies created “a space where an alternative identity can be constructed that deliberately plays with visible difference and ‘Otherness,’ which allows members of the group to question and counter-stipulate class and gender attributes – but only on a symbolic level (Hebdige, 1993, pp. 88–89)” (Herding, 2013, p. 31). The styles, value systems, and behavioral norms created by subcultures endow participants with an identity by breaking the norms that are taken for granted by a vaguely-defined mainstream society.

Despite the prominent role it played in reconstructing the scholarly field of youth cultures, the CCCS receives various criticisms, especially from the 1990s onwards, based on the grounds that it applied a nearly exclusive, class-based neo-Marxist interpretation, outshining “empirical and thorough ethnographic research and caus[ing] ignorance of the subjective interpretations of youth in favor of an inadequately sophisticated analysis with a certain political agenda (Bennett 2000: 22; Hodkinson 2007: 6)” (Herding, 2013, p. 32). Other points of criticism are the absence of less involved youth – particularly young

women and ethnic minority subcultures – from the analyses¹ and the failure to consider local variations of music, styles, and especially commercialized products (Herding, 2013, p. 32).

From the mid-1990s onwards, the theoretical category of a generation has become a popular focus for many social, political, economic, and educational studies. Mannheim's legacy started to be acknowledged by various scholars at a time when faced with accelerating social change, many scholars started referring to the concept of generation "in order to emphasize a break with the past and the birth of a new social subjectivity" (Aroldi and Colombo 2013, pp. 175-76).² The class-based approach to youth cultures has also largely been abandoned, and youth cultures and subcultures are acknowledged to be less binding, more fluid categories. Ronald Hitzler and Michaela Pfadenhauer, for example, "promote the term 'scenes,' underlining the non-committal character of voluntary and temporary engagement of post-traditional collectivisations (Hitzler/Pfadenhauer 1998: 78; Hitzler/Honer/Pfadenhauer 2008)" (Herding, 2013, p. 32), while Bennet (2000) refers to the term "lifestyles" to emphasize the flexible, transitional forms of youth (sub)cultures and their connection to one another and to mainstream society. Reimer (1995), too, use[s] the term lifestyle in his detailed study of Swedish youth in which he concludes that "lifestyle orientations result not only from a combination of class, gender, education, income and civil status, but also from young people's choice of entertainment that is not dependent on their socioeconomic background (Reimer 1995: 135; Bennett 2000: 26)" (Herding, 2013, p. 33).

Up until the 2000s, constrained by Mannheim's conceptualization, the sociological literature treated generations as nationally-bounded entities, and the field research focused only on the experience of young people in the Western world. But with the emergence of new communication technologies, the internet, and social media, a few scholars³ provoked a discussion to expand

1 "Only one article of *Resistance through Rituals* dealt with girls and indoor locations like the 'teenage bedroom' (McRobbie/Garber 1993), while all others investigated outdoor, street-based male subcultures" (Herding, 2013, p. 32).

2 Pilcher (1994), M. Corsten (1999), and J. Edmunds and B. S. Turner (2002, 2005).

3 J. Edmunds and B. S. Turner (2005).

the notion of the concept, arguing that in the latter part of the twentieth century a global generation emerged, often called millennials, generation Y or nexters. These twenty-somethings who made the passage into adulthood at the start of the new millennium are characterized, uniquely, by increasing interactivity (Edmunds and Turner, 2005, p. 559). According to various research studies, this generation has some distinct characteristics that differentiate it from Generation X, which preceded it. They are “digital natives” and history’s first always-connected generation, they are slow to transition into adulthood, distant from marriage as an institution, and optimistic about the future. They are also confident, self-expressive, coddled by their parents, conflict-averse, at ease with racial, ethnic, and sexual diversity, liberal, upbeat, and open to change. “Recent surveys have found that younger adults are far less likely than older generations to identify with a religion, believe in God or engage in a variety of religious practices” (“The age gap in religion around the world,” 2018).

There is no doubt that globalization, triggered by the growth of global electronic communications technologies, is a distinctive feature of Generation Y. But still, the growing research and literature continues to be problematic. While “contemporary studies tend to assume the universality of youth as a category, there are few historical and ethnographic studies of how youth is constructed in non-Western societies” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 413). In other words, what are claimed to be the common features of millennials are features based on the experiences of youth in Western societies, raising significant challenges for the study of youth in non-Western contexts and overlooking the fact that national, local culture still plays a decisive role in constructing the experience of younger generations.

To give an example, there is no doubt that a bond exists between the young people of the Arab Spring and their counterparts in Western countries protesting issues ranging from financial capitalism to individual rights to international institutions to social causes like global warming. They both use social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp to organize and coordinate their actions. “Nevertheless, if we look more closely, there are substantial differences: Young Arabs are seeking a path to redemption that their parents were not able or willing to find. They seek democracy, wealth and equality

in yet unknown forms. Instead, young people from western countries see that the same democracy, wealth and equality that their parents achieved is being put at risk by economic contingencies and ask themselves if future will be worse than today” (Aroldi and Colombo, 2013, p. 187). Similarly, there has been an increase in the use of social media and smartphones among both groups of youth, yet for different reasons. Young people on the Arab countries are confronted with rigid interpretations of Islam and equally strict social codes that place sharp restrictions on public life and therefore use these tools mostly to earn money or meet potential spouses. In Hubbard (2015)’s words: “Lacking free speech, they debate on Twitter. Since they cannot flirt at the mall, they do it on WhatsApp or Snapchat. Since they are banned from driving, they get rides from car services like Uber and Careem.” Even though they share the same communication tools and even cultural production as Western counterparts, they are fighting different battles, and a different rationale is behind their leveraging of new technologies.

The same goes for Turkey. The research studies of Eriş et al. (2013) and Yüksekbilgili (2013), for example, show that even though Generation Y-ers in Turkey share certain global characteristics with counterparts in Western countries (technology orientation, independence, self-confidence), they differ in significant respects such as in their emphasis on honesty, trustworthiness, patience, and the importance of family. Religion is also a highly differentiating factor. When compared to global (Western) millennials, religion plays a more prominent role in the self-identification of Turkish nexters.⁴

Among contemporary scholars that criticize the current agenda of the field and attempt to reconstruct youth categories to include the experiences of non-Western youth, Asef Bayat stands out with his in-depth ethnographic studies of the Middle East. Borrowing Bourdieu’s concept of “habitus”, Bayat (2010) underscores the differences between the experiences of young people in the Western world and their counterparts in the Middle East.

4 According to a Pew Research Center survey of millennials in 2014, only 36 percent said that the phrase “religious person” describes them well; the KONDA (2014) research on the participation of the Turkish youth to the Gezi Park protests revealed that only 4.2 percent of the youth claim to hold beliefs other than Islam.

Although middle class youths (both male and female) of rich industrialized nations, the “global North,” have chance to experience relative autonomy, many rural youngsters (especially female) in poor countries, the “global South” may have little opportunity to undergo “youthfulness.” For they have to move rapidly from the status of childhood into the world of work, responsibility and parenting – all makers of adulthood. Some youngsters, thus, are excluded from the state of youth by virtue of their lack of participation in, or access to, education, youth leisure activities, media, and markets, key axes around which youth cultures and politics crystallize and modes of youth consciousness form. (Bayat and Herrera, 2010, pp. 6-7)

This background and the experience of youths in the global South led Bayat (2010) to coin the term “youth nonmovements” to explain the everyday lives, norms, and practices of the distinctive youth cultures of the non-Western world. Bayat underscores that public arenas like urban spaces, shopping malls, parks, cultural centers, the mass media, and local neighborhoods provide the spaces for young persons to develop a particular consciousness about themselves as youth and for the collective formation and expression of identities. He argues as follows:

Identities, are formed mostly through “passive networks,” the non-deliberate and instantaneous communications among atomized individuals that are established by the tacit recognition of their commonalities and that are mediated directly through the gaze in public space, or indirectly through the mass media. As present agents in the public space, the young recognize shared identity by noticing (seeing) collective symbols inscribed, for instance, in styles (T-shirts, blue jeans, hair-style), types of activities (attending particular concerts and music stores, and hanging around shopping malls), and places (stadiums, hiking trails, street corners). (p. 31)

These nonmovements, according to him, boost change not through collective action, but through their public existence. They are characterized by collective being (behaviors, outfits, and ways of speaking and walking in private and

public spaces) rather than by collective doing (networking, organizing, deploying resources, and mobilizing). “With their central preoccupation with ‘cultural production’ or lifestyles, the young may fashion new norms, religious practices, cultural codes, and values, without needing structured organization, leadership, or ideologies” (pp. 118-120). Even though Bayat’s ethnographic studies were conducted in the Middle East cities like Beirut, his approach to youth culture and particularly his concept of nonmovements breaks new ground in delineating the potential of ordinary people from diverse backgrounds to bring about political and social change. It is a step towards incorporating non-Western contexts and youth into the mainstream discussion (Pourmokhtari, 2015) and shows that the local and national still play an important role in shaping the experience of younger generations.

§ 6.1 Youth in Turkey: A Brief Overview

As Demet Lüküslü (2011) points out, the history of modern Turkey, from the nineteenth century until the 1980s is also a history of youth movements that have played an important role in Turkish political life. In the Tanzimat period, the conception of youth in late nineteenth-century Ottoman society was reformulated as the saviors of the sick man of Europe. Modernization attempts began with the establishment of Western-style military academies and the introduction of legislative and administrative mechanisms on education, such as the establishment of the Imperial War School in 1834 and the General Education Council in 1846, the promulgation of the 1869 Regulations for Public Education, and the opening of the university Darülfünûn-ı Osmanî as an institution of higher education in 1870. The students of these new, Western-style schools, including Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, would soon challenge the regime and eventually found the new republic.

The construction of youth in Turkish public discourse is often analyzed in three periods.

6.1.1 *Youth as the Guardians of the Regime, 1923-1950*

From the beginning, the education of the new generation was a fundamental concern of the young republic, which put a social engineering project in place

to create a homogenous population with one, shared identity – a new type of person with a new mindset that is shaped by and represents the values of the new republic. “The emphasis on the modernizing role of educated youth beginning in the Tanzimat period culminated in the 1920s in a veritable cult of youth initiated by the new state in an attempt to build a national consciousness and a modern nation state” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 416).

The importance placed on reshaping the republic through the youth was addressed at the highest levels. At the end of the Second Congress of the CHP on 15-20 October 1927, Atatürk directly addressed the youth and provided them with their ultimate role in the following lines:

Turkish youth! Your first duty is to maintain and protect Turkish independence and the Turkish Republic forever. This is the primary basis of your existence and of your future. This constitutes your most valuable treasure. . . . The child of Turkey’s future! Your duty . . . is to save Turkish independence and the republic. You will find the strength that you need to achieve this in the noble blood that flows in your veins!⁵
(Atatürk, 1989, p. 1197)

In addition to its mission to plant a new mindset in the youth, the young republic also prioritized physical education (Lüküslü, 2015a). In contrast with the diseased generation of the sick man of Europe, the new generation of the young republic was to be healthy and powerful. “A ‘Youth and Sports Holiday’ was established, for example, and celebrated with great shows of gymnastics” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 417).

The republican regime also positioned education as the source of achievement and means of upward mobility in society. “The young people who identified most closely with the new system were those who entered the public education system and achieved upward mobility during this period” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 417). University students of the time internalized the mission attributed to them by the regime and, in line with party politics and the political

5 “Ey Türk Gençliği! Birinci vazifen, Türk istiklâlini, Türk Cumhuriyetini, ilelebet, muhafaza ve müdafaa etmektir. Mevcudiyetinin ve istikbalinin yegâne temeli budur. Bu temel, senin, en kıymetli hazinendir. . . . Ey Türk istikbalinin evlâdı! . . . Vazifen; Türk İstiklâl ve Cumhuriyetini kurtarmaktır! Muhtaç olduğun kudret, damarlarındaki asil kanda mevcuttur!”

conjuncture of the era, perceived communism, Islamism, the Soviet Union, and Greece as internal and external enemies of the young republic (Lüküslü, 2015a, pp. 41-42).

6.1.2 1950-1980: Youth Acting to “Save the Country”

From the 1950s onwards, Turkey underwent a rapid, paradoxical transformation. On one hand, the populist Menderes government projected a conservative party image and eased restrictions on some religious practices. On the other, Turkey became a member of NATO, an important ally of the Western bloc, and enjoyed the benefits of a worldwide economic boom. Per capital income tripled, and a middle class began to emerge and thrive in the country.

In the second half of the 1950s, however, things began to sour. The economy turned downwards, Menderes and the DP government, increasingly arbitrarily and authoritarian; consequently, the army, the intelligentsia, and university students played roles in staging a coup and overthrowing the Menderes government in 1960.

In a new era of freedom provided by the 1961 constitution, an atmosphere of intellectual discussion began to flourish in Turkey. Influenced by student movements in Europe, especially those in Germany and France in May 1968, university students started seeing themselves as the accelerating force behind the transformation of society after their part in Menderes’ overthrow, and began to organize rapidly. “From 1968 onwards, increasingly disillusioned with the status quo, influenced by parallel movements in Europe, Latin America and elsewhere, and spurred on by various forces with much to gain from the rise of extremism, the student movement gradually moved outside the legal terrain, culminating in increased violence followed by brutal repression subsequent to the military coup of 1971 (and again in 1980)” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 419).

The 1970s were marked by political violence, chaos, and the widespread politicization of youth, particularly university students, who were divided into two extremist camps; Islamist and ultra-nationalist rightists and revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist leftists. On the left, students emulating Latin American urban guerillas robbed banks, attacked American properties, and even kidnapped US servicemen, but their violence was surpassed by the violence of the

far right, notably that of Alparslan Türkeş's Grey Wolves (*Bozkurtlar*), an organization that became a death squad engaged in street killings and gun battles.

In this period, youth – the saviors and the sole representatives of the new republic – were reconstructed in public discourse as a threat to national order and interests, while “students themselves claimed that it was the incumbent government itself that was illegitimate” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 419). Even though these two camps were completely ideologically opposed, they shared significant features; hence Neyzi (2001) argues that it is useful to conceptualize them as generational units in Mannheim's terms. “These were modernist, nationalist, antiimperialist and corporatist political movements, whose rhetoric underscored the independence of the Turkish nation state and the ‘duty’ of youth to dedicate their lives to the construction of a future society, whether envisioned as the recuperation of the early Kemalist period, a socialist utopia or pan-Turkic haven” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 420).

Leaders of both leftists and rightists in this period were modelled on contemporary political leaders such as Che Guevera as well as on local figures like Yılmaz Güney and Mehmet Ali Ağca. They usually belonged to middle-class families, and were born to and raised by educated people who subscribe to the Kemalist ideology. But “as the movement expanded, and as more students of rural background began to attend universities, political activists on both the left and the right came increasingly from rural and/or working-class families.” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 421). From autobiographical accounts, it is evident that student leaders of the time shared common characteristics, especially their need to repress “individual needs, their belief in the necessity of living for the future, and their sense of having been chosen to play a special, unique role in history” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 421).⁶

6 The leftist cult leader Deniz Gezmiş, who was arrested and hung by the government in 1972, famously declared in his court defense: “We have made a gift of our lives to the people of Turkey” (Feyizoğlu, 1998, p. 407).

6.1.3 *The post – 1980 period and the New Youth*

The 1980 military coup was a traumatic event for Turkish political culture. Civilian rule was quickly reestablished after the coup, but the new constitution that was put into effect restricted civil liberties. The aim was to foster young people born in the 1970s in a depoliticized environment, without the experience of the hectic, bloody days of the 1970s. Article 58 – entitled “Protection of the Youth” – of the constitution attributed the following role to youth:

The state shall take measures to ensure the training and development of the youth into whose keeping our state, independence, and our republic are entrusted, in the light of contemporary science, in line with the principles and reforms of Atatürk, and in opposition to ideas aiming at the destruction of the indivisible integrity of the state with its territory and nation.

The state shall take necessary measures to protect the youth from addiction to alcohol, drug addiction, crime, gambling, and similar vices, and ignorance (Turkish Const. art. 58).

As a result of repressive policies in the post-coup period and attempts to depoliticize society and youth in particular – coupled with the liberalization of the economy, rapid privatization, the rise of a consumer society, and the influx of new communication technologies – youth that came of age in the 1980s were criticized and called “Özal’s brats.” They were seen as apolitical, selfish, individualistic, Americanized and excessively consumerist, and lacking a sense of collective responsibility. “The expression ‘turning the corner’ is commonly used to characterize the ethos of the post-1980 period, evoking images of the wanton display of ‘private’ lives and consumption-oriented lifestyles in the age of media and economic liberalization accompanied by widespread corruption and the private use of public resources. Youth, in particular, tend to be identified with such an ethos” (Neyzi, 2001, pp. 423-424).

By the cause of these policies, according to Lüküslü, the post-coup generation constitutes a rupture of the dynamic, politically active “myth of youth,” a notion that has been present in Turkish political culture since the late nineteenth century (Lüküslü, 2015a). In this regard, the post-coup generation symbolizes a new youth culture, the feeling of generational belonging of which was

marked by less political participation, chosen apoliticism, seeing politics as a corrupt, clientelist space, lack of trust in institutions and the media, seeing politics as a pessimistic, totalitarian, unchangeable arena that kills individuality which explains the lack of a protest culture, and therefore seeing individual space as the only arena that allows change (Lüküslü, 2015a).

Despite these common features, “the political repression of the 1980s was also accompanied by increased freedom of expression on the cultural and personal front” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 422). In fact, all studies suggest that the youth culture of the post-coup generation in Turkey was very heterogeneous. “In the 1980s and 1990s, a variety of NGO’s and subcultures including environmentalists, human rights activists, feminists, gays, rockers and others entered the public sphere,” accompanied by new urban spaces “such as exclusive suburbs, along with new age and space-based identities such as street children and youth subcultures” (Neyzi, 2001, p. 423).

In the post-coup period, Turkey experienced a revival of Islam as a cultural and hegemonic discourse. According to White (1999), Turkey always accommodated Islamic and republican values, but “what was new in the 1980s was state sponsorship of Islamic images and ideals” (p. 77). Islam was initially positioned as a private affair by the new republic, but it regained a legitimate political voice through the DP in the 1950s, followed by the gradual participation of Islam as a silent partner in power in the 1960s and especially the 1970s. In the 1980s, however, “that silence was definitively broken as the military government . . . decided to dust off Islam as a coherent mold to shape society away from feared socialist and communist designs” (White, 1999, p. 78). The Özal government promoted “Muslim conservatism” and created a path for upward mobility to lure society from the appealing principles of communism. And by the 1990s, especially following the success of the Welfare Party in the municipal elections of March 1994 that “helped Islamic popular culture to find several new opportunities to enlarge its space” (Saktanber, 2013, p. 267), it became “politically and economically chic to be Islamic (White, 1999, p. 80). Through the proliferation of religious newspapers, magazines, literature and other media as well as a new, urban Islamic fashion and lifestyle, Islamic chic spilled into the “cultural realm” (p. 80). The emergence of this new, visible, strong Islamist movement was also echoed among the youth. Ayşe Saktanber (2013)

is the first to announce a new Islamic youth subculture beginning to emerge following these developments. She underscores that the distinctiveness of this newly emerging subculture does not solely concern religious orientation but is more concerned with the popular culture it attempts to create.

6.1.4 *The 2000s: Youth under AKP Rule*

In the post-coup period, the dominant view among Muslim intellectuals of Turkey was that Islam should not be justified by Western principles and values: How Muslims experience their religion should be authentic and original and should not need the approval of the Western world. “Yet in the 2000s not only did everybody start talking about a process of change that could be observed among Islamists, but the agents of such change have also been designated as post-Islamist intellectuals who no longer argue that Islam and Western democracy are incompatible” (Saktanber, 2007, p. 419). Instead, the dominant narrative shifted to acceptance of modern, universal values based on the principles of a just, egalitarian society. This process of change was reflected in youth policies aimed to foster a pious, democratic generation. The newly founded Justice and Development Party monopolized this new narrative and ultimately won a landslide victory in the 3 November 2002 general elections.

Turkish millennials, especially those born since the late 1980s, have transitioned from childhood to adulthood under AKP rule and “have not witnessed anything but successive AK party governments in their lifetimes” (Kirişçi, 2013). Since taking power, the AKP has made changes ranging from education to the reconstruction of public spaces that have significantly impacted the lives of younger generations. In addition to institutional and legislative changes made to the education system, the AKP government’s involvement in the everyday lives of youth also increased, especially as of its third election victory. On 31 January 2012, then Prime Minister Erdoğan said in a party group meeting that his government was aiming to “foster pious, democratic generations” (“Dindar gençlik yetiştireceğiz,” 2012), openly expressing for the first time the AKP’s version of the myth of youth. From then on, statements by the government that directly address youth increased, and policies directed towards the everyday lives of those in the new generation gradually intensified. In September 2012, the sale of alcohol and its consumption were

banned from university campuses. The next year, a series of regulations limiting the sale and advertising of alcoholic beverages took effect. Retailers were forbidden from selling alcoholic beverages after 10 pm and prohibited from selling alcohol near schools or places of worship. The AKP claimed that the law was an important step in protecting young people from harmful substances (Letsch, 2013).

Since the AKP's overwhelming victory in 2011, moralizing intrusions into Turkish citizens' ways of life have increased, and "the AKP has become very eager to take command of young people's bodies both in an outside of school" (Değirmencioğlu, 2012, p. 179). It has targeted the private lives of youth by putting pressure on and governing public life. "New decrees and moralizing discourses have aroused the suspicion that government was intending to intervene in secular ways of life and reorganize public life to align with Islamic values" (Göle, 2013, p. 10).

For that reason, what started as a peaceful environmental protest against the government's urban renewal plans for Taksim's Gezi Park in Istanbul on 28 May 2013 quickly turned into an uprising of the masses when young protesters were met with extreme police violence. Ordinary people from all walks of life, beliefs, political opinions, and sexual orientations were united in this unique act of defiance and provided with a public space to express a wide range of discontent about many of the AKP government's policy implementations over its decade of political power. At the core were issues of freedom of expression and lifestyle (like curbs on alcohol and Erdoğan's call to families to have at least three kids) as well as the government's encroachment on Turkey's secularism.

A poll conducted by KONDA during the demonstrations shows that the average age of participants was twenty-eight, one in every four of which was a student (KONDA, 2014, p. 7). "Therefore, some started to speak of a 'Gezi Generation,' characterized by a group of people who were younger than 30 and who were maybe born in the 1990s, mainly grew up during the rule of the AKP and who now resist this rule and the government's wish to raise a religious generation" (Böcü, 2015, p. 56).

The Gezi Park protests were the most challenging events of the AKP era and the most significant, nationwide disquiet in decades, yet it had no apparent impact on the AKP's efforts to foster a conservative generation. Interference in the everyday lives of the youth has continued. In November 2013, for example, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan sparked another debate when he condemned the situation of female and male students living under a single roof, arguing that such an arrangement conflicts with society's conservative, democratic character. "The mothers and fathers of the country would never allow such an arrangement" ("Female, male students living together," 2013), he added. Finally, in early 2016, as President of the Republic of Turkey, he again declared his ambition of fostering a pious generation, calling academics to join forces with government projects for IHLs, in which, in line with the AKP's version of the myth of youth, he sees the future of Turkey ("Onlar tedavülde kalktı," 2016).

Much changed since Saktanber announced the emergence of a new Islamic youth culture in Turkey. Previously, being both young and Muslim "presented a difficult situation in Turkey because of the ways in which both secularism and modernity have been understood by large sections of polity and society" (Saktanber, 2007, p. 419). AKP policies and its openly-expressed aim to foster "pious generations" have restructured the place of conservative youth, moving them from the periphery to the center of the cultural realm. With the emergence of the new public spaces and reconstruction of old ones, a new conservative youth subculture emerged in Turkey, a process in which the pro-government, conservative media played a significant role.

This new youth culture – or generation unit in Mannheim's terminology – "put[s] great effort into the reconciliation of Islamic intellectualism with popular culture, through which they can find different ways to express themselves and their subjectivities" (Saktanber, 2007, p. 425). The elements of popular culture (movies, magazines, and television shows) as well as public spaces (coffee shops, fashion shows, and resorts) tailored to Muslim youth undergo mainstreaming and capture a significant share of the popular culture market. As Saktanber (2007) observes, "today, even the most religious activist young people do not want to be referred to as Islamist, which would have been perfectly acceptable before; instead they prefer to call themselves and to be called

dindar, that is, pious or devout, as opposed to dinci, religionist, which is usually used interchangeably with Islamist. However, in addition to these terms, a third one, mütedeyyin, stands between the two in colloquial Turkish, denoting elderly, wise, and apolitical pious Muslims” (p. 419). Communication through internet and social media platforms and interest in the latest technologies (especially mobile phones) proliferate among Muslim youth in Turkey, as is the case for youth worldwide. With the technological advancements, the “identity of Islamist youth in Turkey [has] shifted from a thoroughly communal identity to an individual one via self-reflexivity” (p. 421).

§ 6.2 Depiction of the Youth in Conservative Media: Reflections of a Generational Conflict

Beyond this detailed background on youth and generational studies and their manifestations in Turkey, it is vital to understand the production and reproduction of the discourse on Turkish youth in the conservative media. The most renowned columnists refer to these veins while criticizing or praising the (new) Turkish youth.

6.2.1 *The Early 2000s: Degeneration of Moral Values in Youth*

In Turkish conservative media, in the early 2000s, youth were marked by moral degeneration. The boom in street urchins, violence, and alcohol and drug addiction among the Turkish youth was the greatest cause for concern among conservative journalists who idealize a pious, god-fearing, moral community.

Again, the conservative media first points the finger at the republic and its policies, blaming the republican myth of youth for the problematic youth of the day. In fact, in a column in 2009, Hayrettin Karaman indicates that increasing violence among the youth is rooted in the policies and actions of the young republic. He argues that at the time, the country’s citizens went through a “forced re-culturalization process” (p. 2), which used violence against those who resisted. People who refused to wear Western-style hats and those who wanted the call to prayer to continue in Arabic were threatened, tortured, and

executed. This style of governance passed down from generation to generation and resurfaced as everyday violence among contemporary youth.

Conservative media criticizes the modernist, Western depiction of youth for compartmentalizing and degrading life and for “sacrificing the whole on the altar of a fragment” (Hocaoğlu, 2005, p. 10). There are no concepts such as youth, maturity, and old age in Islam, but rather an uninterrupted, continuous lifetime. When the new republic abandoned the Islamic culture and turned to the West, the youth were its passive victims. That is the reason, it argues, for the heartbreaking situation of Turkish youth today. Some left Turkey to live abroad because of the headscarf ban, some were punished for being Muslim, Kurdish, or communist, and others are at Western-wannabe festivals like Rock’n Coke (Albayrak, 2006b), too drunk or high to take any action.

ilk cinsel deneyim 13 yaş ve altına inmiş!

**BU ARAŞTIRMA
ÇOK SES
GETİRECEK**

3 bin 500 ilk ve ortaöğretim öğrencisi arasında yapılan araştırmada öğrencilerin yüzde 19.9'unun karşı cinsle ilişkiye girdiği ortaya çıkarken, bunların yüzde 25'inin ilk cinsel deneyimini 13 yaş ve altında yaşadığı belirlendi

ALKOL VE ŞİDDET ETKİLİYOR...

Araştırma sonuçlarına göre fiziksel şiddet kullanan ya da buna maruz kalan gençler 4 kat, düzenli alkol kullananlar 5 kat, okuldan kaçanlar 4 kat, suçla karşılaşanlar 5 kat, evden kaçanlar ise 4 kat daha fazla, erken yaşta cinsel ilişkiye girme riski taşıyor. Erken yaşta cinsel deneyim yaşayanların korunmasız cinsel ilişkiye girme riskleri ise 14 kat daha fazla...



'Şark çıbanı kâbusu' döndü

Çevre ve Orman Bakanı Pepe: Urfa'da bir yıl içinde 11 bin 500 şark çıbanı ve dizanteri vakası belirledik...

ÇEVRE ve Orman Bakanı Osman Pepe, Güneydoğu'da bir dönem bölge halkıyla anılan ve küçük büyük herkesin yüzünde çıkan "şark çıbanı" kâbusunun geri döndüğünü söyledi. Şanlıurfa'ya dikkat çeken Bakan, "Şanlıurfa'da şark çıbanı ve dizanteride vaka sayısı 11 bin 500" dedi. 2000'de bu sayının 271 olduğu belirtildi. "Çöp, şark çıbanı ve dizanteri gibi hastalıkların tetikleyicisi" diyen Bakan Pepe şöyle devam etti: "Göl-

lere, nehirlere çöplerin dökülmesi birinci tehdit. Bu çöpleri salverdir mi, içme suyuna karışıyor. Havadan solunuyor, toprak derken şark çıbanı son yıllarda büyük artış gösteriyor. Önce 81 ilin çöp meselesini halledeceğiz. Şark çıbanı ve dizanteri öncelikli konu olduğuna için 'Çöp depoları' kurulması konusunda 31 ilde bu işler öncelikte tamamlanacak. 2006'da 81 ilin çöp sorunu kurulacak tesislerle bitmiş olacak." Hülya KARABAĞLI /ANKARA

yeniden Sağlık ve Eğitim Derneği tarafından 2004 yılında ilk ve ortaöğretim çağındaki 3 bin 500 genç arasında yapılan araştırma, cinselliğin ilköğretim çağlarına kadar düştüğünü gösteriyor.

Doç. Dr. Kültegin Ögel, Dr. Ceyda Eke ve Dr. Sevil Taner tarafından yapılan araştırmaya göre, karşı cinsten hiç arkadaşı olmayanların oranı yüzde 16.3. Karşı cinsle hiç flörtü olmayanlar 33 iken 3'ten fazla flörtü olmuş gençlerin oranı ise yüzde 16.9.

Araştırmada gençlerin yüzde 19.9'u karşı cinsle ilişkiye girdiklerini belirtiyor. Karşı cinsle ilişkiye girdiğini belirten erkeklerin sayısı kızların 8 katı. Cinsel deneyim sahibi gençlerin yüzde 25'i 13 yaş ve altında, yüzde 40.5'i 14-15 yaşında, yüzde 26'sı 16 yaşında yüzde 8.6'sı da 17 yaşında ilk deneyimlerini yaşadıklarını söylüyor.

KONTROLSÜZ İLİŞKİ

Cinsel ilişkiye giren gençlerden yüzde 18.8'i hiçbir doğum kontrol yöntemi kullanmadıklarını belirtirken, yüzde 59.9'u prezervatif yüzde 18.6'sı dişisi boşaltma, yüzde 27.7'si de doğum kontrol hapını tercih ediyor. Araştırma sonuçlarının ortaya çıkardığı sonuçlara göre fiziksel şiddet kullanan

ya da buna maruz kalanlar 4 kat, düzenli alkol kullananlar 5 kat, okuldan kaçanlar 4 kat, suçla karşılaşanlar 5 kat, evden kaçanlar ise 4 kat daha fazla, erken yaşta cinsel ilişkiye girme riski taşıyor. Erken yaşta cinsel deneyim yaşayanların korunmasız cinsel ilişkiye girme riskleri ise 14 kat daha fazla.

'OBJEKTİF BAKMALI'

Doç. Dr. Kültegin Ögel, okul çağındaki gençlerin 5'te birinin cinselliği yaşadığını belirterek oranın yüksek olduğuna dikkat çekiyor. Doç. Dr. Ögel, "Cinsellik İstisnabullu gençler arasında yoğun olarak yaşanıyor. Biz bundan ne kadar haberdarız?"

Aileler, öğretmenler durumdan ne kadar bilgilidir? Duruma ilişkin yapılan değil objektif olarak bakılmamalı. Birçoğu kontrolsüz olarak cinselliği yaşıyor. Gençler eğitime bilgilendirilmeli. Öncelikle ebeveynlerin, idarecilerin ve öğretmenlerin önvangası değiştirilmeli. Ancak bu onargalar ortadan kaldırılsa gençlere eğitimi doğru bir şekilde verebiliriz" ifadelerini kullandı. Doç. Dr. Ögel, suça fiilen cezelerle karşan çocukların cinsellikle daha erken yaşta tanıştıklarının da altını çizerek, "Önemli olan bu çocukların ulaşmak" dedi. MERKEZ

Karşı cinsle çıkmak

	Genel %	Erkek %	Kız %
Hiç	33.0	30.0	36.2
Bir kez	22.6	19.0	26.4
2-3 kez	20.8	20.4	21.2
4-5 kez	8.7	8.9	6.4
5'ten fazla	16.9	23.7	9.7



Karşı cinsle cinsel ilişkiye girmek

	Genel %	Erkek %	Kız %
Hiç cinsel ilişkiye girmedim	80.1	65.5	89.6
Bir kez	7.0	10.9	2.8
2-3 kişi	5.1	9.2	0.8
4-5 kişi	2.1	4.0	0.1
5'ten fazla	5.7	10.4	0.8



İlk cinsel deneyim yaşı

	Genel %	Erkek %	Kız %
13 yaşa altı	25.0	25.4	21.9
14-15	40.5	42.1	28.1
16	25.9	25.2	32.8
17 ve üstü	8.6	7.2	17.2



Figure 6.1 *Yeni Şafak* reporting the research of an NGO that revealed that young people have their first sexual experience before the age of thirteen. Reprinted from "İlk cinsel deneyim 13 yaş ve altına inmiş!," by H. Karabağlı, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 6. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

While the problematic policies of the early republic set the stage for the degenerate youth Turkey of today, conservative media unanimously accuses the growing, "unnecessary" use of technology for making the situation even worse for upcoming generations. In the early 2000s, television as a mass medium,

followed closely by the internet and smartphones, was crucified by conservatives.

With the end of the TRT monopoly on broadcasting in 1990, Islamic media, including television stations, series, and shows have proliferated in the market. “Their programming was initially distinctly theological in character, with shows focusing on the doctrinal, scriptural and ritualistic aspects of Islam” (Kocamaner, 2017), along with occasional attempts by marginal religious figures to challenge the hegemonic interpretation of Islam.

The incorporation of Islam into commercial mass culture, especially following the election victory of the AKP in 2002, also changed Islamic broadcasting. Unable to cope with seductive infotainment broadcasting and the demands of a market reliant on advertising revenues, most Islamic channels underwent mainstreaming and “began to appear to a broader audience by introducing more diverse programming . . . such as studio entertainment, dramas, game shows, reality television, and day-time talk shows” (Kocamaner, 2016).

The failure to lure pious audiences away from commercial broadcasting and the inability to popularize Islamic, family-focused, morally-sensitive television manifests itself in harsh criticisms of mainstream television content in the pious news media. Television is depicted as “the evil inside the house” (Deniz, 2005b, p. 18), poisoning the innocent minds of younger generations, leading them to violence and demoralizing society overall. In the words of Karasevda (2010), the fact that televisions are now in every home is the main reason why Turkey has an apolitical youth, who are consumerist slaves of brands prone to violence.

Çocukların gözü TV'den başka birşey görmüyor

Zamanların büyük bir kısmını ekran karşısında geçiren çocukların televizyon bağımlılığı haline geldiğini belirten uzmanlar "Popüler kimlikleri örnek alan, mutsuz doğumsuz ve yalnız bir nesil büyüyor" diyorlar.

Genellikle fazla televizyon izlenen çocukların sosyal becerileri zayıf olduğunu ve yalnız olduklarını belirten uzmanlar, "Popüler kimlikleri örnek alan, mutsuz doğumsuz ve yalnız bir nesil büyüyor" diyorlar.

Uzmanlar, televizyonun çocukların sosyal becerilerini zayıflattığını ve yalnız olduklarını belirten uzmanlar, "Popüler kimlikleri örnek alan, mutsuz doğumsuz ve yalnız bir nesil büyüyor" diyorlar.

Sürekli televizyon seyreden çocuklar geç konuşuyor

Araştırmacılar, televizyonun çocukların dil gelişimini yavaşlattığını ve geç konuşmalarına neden olduğunu belirtiyor. Araştırmacılar, televizyonun çocukların dil gelişimini yavaşlattığını ve geç konuşmalarına neden olduğunu belirtiyor.



Televizyon, çocuğu 'yorumsuz' bırakıyor

Kontrolsüz şekilde televizyon izleyen çocukların yorum yapma ve muhakeme etme yetenekleri olumsuz etkileniyor. Ankara Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü'nde hazırlanan 'Anne Baba Eğitimi' isimli kitapta, ailelere televizyonun olumsuz etkilerini azaltmak için önerilerde bulunuldu. Kitapta, "Televizyon

karşısına oturmak için teşvik edilen çocuklarda, okul yıllarında da sürdürecekleri şekilde televizyon izleme alışkanlığı gelişir" denildi.



Figure 6.2 (Left) An editorial on the harmful effects of television on the mental development of children, with quotes from psychologists pointing out the threat to families. Reprinted from "Çocukların gözü TV'den başka birşey görmüyor," by Yazıcı, H., 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 2. (Right) *Yeni Şafak* quoting a part of an educational book written by the Ministry of National Education that argues that television negatively effects children's ability to reason. Reprinted from "Televizyon çocuğu 'yorumsuz' bırakıyor," 2006, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 4. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

The conservative concern about television's role in corrupting the youth through needless entertainment was legitimated when a new television series, *Kurtlar Vadisi* (Valley of the wolves), began to be broadcast in January 2003. The action drama followed the journey of an undercover government agent, Polat Alemdar, who served his country by infiltrating the mafia and uncovering relations with the deep state took Turkey by storm, immediately becoming one of the most popular television series of Turkish broadcasting history. The show's run ended in late 2005, but its popularity gave rise to reincarnations of the series under different names in 2007, first *Kurtlar Vadisi: Terör* (Valley of the wolves: Terror) and then *Kurtlar Vadisi: Pusu* (Valley of the wolves: Ambush). These were followed by cinematic productions such as *Kurtlar Vadisi: Irak* (Valley of the wolves: Iraq) in 2006, *Muro: Nalet Olsun İçimdeki İnsan*

Sevgisine (Muro: Damn the humanist inside) in 2008, *Kurtlar Vadisi: Gladyo* (Valley of the wolves: Gladio) in 2009, and *Kurtlar Vadisi: Filistin* (Valley of the wolves: Palestine) in 2011.

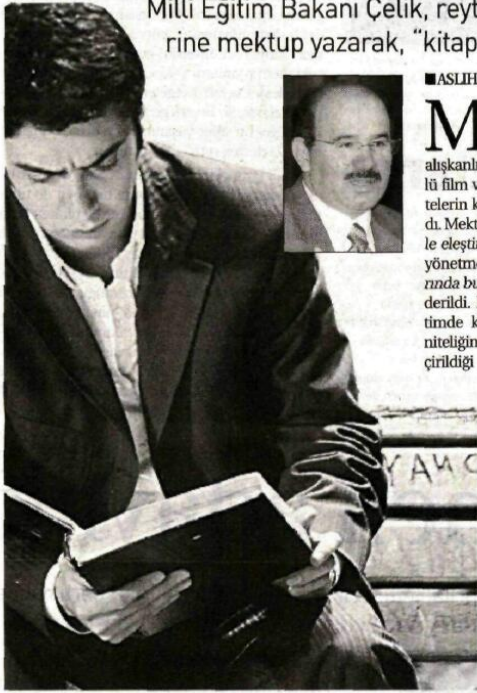
The charismatic main character, Polat Alemdar, who tries to protect his country from threat, quickly became an icon for children and adults in Turkey. Especially among high school students, “the series became a part of everyday culture, not just in terms of fan culture, but in how it defines people’s lives and has led to violent incidents” (Arslan, 2014, p. 120). Paralleling the increasing popularity of the series, youth gangs became widespread in Turkish high schools. In 2006, “a survey done among high-school students found that Polat Alemdar topped the list of their idols” (Arslan 2014, p. 120). Crime news was dominated by the stories of young murderers who idolized Polat Alemdar,⁷ causing a great deal of social concern about the effects of the series on young people.

While concern about the negative influence of the series on youth was not limited to conservative media, for its reporters it was tangible proof that television, and even technology in general, is evil. Through the proliferation of violence and mafia-like behavior among high school students emulating Polat Alemdar, the pious media blames the overall “permissive entertainment media assumed to be inherent in television as a medium” (Kocamaner, 2017) for all of the unwanted behaviors of the younger generation. Karasevda (2010), for instance, argues that the capitalist world is infiltrating every household via televisions, prompting high school students to carry knives on them; is the reason behind stories about violence and rape in sacred educational institutions.

7 Arkadaşını bıçakla öldüren liseliden düşündüren itiraf. (2005, March 24). Hürriyet. Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/arkadasini-bicakla-olduren-liseliden-dusunduren-itiraf-38710569>

Polat, kitap okuyup gençlere örnek olsun

Millî Eğitim Bakanı Çelik, reyting rekorları kıran dizilerin yönetmenlerine mektup yazarak, "kitap okumayı teşvik edecek" sahneler istedi.



■ ASLIHAN ALTAY KARATAŞ / ANKARA
Millî Eğitim Bakanı Hüseyin Çelik, topluma ve özellikle çocuklara kitap okuma alışkanlığının kazandırılması için ünlü film ve dizi yönetmenleri ile gazetelerin köşe yazarlarına mektup yazdı. Mektup içerdiği şiddet sahneleriyle eleştirilen 'Kurtlar Vadisi' dizisinin yönetmeni Raci Şaşmaz'ın da arasında bulunduğu 113 ünlü isme gönderildi. Bakan Çelik, mektubuna eğitimde köklü değişikliklerin, reform niteliğindeki çalışmaların hayata geçirildiği bir dönemeçten geçildiğini ifade ederek başladı.

'Kitap okuyan kahramanlar önerisi'

Çocuklara ve gençlere okumayı sevdirecek, okuma kültürünü aşılacak önemli bir çalışma başlatıldıklarını kaydeden Çelik, şu istekte bulundu: "Bu kesimden resimlerinde, romanlarında, şiirlerinde, oyunlarında, köşe yazılarında, yazdıkları senaryolarda, yönettikleri film ve dizilerde, aktüalite-maga-

zin ve reklam gibi televizyon programlarında, kısaca ürettikleri her eserde, okuma kültürünün oluşmasına ve yerleşmesine katkı sağlayacak unsurlara da yer vermelerini bekliyoruz."

Mektup 113 kişiye gönderildi

Çelik, yazar ve sanatçıları ayrıca görüş alışverişinde bulunmak amacıyla toplantıya çağırdı. Çelik'in mektubunun gönderildiği 113 ünlü isim arasında reyting rekorları kıran televizyon dizilerin yönetmenleri de bulunuyor. İşte mektubun gönderildiği ünlü dizi yönetmenlerinden birkaçı: "Kurtlar Vadisi" dizisinin yönetmeni Raci Şaşmaz, "Yabancı Damat" dizisinin yönetmenleri Yağmur-Durul Taylan kardeşler, "Çemberimde Gül Oya" dizisinin yönetmeni Çağan Irmak, "En Son Babalar Duyar" ve "Çocuklar Ne Olacak" dizilerinin yapımcısı Birol Güven, yönetmeni Raşit Çelikezer, "Aliye" dizisinin yönetmeni Kudret Sabancı, "Sihirli Annem" in yönetmeni Ersoy Güler. Mektup aralarında Anf Yılmaz, Mustafa Altıoklar, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Sinan Çetin'in de olduğu eski ve yeni kuşak sinema yönetmenlerine ve bazı yazarlara, medya yöneticilerine postalandı.

Figure 6.3 The Minister of National Education, Hüseyin Çelik, wrote to the producers of the popular television series asking them to feature characters that display model behavior for young people. In the picture, Valley of the Wolves' star Necati Şaşmaz (Polat Alemdar) sits on a park bench and reads a book. Reprinted from "Polat, kitap okuyup gençlere örnek olsun," by A.A. Karataş, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 14. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Apart from the extraordinary influence of *Kurtlar Vadisi* on Turkish teenagers and the culture of violence it created, conservative media argues that television is toxic to the new generation for disseminating and normalizing a popular entertainment culture, especially through music videos, reality television

shows, and television series adapted from the West. It nurtures a youth that is under the influence of Western cultural imperialism, a new entertainment generation that does not read and think but only has fun – a culture that is objectified by the brutal rules of capitalism (Deniz, 2005a, p. 18). The mainstream entertainment media has a toxic effect on family values, “caused the corrosion of the ‘moral fabric of the family’” (Kocamaner, 2017), and devalues the “family values” of the Turkish society. Özkan (2005) expresses her concern with these words:

The effective (!) result of the programs, of domestically produced television series broadcast on private television channels . . . and especially of video clips that are constantly on music channels is this: Easily being convinced that love is short lived and you can recover from the pain of a break up with a new boyfriend or girlfriend and a few songs. Talking through the lyrics of a song and believing that this is a highly clever joke. Boys should mimic the clothes, laugh, and style of their favorite singer; girls should walk around with a heavy, almost theatrical makeup. Everyone is active, dynamic, dashing, and insincere! Everyone has the same face, look, expression. . . . Youth today do not resemble the youth when arabesque was the only popular music genre.⁸ (p. 18)

The growing popularity of reality competition shows is another point of criticism in conservative media regarding the television and its effect of creating morally corrupt Turkish youth. Renowned columnists regularly touch on this issue, and editorial teams occasionally dedicate full pages to the comments of psychologists purporting that such content encourages teens to experiment

8 “90’lı yıllarda birbiri ardına çıkan özel televizyon kanallarında yayınlanan programların . . . ve özellikle müzik kanallarında yayınlanan kliplerin başarılı (!) sonucu şu: Aşkların ömrünün kısa, her ayrılığın ardından yaşanacak acının yeni bir sevgili ve birkaç şarkı ile telafi edilebileceğine kolayca ikna oluş. Şarkı sözleri ile konuşma, bunun zekica yapılmış iyi bir espri olduğuna duyulan şaşmaz inanç. Erkeklerde hayran olunan şarkıcı gibi giyinme, yürüme, gülme, bakma, durma; kızlarda kılık kıyafetin ötesinde gündüzleri bile ağır sahne makyajıyla dolaşma. Herkes aktif, dinamik, gösterişli ve samimiysiz! Herkeste aynı yüz, aynı bakış, aynı ifade. . . . Arabeskin tek popüler müzik olduğu yılların gençlerine benzemiyor artık hiçbir genç.”

with drugs and alcohol and promotes violent, aggressive behavior. The tragic death of Ata Türk, a competitor of the popular reality show *Gelinim Olur Musun?* (Would you be my daughter-in-law?), from a drug overdose in late 2005, justified their arguments. The funeral was broadcast live on news channels, showcasing the “qualities that drive Turkey’s nascent celebrity culture, which jumbles private lives and electronic media with heavy helpings of humiliation” (Vick, 2005). Angered by the incident and the attention it received in the media, then Prime Minister Erdoğan criticizes the funeral coverage and the general popularity of reality shows stating: “What did this person become famous for? We have programs at the moment that follow a trend that contradicts the traditions and family structure of Turkey, which is a country with a 98 percent Muslim population. I am worried about this.” (Vick, 2005).

ECSTASY ALARMI

Ata'nın ölümü gözleri sentetik uyuşturuculara çevirdi. Emniyet, uyuşturucu kullanımının gençler arasında arttığına dikkat çekti

Bir televizyon programındaki yarışmada ünlenen Ata Türk'ün aşırı dozda ecstasy kullanımından öldüğü iddiası, uyuşturucu kullanımı konusunu yeniden gündeme getirdi. Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü Kaçakçılık ve Organize Suçlarla Mücadele Dairesi'nce



hazırlanan raporda, "2000-2004 arasında ecstasy yakalamaları 21 kat arttı. 2003'te yüzde 37,5 oranında artan ecstasy yakalamaları, 2004'te yüzde 60,7 oranına yükseldi" denildi. Raporda, geçen yıl toplam 718 bin 734 adet ecstasy tabletin ele geçirildiği, 1413 kişinin de yakalandığı bildirildi. Raporda Türkiye'de sentetik uyuşturucu kullanımının genellikle ecstasy formunda olduğu kaydedildi.

Esrar ve captagon kullanımı da arttı

Geçen yıl esrar olayı sayısında yüzde 34, yakalanan kişi sayısında da yüzde 31 oranında artış kaydedildiği, esrardaki bu artışın, Afgan esrarının Türkiye üzerinden Avrupa'ya transit taşınmasından kaynaklandığı ifade edildi. Türkiye'de kullanılan ecstasy tabletlerinin çok büyük bir kısmının Hollanda kaynaklı olduğuna dikkat çekildi. "2003 ile karşılaştırıldığında 2004'te captagon olaylarında yüzde 27, yakalanan kişi sayısında da yüzde 33,7 oranında artış yaşandı" denildi.



Figure 6.4 *Yeni Şafak* raising the issue of increased use of synthetic drugs among young people upon Ata Türk's death. Reprinted from "Ecstasy alarmı," 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 3. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Similar criticisms come from conservative columnists. Mahmut Övür (2005) from *Sabah*, for example, criticizes the broadcast of harmful reality television shows on public satellite television, calling for the RTÜK to act immediately to oppose shows that deteriorate traditional social values. Ahmet Kekeç (2005), on the other hand, accuses the media and brutal competition over ratings of murdering the young man. "We are all their prisoners. They are killing us,"⁹ he adds. *Yeni Şafak* (2005) also heavily criticizes the premiere of new reality television shows upon Türk's death, condemning television channels for

9 "Hepimiz onların elinde esiriz. Bizi boğuyorlar."

airing programs that sacrifice the health and moral values of the society to make more money and receive higher ratings.



Figure 6.5 Following Erdoğan's outrage, full-page coverage of Ata Türk's funeral with heavy criticism of television channels for turning it into a story to increase ratings. Reprinted from "Cenazesi de Reyting Rekoru Kırdı," 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 3. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

While the leisure time of youth had predominately been spent in front of television sets, in the early twenty-first century television began to be replaced

by the internet, online gaming, social media, and smartphones.¹⁰ Conservative media then directs its criticism towards the negative effects of the proliferation of these technologies. Its arguments against new technologies are twofold: First, excessive use and exposure to them negatively affects the physical and psychological health and future of young people, and second this “market” is turning the new generation into the objects of Western-dominated capitalism. By 2006, these media outlets already started warning parents about the dangers of online games – how it could lead to serious addiction problems and normalize violence. Newspapers started to be inundated with both local and international stories about young people committing violent acts under the influence of online games to which they are addicted as well as committing theft to afford the devices and games in the first place.

10 In 2010, the percentage of households with Internet access in Turkey reached 41.6 percent and has continued to increase since then. As of 2016, 76.3 percent of the country’s households have Internet access. (TÜİK Information Society Statistics, 2004-2016).

Ölümler şimdilik sanal!

Şiddet oyunlarıyla gündeme gelen internet kafelerin yeni gözdesi Knight. Öldürerek büyüme üzerine kurulu online oyunun gerçek cinayetlere neden olmasından korkuluyor. Bağımlılık yaratan oyun karakterleri parayla satılıyor

Tüm dünyada milyonlarca insanın ekrana oturan Knight Online isimli oyunun yaratıp bağımlılık enderinde insanın insaniyetinden mahrum olduğu iddia ediliyor. Bir başka iddia da oyuncuların sanal karakterlerini geliştirilerek için başka oyunculara satacaklarıdır.



İnternette oynamakla ve şu an dünyada milyonlarca kullanılan olan Knight'ın sanal karakterleri satılıyor. Çünkü, bir süredir olduğu gibi, Türkiye'de de bir süredir bu oyunun hızla popülerleştiği görülüyor. Milyonlarca kullanıcı bu oyunun sanal dünyasında gerçek hayata benzer bir dünya kurmuş durumda.

İRLANDININ SAVASI

Knight Online isimli oyun için bilgisayarın küçük bir programı yükleniyor. Bu program kullanıcılara, Amerika, Japonya ve Malezya'da bulunan oyunun ana bilgisayarlarına bağlı olarak çalışan ve her üçte bir ayrı bölüme bir bölüme ayrılmışta oluyor. Kullanıcılar seçtikleri karakterleri oynama için oluşturuyor. Karakterleri Üst diye adlandırılan üç katmanlı yapıya bölünmüş ve her katmanın bir amacı var. Oyunda tek amaç, savaşmak (öldürmek) para, eşya ve diğer kazanımları elde etmektir.

DÜŞMAN BAŞINA

Sanal bir dünyada gerçek hayata benzer bir ortam yaratılıyor. Bu ortamın adı Knight Online. Oyunun başlangıçta sadece Amerika, Japonya ve Malezya'da bulunan oyunun ana bilgisayarlarına bağlı olarak çalışan ve her üçte bir ayrı bölüme bir bölüme ayrılmışta oluyor. Kullanıcılar seçtikleri karakterleri oynama için oluşturuyor. Karakterleri Üst diye adlandırılan üç katmanlı yapıya bölünmüş ve her katmanın bir amacı var. Oyunda tek amaç, savaşmak (öldürmek) para, eşya ve diğer kazanımları elde etmektir.

KARAKTERLER SATILYOR

E.B., oyunu oynayanların karakterlerini karakterleri geliştirilmesini ve oyun ortamından para kazanarak bir cinayet yapıyor. Oyunda tek amaç, savaşmak (öldürmek) para, eşya ve diğer kazanımları elde etmektir. Oyunda tek amaç, savaşmak (öldürmek) para, eşya ve diğer kazanımları elde etmektir.



Knight'ta oyun karakterleri 'düşman' öldürerek yeni silah kazanıyor. Başarı olanlarına bakılmadan oyuncuların parayla satın alıyor.

>> İNGİLTERE

Oyunlar, bağımlılık için tasarlanıyor

İNGİLTERE'DE Panorama adlı şirket tarafından yapılan bir araştırma, bilgisayar oyunlarının bağımlılık yaptığını ortaya çıkardı. Araştırmaya göre çok sayıda bilgisayar oyununun içinde, oyuncuların oyunlara daha da bağımlı hale gelmesi için tasarlanan güçlü psikolojik unsurlar yerleştiriliyor. Araştırmacılar, oyunlarda bilimsel araştırmalarda kobay farelere uygulanan "başarıya ödül kazanma tekniği"ne yer verildiğini ve bunun bağımlılığı gittikçe artırdığını açıkladı. İngiltere Interaktif Eğlence Kurumu, bilgisayar oyunlarının ciddi derecede tehlike arz ettiğini kaydetti.

Figure 6.6

(Left) Commentary on the growing popularity of the online game Knight that heavy emphasizes how online games lead to real life murders. Reprinted from "Ölümler şimdilik sanal," by R. Yeter, 2006, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 5. (Right) Research conducted in the United Kingdom revealing that online games are designed to generate addiction. Reprinted from "Oyunlar, bağımlılık için tasarlanıyor," 2010, *Sabah*, p. 6. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

In addition to more tangible negative effects of technology on young people, conservative media also raises concern over the long-term implications of excessive technology use on the moral values and mental development of the future generations of the country. Fatma Barbarosoğlu (2010a), one of the leading conservative figures critical of today's youth who holds an extremely pessimistic view of younger generations, belittles millennials for spending all of their time with technology and experiencing alleged freedom through it. The reality, according to her, is that computers are neither making children wiser nor smarter. On the contrary, the three types of technology screens (tel-

evision, mobile phones, and the internet) are keeping youth ignorant and fostering a youth that thinks “Hitler” is the plural form of the word “hit” (p. 11).¹¹ In the same manner, Leyla İpekçi (2015b) denounces millennials’ technology addiction for degenerating the true meaning of morality. She underlines that screens are the only things able to capture the attention of the youth and criticizes this generation for living in a virtual delusion.

Young people are living in their own, completely virtual world that curbs the human soul, constantly manipulates desires and goals, and duplicates personalities through tons of glamorous images. . . . Today’s youth finds spirituality in exhibiting themselves. Exposure in the virtual world!¹² (p. 17)

Finally, columnist Erol Göka raises similar concerns about the impact of the internet on the mental development of youth. “Internet is killing our children’s imagination,” he states in his column on 19 May 2016. He argues that these technologies are successful in determining lives and giving direction, but they cannot add kindness, tenderness and compassion to people’s relationship with each other and the world. He believes that the imaginations of younger generations are limited by the devices and apps they use.

11 -lar and -ler are the plural suffixes in Turkish. If the last vowel of the receiving word is one of (e, i, ö, ü), it will be followed by -ler. Barbarosoğlu makes a cynical comment here even though “hit” is not a Turkish word. She therefore adds “But as the youth do not know what hit means in singular form, it asks for help about this” (p. 21).

12 “Nefsi kamçılaman, arzularını ve heveslerini durmadan manipüle eden, benliklerini gösterişli imgelerle çoğaltan onlarca görüntü ve mesaj içinde kendilerine ait sanal bir dünyada yaşıyor gençler. . . . Maneviyatı kendilerini teşhir etmekte buluyor şimdi gençler. Sanal alemlerde teşhir!”



Figure 6.7 (Left) Quote from the Academy of Science and Art Philosophy in which speakers claim that today's youth are worshipping technology and this limits their imaginations and makes them unable to become good writers or poets. Reprinted from "1990 kuşağından şair çıkmaz," 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 18. (Right) A comparison of the things for which millennials and baby boomers will wait in line. Whereas today, youth is willing to wait for hours to buy a newly released iPhone, their grandfathers faced long lines for a tank of propane. Reprinted from "Dedeler tüp, torunlar iPhone kuyruğunda," by A. Yaşa, *Yeni Şafak Pazar*, pp. 8-9. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Conservative media's perception of technology is not always negative. While it criticizes excessive technology use by young people, there are moments when it praises Turkey's tech-savvy youth and their entrepreneurial activities. As an example, columnist Yaşar Süngü (2010), who criticizes the new generation for being slaves to consumerist, capitalist culture and irresponsibly spending their last lira on iPhones, also praises young entrepreneurs from METU who launched a game development studio and created an app that allows users to make traditional Turkish marbling. He comments: "Protecting

local treasures while using the cutting-edge technologies... don't you also want to shout "this is it!" when you hear this?" (2012).¹³

In the same vein, columnist Erol Göka (2016a) focuses on the mainstream criticisms of today's "app youth" in a column and argues that this label is unfair to young people because research shows that the app generation is surprisingly more tolerant and acceptant of diversity, even though there is still a tendency to form friendships and groups with like-minded people in today's digital world. To resolve this contradiction and his love-hate relationship with technology, he proposes responsible use of these digital platforms.

Are you saying the youth should not use digital technologies, you might ask? Of course, they will use them and leverage the opportunity to express themselves and enrich their identities. But we will also continue to assess the situation and call attention to the dangers that come along.¹⁴ (p. 21)

6.2.2 *Generation "Me" and the Lost Sense of Community*

Due to excessive use of technology, a crooked education system, and the hegemony of Western consumer culture over young people, conservative media portrays the new generation of the country as self-centered, narcissistic, and materialistic. Journalists call the children of the Baby Boomers and GenX'ers "Generation Me" and criticize the millennial youth for being raised with the values of individualism, personal gain, and self-consumption rather than duty or group cohesion. They call for the urgent reinvention of what it means to be "us" as a community.

Prior to 1970, honesty, hard work, faithfulness, and respect for others were the most important values, and having these was enough to earn the respect of society. Consciousness of national duty and responsibil-

13 "Hem yerel değerleri koruyacaksın hem de son teknolojiyi kullanacaksın. İnsanın bunu duyunca; 'İşte bu' diyesi gelmiyor mu?"

14 "Ne yani dijital teknolojileri kullanmasın mı gençler diyeceksiniz? Elbette kullanacaklar, kendini ifade etme, kimliklerini zenginleştirme imkânlarından yararlanacaklar. Ama biz de durumu tespiti yapmaya, tehlikelere dikkat çekmeye devam edeceğiz."

ity was prioritized over individual needs. With the rise of individualism, self-focus and living only for one's self has started be prioritized. . . . Having been conditioned to demand "the best" in life as they were growing up, "generation me" wants the best clothes, houses, and cars as well as the best spouse and the best child. The biggest reasons why marriages do not last long nowadays is the style of demand that we give into.¹⁵ (Karabiyik, 2010, p. 4)

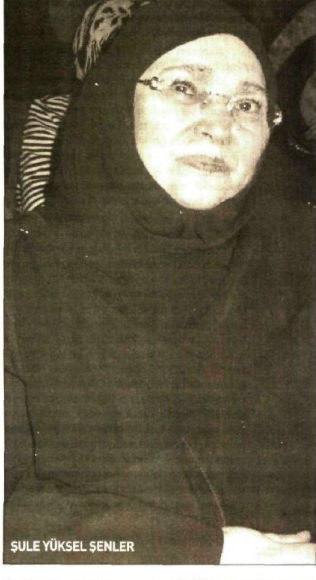
The most catastrophic effect is that "Gen Me" has been reshaping the Turkish character and shaking the foundations of society's cultural and moral virtues, especially when it comes to family values.

Professor Hüdaverdi Adam from Sakarya University is right when he says Turkish family structure is being destroyed! . . . After seeing that society is mentally depressed, he explains the destruction brought about by the imposition of consumerism through advertising, and he states that the lifestyles shown on television series are undermining the family order. The children of our time are great but I am curious to see if they'll be able to hold up in their future lives.¹⁶ (Şeker, 2005, p. 15)

-
- 15 "1970'den önce dürüstlük, çalışkanlık, vefakarlık, başkalarına saygılı davranmak önemli, toplumda saygın bir yere sahip olmak için yeterliydi. Toplumsal görev ve sorumluluk bilinci bireysel isteklerden üstün tutuluyordu. Bireyselleşmenin pompalanması ile başkalarının ne düşündüğünü umursamamak; kendine odaklanma ile sadece kendin için yaşa söylemi öne çıktı. . . . Hayattan hep en iyisini istemeye şartlandırılarak büyüyen 'ben nesli', en iyi kıyafet, en iyi ev, en iyi arabaya sahip olmanın yanında; en iyi eş, en iyi çocuğa sahip olmak da istiyor. Evliliklerin eskiye göre kısa ömürlü olmasında en büyük etken teslim olunan istek tarzı."
- 16 "Sakarya Üniversitesi hocalarından Prof. Hüdaverdi Adam, Türk aile yapısının giderek bozulduğunu söylerken ne kadar haklı! . . . Hoca, "toplumun sosyal psikolojisi bozuldu" tespitini yaptıktan sonra, reklâmlarla dayatılan tüketim çılgınlığının getirdiği tahribatı anlatıyor ve televizyon dizilerinde sunulan hayat tarzının ailede düzeni dinamitlediğini belirtiyor. Şimdiki çocuklar harika ama, ileride hayat karşısında nasıl olacaklar merak ediyorum."

Bireysellik değil birliktelik

Şule Yüksel Şenler, AKV'nin düzenlediği bir etkinlikte okurlarıyla buluştu. Konuşması boyunca gençlere tavsiyelerde bulunan yazar, gençleri, kültürümüze sahip çıkmaya, bireysellikten uzaklaşıp birliktelik bilincinde olmaya çağırdı.

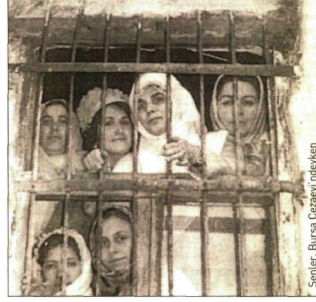


■ HALE KAPLAN ÖZ

Yayımlandığı dönemde gündeme oturan ve 80'in üzerinde baskı yapan Huzur Sokağı kitabının yazarı Şule Yüksel Şenler, uzun bir aradan sonra okurlarıyla buluştu. Hastalığı nedeniyle son yıllarda oldukça sınırlı sayıda röportaj veren ve toplantılara katılmayan Şule Yüksel Şenler, geçtiğimiz gün Araştırma ve Kültür Vakfı'nın konuğu olarak "Geçmişten Geleceğe Konuşanlar" başlıklı etkinlikte konuşmacı olarak katıldı. Fatih Karagömrük'te bulunan Feza Sineması'nda yapılan toplantıya gelen Şule Yüksel Şenler, salona girişinden itibaren yoğun bir ilgi ile karşılandı. Bu ilgi karşısında gözyaşlarını tutamayan Şenler'in sevincini Danimarka'dan gelen kardeşi Gonca Hanımı görmek daha da artırdı.

Toplantı, Şule Yüksel Şenler'in hayat mücadelesini fotoğraflarla anlatan sinevizyon gösterisiyle başladı. Ardından Mülkades Çalık Karan: "Kırım okudu ve Şule Yüksel Şenler sahneye davet edildi. Yine gözyaşlarıyla davetileri selamlayan Şenler'in rahatsızlığından dolayı güçlükle hareket ediyor olması dikkat çekti. Fakat konuşmaya başladıktan sonra eski günlerinden pek de farkı olmayan bir hitabet gücüne davetilere seslendi, iki saat sürmesi planlanan toplantı bir saat daha uzatıldı.

Şule Yüksel Şenler, Araştırma ve Kültür Vakfı Hanımın Komisyonu Başkanı Fatma Kurluoğlu'nun sorularına cevap vererek hayat mücadelesini, çocukluğundan başlayarak anlattı. Film senaryosu olarak kaleme aldığı, sonrasında Buğün gazetesinde tefrika edilen ve nihayet romana çevrilen ve 80'in üzerinde baskı yaparak bir rekora



Yazmaya 14 yaşında Yelpeze Dergisi'nde hikayelerle başlayan, ardından Kadın Gazetesi ve Yeni İstiklal Gazetesi'nde köşe yazarı yazan Şule Yüksel Şenler, Huzur Sokağı, Gençliğin İzdirabı, Hidayet, Kız ve Çiçek, Uyarılığın Göz Yasıları, Sağ El, Bize Ne Oldu gibi 12 kitabı imza etti. Şenler, hayatı rahatsızlığından dolayı azaplı olmasına rağmen hala yazma azmindedir.

Bir tenkid, bir övgü

Şenler, konuşmasında hoş hatıralara da yer verdi: Necip Fazıl Kısakırık'le bir senahat esnasında karşılaşırlar. Kısakırık, Şenler'e "Konferans vermek için kazalara gitmeyin, çabuk tökenirsiniz. Büyük şehirlere gidin" der. Şenler ise "Ben köy köy dolaşmak istiyorum, ama ne imkan ne vakit var. Zaten köylerdeki kasabalarla gelip beni dinliyorlar. Benim onlara gitmem gerekiyor, onlar bana geliyorlar" cevabını verir. Yine Necip Fazıl Kısakırık'e Şule Yüksel Şenler'in baskıyan olduğunu "Seher Vakti" dergisini nasıl bulduğunu sorular. Şair, "Yımalı boşa gibi" yorumunda bulunur. Ardından Şule Yüksel Şenler sorulduğunda ise, "Ben bir Fazıl isem o da Fazıldır" der.

Figure 6.8 Şule Yüksel Şenler, a popular conservative writer known for her book Peace Street (*Huzur Sokağı*), asking young people to move away from individualism and develop a sense of togetherness and community. Reprinted from "Bireysellik değil birliktelik," by H.K. Öz, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 18. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

6.2.3 The Long "Millennial" Summer: The Gezi Park Protests and Beyond

The Gezi Park protests of summer 2013 and the fact that the sweeping majority of protesters were millennials again put the problem of youth on the agenda of conservative media. But there was an important difference from how the issue was covered prior to the protests. During and after the summer of the Gezi Park protests, conservative media, especially renowned columnists, started to apply a dichotomous language to discussions of youth in Turkey. Whereas prior to Gezi incidents it talked about the young people of Turkey

and their problems as a whole, conservative media has shifted to an “us vs. them (conservative, Islamist youth vs. secular youth)” discourse following the Gezi movement.

The first narrative about young people participating in the Gezi uprising is dominated by an argument that they were deceived and were used in a game organized by traitors and international collaborators. In an opinion piece published on 5 July 2013, the ninth day of the protests, *Yeni Şafak* claims that Jewish leaders and neoconservatives associated with America’s pro-Israel lobby, the American Israel Public Affairs Council (AIPAC), had a secret meeting in February and plotted the Gezi scenario. “The ‘Istanbul Uprising’ was simulated on 12 February in order ‘to bring the apolitical Turkish youth out on the streets’” (Kredo, 2013).¹⁷

After establishing that the Gezi movement was no more than a plot and that it did not reflect the true will of Turkey’s younger population, newspapers and columnists started to emphasize that the young people protesting in Gezi Park represented neither the real Turkish youth nor the population as a whole. The anti-Gezi conservative media underscores that these youth were mostly children of families that support the CHP and hence do not reflect the majority of the contemporary Turkish youth. It adopts a language that undermined these Gezi youth and promoted a dichotomous language that pit the young protestors of Gezi against the conservative, Islamist, pro-government youth. On 9 July 2013, columnist Murat Menteş dedicates his column to the voices of young people not participating in the protests, and *Yeni Şafak* publishes an editorial that included in-depth interviews with religious youth who had started organizing poetry sessions in parks as an alternative to the Gezi forums.¹⁸ Atilla Yayla (2013), on the other hand, accuses Gezi youth of adopting an inherently fascist, national socialist, pro-war, totalitarian philosophy.

17 After the 15 July 2016 coup attempt, the Gülen movement was retroactively blamed for orchestrating the Gezi protests.

18 During the Gezi Park incidents, protesters organized forums in public parks in major cities. The forums were open to everyone who wants to join and designed as democratic public spaces where people get together to express their thoughts and ideas freely.

YENİ ŞAFAK PAZAR EKI

Gezi eylemlerine karşı: #direñşiiir

Gezi Parkı olaylarından sonra eylemcilerin parklarda düzenlenen forumlarına karşılık bir grup genç de parklarda Sezai Karakoç okumaları başlattı. 'Karakoç'un içindeki gür sesi ve dirilişi duymak istiyoruz' diyen gençler, her cumartesi ikindi vakti Sezai Karakoç'un Hızır ile kırk Saat kitabından şiirler okuyorlar.

Aysel Yaşa • 00:00 Temmuz 14, 2013 • Yeni Şafak



Gezi eylemlerine karşı: #direñşiiir
Fotograf: Yeni Şafak

Figure 6.9 Editorial published in *Yeni Şafak*'s weekend supplement highlighting the pious youth who organized poetry sessions in parks as an alternative to post-Gezi forums. Adopted from "Gezi eylemlerine karşı: #direñşiiir," by Yaşa, A., 2013 <https://www.yenisafak.com/yenisafakpazar/gezi-eylemlerine-karsi-%23direñşiiir-542105> . Copyright (n.d.) by Yeni Şafak.

In fact, the dichotomous language of "our" vs. "their" youth (those who support the AKP versus those who support the CHP) is a legacy of the Gezi Park protests and added to the list of discourses promoting the further polarization of society. The internalization of this divisive language is best observed in the words of Hilal Kaplan in her column on September 2014, nearly one and a half years after the Gezi movement was sparked.

The republic gave youth the mission to become the guardians of the revolution. Young people back then had a figurative role to unquestionably repeat the prompts given to them by the regime, collaborate with the military in times of danger and spend the rest of their time in soccer stadiums. The AKP, on the other hand, doesn't want the youth to be the guardians of any regime but encourages them to become the

“revolution” itself. (I put revolution in quotes because what we are experiencing is not a revolution, but an accelerated evolution from military authority to democracy).¹⁹ (p. 6)

6.2.4 *Should Young Girls and Boys Live Together?*

Only months after the Gezi Park protests, Erdoğan initiated another storm of discussion that again raised questions about the government’s excessive involvement in the private lives of young people. In November 2013, then Prime Minister Erdoğan said that his government would take measures to control off-campus, coeducational housing. “Invoking his credentials as a conservative, and saying that the government receives ‘intelligence’ about what goes on inside coed housing facilities, Mr. Erdoğan was quoted in the Turkish news media as saying to a weekly meeting of his party’s lawmakers: ‘Anything can happen. Then parents cry out, saying, ‘Where is the state?’ These steps are being taken in order to show that the state is there. As a conservative, democratic government, we need to intervene’” (Pınar, 2013).

The words of Erdoğan quickly became the hottest topic of discussion in the mainstream media, and a conservative narrative on this issue was constructed in line with the statements of the government. The initial message was that Erdoğan’s words were distorted and the proposed regulation concerned only illegally run off-campus dormitories. His words were taken out of context; in fact, the government was only preparing to regulate a sensitive issue that endangers children’s safety, life, and property.

19 “Cumhuriyet, gençliğe devrimin bekçileri olması görevini vermişti. Sorgusuz sualsiz, rejimin verdiği sufleri tekrarlayan, devrim tehlikeye girerse orduyla kol kola giren, diğer zamanlarda en fazla staddlarda boy gösteren figüranlardan öte bir rolü yoktu gençliğin.

Ak Parti ise, gençlikten devrim bekçiliği değil, ‘devrim’in kendisi olmasını bekliyor. (Yaşadığımız ‘devrim’ değil, askeri otoriterlikten demokrasiye hızlı çekim bir evrim süreci olduğu için devrim, tırnak içinde.)”

İŞTE ÖĞRENCİ EVİ GERÇEĞİ

Öğrenci evlerinin denetlenmesinin, özel yaşama müdahale olarak gösterilmesi gerçeği yansıtmıyor. Öğrencilerin birlikte kiralayıp kaldığı evlerin denetlenmesi söz konusu değil. Asıl sorun, hiçbir yasal dayanağı olmadan işletilen "apart evler".

YASADIŞI TİCARETHANE

▶ Yurt işletmecileri ve eğitimciler, Özel Yurtlar Yönetmeliği'ndeki zor şartları yerine getiremeyen girişimcilerin 'öğrenci evi' ve 'apart' adı altında kurduğu 'mini yurtlar'ın denetlenmediğine dikkat çekti. Başbakan Erdoğan'ın da 'denetleyeceğiz' diyerek dikkat çektiği bu öğrenci evleri, yasadışı ticarethaneye dönüşmüş durumda. Buralarda kalanların yaşayacağı sorunlarda muhatap bile yok.

HER TÜRLÜ İSTİSMARA AÇIK

▶ Sektörü uzun süre inceleyen araştırmacı Ali Öztürk, "Yurt sorumluları öğrencilerin bütün kimlik bilgilerine belediye ve valiliğe bildirmek zorunda. Öğrencilerin haklarından, can ve mal güvenliğinden devlet ile yurt sahibi sorumlu. Öğrenci evi açanlar, bundan kaçıyor. Bu evlerde her türlü istismar da olabiliyor" dedi. Öztürk, bu işletmelerin bir an önce denetim altına alınması gerektiğini söyledi. 12

Kızlar şikayet etti

▶ Türkiye Öğrenci Konseyi Başkanı Nihat Buğra Ağaoglu, aileler ve kız öğrencilerden evlerle ilgili yoğun şikayet aldıklarını ve durumu Başbakan Erdoğan'a ilettiklerini açıkladı. Hükümet ise yurtların sayısını arttırmak için 4 aşamalı plan geliştirdi. İlk etapta 65 ilde yurt kiralanacak. 14

Figure 6.10 Cover snippet for a full-page story on the real reason behind the government's initiative to regulate private student housing. According to this article, the attempted regulation concerned only the illegal status of such housing options and is nothing to do with intervening in the private lives of young people. Reprinted from "İşte öğrenci evi gerçeği," 2013, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 1. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Columnists, on the other hand, joined in the discussion of whether this constituted an invasion of privacy or was another attempt by Erdoğan to make the country more conservative. Their views on the matter and their way of justifying Erdoğan's initiative provide significant insight into the conservative media's perception of conservative youth and a conservative society in general.

One striking argument is that opposite sexes living together in private student houses contradicts the moral fabric of Turkey's family structure. Özlem Albayrak in her column in 10 November 2013 focuses on this issue and criticizes those condemning Erdoğan's words based on the grounds that young people over eighteen are legally adults and can do whatever they wish.

[This argument] is not valid for Turkish society. In Turkey, children are not kicked out to fend for themselves when they turn 18. Yes, legally, it is not the state's business to know what these people do or don't do. But the family structure includes a tradition of sending even children over 18 to college and paying for their expenses even it results in financial difficulties – to still support them when they find a job, to “keep an eye on” them even after they get married.²⁰ (p.18)

Another important point of justification is that Erdoğan is a conservative individual, and it is normal for a conservative to think like that and raise his concerns about the moral degeneration affecting the society today (Metiner, 2013). After all, the state is responsible for taking measures for the common good on behalf of families and individuals; hence, it is the state's obligation to solve the problem of moral corruption spreading among Turkish youth (Yıldırım, 2013).

But above all, the debate revealed that conservatism actually means Islamism for members of the conservative media. In fact, this premise is openly acknowledged by Hilal Kaplan in her column in November 2013 where she addresses the various arguments in the student housing debate.

And the most important thing is the Islamic angle... But wait a minute: I cannot say “Islamic” because Prime Minister Erdoğan explains this as “conservative democracy.” We have a government that cannot openly and bravely define itself as “Muslim democrats” and is instead forced to circumnavigate and call themselves “conservatives” . . . and we are still debating the regulation of student houses. . . .

Historically, we see that Islamic administrations try to prevent the roads that lead to adultery before forbidding adultery itself. After all,

20 “[Bu önerme] Türkiye toplumu için geçerli değil, zira Türkiye’de evlatlar genellikle, ‘artık 18’sin adamım, hayatla kendin başa çıkmak zorundasın’ denilerek kapı önüne konmaz. Evet, yasalar önünde bu insanların, ne yapıp ne yapmadığı devleti hiç mi hiç ilgilendirmez. Ama aile yapısı, 18 ve üzeri olsa bile çocukları çeşitli sıkıntılara katlanarak üniversiteye gönderip masraflarını karşılamayı, okul bittikten sonra iş bulsa bile maddi-manevi desteğini esirgemeyi, çocuk evlenmiş olsa bile ‘göz kulak olmayı’ gereksinen bir geleneği içerir.”

the Quran forbids not just adultery but also getting close to it, as well, because the road to adultery is one from which it is very hard to return.²¹ (p. 15)

Hayrettin Karaman (2013) correspondingly contributes to the debate with similar arguments and explains why the new initiative is acceptable with references to the mandates of Islam.

If a couple is cohabitating without being married, girls and boys are living in the same house, or if there is a reasonable suspicion that things are happening in a house that could endanger the country, according to Islam, the state can inspect these houses, obstruct illegal activities, and punish the offenders.²² (p. 2)

6.2.5 *What Makes an Ideal Youth?*

Conservative media overall is predominantly pessimistic about the future of young generations in Turkey. It believes that the upcoming generation is trapped in the “virtual” world of excessive consumerism and is careless, lazy, out of touch, patronizing, egotistical, and disrespectful of their elders (İpekçi 2015c, Böhürler 2014b, İpekçi 2016). They worship their own bodies and souls.

21 “Ve en önemlisi İslâmî boyut... Ama bir dakika, ‘İslâmî’ diyemiyorum zira Başbakan Erdoğan bunu ‘muhafazakâr demokrasi’la açıklıyor. Yani daha kendisini göğsünü gere gere ‘Müslüman demokrat’ olarak bile tanımlayamayan, bu yüzden kuyunun etrafından dolanarak ‘muhafazakâr’ demek zorunda bırakılan bir iktidar varken, biz öğrenci evlerinin denetimini tartışıyoruz. . . . İslâm tarihindeki yönetimlerin genelde zinanın kendisinden önce zinaya giden yolları engellemeye çalıştığını görürüz. Nitekim ayeti kerimede de sadece zina yapmak değil, zinaya yaklaşmak da yasaklanmıştır. Zira zinaya yaklaştıran yol, geri dönülmesi nefse çok zor gelen bir yoldur.”

22 “Eğer bir evde nikahsız bir çift yaşıyorsa veya kızılı erkekli öğrenciler birlikte kalıyorlarsa, yahut da bir evde ülke için tehlikeli olan bazı faaliyetlerin yapıldığı konusunda ciddi şüpheler varsa İslâm’a göre devlet bu evi denetler, basar, gayr-i meşru olan fiilleri engeller, faileri cezalandırır.”

They do not read, do not show any interest in their own culture, language, and history, and are out of touch with the real world.²³

While making these observations, the majority of the journalists adopt a comparative approach, nostalgically measuring the situation of today's youth up against their own time. In her column on September 2014, Hilal Kaplan summarizes the core differences between today's youth and her own experience as follows:

In our time, everything was black and white, right or wrong, malignant or benign. Today, we are living at an "interesting" time in which we experience various shades of grey.

In our time, those who didn't read Kutub, Afgani, Abduh couldn't even set foot in the neighborhood. Today, the youth only knows about Kutub because of the coup in Egypt, and unfortunately, their "neighborhood" is scattered to the four winds.²⁴ (p. 6)

Similar claims are often made by various conservative columnists. Ayşe Böhürler (2014b), for example, argues that while hers was an idealistic generation, insisting on building a way of life based on values and fighting a war on two fronts with both the traditional religious understanding and the hegemonic system, today's youth are not like them because they are not being

23 Fatma Barbarosoğlu is a staunch critic of the new generation in that respect. She occasionally criticizes the youth for not developing the habit of reading and wasting time on their screens. She once commented on a young girl who claimed to be a poet and said: "She doesn't know the names of any contemporary poets. She thinks writing a poem is just about rhyming. . . . This youth, who fears reading and decides which books to read based on the publishing house, is not that nervous when it comes to movies and social media. They watch whatever they can find; they waste their time following silly people on Twitter" ("Çağdaş şairlerden hiçbirinin adını bilmiyor. Şiir yazmayı belli ki kafiye düşürmek olarak anlıyor. . . . Kitap okumaktan korkan, hangi kitabı okuyacağına yayınevine göre karar veren bu gençler, konu sinema ve sosyal medya olduğunda hiç de tedirgin değil. Ellere geçen her şeyi seyrediyor, saçma sapan insanları tivitirdan takip edip zaman harcıyor.") (Barbarosoğlu, 2013b, p. 9).

24 "Bizim zamanımızda her şey siyah ve beyazdı, haklı ve haksızdı, zalim ve mazlumdu. Şimdiyse grinin binbir türlü tonunu yaşadığımız 'ilginç zamanlar'dan geçiyoruz. Bizim zamanımızda Kutup'u Afgani'yi Abduh'u okumayan, mahalleden içeri adım atamazdı. Şimdiyse Kutup'tan bile Mısır'da darbe olduğu için haberi olan ve ne yazık ki 'mahalle'si de dört bir yana dağılmış bir gençlik var."

raised in a coherent family environment. Ali Nur Kutlu observes that he and his children could not laugh at the same jokes anymore (Kutlu, 2015a).

Despite this pessimistic, almost disparaging view of the new youth, conservative journalists nevertheless believe that there is still hope for the new generation (Muradoğlu, 2014) and they occasionally share their advice (both about the youth and the overall system) on how to stop the degeneration. Their recommendations and solutions can be grouped into four main categories: Encouraging young people to marry young, embracing religion (Islam) as a guide and basis for cultural and generational consciousness, limiting the use of technology – especially social media –, and finally, emulating the right role models.

6.2.5.1 The “Natural Way”: Marry Young and Start a Family

Conservatives believe that sexuality is the most challenging test people go through during their youth. It is even more difficult for today’s youth as capitalism’s principle of unlimited freedom results in the sexually objectification of women (Beşer 2015b). In a “modern” society where sexual desires are normalized, young people are faced with a difficult situation: They either have to show extraordinary effort and strength to maintain self-control and hence become mentally depressed, or they can no longer resist their urges and sin (Beşer 2015a).

The ultimate solution to this problem is simple: Young people should be encouraged to marry young and start a family as soon as possible. This is not only the right way but the natural way. There is a reason why sexual desires emerge at a certain age, and it cannot be boiled down to a biological, sexual urge. These desires contain an unspeakable appeal and lust. In early marriages, love is more lasting, the chances of having a baby with birth defects is lower, and the children will be smarter and healthier (Beşer 2015b).

But more important than these, young people are encouraged to marry as soon as possible because it is what Islam advises them to do. Conservatives refer to the words of the prophet to legitimize early marriage – especially the hadeeth “O young men, whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so, and whoever cannot afford it, let him fast, for that will be a shield for him”. They believe that marriage is the prerequisite for getting life in order and

building an honest, moral, religiously-acceptable future. Indeed, that is the meaning of the phrase “there is a miracle in marriage” (*nikahta keramet vardır*) (Akkuşak, 2005).

While they encourage young people to marry young and advise them not fear marriage, journalists who write about this subject also acknowledge the financial burdens of matrimony and call for private and public support programs to help young people financially.²⁵ Indeed, conservative media celebrates government incentives to encourage university students to get married. First a subsidy of 10 thousand Turkish lira for couples that marry early was announced by the Ministry of Families and Social Policies in late 2013. Subsequently, the AKP government introduced a dowry account program for those who marry for the first time before the age of 27, through which “the government will grant up to 20 percent of the amount of money that young people save in their dowry accounts” (“Applications for marriage dowry,” 2016).

25 See Beşer 2015a and Beşer 2015b.

Üniversite öğrencisine evlilik kredisi müjdesi

Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Fatma Şahin'in açıkladığı yeni evlenen çiftlere faizsiz 10 bin lira kredi, evlenmek isteyip de maddi imkansızlıklar nedeniyle evlenmeyen 18-24 yaş aralığındaki gençleri kapsıyor. Evlenecek çiftlerin üniversite öğrencisi olması durumunda ise bu yaş sınırı 26 olarak belirlendi.

1 YIL İÇİNDE GERİ ÖDEME

Başvuruları kabul edilen gençler krediyi bakanlıktan değil, anlaşma yapılan bankalardan çekebilecek. Normal şartlarda ödemeler 1 yıl sonra başlayacak. Çocuk sahibi olmaları ya da hamilelik durumunda kredinin ödemesinde öteleme



imkanı sağlanacak. Ödemeler 2 yıl sonra başlayacak. Öte yandan Gençlik ve Spor Bakanı Suat Kılıç'tan da evli öğrencilere müjde geldi. Kılıç, evli üniversite

öğrencilerinden barınma ücretini almayacakları, kredi alıyorsa bursa çevirecekleri bir çalışma üzerinde durduklarını açıkladı. **AYFER MALLI - ANKARA**

Figure 6.11 *Yeni Şafak* celebrating the government initiative to grant subsidies to couples that marry early. Reprinted from “Üniversite öğrencisine evlilik kredisi müjdesi,” by A. Mallı, 2013b, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 6. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

6.2.5.2 The Right Way is the Islamic Way: Embrace Islam as a Guiding Light and Form a Cultural and Generational Consciousness

Conservatives believe that religion is the fundamental reference for civilization; hence, they propose Islam as the antidote to all the problems of young people and as a means to protect future generations from the deleterious effects of Western values and capitalism. Only a conscious, religious youth guided by Islamic doctrine can fight the shallow, vulgar postmodern, neoliberal popular culture (Kaplan, 2015c) and lead the country to a better and

brighter future.²⁶ In fact, this sense of duty given to youth is not limited to the country but is to cover the entire ummah. Conservative media occasionally underscores that the entire Muslim community expects something great from the youth (Kutlu, 2015b). The world of Islam needs a youth that embraces religious values, is indifferent to misconceptions and tolerant of diversity.²⁷ That is why young Muslims are encouraged to rally together, to form a Muslim club (Öztürk, 2015), and to develop a generational consciousness based on religion.



Figure 6.12 A thorough analysis of the book called *Generation M: Young Muslims Changing the World* which celebrates the central role Muslim millennials play in the world today. Reprinted from “M jenerasyonunun ayak sesleri yükseliyor,” by S. Yassıkaya, 2016, *Yeni Şafak Pazar*, pp. 1,4. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

- 26 For example, in his column in September 2016, Kutlu lists recommendations for school-aged teens. He first underscores that their ultimate aim should be to serve the country. In the twentieth place on the list he writes: “Don’t forget that if you are a Muslim, you have a country, a nation, [and] an ummah to whom you are responsible” (p. 8).
- 27 Yusuf Kaplan, for instance, often described the ideal youth self-conscious and aware of the problems of humanity, Muslims, and the nation (2013b, 2015a, 2015c).

A thorough religious education, reciting the Quran on a regular basis, and performing the five ritual prayers is deemed necessary not only to protect the youth from foreign cultural invasion but also to ensure personal growth and avoid sin. A young person that reads religious intellectuals, learn their duties, and performs their rituals will naturally grow into a moral, just, and mentally and physically vigorous adult. That is why religion, along with moral and national values, is occasionally proposed to counteract harmful habits – adultery, inappropriate sexual desires, addictions, and a tendency to violence.²⁸



Figure 6.13 *Yeni Şafak* reporting on research by the Ministry of Religious Affairs suggesting that youth be directed religion and moral and national values to avoid drug addictions and alcohol use. Reprinted from "Gençleri uyuşturucuya arkadaş çevresi itiyor," by E. Göktaş, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 15. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

6.2.5.3 Beware of Increasing Use of Technology: Reconnect with Nature

As mentioned before, there is a common conception among conservative intellectuals that excessive use of contemporary technologies and new platforms cause young people to lose touch with the real world – make them selfish and

28 In his column on May 2015, Beşer proposes a "recepî" for youth: marry young, perform honest and aboveboard prayer, always engage with honest man, and do not dishonor your earthly life and eternity for a few minutes of pleasure (Beşer, 2015c).

illiterate and limit their worldview to an exaggerated universe of games, entertainment, and competition (Beşer, 2015c). This connectivity, and especially social media, provides them an escape from realities, traps them in deceptive, virtual pleasures and fantasies (Kaplan, 2014a), and offers them a dangerous short-cut to information, experience, and advice.

A significant portion of young people turn to social media to gather information, experience, and advice. Nowadays clips, videos, and memes highlighting wise sayings and pieces of advice from seniors are guiding young people. They leverage this pile of available information without restraint. We do not know which of them are harmful and problematic for these teenagers.²⁹ (Kutlu, 2016a, p. 10)

To tackle this problem and limit the negative influence of social media and technology, conservative media suggests young people acquire a reading habit and stress the importance of children and young people having authentic experiences, connecting with nature, and getting involved in real life issues. It believes that families, the state, and the community as a whole are responsible for this issue and must encourage young people through hands-on training, behavioral education programs, and activities that revive their urge to discover and invent (Kutlu, 2016a; İpekçi, 2015b).

29 “Gençlerimizin önemli bir kısmı sosyal medya üzerinden bilgi, tecrübe ve öğüt ihtiyacını karşılıyor. Özlü sözlerden, büyüklerin tavsiyelerinden yapılmış capsler, klipler, videolar şimdi gençlerimize yol gösterir oldu. Bir yığın halinde duran bu bilgi denizinden, kontrolsüz rastgele faydalanıyorlar. Arada ne kadar zararlı, ne kadar sorunlu şeyler var, bunları bilemiyoruz.”



Figure 6.14 Full-page coverage on the negative effects of technology use on children and their personal development. The article mentions that technology contributes to narcissist tendencies and advises parents to spend more time with their children. Reprinted from "Cepte narsist bir gençlik yetişiyor," by A. İzmir, 2016a, *Yeni Şafak Pazar*, p. 9. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

6.2.5.4 Today's "Life Coaches" were Yesterday's "Brothers": Emulate the Right Role Models

In the minds of conservative columnists, one of the fundamental reasons today's youth are prone to backsliding is that they do not have older role models to guide them in becoming moral, pious, conscious adults. Instead, they try to become like the celebrities they see on television shows, in video clips, and on social media. Hence, they turn into morally corrupt, consumerist, uncultured individuals. In his column in July 2016, for example, Kutlu touches on this issue and compares his generation with the new one.

We were lucky. We had "brothers" that looked after us. Today, these people are called "life coaches, mentors." I realize that growing up with their life experience, cultural richness, and model behavior was an invaluable experience for us. I see that today's youth do not have this and it makes me very sad.³⁰ (p. 10)

To fill this void, the two role models that conservatives propose for youth are Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and Mehmet Akif Ersoy. Especially in the last few years, the attempt to revive the thinking, literary work, and biographies of these prominent thinkers is apparent in the conservative media.

30 "Biz şanslıydık. Bizimle sürekli ilgilenen 'ağabeylerimiz' vardı. Bugün o insanlara, 'yaşam koçu, mentor' deniyor. Onların hayat tecrübesi, fikir ve düşünce zenginliği ve örnek davranışlarıyla büyümek bizim için en bulunmaz nimetmiş. Şimdi gençlerimizin bu zenginlikten yoksun büyüdüğünü görüyor ve çok üzülüyorum."

Yeni nesil Safahat'a sahip çıkıyor

Marmara Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi'nde öğretim görevlisi olan, aynı zamanda çeşitli kurslarda eğitimlik yapan Talip Mert, 2009'dan beri Osmanlı Türkçesi dersinde Mehmet Akif Ersoy'un başyapıtlarından Safahat'ı orijinal diliyle öğrencilerine okutuyor. Eserin tamamını okuyan öğrencilerle ise geçmişte bir gelenek olan Safahat hatmi yapıyor. Mert, bugüne dek 700 öğrencisi arasında başarılı olan 62 kişiye kendi yaptığı hat çalışmalarını hediye etti.

OSMANLICA ÖĞRENMEK İÇİN İDEAL

Safahat'ın Osmanlıca öğrenmek için ideal bir kaynak olduğunu söyleyen Mert, eserin sade ve sanatkarane bir üslupla yazıldığını söylüyor. Safahat'ın Osmanlıca tıpkıbasımlarının bugünün okuruna ulaşmasının sevindirici olduğunu ifade eden Mert, "Safahat her evde bulunan ancak az okunan bir eser. Yeni nesil bunu değiştirebilir. Teknoloji çok gelişti, telefondan tabletle Safahat'ı her yerde okuyabiliriz. Akif'i anlamak isteyen Safahat'ı okusun. Hatta mümkünse Osmanlıcasını okusun" diyor.

BUGÜNÜN İNSANINA KILAVUZ

"Safahat, bugünün insanına kılavuzluk yapıyor, geçmişten hisse kapmasını sağlıyor. Elimizdekilere sahip çıkılması gerektiğini öğretiyor" diyen Mert "Derslere not geçme kaygısıyla gelenler de var gerçekten öğrenmek isteyen de. Okul dışında verdiğim kursta 6 yıldır devam eden öğrencilerim var. Yaşları 40 ila 70 arasında değişiyor" şeklinde konuşuyor. Mert, çocuk yaşta tanıştığı Akif'in eserlerinden etkilendiğini, zamanla kişiliğini araştırmaya başladığını ve her yeni bilgiyle hayranlığının arttığını söylüyor. Mert, bugün kabulünün 95'inci yılını kutladığımız İstiklal Marşı için yaptığı araştırmalarda marşın 6 ayda İsveççe'ye çevrildiği bilgisine ulaştığını da sözlerine ekliyor.



Marmara Üniversitesi'nde öğretim görevlisi Talip Mert, **Safahat hatimleri geleneğini yasadmak için harekete geçti.** Derslerde Mehmet Akif'in başucu eseri Safahat'ı Osmanlıca okutan, başarılı öğrencilere törenle hediye takdim eden Mert, **"Her evde bulunan ancak az okunan bir eser. Yeni nesil Safahat'ı her yerde okuyabilir"** diyor



Bu ülke ona çok sey borçlu

Akif'i "Cemiyetle gülen cemiyetle ağlayan biriydi" sözleriyle anlatan Mert, sair için sunulan söylüyor: "Akif dendiğinde akla ilk gelen kelimelerden biri ümitsizlik. Ümitsizliğe düşümandır. Nası yaşarsa mutlu olacağını yolu gösterir. 'Sessiz yasadım' demistir. doğrudur. Mütevazı bir hayatı olmuştur. İsterleri tevazıyla ortaya koyardı. Maddi kararsız beklemeden cemiyetin derterini giindeme getirdi, çözüm aradı. İki günü esit etmemek isteyen bir insandı." İstiklal Sairi'ni sadece derslerinde anmayan, öğrencileriyle sık sık kabir ziyaretinde bulunan Mert, "Özel günlerde Akif'in kabirini ziyarete gidiyoruz. Öğrencilerim arasında tasradan gelenler de var. Okul bittğinde geri dönerler. Onlarla yaptığımız bu ziyaretlerle minnettarlığımızı gösterme fırsatımız oluyor. Bu ülke ona çok sey borçlu" diyor.

Figure 6.15 "The new generation protects *Safahat*." *Yeni Şafak* reporting the attempts of a professor to keep the literary contributions of Mehmet Akif alive by giving his famous work *Safahat* as a gift to his graduating class. Reprinted from "Yeni nesil Safahat'a sahip çıkıyor," by İ.N. Öztürk, 2016, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 21. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

As an example, in 2014, the pro-government, conservative newspaper *Star* started organizing annual Necip Fazıl Kısakürek Awards to commemorate the memory of Kısakürek and celebrate the literary contributions of Turkey's new pious intellectuals. The awards receive significant support from the president, and Erdoğan himself has attended all the award ceremonies to date. In addition to the extensive coverage of the ceremony every year, mostly with specific

focus on Erdoğan's speech, the majority of conservative columnists also dedicate their columns to Necip Fazıl in late May to both celebrate his birthday and commemorate his death.³¹ For example, around Kısakürek's 105th birthday, columnist Mehmet Doğan (2010a) writes:

The youth that Mr. Necip Fazıl sought throughout his life was an ideal youth that has a time, space, community – a consciousness –, a youth that formed a wholesome school of thought from the information he obtained through a continuous process of debate and supervision, that reached a sense of knowing and disclosed the secret of the East and the West. All his life, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek lived young by dreaming about this ideal youth, but departed this life before he could see the youth he longed for.³² (p. 11)

31 Necip Fazıl Kısakürek was born on 26 May 1905 and died on 25 May 1983.

32 “Zaman ve mekân, tarih ve toplum şuuruna sahip, sürekli muhasebe ve murakabe içinde edindiği bilgileri kendinde fikir bünyesi haline getirmiş, bilme hassasına ulaşmış, Doğu ve Batı mahsup sırrına ermiş ideal bir gençliktir, Necip Fazıl Bey'in ömür boyu aradığı gençlik. Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, hep ideal gençlik rüyaları görerek hep genç yaşadı, ama özlediği gençliği göremeden gencecik gitti.”



Figure 6.16 (Left) Coverage of the 2014 Necip Fazıl Awards ceremony. During his opening speech, Erdoğan said: “The master instilled confidence in a generation.” Reprinted from “Üstad bir nesle özgüven aşıladı,” by K. Kara, 2014, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 13. (Right) Erdoğan speaking at the first annual AKP youth branch meeting in Istanbul. “Erdoğan spoke to the youth quoting Mehmet Akif and Necip Fazıl,” *Yeni Şafak* reports. Reprinted from “Sorunu masada çözen bir gençlik istiyoruz,” by Z. Gülün, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 12. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

In addition to his biography, conservative media occasionally underlines and presents Kısakürek’s important literary works, his philosophy and accomplishments, and his thoughts on what ideal youth should be as a guideline for today’s youth.

Women: Home Builders or Backbone of the Economy?

The year 1980 has marked a radical turning point in studying feminism and women's movements in Turkey. The 1980 military junta suppressed both left- and right-wing movements with the aim of depoliticizing Turkish society and providing long-term stability under military control. In this ideological vacuum following the coup, "the feminist movement brought up issues common to second wave feminism in the West" (Diner and Toktaş, 2010, p. 41), and as Serpil Çakır also points out, towards the end of the 1980s, the increasing attempts of academic and non-academic feminist circles led to the formation of a new feminist consciousness in Turkey, marked by the significant attempt to give back the voices of women to themselves as active agents of the transformations and reforms brought about women's status during the early republican Turkey.

This new feminist consciousness, backed by a growing number of studies on autonomous women's movements and significant female figures in the history of the country, created a debate between the new feminist scholars and the women of earlier generations "who had been brought up within and had therefore internalized the official ideology of the Kemalist regime" (Çakır, 2007, p. 63), a debate that still marks the foundation of the feminist history of Turkey in the twenty-first century. While the new generation continues to put pressure on the liberating effects of Republican reforms, pushed by the policy of what Sinem Tekeli coined as state feminism by arguing that women of the

early Republic not only embraced the rights handed to them from above but actively fought for granting them, the women of earlier generations respond these criticisms by stating that the Republican reforms had empowered women “in the absence of a significant women’s movement” (Abadan-Unat, 1991, p. 181) in the country.

The history of the women’s movement in Turkey suggests that both state feminism and women as autonomous actors played an important role in the discussion of women’s issues in Turkey. A three-stage periodization is helpful in analyzing the developments in this area and locating the policy and discourse in the realms of gender, sexuality and the family. The first stage covers the period of the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire to the foundation of the new republic, and is marked by women’s philanthropic activities and the demand for education. The second stage lasted until the 1980 military coup. State feminism and the dominant “republican patriarchy hegemonized the discourse on women’s emancipation until the late 1980s with the claim that Turkish women had been emancipated from the clutches of tradition” (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 558). Only in the third stage, after the 1980 coup that women started to raise their voices through feminist organizations.

§ 7.1 From the Early Republican Period to the 1980s: State Feminism and Women as Agents of Change

Women’s movement in Turkey has its origins in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, at a time when the society was going through significant social, political and economic changes. The main ideologies that “preoccupied the minds of Ottoman intellectuals in the second half of the nineteenth century all gave considerable place to the status of women” (Abadan-Unat, 1991, p. 180). As early as the Young Turk Period, the desire to create a new life and a new nuclear family, coming from the regime’s Westernization ideas and backed by the French Revolution’s liberty, equality and fraternity motto, put the issue of women onto the forefront of the Young Turk’s main agenda, then again of the Republican Turkey. For both, “the nuclear family based on partnership was seen as the model family, one that would emerge from and also lead to the emancipation of women” (Toprak, 1991, p. 442). Going hand in

hand with the dominant nationalist ideology, women's emancipation was acknowledged by the state, from the beginning, as the most important prerequisite for the larger transformation of the society. Atatürk himself also saw the status of women as the accelerator force of the desired social change and regarded equality to men and women as the core condition of reaching to the level of contemporary civilizations (Abadan-Unat, 1991).

Another area where state feminism played an important role in women's emancipation was linked with the regime's commitment to secularization. "Islamic values and the traditional social order, which until the end of World War I were defended by an omnipotent ruler were irreparably shaken when the sultan was discredited" (Abadan-Unat, 1991, p. 180) by the new regime, which paved the way for an official challenge to seclusion and veiling. The clothing reform which started with the July 1925 cabinet decree regarding the close down of Islamic monasteries, zawiya, mausoleums and the clothing of religious officials, had an incredible impact on the clothing of women. Women threw away their veils and headscarves, and the Kemalist regime encouraged women to participate in sporting contests (Zihnioğlu, 2003, p. 167). So, it was with the regime's motive that women were emancipated in terms of bodily self-expression.

Closely related with the issues above, the new regime's commitment to Westernization and secularization also opened up the ways for women to become integrated into the public life. Partially with the regime's commitments to these social transformations and partially related to the disastrous conditions of the consequent wars, women were encouraged to take part in the state's labor force for the sake of the national cause, and provoked into political activism, though mostly in the forms of philanthropic activities. Despite the criticisms from the society and some regulatory limitations from the regime, such as the issuing of the permitted skirt lengths, state institutions including hospitals, postal services or municipal administrations began to open their door to women (Abadan-Unat, 1991, p.178), while women were also participating in open-air meetings or providing social services for the needy by organizing themselves under organizations like *Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti Kadınlar Heyet-i Merkeziyesi* (women's section of the Red Crescent Soci-

ety), *Muhtaç Asker Ailelerine Muavenet Cemiyeti* (the society for needy soldiers families) and *Müdafaa-i Milliye Osmanlı Hanımlar Heyeti* (the Ottoman women's committee for the national defense) (Toprak, 1991, p.447). The regime played a significant role in motivating and accelerating such initiatives by women throughout the Independence War and World War I, which paved the way for women's active participation to the state decision-making bodies thereafter.

The adoption of the Civil Code in 1926 was another important milestone for the history of gender politics in Turkey. While the code had its limitations such as not creating absolute equality between men and women, it was nevertheless a revolutionary step from the regime to show its commitment to the women's emancipation. The adoption of the new Civil Code was a consequence of the state feminism ideology, as firstly, in line with the state's Westernization ideology and the desire to create a nuclear family, it was adopted by the Swiss code with only a very few amendments, and secondly, there was no consultation of the state to the women's organizations during the preparation of the law. In other words, as Zihnioğlu (2003) also states, this reform that effected women was actualized without the presence of women – a sign that the regime itself was committed to this particular aim.

The late Ottoman and early republican state feminism put considerable emphasis on women's education. Starting with the Young Turk period, discrimination in education was lifted, and women started to attend schools of higher education. "In 1914 a university for women (İnas Darülfünunu) was founded [and] in January 1918, segregation between sexes at the university ended as women attended the same lectures as men" (Toprak, 1991, p. 446). Thus, new educational opportunities were offered to them by the regime, and it was thereafter that "the concept of mahrem, or sacrosanct domestic privacy, was shaken, and its traditional strictness began to relax" (Pelvanoğlu, 2013, p. 156). It was these women who benefited from these educational opportunities offered by the regime, that opened the door for the development of their own voice as autonomous actors.

Despite the unarguable impact of the state feminism on women's emancipation in Turkey, there were also a few areas that women autonomously acted as the agents of such change, most notably in the fields of journalism, arts and

literature, labor force and in terms of organizations they established such as *Kadınlar Halk Fırkası* (Women's People Party).

Published between 1913 and 1921, *Kadınlar Dünyası* (world of women) “was the voice of an independent women's movement and the most radical of the Ottoman women's journals, in that it did not allow male writers in its columns” (Çakır, 2007, p. 69). Unlike the *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (newspaper for women), which was the women's journal that reflected the state feminism and owned by elite intellectual women, *Kadınlar Dünyası* reached larger masses and supported by women in every segment. It created its own agenda by incorporating readers' letters and demanded to define their own self-identity as women by expressing reactions to various policies of the regime, such as blaming the anniversary of the 1908 Constitution for being the national day of men (Çakır, 2007, p. 71). In *Kadınlar Dünyası*, women were involved in the contemporary debates as active agents.

Another example of a similar kind of autonomous journalism was *Resimli Ay* (the month with pictures) magazine. Led by a prominent woman figure Sabiha Sertel, this monthly periodical issued articles that touched upon “variety of social issues, editorials, opinion surveys, letters to the editor, short stories, poetry and self-help pieces” (Shissler, 2008, p. 13). Through the pages of *Resimli Ay*, Sertel sought to influence public policy regarding women's participation to the workforce, prostitution and women's legal rights. Even though *Resimli Ay* was not completely against the republican regime, it still created an autonomous voice of opposition, pushing for larger modernization while urging women to develop “their own individual and social personalities” (Shissler, 2008, p. 22).

Apart from the examples of collective actions, there were also individual woman figures that stand out as examples of women as autonomous actors. One prominent figure was Sabiha Serter. She pushed for further liberalization for women through the articles of *Resimli Ay* magazine, criticizing the government policies towards women from the core when necessary. By using *Resimli Ay* as a tool to make herself heard both in the public and political level, she called on “society to give men and women equal freedom in sexual choice and expression while at the same time pushing women to enter the paid labor force” (Shissler, 2008, p. 19). Similarly, Mihri Müşfik Hanım stood out as an

influential woman figure, who diverged from the ideological and moral boundaries of the privileged upper-class women (Pelvanoğlu, 2013, p. 157), and made individual contributions to the arts education of women such as persuading the official authorities for the use of nude Greek sculptures as models in the lectures.

In the early republican era, the official state ideology claimed a monopoly over women's issues. "However, starting in the 1960s, leftism and Islamism emerged as contestant frames to colonise the potentially feminist voices (Tekeli 1986, pp. 192–195)" (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 558). Even though the republican patriarchy continued to draw the boundaries for women's movements, "women had to 'bargain with patriarchy' (Kandiyoti, 1988) through loyalty to republican morals, which first and foremost perceived them as (potential) wives and/or mothers" (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 558).

The student movements and especially the leftist ideologies provided a new form of discourse for women. "The humanitarian and egalitarian discourse on which most leftist ideologies depended offered women a place in the fight against class domination. But the fight was strictly against the class system and any other ideology such as women's rights had to be subordinated to the main goal" (Sirman, 1989).

§ 7.2 The post-1980 period and the new feminist wave

The 1980 military coup marked a turning point in the history of women's emancipation in Turkey. "The feminist movement in Turkey gained its independence after the coup d'Etat in 1980, when all leftist or nationalist political organisations were forbidden" (Merçil and Semenoğlu, 2014, p. 24).

The aftermath of the 1980 military coup was a fruitful period of learning for the feminists in Turkey. Due to their activities in this period they gained the experience and skills to raise their voices through organized activism. Institutionally, "women's organizations, which had been about 10 in number between 1973 and 1982 and 64 between 1983 and 1992, multiplied, reaching more than 350 by 2004" (Arat, 2008, p. 392).

The expansion of the feminist wave brought out cleavages within the movement. The 1980s and the 1990s were particularly marked by the increasing visibility and activism of Islamic women. Paralleling with the increasing role and visibility of Islam in the public and political spheres, Muslim women began to speak up and started to organize around a common criticism that the dominant, Kemalist feminism limits religious freedom. Discussions and debate focused almost exclusively on the issue of women's right to wear a veil in public. Islamist women found themselves in a confrontation with state policies and the feminist wave and started to organize around the right to wear headscarves at universities. Even though majority of these covered women were antagonistic towards feminism as an ideology, they shared a language with secular counterparts and framed the ban as a violation of human rights, religious freedom, and the right to an education.

This new generation of Islamist women who promoted the right to attend universities with a head covering became visible in both the public and private realms through acts of civil disobedience and political activism. "They protested in front of university gates, organized demonstrations outside the universities, wrote about their victimization in newspapers, journals and novels, and formed platforms to promote their right to wear the headscarf [as] other Islamist women channeled their protest at the secular framework into their engagement in Islamist political parties" (Arat, 2008, p. 411). In just six years, number of registered women working for the Islamist RP reached a million, the majority of whom were working within the party to fight against the bans on head coverings that restricted their access to education and employment as well as their participation in the political and public spheres. As Arat (2008) suggests, this unusually high number of female supporters of the RP extended the limits of women's political participation and engagement, while contributing to women's movements' institutionalization process as they learned collective activism and recruited new supporters to the common cause.

§ 7.3 Politics of Gender in the AKP Period

7.3.1 *The Early Years: A Period of Progressive Reforms*

The early years of the AKP period “represented a turn in the traditional ignorance of women’s civil societal activism by tending to engage in dialogue” (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 562). Active engagement of Islamist women in electoral politics continues during the AKP period, in which, in pursuit of headscarf rights, women plays a decisive role in expanding the female voter base of the party, hence becoming actors in public life.

Within the first terms in government, a series of progressive steps were taken on the political level. The amendments in the Turkish Penal Code in 2004, for example, marked significant changes. “The recognition of sexual crimes as ‘crimes against individuals/crimes against the inviolability of sexual integrity’ (WWHR, 2005, p. 14), termination of provisions that had previously enabled rapists to escape from legal punishment in the case of marriage, and inclusion of provisions to eliminate discrimination against non-virgin and unmarried women can be cited as positive steps in the amendment.” (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 562).

This reform was followed by another change in the law on municipalities a year later, which required municipalities over 50,000 inhabitants to provide shelters to female victims of domestic violence. And in 2009, Parliamentary Commission for the Equality for Women and Men was established to promote gender equality.

Despite this initial, reformist wave, the AKP’s stance “gradually evolved from an expressed willingness for cooperation to lack of interest, and at times, hostility toward feminist demands” (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 564). The party’s ignorance of the demands for gender quotas in politics, the hostile declarations about feminism by various institutions and leaders¹ shows that “apart from attempts at short intervals, the party’s liberal rhetoric on this issue has

1 Declaration by the Presidency of Religious Affairs: “[F]eminism leads to grave consequences in moral and social respects. Above all, the woman who falls into the feminist movement, [by acting] through the principle of unconditional freedom ignores many of the rules and values which are indispensable for the family . . .” (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 564).

been prone to conservative intrusions . . . [and] in its search for a solution to the problem, AKP has bypassed the demands of the feminist initiatives to partake in the discussions and policy-making process” (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 565).

7.3.2 2011 and Beyond: The Decline in the Reformist Agenda and Reinforcement of Conservative Gender Values

As in many other policy areas, the AKP’s third term in office signifies a turning point for women’s issues. The “anti-abortion policy initiative, restrictions imposed on C-sections as a part of pronatalist policies, [the AKP] parliamentarians’ patriarchal declarations reproducing traditional gender roles and the increasing emphasis on family, family unity and women’s familial roles constitute a particular gender regime which resonates with the [AKP]’s authoritarian turn and its project of reinforcing conservative values on the broadest scale possible” (Cindoğlu and Unal, 2017, p. 42).

One of the most highly-debated incidents occurred in July 2010 when then Prime Minister Erdoğan clearly stated in a speech he gave at a meeting with women’s NGO representatives that “women are women and men are men. Is it possible for them to be equal?” (Hatipoğlu, 2014). He claimed that homemaking and motherhood are in women’s divinely ordained nature. This was followed by his insistence on families to have at least three children, numerous declarations about abortion being a murder and C-section births, “which he claimed make it harder for a woman to give birth again, were part of a ‘hidden’ plot to reduce Turkey’s population.” (Kandiyoti, 2015). On the institutional level, the biggest change is the replacement of the General Directorate in 2011 with the Ministry of the Family and Social Policies, “where discrimination against women was placed alongside the protection of children, the disabled, and the elderly, clearly marking it out as a social welfare issue” (Kandiyoti, 2016, p. 107).

§ 7.4 A Consistent Idea: Family as the Essence of Nation

While the AKP government had a gradual shift in its approach to women’s issues and empowerment, it has nevertheless been clear and consistent in its

understanding of family as an institution. “The party, in its election declaration in 2002, had already demonstrated its approach to women’s issues in terms of the woman’s essential role of ‘bringing up the next generations and ensuring happiness in the family’. Thus, while women’s empowerment has been one of the recurrent themes in the party’s discourse, it is located within the context of family politics” (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011, p. 565).

For the AKP, family refers to the three-generational extended family. It draws a sharp distinction between the family values of Turkey and the West, and criticizes the latter (the idea of a nuclear family) for being reason of moral degeneration in societies. “On different occasions, . . . Erdoğan utilized this metaphor of family in order to make reference to the solidarity and common fate of the nation” (Cindoğlu and Unal, 2017, p. 43). The AKP also uses this idea of extended families as a tool to reinforce gender values. As Cindoğlu and Unal (2017) also claims, attributing such a sacred value to the family “rely on a conservative politics of family that attempts to stimulate a strong commitment among citizens to the moral and political importance of the family ideal. . . . Accordingly, the party promotes the reproduction of heterosexual, Turkish, married couples with conservative lifestyles, while leaving other ethnicities, sexual orientations and cohabitation practices outside (Baba, 2011; Erten, 2015)” (p. 43).

§ 7.5 Conservative Media and Women’s Issues: Beyond the Right to Veil

Prior to the AKP period, the visibility of these activist women in the media – newspaper columns, journals, and books – was mainly limited to an audience of other women. But the AKP’s overwhelming election victories starting in 2002, when power gradually transferred “from secular groups to an Islamically rooted one, the government helped pro-government newspapers to emerge where Islamist women began writing as columnists – now they are in positions of power as columnists addressing a conservative community, they are visible and publicly prominent, emerging in public debate and making claims about the daily agenda of the country” (Arat, 2016, p. 126).

Initially, conservative media and especially women columnists leverage this newly acquired power almost exclusively to raise their voices about the headscarf issue. Until the government lifted a ban on the wearing of headscarves on university campuses and allowed women to wear headscarves in state institutions in 2010 and 2013, respectively, women's rights and issues in the conservative media amounted to the issue of the headscarf ban. This was true for both male and female columnists as well as for editorial teams. Headscarves were considered an individual human right, and the ban was deemed a violation of religious freedom protected by the constitution. It was also suggested that this was the main reason why the visibility of women in the public sphere in Turkey is limited: Women who are allowed to dress freely neither in public institutions nor in the majority of the private sector jobs have no choice but to stay home.

Conservative media started covering women's issues beyond the headscarf ban, especially with the gradual resolution of the problem starting in 2010. While touching upon other women-related issues, these journalists – especially female columnists – carry their experience with the headscarf controversy with them. “They were part of this struggle, and their collective memory was shaped by this confrontation as well as the process of empowerment” (Arat, 2016, p. 131). This legacy is reflected in their approach to women's rights beyond the right to wear a veil. Much has been written about Islamic women and their headscarves in Turkey since the 1990s,² so this study limits itself to the understudied area of women's problems beyond the headscarf issue and further restricts the scope to columnists' views on other gender issues in the conservative media.

7.5.1 *The Conservative Dilemma: Women's Employment and Participation in Politics*

Women's participation in the political and economic spheres leaves conservatives with a fundamental conflict between ideology and the realities of social and economic life. On one hand, even male-dominated conservative groups

2 See, for example, Göle (1996), Arat (1990), Saktanber and Çobanoğlu (2008), and White (1999).

cannot deny the importance of women's participation in the workforce for the country's economic performance. But despite the realities of the contemporary economic system, "the image of a good society held by a conservative in Turkey is one in which women continue to lead their traditional domestic lives, help raise children, and be the homemakers" (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, 2009, p. 57).

This lack of conformity between the realities of the modern socio-economic system and the traditional conservative approach to women's social roles is also prevalent in the narratives in conservative media. First, opinions start to diverge on whether women should enter the workforce. Columnists who oppose working women, who are predominantly male, justify their claims based on two main arguments: First, women working outside of home neglect the needs of motherhood and home life in general, which, in turn, deteriorates the moral fabric of the society. Second, the fierce, cut-throat capitalist system does not empower women; on the contrary, it controls, objectifies, and enslaves women as sexual objects.

Süleyman Seyfi Ögün, Ali Bulaç, Ergün Yıldırım, and Yaşar Süngü are among journalists that share these concerns about women's participation in the workforce. The renowned conservative intellectual Ali Bulaç (2011), for example, blames women's employment outside the home for the high rate of male unemployment and argued that this unnatural order causes discontent in family life. Likewise, Süleyman Seyfi Ögün (2013), Ergün Yıldırım (2014), and Yaşar Süngü (2016) all blame capitalism, its institutional manifestations, and modernity for generating and deepening the problems of women. On 9 March 2016, a day after International Women's Day, Süngü writes a critical piece on women's rights advocates who help other women find jobs outside of home. He argues that the only aim of these so-called advocates who promote themselves this time every year is to force women out of the home and help move the wheels of capitalism. He states that women taking on social responsibilities outside of the home based on the false premise of gender equality and freedom transforms and endangers the structure of the family. He adds that women can be fathers but men cannot be mothers by linking this justification with the sanctity of motherhood.

In a similar vein, journalist Ergün Yıldırım (2014) believes that though it seems innocent and seems to benefit economic development, promoting working women fundamentally ignores the social aspect of the issue and undermines the importance of home, fertility, motherhood, and children. The idea that “men and women are equal” is a myth and a made-up dream of modernism and capitalism. It encourages women to reconstruct their identities by excluding the home and motherhood. They then try to compete with their spouses and other men. But the truth is that women are the pillars of the family – someone who maintains the order of the entire universe. Women’s employment breaks down the unity of the family, motherhood, and fertility and ultimately leads to a crisis in men's mental health. If the head of household is not present, men are bound to remain trapped under the wreckage.

Kadın Ev'in direğidir

Moderniteyle beraber kadın konusunda düşüncelerimiz pelesenk olan ifadeler var: Kadın istihdamı, kadın erkek eşitliği, kadın çalışması, kadının eğitimi, kadının özgürlüğü. Bir kadın ideolojisiyle karşı karşıyayız. Dünyaya kadın üzerinden bakın ve her şey yine kadına açıklanan bir ideolojidir bu. Toplumsal cinsiyet kavramıyla bilimsel bir meşruiyete de kavuştu bu ideoloji. Sosyolojinin konularını altında toplumsal varlığı "cinsiyetle" açıklıyor. Belki bunlara siyasi cinsiyet, dinsel cinsiyet, etnik cinsiyet ve homo cinsiyet de eklenecek yakın zamanlarda. Kadın, dünyayı varlığa ulaştıran bir yaratılış hikayesine dönmek neredeyse. Avrupa modernliğinden topraklarımızı gelen, kapitalizmin ve endüstri toplumunun üretim tarzıyla kapımızı çalan bu kişilerle hiç sorgulanmıyoruz. Kadın meselelerini, ev meselelerini, aile meselelerine derman olacak sibirli formüller olarak görüyoruz.

Kadın istihdamı ve kadın eşitliği etrafında yapılan açıklamalar ve koparılan güdümler üzerinde durmak istiyoruz. Kadın ve erkek eşitlik tartışmasını sorgulamaya çağında bulunan devletin tepesindeki şahsiyet olarak Cumhurbaşkanı, "modernlerimiz" uykusunu kaçırıyor. Onların yüzü elli yıllık hülyakarna gülmeye başlıyor. Bir akademiye dokunmuş adeta. İyi ki de dokundu. Modernliğin kadın erkek eşitliği, büyük efsanelere ve boy hayallere dayanıyor çünkü. Kadın ev ve aile içinden soyutlayarak tanımlayan bir girişimdir. Bütün modernlik ihtisalarına rağmen kadın-erkek eşitliği en fazla kapitalizmin işine yarar. Kadının beşliğin, ev ve aileyi ötekileştirerek kurmasına yarar. Anneliği tarifleye yarıyor, rekabeti kocaya ya da erkeğe yapmaya davet ediyor. Bir idealite olarak bu "cinsiyet eşitliği", ilginç sonuçlara götürüyor insanları. Eşitlik kadına bir kurtuluş tedavisi olarak sunuluyor ve kadının dışlama, şiddet, işsizlik, yalnızlık vb. sorunlarının bunlarla açıklanacağı varsayılıyor. Hatta bunun için erkek bedenine rahim takarak biyolojik eşitliğe kadar vardırıyolar işi. Madem ki kadın eşit olacak, doğum yaptırmakta da bu uygulanır.

FEMİNİZM BİR KADIN TEOLOJİSİDİR



ERKİN YILDIZIM
Aile varlığı, kapitalizmin ihtisalarlarıyla bütünleşen kadın ve ev algısı sonucunda büyük yıkımlarla yüz yüze. Ruhaniyeti, evi ve anneliği dikkate almadan istihdam projeleri ve eşitlik projeleri maneviyatı daha da derinleştiriyor. Evet, asıl olan adalettir. Çünkü adalet, kalkınmanın hoyratlığına adanan bir aile politikasına hoş bakmaz. Evi, anneyi, çocuğu ve doğurganlığı saygı duyar.

Bunu ne kilisede bulur ne de evlilikte. Paris'in, sokakları ve evin dışında aranmaya yönelik bu muthuluğu, Emma'nın kurtuluş arayışı hazin bir sonla biter. Emma, modern kadının evden çıkmasını ve bundan kurtuluşu için evden feragatini anlatan bir semboldür. XIX yüzyılın büyük Fransız romancısı Gustave Flaubert'in inşa ettiği bir karakterdir.

Evi, kadının direkt olduğu hayat varlığıdır. Direk, kadının geleneklerde bütün kainatı ayakta tutan kozmolojik bir semboldür. Kadının evden çekilmesi, evi taşıyan direğin yıkılmasıdır. Anneliğin çöküşü ve doğurganlığın ölümüdür. Erkeğin, ritual düzeninin kurulmasıdır. Çünkü evin direği yoksa, o evin altında yaşayan erkek de bu yıkımların altında mahvolmaya mahkumdur.

Figure 7.1 Part of the column of Ergün Yıldırım on 7 December 2014 entitled "Woman is the chief pillar of home." In the image, a housewife with a kitchen apron is spinning the world on her finger. Reprinted from "Kadın ev'in direğidir," By E. Yıldırım, 2014, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 18. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Süleyman Seyfi Ögün (2013) shares the same viewpoint, but justifies his claims from a natural, biological perspective. Ögün states that the ancient world was never constructed on the premise of equality in the first place and argued that a woman's place is at home as it has been since the time of prehistoric hunter-gatherer tribes. These tribes had a gendered division of labor; men hunted while women stayed home, nurtured the children, and prepared for post-hunting chores. The current differences between men and women rested on

this inequality, and capitalism and modernity worsened contemporary women's issues.

While other conservative women columnists argue in favor of women's participation in the workforce, former *Yeni Şafak* columnist Teodora Doni³ stands out as an exception in the debate. Doni (2010) shares concerns about the deleterious effects of working women on the moral fabric of the society. She narrates how her own childhood experience took a turn for the worse after her mother started working and argues that the children of working mothers are lonely, ill-nurtured, and overall have an unhappy childhood, wasted in the corners of daycare centers and after school courses. She announces that she was proud to be a housewife (even though she was earning a livelihood through journalism) and that she dedicated her life to raising her children without that feeling of loneliness she experienced in her own childhood.

Apart from Dori, conservative women columnists, given that they themselves are professional women, all support women's employment. "They develop secular as well as Islamist arguments to encourage and legitimize women's employment" (Arat, 2016, p. 136).

Yeni Şafak writers and prominent conservative intellectuals Özlem Albayrak and Fatma Barbarosoğlu are among leading conservative women that supported women's work outside the home. Justifying women's employment with women-friendly interpretations of Islam, these women argue that historically, women did in fact work outside the home. Moreover, given the current sociological realities, it is unfair to victimize or criticize working women.

Fatma Barbarosoğlu, for example, defends women's participation in the workforce in a number of her columns, criticising both liberal policies as well as the conservative male perspective on the issue. She argues that liberal policies do not recognize women's work at home because of the rules and norms of the contemporary capitalist economic order. Moreover, she criticizes conservative men because what they understand from women's work is women's employment outside the house. These men unfairly blame working women for all domestic problems such as the poor performance of children in school or

3 She was fired from the newspaper in 2012 after her articles were censured for being critical of the new educational system.

the increase in the rate of divorce. Barbarosoğlu also occasionally touches on the problems and double burden that working women face. She asks the conservative community – especially men – not to judge working women and to recognize the difficulties they have to overcome, and she advises to be more tolerant, appreciative, and helpful to these women, especially to mothers.

While she advocates for women's participation in the labor force, Barbarosoğlu refrains from criticizing government policies and instead focused her discussion on the social dynamics of the Muslim community. In one column, she suggests that pious Muslims get on board with government initiatives to encourage women's employment and education. She argues that conservative families should encourage their daughters to work outside the home, just as they fought for their daughters' right to higher education. "She thus expect[s] the Muslim community to keep up with the times and accept the consequences of educating their daughters" (Arat, 2016, p. 137). The only time she subtly criticized government policies towards women was in a column in 2013, in which she states that the government should make up its mind about women's employment in Turkey, because current policies push (married) women to have more children on one hand, while encouraging women's participation in the workforce, on the other. This ingenious comment aside, Barbarosoğlu approaches the issue as a mere domestic decision, beyond the reach of political interference (Barbarosoğlu, 2013a).

Unlike Barbarosoğlu, Hatice Karahan (2016) holds the government responsible for supporting women's empowerment in the economic sphere. She claims that strengthening women's economic freedom is an important step towards reducing domestic violence and argues in one column that effectively and permanently solving the problem of violence towards women requires more than sanctions. Women should be economically empowered and male children should be properly educated.

Another prominent female columnist, Nihal Bengisu Karaca justifies her claims from an Islamic perspective. She criticizes essentialist arguments that attribute fixed characteristics and roles to men and women ("woman is a mother, bearer of the family, man goes out and earns a living"), because they significantly limit one's spiritual journey to come to know themselves and

God. She underscores that the journey to God is inherently genderless and justified women's right to work outside the house.

Not all conservative columnists who support women's work outside the home are women. A few male *Yeni Şafak* columnists such as Murat Menteş, Kerem Alkin, and Erdal Tanas Karagöl also support women's participation in the workforce. In a column in 2013, Menteş argues that the way for women to become sacred as mothers and dignified as individuals is to have the ability to buy their dresses and headscarves with their own money. Moreover, the argument that if women work, family, and children will be neglected is an insult to Turkish women and it is gender discrimination. Alkin (2015) believes that Turkey will achieve its 2023 vision⁴ with women's participation in the socio-economic sphere. Karagöl (2016) shares similar views and argues that women's participation in the workforce is not only important for the Turkish economy, it will have a positive impact on the social dynamics of the country, as well. He shares the results of research conducted by the Women and Democracy Association (*Kadın ve Demokrasi Derneği* or KADEM) that revealed that 63 percent of women believe their work life has a positive impact on their family life. He interprets this as a proof that if the problems of women in the workforce are solved, it will have a constructive impact on the domestic front. He urges all key stakeholders to work together to find a permanent solution to this crucial social problem.

While there are different opinions about whether women – especially mothers – should enter the workforce and while columnists propose differing arguments to prove the legitimacy of women-earning a living, there is a common consensus that women's roles at home – as mothers and wives – are crucial for strengthening family values and ultimately the moral fabric of society. In line with the AKP government's narrative, conservatives argue that the prerequisite for a healthy society is healthy families, which in turn requires proper acknowledgement of motherhood and the role of women in the family as well as in the economic sphere. Hayrettin Karaman (2005d) expresses this point by quoting the words of Emine Erdoğan.

4 The 2023 vision is a list of goals the AKP government is determined to achieve by the year 2023 (the centenary of the republic) in areas including economy, energy, transportation, education, healthcare, tourism, and foreign policy.

While we say yes to more active women, we say no to the commodification of women. We do not believe in the crooked perceptions that neutralize women's role in the family and the mission of motherhood. Healthy social structures can only be possible with healthy families. We defend women's productivity, their participation in the workforce, and their economic liberties, but we also underline the need to protect the family structure. We do not want to see women intimidated; we want them to be strong cornerstones.⁵ (p. 2)

Fatma Barbarosoğlu (2010b) also touches on the issue in a column in which she discussed a scenario where men stayed at home and women worked outside of the home. While she agrees that men can do the housework that women have traditionally done, she finds such an ultra-modern family structure potentially harmful for being at odds with the nature of motherhood. While in such a "new order," homes could become a man's domain, children will always belong to mothers.

News stories covered by editorial teams also reflect this tension and the attempt to reconcile women's role in the family and their employment. While women's active participation in the public sphere is promoted, women are constantly reminded of their duties as mothers and homemakers. This ambivalent narrative is especially evident in stories about statements and speeches made by government officials.

5 "Biz kadınların aktif hale gelmelerine evet derken, kadınların metalaştırılmasına da hayır diyoruz. Kadının aile içindeki rolünü sıfırlayan, annelik misyonunu küçümseyen çarpık anlayışlara da mesafeliyiz. Sağlıklı toplum yapılan ancak sağlıklı ailelerle gerçekleşebilir. Kadınların üretkenliğini, çalışmasını ve ekonomik özgürlüğünü savunuyoruz, ancak, aile yapısının da korunması gerektiğini söylüyor, köşesine çekilmiş kadınlar yerine, köşe başını tutan köşetaşı gibi kadınlar görmek istiyoruz."

Kadın işvereni milyonlar yapacak

MUSIAD yeni işverenleri ekonomiyi kazandıracak



Türkiye'de tüm işveren kadın şirketleri içinde yıllık cirosu 1 milyon lirayı aşan işveren kadınların oranının yüzde 3'te kalması MUSIAD'ı harekete geçirdi. "Melek Danışman" uygulamasıyla sahaya inceklerini dile getiren Başkan Nail Olpak, "Hedefimiz 5 yıl içinde bu oranı yüzde 15'e çıkarmak" dedi



Başarı sadece kariyer değil

Emine Erdoğan, "Başarı sadece kariyer değil" dedi. Emine Erdoğan, dünyayı geleceğe taşıyacak girişimcileri desteklemek için bir araya gelerek, "Kadınlar da bu gelecekte yer almalı, etkin olmak istiyorsa, girişimciliği öğrenmelidir" dedi. Erdoğan, MUSIAD Kadın Girişimci Zirvesi'ne gıda yemeğinde yapıldığı konuşmada kadın girişimci olarak konuşulduğunu vurguladı.

Emine Erdoğan, "Başarı sadece kariyer değil" dedi. Emine Erdoğan, dünyayı geleceğe taşıyacak girişimcileri desteklemek için bir araya gelerek, "Kadınlar da bu gelecekte yer almalı, etkin olmak istiyorsa, girişimciliği öğrenmelidir" dedi. Erdoğan, MUSIAD Kadın Girişimci Zirvesi'ne gıda yemeğinde yapıldığı konuşmada kadın girişimci olarak konuşulduğunu vurguladı.

KADIN MUCİTLER

Zirvede kadın mucitlerden de örnekler verildi. Nail Olpak, "Bulaşık makinesini bir kadın icat etti. İlk büyük dikey bilgisayar bir kadın geliştirdi. Araba silceklerini de bir kadın buldu. Kadınlar yatacak, bir kadın tarafından tasarlandı. Optik analiz sistemlerini bir kadın keşfetti. Güneş enerjisiyle netleşen sistem de bir kadın icat etti. Lanetli karakteri tedavi etmek, bir kadın fikriydi. Ve ebette daha pek çokları. Sadece mucitlere bakmayalım. Bugün MUSIAD kadın üyeleri arasında, ağır sanayiden ulaşımlara kadar geniş bir yelpazede işyerleri var. Bunların yanı sıra, kadın girişimciliğinin profesyonel boyuttaki başarı örneklerini de unutmamamız gerekir. İntel ve Vodafone gibi uluslararası kurumların dünya çapında faaliyetinde bulunan başarılı Türk kadınlar, bunların güzel örnekleri" bilgisini verdi.

■ EKONOMİ SERVİSİ - İSTANBUL

Son 14 yılda kadın istihdam alanında izlenen politikalar ve yürütülen projeler sonucunda kadınlara işçisine katılmada ve istihdamında artışlar gerçekleşti. Kadınların işçisine katılım oranı 2005 yılından bu yana 8,2 puanlık artışla yüzde 31,5'e ulaştı. Ancak buna rağmen yıllık cirosu 1 milyon lirayı aşan işveren kadınların şirketlerinin oranı, tüm işveren kadın şirketlerine oranla hala düşük. İşte bu gerekçe, Türkiye ve dünyada 169 noktada yaklaşık 12 bin üyesi olan Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği'ni harekete geçirdi.

KADINLI BEREKETTİR

MUSIAD Başkanı Nail Olpak, "Bu oran mülkümüzün yarısı kadın olan ülkelerde çok düşük. Biz biliyoruz ki kadınlara elinin değdiği her şey bollamıyor, hareketleniyor, elinin değdiği herşey bir zanaat ve güzellik geliyor. Durum böyleyken neden yıllık cirosu 1 milyon üzerine çıkan kadın girişimcilerin az diye sorguladık ve gördük ki girişimcilerimiz büyümek ve ilerlemek için bilgiye ihtiyaç duyuyor. Biz de

bunun için "Melek Danışman" uygulaması başlattık. Amacımız 5 yıl içinde tüm işveren kadın şirketleri içinde yıllık cirosu 1 milyon lirayı aşan işveren kadınların oranını yüzde 3'ten yüzde 15'e çıkarmak" dedi. Ülkemizin 2023 hedeflerine ulaşmasında, kadınların işçisine katılımının büyük önem arz ettiğini anlamaya gayret ettiklerini de vurgulayan Olpak, kadımlar olmadan hedeflere ulaşılamaz olduğunu söyledi.

3 PİLOT BÖLGE SEÇİLECEK

MUSIAD tarafından Alle ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı, Başbakanlık Tanıtma Fonu ve Tuzla Belediyesi işbirliği ile gerçekleştirilen Kadın Girişimci Zirvesi'nde konuşan MUSIAD Yönetim Kurulu Üyesi Gülten Durdu, "Melek Danışman" uygulamasının ilk aşamada belirlenecek 3 pilot bölgede başlayacağını söyledi. Durdu, kendilerinin işyeri olsun veya olmasın tüm kadın girişimcileri desteklemeyi aktararak, "Bunun için çağrı merkezleri açıldı. Önce bu çağrı merkezleri kansayla bize ulaşan kadın girişimcilere yol gösterecek doğru yönlendirmeler yapacağız" bilgisini verdi.

Figure 7.2

Yeni Şafak covers the MUSIAD Women Entrepreneurs Gala Dinner and focuses on Emine Erdoğan's speech. While the headline reads, "Women will make employers millionaires," the subtitle underlines "Having a career alone is not success," by which Erdoğan reminds women of their domestic responsibilities. Reprinted from "Kadın işvereni milyonlar yapacak," 2016, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 6. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

ANNE TOPLUMUN GELECEĞİDİR

Hükümetin esnek çalışma düzenlemesinde kadının annelik rolünün göz önünde tutulduğunu söyleyen Aile Bakanı Ramazanoğlu, **düzenlemenin özel sektörün de önünü açacağını** belirtti.

Türkiye'de kadının iş gücüne katılımıyla ekonomiyi sağlanacak katkıya dikkat çeken Sema Ramazanoğlu, **"Kadın geleceği aynı zamanda toplumun geleceğidir"** dedi.

■ ARZU KURUM - İSTANBUL

Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Sema Ramazanoğlu ile Türkiye'deki kadın istihdamı üzerine konuştuk. Hükümetin kadın çalışanlar için yaptığı esnek çalışma düzenlemesinin geçtiğimiz ay yürürlüğe girdiğini belirten Bakan Ramazanoğlu, bu düzenlemenin kamu için ön açıcı aynı zamanda özel sektöre de örnek olacak bir adım olduğunu ifade etti. Ramazanoğlu, "Özel sektör istihdamına kendi varlık ortamından bakıyor. Ama bir esnek çalışma saatlerine önce kamuda uygularız, sonra kamu bu konuda da diğer konularda olduğu gibi öncü olacak" dedi.

Arzu Kurum: Bakanım, kadınların iş gücüne katılımı için hükümetin yaptığı düzenlemelerle ilgili olarak, özellikle dar gelirli olan insanlarla paylaşımlarını tavsiye ediyoruz, biraz az kazanın ve kazandıklarınızı özellikle dar gelirli olan insanlarla paylaşın tavsiyesini hatırlatan Bakan Ramazanoğlu, gunları kaydetti: "Evet, çok kazanmak önemli bir şey ama bir kadının anneliği de çok önemli. Kadının geleceği aynı zamanda toplumun geleceğidir. Çocuk doğuran bir kadını ödüllendirmemiz lazım. Aynı bir gün patronlarımız hayatta sadece kazanmak üzerine olmadığımızı algılayacaklar."

ÜLKEMİZ İÇİN BİR DEVRİM
Özel sektörde sadece kadın istihdamının belli bir seviyede olması zorunluluğu olmadığını ama ihtiyaca binaen böyle bir adım atılabileceğini belirten Ramazanoğlu, "Esnek çalışma saatleri Türkiye için devrim niteliğinde bir adım. Bir süre sonra

kamunun açtığı bu yenilik, özel sektörde henüz daha fazla üretmek hem de işsizliği de azaltmak anlamında kendi ellerini de güçlendirecek. Belki yasya da gerek kalmadan bu uygulamaya hayata geçecek. Ama eğer bakış bir tikanlık var, yasal düzenlemede yapılabili" diye konuştu. Toplumun geleceğinin önemine vurgu yapan Ramazanoğlu, "Bizaz da kazanırken toplumun geleceğine de yatırım yapılmalı. Kadına esnek çalışma saatleri ile bir imkân sağlandı, öteki taraftan da eğitim diyoruz. İstihdamın en önemli temel birincisi basamağı eğitimdir" dedi.

KADININ ANNELİĞİNİ GÖZ ÖNUNE ALDIK

Ailenin verdiği manevi desteği 'kimi zaman psikolojik kimi zaman da maddi bir motivasyon' olarak değerlendiren Ramazanoğlu, şöyle devam etti: "13 yıllık AK Parti iktidarında kadınlarmız için bu desteği bir yasa tasarlama, yeni yasalar çıkararak hazırladık. Öncelikle yasal zemin hazırladık. Kadın girişimcilerin önünü açmak ve kadınlarımızın finans ulaşım sağlamak, hareket alanlarını arttırmak için çok ciddi önemi adımlar attık. 'Kadınlar girişimci, iş kadını olarak görmediklerini dile getiren Ramazanoğlu, "Kadın aynı zamanda annedir. Kadının anneliği de göz önüne alındık. Kadınlarımız; destek kredileri, faizsiz geri dönüşümsüz krediler, eğitimler, sertifikasyon programları gibi birçok alanda destek sağladık. Öteki taraftan kadımlarla ilgili anneliği de destekleyen doğum sonrası ücretsiz izinler hakkı tasdik" diye konuştu. Uygulamada olan Aile Sosyal Destek Projesi olduğunu söyleyen Ramazanoğlu, "Bu proje 6 ilimizde ve bazı ilçelerimizde başladı. Projezin ana temeli her ailenin bir sosyal damgası olacak. Bu çok büyük bir proje. İrsalallah 2023'e kadar bütün Türkiye'de tamamlanmış olacağız" dedi.



KAMU, ÖZEL SEKTÖRE ÖRNEK OLACAK

'EŞ VE ÇOCUK' YERINE 'ÇOCUK VE İŞ' DEDİK
Öncelikli doğum izinlerinde geçen süreyi özlük hakları ile konduğunu, bu sürenin aynı zamanda sosyal güvence olan emekliliklerinden de sayılığın altını çizen Bakan Ramazanoğlu, "Diğer taraftan kadın anneliğine devan etmiş bir ödüllendirmek için de ikinci öncülü kez doğdu."

bu takdirde doğum parası verildi. Esnek çalışma saatleri belirledik. Kadın anneliğinin özellikle küçük yaşlarda çocukların anneye ihtiyacı olduğu yaşlarda esnek çalışma saatleri ile hem çocuğuna hem eğine zaman ayırması dedi. Çocukla veya eşle birlikte çalışması için de ikinci öncülü kez doğdu."



Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Sema Ramazanoğlu, kadın sosyal ve ekonomik hayattaki önemini Yeni Şafak'a anlattı

İnebolu Limar ve Hopa Termi Santrali'ne on

Özellikle Yüksek Kurul Hopa Termik Santrali taşınmaları ve İnebolu Lim ile diğer taşınmaların E. Bakır AS'ye satış ve devri onayladı. Kurulun Hopa Termik Santrali taşınmaları ve İnebolu Lim ile diğer taşınmaların onaylanması, İnebolu Liman'ın 49 yıl süreyle işletme hakkının verilmesi için önemli bir adım olarak görülüyor. İnebolu Liman'ın 49 yıl süreyle işletme hakkının verilmesi için önemli bir adım olarak görülüyor. İnebolu Liman'ın 49 yıl süreyle işletme hakkının verilmesi için önemli bir adım olarak görülüyor.

ONCELİKTE BAKIR'DA

Hopa Termik'in bağlı Mardin'in Mazıdağı, İstanbul Beşiktaş (Ortaköy) ve Eyyup (Göl) gibi taşınmaları da aynı kararla onaylanacak. Sız kusurlu varlıklar 75 milyon lira ile en yüksek teklif veren Eti Bakır AS'ye devredilecek.

GİRİŞİMCİLİK DESTEĞİ GÖÇÜ ÖNLEYECE

Göçün nedenlerini baktığımızda, bunu oluşturan nedenlerin ortadan kaldırılmaması mümkün olduğunu söyleyen Bakan Ramazanoğlu sunları söyledi: "Göç bir travmadır. Coğrafyama zor bir coğrafya. Güneyimizde bir taraftan savaş var. Şuanda Suriye'den, ondan önceki dönemde de Irak'tan göç almış ve almaya devam eden bir ilkeyiz. Göçün nedenlerinde değinen Ramazanoğlu: "Kendi nüfus hareketliliğimize baktığımızda göçleri ekonomik nedenler, çocukların eğitim almama nedenleri diğer nedenler olarak görüyoruz. Biz bunun için diyoruz ki insanlar kendi buldukları yerde üretmeler, işte girişimci bunun için destekliyoruz" dedi. Ramazanoğlu, ailelerin çocuklarına eğitim almak için büyük mekânlara göndermek zorunda kalmışlar diye orta öğretim yurtları yapmayı hedeflediklerini söyledi.

BİZİM KAPIMIZ HERKESE ACIK

Kadınlara yönelik sağlanan desteklerin önemine değinen Ramazanoğlu, "Devletin sağladığı destekler kadın girişimciliğini arttıran, kadın becerilerini ön plana çıkartacak hizmetler" dedi. STK'larla birlikte de önemli adımlar atılmalarını belirten Ramazanoğlu, "Kadın üretmesi önemli ama tedatit zincirinin oluşturulması lazım. Ürettiğini satabilmesi lazım. Bu da çok önemli. Ürettiğini satamazsanız üretmenin bir anlamı olmaz. İşte bu tedarik zincirinin oluşturulması için bir sivil toplum örgütüyle de işbirliği içinde bu konuda yeni filmler yapıyor, yeni acemiler lazım. Herkese kapımız, gönüllümüz, düşüncelerimiz açık" diye konuştu.

Figure 7.3 An interview with Sema Ramazanoğlu, then the Minister of Family and Social Policy. The first highlighted quote under the headline focuses on women's role as mothers while the second touches upon the positive contribution that women participating in the workforce has on the economy. Reprinted from "Anne toplumun geleceğidir," by A. Kurum, 2016, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 6. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

7.5.2 *Positive Discrimination, Quotas, and Gender Equality*

The AKP has prided itself on positive discrimination for women, referring to the legal and structural reforms carried out since its first years in power. Indeed, “the EU accession talks in conjunction with the women’s rights movement triggered the AKP governments to achieve significant legal advances on civil rights, women’s employment and domestic violence” (Ayata and Doğangün, 2017, p. 613). Through changing related articles of the penal code and constitution,⁶ adopting progressive, legal regulations concerning women’s economic empowerment,⁷ combatting domestic violence, and being involved in national and international conventions, seminars, and initiatives,⁸ the AKP government promoted numerous incentives to strengthen gender equality and empower women.

But despite these promising developments, “women’s secondary position in politics has not significantly changed” (Ayata and Doğangün, 2017, p. 614). In 2004, an initiative to establish a quota system to strengthen women’s participation in politics was rejected by the AKP deputies (including female representatives), based on the grounds that “the revised Constitution already accepts the equality between men and women and there is no need for further measures” (Marshall, 2011, p. 577).

The issue of women in politics is also a topic of discussion in the conservative media. While news stories praise the government’s initiatives on this front

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- 6 On 26 September 2004, a major reform was made to the Turkish Penal Code. With amendments to more than thirty-five articles, the new penal code eliminated patriarchal constructs such as “honor,” “tradition,” “morality,” and “chastity” in the regulation of sexual offences. Gender equality was strengthened both in the new penal code and in amendments made to related articles of the constitution.
 - 7 On International Women’s Day in March 2012, a new law called the “Law on Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women” was passed by the assembly. The new law covered all women, regardless of marital status.
 - 8 In 2009, a new committee called “Equal of Opportunity for Women and Men” was created to strengthen women’s rights and promote gender equality and non-discrimination. “During 2009–2011, Turkey was actively involved in drafting the ‘Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence’ of the Council of Europe [and] in May 2011, Turkey hosted the signature ceremony of the Convention and was the first country to ratify it without any reservations” (Ayata and Doğangün, 2017, pp. 613-14).

and celebrated how much Turkey has evolved, conservatives debate whether there should be gender quotas in politics and whether positive discrimination should be applied to encourage more women to participate in political decision-making processes.

Yeni Şafak columnists do not openly equate positive discrimination with preferential treatment, but raise concerns based on the argument of meritocracy. They maintain that recruitment should be done on the basis of merit, not gender. The argument that quotas that recruit on the basis of gender are not meritocratic is supported by both by male and female columnists. Tosun (2005), for example, underlines the issue of meritocracy and argues that while women's participation in politics should be encouraged, gender quotas and other legal means of positive discrimination should be avoided as they lead to a political order that includes women just because they are women – making them the democratic “mannequins” of an undemocratic order. Tosun also underlines that introducing compulsory legal measures would be an insult to successful women that do not need any preferential treatment to make careers for themselves in politics.

Unlike Tosun, *Yeni Şafak* columnist Davut Dursun (2006) approaches the issue from a different perspective and asks what impact women's growing influence in politics would have on the system itself. He assumes that politics is by nature a male profession that is purely rational, fierce, and highly competitive. Dursun presents Thatcher and Çiller as examples and claims that rather than women transforming politics into a more humane, just, and peaceful domain, the cut-throat nature of politics would transform women and eliminate their delicate nature.

In this discussion of positive discrimination and gender quotas, two pious columnists, Erdal Şafak and Ali Bayramoğlu, stand out as exceptions. During discussions of gender quota legislation in 2004, both supported the proposal and argued that once the necessary infrastructure was in place, gender quotas should definitely be introduced to further democratize the country and strengthen women's positions in public life.

Overall, the conservative media has no unified narrative when it comes to women's participation in the workforce or in politics: The struggle to reconcile the traditional conservative values of family and women with the needs and

demands of contemporary politics and economics dominates the agenda. Although a few male intellectuals propose solutions for women's convenient participation to workforce, such as determining and promoting lines of business that fit women's natural, biological characteristics (Süngü, 2015; Akkuşak, 2006) and while a couple support initiatives like gender quotas in politics, an ongoing conflict exists in the conservative media among different views about gender roles, motherhood, and contemporary socioeconomic realities.





Figure 7.4 Yeni Şafak celebrating the significant number of female deputy candidates ahead of 2015 general elections. Reprinted from “Yetmez ama evet,” by A. İzmir, 2015, *Yeni Şafak Pazar*, p. 8. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

7.5.3 The Power of a Common Goal: Preventing and Combating Violence against Women

If there is one women’s issue on which conservative media agree, it is violence against women. The pious media and columnists, both male and female, all

condemn gender-based violence on every occasion. One early, highly-debated incident illustrating this point was police intervention in the International Women's Day demonstrations in 2005. In March 2005, in Istanbul, police violently broke up an unauthorized demonstration by female protestors marking International Women's Day. The police fired rubber bullets, used tear gas, and beat men and women trying to flee, all of which was caught on television cameras. "The brutality of the attacks shocked the members of the visiting Troika of EU foreign ministers of Luxembourg, Belgium and Britain" (Sami, 2006, p. 24), and the EU condemned the use of disproportionate force. While the government's initial reaction was to underline the unauthorized aspect of the demonstrations and compare the level of force used by police to that of counterparts in Europe, news articles about the incident in the conservative media condemned the police and focused on implications for EU membership. The headline following the event were "This bludgeon is for all of us," "Tear gas, truncheons, and arrests to celebrate Women's Day," and "No conscience can accept this." While female columnists were reluctant to criticize the police, two male columnists – Mustafa Karaalioğlu and Ali Bayramoğlu – included the incident in their columns and criticized both the police who attacked the protestors and the government which tried to justify the use of force with language of unauthorized protests and provocation.

Kadınlar Günü şerefine biber gazı, cop, gözaltı

Güvenlik güçleri, Dünya Kadınlar Günü'nü kutlamak için toplananları "izinsiz gösteri suçu"ndan cop ve biber gazı kullanarak dağıttı, 68 kişiyi gözaltına aldı

8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü, İstanbul'da olaylı geçti. İzinsiz gösterileri engellemek üzere meydanlarla önlene alan güvenlik kuvvetleri, Beyazıt Meydanı ve Saraçhane Parkı'nda gösteri yapmaya gelenleri güç kullanarak engelledi.

Bazı siyasi parti, sivil toplum örgütleri ve sendika üyelerinden oluşan yaklaşık 250 kişilik grup, 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü kutlaması için Beyazıt Meydanı'nda toplandı.

Ancak polis, izinsiz olduğu gerekçesiyle, grubun dağılmasını istedi. Göstericiler slogan atınca, polis biber gazı ve cop kullanarak göstericileri dağıttı, 5 kişiyi gözaltına aldı.

4 KİŞİ YARALI

Bir başka grup da Fatih'teki Saraçhane Parkı'nda toplandı. Ellerinde 8 Mart'a ilişkin pankartlarla parka gelen göstericiler, burada da izinsiz gösteriyi engellemek için toplanan polisle karşılaştı. Polisin "Dağilin" uyarısına kayıtsız kalan göstericiler, biber gazı ve copla müdahaleyle karşılaştı. Polis, 29'u kadın 63 kişiyi gözaltına alarak, İETT'ye ait 2 otobüsle Emmiyet Müdürlüğü'ne götürdü. Gözaltına alınan göstericilerden 3 kadın, biber gazından kötü etkiledikleri için fenalaştılar ve Emmiyet'ten sonra hastaneye kaldırıldılar. Nejla Can (40) adlı bir başka kadın ise polisten kaçarken yol kenarındaki demir çubukun üzerine düştü. Boğazına demir saplanan Can, hastaneye kaldırıldı.

Mustafa KAYA-Yalçın BEL /MERKEZ



Figure 7.5

Sabah reporting the police brutality towards women with the sarcastic headline: "Tear gas, truncheons, and arrests to celebrate Women's Day." Reprinted from "Kadınlar Günü şerefine biber gazı, cop, gözaltı," by M. Kaya, Y. Bel, 2005, *Sabah*, p. 25. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.



SORUŞTURMA BAŞLATILDI

Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü, İstanbul'da 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlık Günü nedeniyle eylem yapan kadınlara karşı polisin uyguladığı şiddetli tutumunu incelemek amacıyla soruşturma başlattı. İçişleri Bakanlığınca yapılan açıklamada, "İstanbul'da izlenen yapılan gösteriler ve bu gösterilerde okun olaylara polisin müdahalesinin araştırılması için şu polis müfettişi görevlendirildiği" belirtildi.

BU COP HEPİMİZE



AB: Türkiye'ye hiç yakışmıyor

Ankara'daki AB Troykas kadınların dövülmesini knadı ve toplantıya geç geldi. Brüksel'den yapılan açıklamada da polisin tavni eleştirildi

8 MART Dünya Kadınlar Günü nedeniyle İstanbul'da düzenlenen gösterilerde polisin şiddetli tutumuna tepki gösterildi. AB Dışişleri Bakanı Lüksemburg'un Dışişleri Bakanı Jean Asselborn, "bu tür saldırılara beklentiler, 'Her türlü şiddetle, özellikle görsel şiddet tarafından kullanan şiddetli karşıyoruz. Gösteriler sırasında oranlar şiddetli kullanıldı. Bu gösteriler Türkiye'ye yakışmıyor" dedi. AB adına bu deklarasyonu yayımladıklarını kaydeden Asselborn, tahliyat edilmiş mektupları Türk yetkilileri iletti. Genişlemeler Sorumlusu Oye Öll Rehn de "Türkiye istisna gölge dışarı" diye konuştu.

"BİLEREK GEÇ GELDİK"

Troyka Toplantısının daha ilik dakikalarında "cop" alması gelince Dışişleri Bakanı Abdullah Gül, AB temsilcilerine yazdırmaya başladı. Ankara Palası'na toplantıya 41 dakika geç gelen AB temsilcileri, bu durumu Bakan Gül'e söyleyememişlerdir. "İstanbul'daki olaylara kayıtsız kalamadık, bu konudaki tepkimizi açık bir şekilde dile getirmek için ertek bir metin hazırladık. Brüksel'den bir açıklama yapıldı. Bu nedenle toplantıya 'bilerek' geç geldik."

Gül ise olayları öğrendiği öğrenince İçişleri Bakanı Abdullah Gül'e yazdığı mektupta şiddetli ve "sorunlar hakkında soruşturma açılacak" dedi. İstanbul'da yaşanan "8 Mart'ta verecek" olarak nitelendirilen Gül, herkesin hakları savunmasını gerektiğini belirtti. Gül, "İçişleri Bakanlığımız gerekli adımları bulmaktadır."

Avrupa Birliği kapısındaki Türkiye yine şiddet görüntüleriyle dünyaya sunuldu. Hukukçulara göre; kadınları döven polisin özgürlükleri kavrayamama sorunu var

■ Nejdet COKAN - Pervin METİN - MERKEZ

Abye sızan yasa dışı çevrelerce 3 yıl önce yapılan de-ğışiklik toplantı ve yürüyüşün izin alınması zorunlu-ğuna kadınlara yerine bil-dirim sorumluluğu getirildi. Başarı açıl-madık için ise izin ve bildirim gerek-miyor. Pazar Günü yapılan 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü kutlamaları bu-zurda olduğu sona ererken, Beyaz-zafrahi kadınlar ise yine bilâkî gi-yimlerle sınırlıydı. İziniz olduğu gerekçesiyle Beyaz Meydanı'nda toplanan 200 kişiye birer gaz ve copla mü-dahale eden polis, kadınları yerlerde sürükledi ve 50 kişiye gözaltına aldı.

ÖNYARGILAR DEĞİŞSİN

Polisin bu sert tavrı, uluslararası hu-ber kuruluşlarınca geniş kitlelerde da-8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü'nde olay olarak tek bir örnek "güçlü. Bu gi-yimlerle, Avrupa kapısındaki Türkiye'yi AB'ye ve Batı'ya karşı bir kez daha ge-çerlenmiş biraktı. Hem hukukcular hem de sivil toplum kuruluşları artık bu gi-yimlerle konuşulmasını istiyor.

İDARI HOSGÖRÜ

Polisin özgürlükleri kavrayamama sorunu olduğuna önce sızan Kalkıştı. "İdari hoşgörü diye bir kavram var. Po-lis görevleri sağlarken özgürlüğü de sağ-lamak zorundadır. Ama polis bunu gösterimlere ve sivil toplantılara katılanları cezalandırmak için kullanıyor. Polis ar-tık toplantı ve gösteri yürüyüşünün önünü kısıtlamak değil, demokratik ve şiddet kullanılmamalıdır" diye konuştu. Bu müdahaleleri yeni yasaların ilgi-siz olmasından dolayı eleştiren Çera, Hukukçu Profesörü Bahar Öztürk, "Polis, Top-lanma ve Gösteri Yürüyüşleri Kanu-nu'na göre müdahale edemiyor. Bu yasa dışıdır. Bu işi düzenlemek bu işi düzenler. Türk Ceza Kanunu ve Ceza Muhaka-meleri Kanunu'nunla değişikliklerden sonra Toplanma ve Gösteri Yürüyüşleri Kanunu'nda da gerekli değişiklikler ya-pılmalıdır. Bu konuya dikkatli olun-malıdır" dedi.

1 NİSAN MİLAT

Prof. Şehval Davut da poli-sin şu anda Toplanma ve Göste-ri Yürüyüşleri Kanunu'nun ile Polis Vazife ve Salah-iyetleri Kanunu'na dayanarak, bu tür gösterilere müdahale etmesini tartışarak, "Şu anda yapılan hukuka aykırı değil. Ancak 1 Nisan'da yürürlüğe girecek Yeni Ceza Muhakemesi Kanunu, bu ka-nunların içerisindeki ve beşine eklenenler, Polis yine müdahale edemeyecek ama gözetim alabilmesi için sınırları zorlayacaktır. Bu ne-dendir daha toleranslı davranmak zo-runda kalacak. 1 Nisan'dan itibaren bu tür gösteriler olmaz. Polis 1 Ni-san'dan itibaren daha dikkatli ve daha ölçülü davranmak zorunda kalacak. Ayrıca göstericilerle diyalog için birer gaz kullanmak da doğru değil" diye konuştu.

Türk Kadınlar Birliği Ge-net Başkanı Sema Kenderit ise sızan kadınlara kadınlara şiddet olma-dığını, davasını ve dışarıya biçimini sınırlı bulmadığını ifade etti.

Figure 7.6

Sabah condemning the harsh police reaction towards protesters, commenting that the incident is shameful for a country that is in the process of EU membership. Reprinted from "Bu cop hepimize," by N. Cokan, P. Metin, 2005, *Sabah*, p. 20. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Even though it is a topic that women's movements have been raising and prioritizing since the 1990s, violence against women was not a high priority on the AKP's agenda in the first years of its power. It was discussed as part of EU membership negotiations and the necessary legal acquis, but as enthusiasm for the EU gradually declined in the AKP's second term, the issue of violence against women started to be discussed as an independent issue. Particularly after the 2011 national elections that consolidated the party's power, the AKP "increasingly focus[es] its attention on the conservative constituency and 'common values'" (Ayata and Doğangün, 2017, p. 616) and positions combating violence against women as a priority issue.

This shift in government policy and the newfound independence of the issue of gender-based violence are reflected in media coverage about violence against women. Since 2010, there has been a significant increase in news coverage of the issue.

With respect to gender-based violence, the conservative media does not distinguish between pious women and secular women who are victimized because of their lifestyle or dress. Özlem Albayrak and Hayrettin Karaman, for example base their arguments on a women-friendly interpretation of Islam and criticize those who use Islamic rules as an excuse to legitimize violence against women. Albayrak argues in one of her columns that patriarchy should not be attributed to Islam and "maintains that Islam is a religion that gives individual responsibility to women and would not approve of the harassment of women who dress in a revealing manner" (Arat, 2016, p. 139). In a similar vein, Hayrettin Karaman touches on this issue a few times in 2010 and criticizes Muslims who try to legitimize violence against women by misconstruing verses and hadiths and even making up new ones. With reference to the proper passages from the Quran, Karaman underlines that violence against women is a major sin in Islam. In reference to honor killings, he also argues that it is wrong to assess honor and chastity only by looking at the actions of women; in Islam, men and women are equally responsible for protecting their honor and morals.

Another argument conservative columnists put forward while discussing violence against women is that it is a modern problem that cannot be reduced

to patriarchy. Ayşe Böhürler (2015) argues that universal, Western-style solutions do not work to deal with Turkey's domestic violence against women, and Fatma Barbarosoğlu (2015a) maintains that male violence is indeed a modern phenomenon, partly caused by the transition from traditional, extended family structures to urban, nuclear families. She suggests that the message of "no to violence against women" must be replaced with no violence at all, without discriminating between genders. Violence, after all, is as a human rights issue – not a gender issue – and must be treated as a moral crisis.

With respect to violence against women, Islamist columnists show exceptional solidarity with secular feminists and pass along their views to the pious community in their columns. Even though Ayşe Böhürler does not always agree with the secular feminist Deniz Kandiyoti's arguments, she dedicates one column in March 2013 to communicating the views of Kandiyoti on the increasing number of cases of violence against women. According to Kandiyoti, men are restoring their shattered images of masculinity through violence against rebellious women. When the ordinary rules of patriarchy are not enough, a new phenomenon called "masculine restoration" comes into play and increases pressure to consolidate the male-dominated social order. She also argues that contemporary women hold the state responsible for increasing violence against and pressure on women, and they demand change on the sociopolitical level rather than remain silent. Böhürler summarizes these provocative arguments and comments that though she does not agree with Kandiyoti's biased association of increased violence with Islamist policies, her argument is still worth thinking hard about.

Perhaps the greatest moment of solidarity regarding violence against women was the murder of Özgecan Aslan in early 2015. A twenty-year-old university student was brutally murdered after resisting rape by a minibus driver in Mersin. Aslan's death sparked a series of protests throughout Turkey. "The hashtag #OzgecanAslan was tweeted more than three million times, and an online petition calling for harsh punishment against her attackers gathered almost a million signatures." (Asquith, 2015). The incident also had broad political repercussions. President Erdoğan declared violence against women to be Turkey's bleeding wound and promised to follow the case to ensure that the murderers of Özgecan receive the heaviest penalty (Kızıl, 2015). Prime

Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu then announced the launch of an extensive campaign to combat violence against women (“Turkish PM pledges to act on women killings,” 2015).

Like its secular counterparts, the conservative media united in condemning this heinous crime. While the editorials focused on exalting the government’s statements and work on gender-based violence, columnists strongly condemned the brutal murder of a young, bright female university student. Ali Bayramoğlu (2012) states that the pain of Özgecan united all segments of the society. He says brutality and violence against women is not a class-based phenomenon and is therefore not limited to a certain part of society. Violence is sexist by nature and is by far the largest problem in contemporary Turkey. He also maintains that violence against women should be treated as a threat to homeland security.

Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan’ın bir sözü kadınları harekete geçirdi!

Kadına karşı şiddet konusunda hepimiz, korkmuş bir vahşetle aramızdan ayrılan **Özgecan**’ın tüm farfeli sesleri birleşti ve bu konuda tek ses oldu. Ama tabii bu işin peşini bırakmamak lazım. Öğreniyorum ki **8 Mart Dünya Emekçi Kadınlar Günü** nedeniyle **Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan** aralarında sivil toplum kuruluşlarında aktif görev yapan bazı kadınların da olduğu bir grubu kabulü sırasında bazı konular bizzat himayesine aktırdı.



kadına şiddetin de bu konulardan biri olduğunu söylemiş. Türk İşadamları Demeyi’nin (TIKAD) bu toplantıya katılan yöneticileri de Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan’ın bu sözlerini duyduktan sonra diün hemen harekete geçti. Aralarında akademisyenlerin, gazetecilerin, iş kadınlarının ve siyasetçilerin de olduğu bir grubu, kadına karşı şiddetin önlenmesi konusunda acil eylem planı oluşturmak ve ortaya çıkacak sonuçların hiç vakit kaybetmeden Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan ile paylaşarak çözüm odaklı bir kampanyaya dönüştürmek için buluşturdular.

TIKAD’ın Yüksek İstisare Konseyi Başkanı Demet Sabancı Çetindoğan ve Yönetim Kurulu Başkanı Nilüfer Bulut önderliğinde ki toplantı, kadına şiddetle savaşmak için eğitimin ve ailenin güçlendirilmesi gibi konuların ne kadar önemli olduğunu vurgusuyla geçti. Nilüfer Bulut, beyin fırtınası toplantısının açılışını yaparken, idama karşı bir duruş sergileyen iki kız çocuğu annesi biri olarak Özgecan sonrası idamı istemeye başladığını söyledi. Özellikle toplumun tüm kesimleri Özgecan sonrası sarsıldı. TIKAD’ın 2015 hedefi kadına karşı şiddet konusunda çözüm odaklı projeler yapmak. Bulut bu toplantıyla işte bu hedefin startını vermiş

oldu. Tabii ki toplantıda gelmiş ülkelerde kadına karşı şiddet konusunda alınan önlemler, örnek projeler konuşuldu. Şiddetin ön planda olduğu dizilerin etkisine değindi ve bu dizilerle ilgili neler yapılabileceği tartışıldı. Çocuklara anaokuldan itibaren verilen öfke kontrolü derslerinin Türkiye’de de hayata geçirilip geçirilmeyeceği de ortaya atılan konular arasındaydı.

Muhtarlar aracı olsa?

Bu arada meslektaşım **Meral Tamer’in**, Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan’ın sigarayla olan mücadelesinin, üstelik de Türkiye gibi bir ülkede, kimsenin hayal bile edemeyeceği büyük bir başarıya ulaştığını hatırlatması ve kadına karşı şiddet konusunu himayesine almasının önemli

olduğunu söylemesi üzerine, ben de bir öneride bulundum. **Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan**, salı günleri Türkiye’nin dört bir yanındaki muhtarları kabul etmeye başladı. Erdoğan’ın muhtarlarla yaptığı konuşmada kadına karşı şiddet konusu önemli bir gündem maddesi olarak yer alsa, çarpıcı etkisiyle bu konunun halk arasındaki yayılma hızı müthiş olmaz mı? Ezicimle Nilüfer Bulut ve elbisi tüm önerileri alt alta getirip, Ankara’da başta Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan’ın makamı üzere etbali her kapıya gidip kadına karşı şiddet konusunun söze kalmayacağını, bizzat takipçi olacağını söyleyecek. Bizler de bu konuyu gündemde tutarak, kadına karşı şiddetin bu ülkede son bulmasını yardımcı olmaya çalışacağız.

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Figure 7.7 Prominent female columnist Şelale Kadak celebrating the efforts of President Erdoğan to combat violence against women in the aftermath of the Özgecan murder. Reprinted from “Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan’ın bir sözü kadınları harekete geçirdi!” by Ş.Kadak, 2015, *Sabah*, p. 12. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Women’s shelters are another issue that frequently comes up in discussions about violence against women. Even though, according to law, municipalities with populations over 50,000 are required to offer at least 200 beds in a shelter, the government does not prioritize this law. “In practice, the opening of the

shelters was left to the initiative and the goodwill of the municipal administrations” (Salhi, 2013, p. 98). Pious female columnists join secular counterparts in underlining the importance of and the need for these domestic violence shelters and criticized the traditional Islamist approach that undermines them by considering these shelters to be modern tools invented to break up families and corrupt the moral fabric of society. Özlem Albayrak, in her column on March 2013 criticizes macho, conservative men who undermine issues related to women’s rights and mock those who raise their voices against violence and the torture of women. She states that Muslim customs and traditions that believe women shelters encourage women to revolt against their husbands will be brought to account, whether in this world or the next. Similarly, by touching upon the degeneration of family as an institution, Barbarosoğlu (2013c) condemns the mentality of pious males who ignore the damage the system does to the social fabric and blame contemporary women for the deterioration of the family unit and the need for women’s shelters. “The writings of Islamist columnists communicate the importance of helping women who were exposed to gender- based violence and the need for shelters to a conservative community that was skeptical of these new values” (Arat, 2016, p. 141).

Eşi yorganı çeken de sığınma evine gidiyor

Diyarbakır'da kadın sığınma evlerine, şiddete maruz kalan kadınların yanı sıra, "sudan" sebeplerle kocasına küsen kadınların da sıkça başvurduğu ortaya çıktı

Hüseyin KAÇAR | SABAH

Diyarbakır'da 2005'te kurulan sığınma evine bugüne kadar 414 kadının başvuruda bulunduğu ifade edilirken, bu kadınlardan pek çoğunun birbirinden ilginç gerekçelerle merkeze geldiği belirlendi. Kimisi şiddetle korunmak için başvururken, kimisi eşi çamaşır veya buluşmak makinesi olmadığı, kendisine "aşkım" demediği veya yorganı üstünden çektiği için merkezin yolunu tuttu.

'AŞKIM DEMİYOR'

Son dönemlerde kendilerine başvuruda bulunan kadınların sayısı kadar başvuru gerekçelerinin de arttığını kaydeden Diyarbakır Sosyal Hizmetler II Müdürü Oktay Taş, ölümlü korkusu ve şiddetle karşı karşıya oldukları nedenlerle gelenlerin de olduğunu söyleyerek, şunları anlattı: "Komsususu 'aşkım' diyor, kendi kocası 'aşkım' demiyor diye kıstıp bize geliyor. Eşi çok buluşmak çıkarıyor diye kıstıp bize geliyor. Bu bize sunu gösteriyor ki bölgenizdeki kadınlar artık bilinçleniyor. Psikolojik, cinsel

ve fiziksel şiddet gören kadınlara yardım amacıyla kurulan sığınma evine kadınlar farklı gerekçelerle de başvuruyor. Artık en küçük sorunda bile gidebilecekleri yer olduğunu biliyorlar. Bu tür şikayetlerle bize gelen kadınlar, görüşmelerden sonra genellikle evlerine gönderiliyorlar."

9 KADINDA HAYATI TEHLİKE

Taş, Güneydoğu'daki kadınların bilinçlenmeye başladığını da ifade ederek, "Kadın Sığınma Evi şiddet gören kadınların barınması amacıyla kuruldu. Ancak toplumda giderek bilince, düzeyinin artması nedeniyle birbirinden değişik gerekçelerle başvuru yapanlar oluyor. Çamaşır ve buluşmak makinesi olmadığı için kocasına kıstıp gelen kadınların yanı sıra farklı gerekçelerle gelen kadınlar da var. 'Yataktan yorganı üzerinden çok çekiyor' diye, 'çok buluşmak çıkarıyor' diye eşine küsenler var... Ancak tüm problemler maalesef küçük değil. 2009'da bize gelen 116 kadından hayatı tehlikesi olan 9 kadın başka illerdeki sığınma evlerine gönderildi" şeklinde konuştu.



Başvuru sayısı yükseliyor



SOSYAL hizmetler ve sivil toplum kuruluşlarının çalışmaları sonucu şiddet gören kadınların artık 'Bu benim kaderimdir' diyerek şiddeti gözlemlenip susmadığını belirten Taş, "Kadınlar gerek telefon gerekse bizzat bize başvuru yaparak sığınma talebinde bulunuyor.

2005'te 36, 2006'da 54, 2007'de 72, 2008'de 105, 2009'da 116 ve 2010'un ilk 3 ayında ise 31 kişi başvuru yaptı. Yıllara göre yükselen kadında bilinç düzeyinin arttığını gösteriyor. En küçük şiddet ve haksızlıkta bile bize başvuruyorlar" ifadesini kullandı.

Figure 7.8 An editorial by *Sabah* about women's shelters in Diyarbakır characterized by a negative nuance. It is reported that women in Diyarbakır are frequently applying to women's shelters for irrational reasons. Reprinted from "Eşi Yorganı Çeken de Sığınma Evine Gidiyor," by O. Taş, 2010, *Sabah*, p. 7. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

As these examples demonstrate, fighting to end violence against women became an important concern for conservative media – a social issue that unites them with secularists. "They pride themselves on what the party and the government they backed did for women" (Arat, 2016, p. 132) and convey official government messages whenever possible.

Conservative dailies and columnists usually refrain from criticizing or pressuring the government to implement policies that are more effective. Instead, they discuss the issue as a social, human rights problem and disseminate positive messages through a women-friendly interpretation of Islam. These dailies also celebrate steps taken by the AKP government to fight gender-based violence. Ayşe Böhürler, for example, celebrates the AKP government's progressive initiatives regarding women's rights and even argues that the most transformative steps in the republic's history were taken by the AKP. Böhürler

underlines President Erdoğan's personal dedication to the cause, the AKP government's legal and institutional initiatives – like zero-tolerance of violence (2005), setting up an investigation commission in the assembly to determine the causes of honor killings (2006), changes to laws that cleared the way for positive discrimination for women (2011), and increasing the number of women's shelters across Turkey – and defends Erdoğan in the aftermath of the president's speech to KADEM, where he stated that men and women are not equal because it is against the laws of nature and he accused feminists of undermining the sacredness of motherhood. Pious columnists also celebrated the Istanbul convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and government-level participation in the international women's rights-related meetings and consortiums. Sibel Eraslan from *Star* newspaper, for example, is one journalist who accompanied Minister of Family and Social Policy, Fatma Şahin, to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2013, and she praises the Minister for representing Turkey in the West. "Ironically, it was the secular republic, of which Islamists [are] so critical for its rigid secularism that . . . endorsed the West as a standard with which to judge progress" (Arat, 2016, p. 132).

7.5.4 *Perception of Feminism as an Ideology*

While conservative media exhibits solidarity and even presents feminist causes and rhetoric on certain issues like violence against women, it is openly hostile towards feminism, which it sees as a Western-oriented ideology. It "chastise[s] feminists for promoting the idea that women can have it all and that the role of "supermom" is desirable[, and for] urging mothers to participate in the paid workforce, [which] generates feelings of maternal guilt and leads to women feel unnecessarily dissatisfied with their choices" (Schreiber, 2016, p. 3).

Fatma Barbarosoğlu (2005) notes that the Western feminist concern – that women seek professional success and pursue glorious careers – creates anxieties and feelings of falling behind among women. She uses a rhetoric that implicitly blamed feminism for its undue emphasis on standing on one's own two feet and argues that this mostly leads to the exhaustion of women. Even

though Barbarosoğlu uses double-burden – a concept with which feminists protest the exploitation that women working outside the home face when they are expected to do all the housework, as well – she nevertheless wants to distance herself from feminists.

Conservative media also chastizes feminism for being alien to the realities of Turkey’s traditional, non-Western values and for being inherently at odds with Islam. To give an example, when the first International Conference on Islamic Feminism was organized in 2005 by the Junta Islamica of Catalonia, *Yeni Şafak* adopts a rather skeptical tone and reports that many “intriguing” delegates participated in the conference, including Amina Wadud, who the media criticized for leading a controversial, mixed-gender Friday service in the United States, as well as the daughter of the leader of the outlawed Justice and Charity Group of Morocco.



Figure 7.9 *Yeni Şafak's* coverage of the first International Conference on Islamic Feminism. Reprinted from “Feministlerden ‘cihad’ çağrısı,” 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 11. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

These arguments are occasionally voiced at the government level as well as being covered by the conservative media. In November 2013, *Yeni Şafak* covers the meeting of KADEM on the fight against violence against women and quotes statements made by president Erdoğan’s daughter, Sümeyye Erdoğan. According to the story, Erdoğan claimed that the majority of women activists are influenced by the Western-dominated literature on women’s studies,

which alienates them from the realities of their own society. She maintained that approach in women's issues with reference to Western concepts and arguments is problematic and called for an increase in the number of domestic academic studies. *Yeni Şafak* uses this part of the meeting in the headline which read "Women's Rights Activists are Alien to This Society."

Özlem Albayrak (2005c) shares this concern with Sümeyye Erdoğan and even criticizes her own community for referring to feminist ideology when talking about the rights of pious women. She states that in the language of modern headscarfed women, the term feminism took on a new meaning. Feminism, an ideology that is inherently incompatible with Islamic values (and that is indeed unnecessary as Islam clearly defines men's, women's, and even animal's rights), has become an indicator of style among pious women. This is the result of a common misbelief that women can only successfully express themselves if they ground their arguments in Western ideology. She complains that among headscarfed women, the term feminism started to connote the improvement of women's rights; became a "brand" that does not quite fit with the values of the community.

7.5.5 *Human Rights or Women's Rights?*

Just as for all other media, women's rights dominate the agenda of the conservative media every year on 8 March. Columnists touch on the issue from different perspectives, and editorial teams cover public and private events, activities, and speeches organized throughout the day.

Bu mesele, insan haklarından ayrı düşünülemez

Devlet Bakanı Selma Aliye Kavaf, 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü'nü, sadece bir kutlama ve anma değil, kadının geliştiği noktadan, yaşadığı sorunların değerlendirildiği ve bu yolla kadınlar arası birlik ve dayanışmanın güçlendiği bir gün olduğunu söyledi.

Kavaf, 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü meclisleriyle yayımlandığı mesajda, Türkiye'de kadınlara yönelik ayrımcılığın giderilmesi ve kadınlara da erkeklerle tanınan hakların verilmesinin, 1800'lü yılların ikinci yarısına uzandığını ifade etti. Kavaf, şunları kaydetti:

EVRENSEL MESELEDİR

Türk kadını 1939'da yerel, 1934'te de genel seçimlerde birçok ülkeden önce seçme ve seçilme hakkını elde etmiştir. 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü, sadece bir kutlama ve anma günü değil, kadının geliştiği noktadan, yaşadığı sorunların sorgulandığı, değerlendirildiği ve bu yolla kadınlar arası birlik ve dayanışmanın güçlendiği bir gündür. Kadın hakları insan haklarından ayrı düşünülemez. Toplumsal eşitsizlik, kültürel bir konu ya da bir kadın meselesi değildir. Bu, küresel, insanlığın bir meselesidir. Kadın ve erkek arasındaki eşitlik, demokrasi ve insan haklarının en üst düzeye çıkarılması için gereklidir." ANKARA



Kadınlar Günü 100 YAŞINDA

Bugün 8 Mart Dünya Kadınlar Günü. İlk kez bundan 153 yıl önce New York'ta sokaklara dökülen kadınlar, düşük ücretleri, uzun çalışma saatlerini, insanlık dışı koşulların protesto ederek mücadele ateşini yaktı. Erkeklerle eşit haklara sahip olmak için başlayan yolculuğun resmi anlamda 100. yıldönümü.

ANKARA

Kadınların erkeklerle eşit haklara sahip olmak, sosyal hayatta yer almak için verdikleri mücadelemizin ilk ateşi, bundan 153 yıl önce New York'ta yakıldı. Mücadele ise 100 yıl önce resmi boyut kazandı. Kadınların hak arayışı, New York'ta tekstil sektöründe çalışan yüzlerce kadının, 8 Mart 1857'de düşük ücretleri, uzun çalışma saatlerini ve insanlık dışı çalışma koşullarını protesto etmek için grev yapmasıyla başladı. Danimarka'nın Kopenhag kentinde 1910'da düzenlenen Kadın Sosyalist Enternasyonal toplantısında Clara Zetkin, 8 Mart 1857'de başlayan kadın haklarının kazanılması mücadelesinin, her yıl "kadın günü" olarak kutlanmasını önerdi ve öneri oybirliğiyle kabul edildi.

"BİZ DE VARIZ" MÜCADELESİ

Kopenhag kararından sonra ilk kez 19 Mart 1911'de Avusturya, Danimarka, Almanya ve İsviçre'de yüz binlerce kadın ve erkek değişik aktivitelerle "kadın günü"nü kutladılar, oy verme ve seçme-seçilme haklarının yanı sıra meslek edinme ve mesleki eğitim görme haklarını istedikler. Birleşmiş Milletler Örgütü, 1975'i "Dünya Kadınlar Yılı" ilan etti ve 16 Aralık 1977'de 8 Mart'ın, tüm kadınlar için "Dünya Kadınlar Günü" olarak kutlanmasını kararlaştırdı. Kadınlar, tam 100 yıldır her 8 Mart'ta bu mücadeleye katkısı olanları anmak ve eşitsizliğe, adaletsizliğe karşı çıkmak için bir araya geliyorlar. Değişen dünyada ve yeni toplumsal koşullarda yeni haklar elde etmek için caba harcıyorlar. (AA)

Figure 7.10 *Yeni Şafak* celebrating the hundredth anniversary of International Women's Day. The subtitle is a quote from the Minister of State Selma Aliye Kavaf that reads; "This issue cannot be separated from human rights." Reprinted from "Kadınlar Günü 100 yaşında," 2010, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 8. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

A recurring, general argument in conservative media's coverage of women's rights, which mostly appears in the first week of March, is the view that one should not make gender-based distinctions with respect to rights, but rather one should talk about human rights as a whole. It is an issue of justice rather than a gender or identity issue (İpekçi, 2015a). Once this view is embraced, what is described as women's problems will become the problems of the humanity in general.

This argument is secular in content, though it is addressed within the framework of an Islamic discourse. In one of his columns in 2015, Yalçın Çetinkaya maintains that the world was created not just for men but for a creature called human being. Similarly, Hayrettin Karaman argues that the world does not need a women’s day but rather needs a day of humanity. Karaman states that the Quran makes it clear that men and women are equal before God and ends his column with the verse: “No good come those who do wrong to women.” This approach is in line with the official government narrative, as officials, including Erdoğan, often state that women’s issues are the problems of humanity in general.





Figure 7.11 Then Prime Minister Erdoğan delivered the opening speech at the Women in the Alliance of Civilizations Congress held in Istanbul in January 2006, where he stated that discrimination against women is as dangerous as racism. The congress also hosted several ministers from Erdoğan’s cabinet, as well as his wife and several state officials from different countries. Reprinted from “Kadına karşı ayrımcılık ırkçılık kadar tehlikeli,” by S. Alkan, İ. Zelvi, 2006, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 12. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

7.5.6 Women: Individuals or a Part of the Family?

In her book *The Forbidden Modern*, Nilüfer Gölge suggests that women’s participation in the Islamic movement – whether through journalism, political party membership, filmmaking, or activism – generated unexpected outcomes. Women have started to undergo a process of individualization.

Women, once empowered by their public and professional visibility, continue to follow and develop personal life strategies. At the same time, while never forgetting the primacy of their identities as mothers and wives, women confront and criticize the Islamist ideology. . . . Criticizing the “pseudo protectionism” of Muslim men, women claim their right to “acquire personality” – that is, “a life of their own” – and, consequently, provoke disorder in Islamic gender definitions and identities (Göle, 1996, p. 22).

This provocation that Göle observes in the late 1990s turned into a tug-of-war between the quest of women for individual identity and Islamic communalism in the twenty-first century. While conservative female columnists promote women’s right to participate in the workforce outside the home through individualist arguments even as they use religious, Islamist justifications, pious male journalists see the rise of women’s individuality as a threat to the traditional, communal Islamic order. Kemal Öztürk’s column on 8 March 2016 is important in this respect. In a piece he wrote with reference to International Women’s Day, he criticizes the feminist narrative of the celebration which, according to him undermines women’s identity as mothers and wives, turning them into autonomous individuals outside the family. He insists that a paradigm shift is needed in the approach to women’s issues, and instead of wasting time on initiatives like positive discrimination or women’s participation in the economy, the energy of the society should be directed towards strengthening, protecting, and canonizing the family as an institution.

Kadın ailenin çimentosu

Sağlık Bakanı Mehmet Müezzinoğlu, kadının ailede çimento görevi gördüğünü, aileyi dejenerere etmek isteyenlere izin vermeyeceklerini söyledi.

• EDİRNE (AA)

Sağlık Bakanı Mehmet Müezzinoğlu, aileyi dejenerere etmek isteyenlere, sokakta kadını farklı bir boyuta taşımak isteyenlere asla müsaade etmeyeceklerini belirterek, "Kadın ailede nasıl bir çimentoysa sosyal yaşamda da öyle bir çimento ve ana unsur olmaya devam edecektir. Bunun öncülüğünü yapmanın derdini taşıyoruz" dedi. Bakan Müezzinoğlu, Edirne AK Parti İl Kadın Kolları Danışma Meclisi Toplantısı'nda yaptığı

konuşmada, "Şimdi önümüzdeki 25 yılı planlıyoruz. Kanun çıktı. Kamu-özel işbirliğinde şehir hastaneleri ve hastane kompleksleri yapıyoruz. Yaklaşık 30'un üzerinde 37 büyük hastane yapacağız. Hastane şehirleri yapıyoruz. Burada istiyoruz ki, Amerika'da Houston örneği değil, İstanbul'da, Ankara'da, Erzurum'da, Diyarbakır'da, Manisa'da, Tekirdağ'da, Edirne'de bizim evlatlarımız yapın, bizim insanımız da yaşasın. Yıl sonuna kadar yapacağımız ihalelerde 20 milyar liralık ihalelerin altına imza atacağız." şeklinde konuştu.



Bakan Mehmet Müezzinoğlu, Edirne'de AK Parti'ye katılan yaklaşık 50 kişiye rozetlerini taktı.

TEK AYAKLA YÜRÜNEZ

Bakan Müezzinoğlu, "Nasıl tek ayakta sağlıklı yürünemez ise sağlıklı yürüyebilmek için sağ ve sol ayağının da güçlü olması gerekiyorsa medeni bir yürüyüşte kadının da erkeğin de güçlü bir şekilde, yan yana, omuz omuza hak ve hukuk anlayışıyla yolculuğa devam etmesi lazım." dedi.

Şiddetin sebebi bireysellik

Aile içi şiddetin masaya yatırıldığı **Aile Hukuku Konferansı'nda** önemli tespitler yapıldı. Geleneksel aile yapısındaki bozulma nedeniyle kişilerin bireyselleşmesinin **toplumsal şiddeti** beraberinde getirdiği belirtildi.

Dünyadaki toplumsal değişimler Türkiye'deki aile yapısında büyük değişikliklere neden oldu. İstanbul'da gerçekleştirilen Aile Hukuku Konferansı toplantısı sona erdi. Toplantıda önemli tespitlerde bulunuldu. Bireyler arasındaki özgürlükçü yeni aile yapısının geleneksel aileyi oluşturan bireyler arasında çözülmeye yol açtığını belirten Hukukçular Derneği Başkan Yardımcısı Avukat Şerafettin Ekici, Konferansın sonucunu bildireninde diğer

çekici ayrıntıları paylaştı.

HER GEÇEN GÜN ARTIYOR

Geleneksel aile yapısından uzaklaşmanın aile içi şiddeti körüklediğine dikkat çekilen konferansta, "Yapılan araştırmalar dünyadaki kadınların üçte birinin eşi tarafından uygulanan şiddete maruz kaldığı göstermektedir. Ülkemizde yapılan araştırmalarda ise bu oran her geçen gün yükselmektedir" denildi. Toplumdaki geleneksel yapının bozulması nedeniyle

gençlerin uyuşturucu, fuhuş gibi birçok tehlikeli yola saptığına işaret edildi. TCK ve 6284 sayılı yasada yer alan cezaların caydırıcı olmadığı belirtilirken, şiddete meyilli eşlerin daha da cesaretlendiği vurgulandı. Emniyet Müdürlüğü bünyesindeki polis yetersizliğinin de uygulamayı olumsuz etkilediği saptandı. Şiddete tanık olan çocukların rehabilite yapılmadığı belirtilirken, sığınma evlerinin sayısının azlığına dikkat çekildi.

• AVRUCU EDİRNE / İSTANBUL



Figure 7.12

In the first story, the Minister of Health Mehmet Müezzinoğlu states that women are the cornerstone of the family and that the government will fight against forces that aim to undermine family values. Reprinted from "Kadın ailenin çimentosu," 2013, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 13. The second clip covers a conference on family law, where experts argued that increasing individualism within families generates social violence. Reprinted from "Şiddetin sebebi bireysellik," 2014, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 18. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Even though female writers refer to individualist arguments to justify women's economic and political visibility, on the issues of marriage and family, they are equally concerned about the degeneration of these institutions.

Such concern is most prominently raised with respect to the effects of match-making reality television shows, prime time television series, and entertainment news and gossip programs. As early as 2005, conservative media collectively criticized these programs for forgetting the true meaning of family, the privacy of the home, and the sacred status of marriage as an institution. Özlem Albayrak (2005a) touches on this issue from a broader framework of morals and defines marriage programs as moral courts that turn marriage into a sad tragedy – places where married women reveal their most private moments in exchange for approval. Ten years later, similar concerns are raised by Sema Karabıyık (2015a), who defines these programs as marriage destruction forces that undermine family values and the meaning of love for the sake of higher ratings. Editorial teams, too, repeatedly condemn these evil programs for setting a bad example for society, promoting violence, and undermining traditional values.

Kaynanalara RTÜK artık 'dur' diyecek

RTÜK Başkanı Karaca, 'Gelinim Olur musun' türü programların toplumun sabrını zorladığını belirterek, "Çocukları ve gençleri olumsuz etkileyen bu yapımlara dur demenin zamanı geldi" dedi.

Radio ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu Başkanı Fatih Karaca, "Gelinim Olur musun" gibi bazı televizyonlarda yayınlanan yarışma formatlı programların toplumu sabrını zorladığını belirterek, "Bu tür programlarda kamu yararından bahsetmek mümkün değil. Özellikle çocukları ve yetişme çağındaki gençleri olumsuz etkileyen bu programlara dur demenin zamanı gelmiştir" dedi. İzleme ve Değerlendirme Dairesi içerisinde bu tür programları takip etmek amacıyla özel bir komisyon kurulacağını belirten Karaca, "Üst Kurul Başkanı olarak, bu raporları oluşturduğumda, gerekirse üst kurulu olağanüstü toplantıya çağırarak, süratle değerlendirilmelerini ve bir karara varmasını sağlayacağım" diye konuştu.

Toplumsal sınır aşıldı
RTÜK Başkanı Fatih Karaca, üst kurul binasında düzenlediği basın toplantısında 'Gelinim Olur musun' gibi bazı yarışma formatlı programlarla ilgili Üst Kurul'a yoğun şikayetler geldiğini açıkladı. 178 Ato RTÜK hattına gelen şikayetlerin büyük bir bölümünün de söz konusu programlardan oluştuğunu açıklayan Karaca, sosyal hayat içerisindeki bu tür programlara neden göz yumulduğu ile ilgili eleştirilere maruz kaldıklarını söyledi. Bazı milletvekilleri tarafından da bu tür programlarla ilgili görüşlerinin sorulduğuna kaydeden Karaca, toplumsal sınırın aşıldığını vurguladı. "Bu tür programlardan biz de büyük rahatsızlık duyuyoruz. RTÜK Başkanı sıfatı dışında yayıncı sıfatım ile bu tür programlardan utanç duyuyorum" diyen Karaca, söz konusu programlarla aile ilişkilerinin sulandığını ifade etti.



RTÜK Başkanı Fatih Karaca, 'Gelinim Olur musun' tarzı programların toplumun sabrını zorladığını söyledi.

Takip için özel komisyon oluşturulacak

Hakaretlerin yaşandığı, insanların başlarında bardak kırıldıkları bu tür programlarda kamu yararından bahsetmenin mümkün olmadığını vurgulayan Karaca, 28 Şubat Pazartesi günü Televizyon Yayınları Dairesi ile yaptıkları görüşmeler sırasında da söz konusu görüşlerinin aktarıldığını hatırladı. Bu çerçevede, İzleme ve Değerlendirme Dairesi içerisinde ilk defa bu tür programları takip için özel bir komisyon kurulacağını kaydeden Karaca, "Rutin televizyon takiplerinin dışında özel komisyon bu tür formatlı programları izleyecek ve raporlandır-

caktır. Üst Kurul başkanı olarak bu raporları oluşturduğumda, gerekirse, üst kurulu olağanüstü toplantıya çağırarak süratle bu raporların değerlendirilerek kurula bir karar altına alınmasını sağlayacağım" ifadesini kullandı.

Adı geçen yayınların basın özgürlüğü kapsamında değerlendirilemeyecek kadar büyük tepkilere neden olduğunu ifade eden RTÜK Başkanı Karaca, "Özellikle, çocukları ve yetişme çağındaki çocukları olumsuz etkileyen bu programlara dur demenin zamanı gelmiştir. Bu gün mesele bütün boyutları ile değerlendirildi. Pazartesi gün yapılacak Olağanüstü Üst Kurul toplantısında bu raporların derhal ele alınmasını kararlaştırdı" dedi. ■ ANKARA

Figure 7.13

RTÜK President Fatih Karaca's statements about the negative effects of matchmaking reality television shows on teenagers, children, and family values. Reprinted from "Kaynanalara RTÜK artık 'dur' diyecek," 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 17. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Beyond general concern about promoting the wrong image of marriage and family to society, one recent criticism of matchmaking programs is that they use headscarfed women to make the programs look morally compatible with the general, conservative values of the traditional Turkish family. Denying that real, conservative, headscarfed women would participate in such programs, the conservative media argues that the fact that there are middle-class, headscarfed women on these shows is proof that they are fiction and are trying to generate buzz and earn higher ratings.



Figure 7.14 The same issue more than a decade later: *Yeni Şafak* weekend supplement exposing the negative effects of marriage programs, particularly with respect to violence and morality. One of the sidebars states that the headscarfed candidate Hanife is proof that these programs are faked. Reprinted from “Evlilik programları şeytan üçgeni: Kurgu, entrika, şiddet,” by İzmir, A., 2016b, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 6. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

With respect to television series, the favorite pastime of Turkish society (“Türkiye’de TV izleme oranı düştü,” 2013), pious columnists combine conservative and feminist arguments. They criticize the perception of family and the role of women in these stories. *Yeni Şafak* columnist and writer Sema Karabyık, who regularly wrote about the small screen, numerously condemns the construction of family in prime time Turkish series. In 2013, she criticizes how the series *Merhamet* (Compassion), which follows the story of a successful lawyer with a traumatic past and an abusive family, for promoting the idea

that family is a burden along the path to personal success, rather than the mechanism of support. Similarly, in analyses of popular series that broadcast in 2015, she argues that Turkish television series are gradually implanting a “trust no one, not even family” motto with plots full of intrafamilial murders, betrayals, and violence. She adds that these series narrate family not as the smallest, but rather the most unpleasant unit of society (p. 24).

Karabıyık uses secular feminist arguments to talk about how Turkish television series narrate marriage and its problems. In a column in 2015, she put forward the similarities of the characters and relationships in three romantic-comedy series being broadcast on different channels, and she criticizes how they all establish a prototype of marriage in the minds of their audiences – one in which women are meant to serve men. In all three stories, the men are successful, strong, disciplined businessmen and the women are at their service – one is the main character’s personal assistant, another cleans the man’s house, and the mother of the third female character is the personal chef for the man’s family. When the male characters get jealous, they shut down emotionally and order the women around, as if to remind them who is boss. In the same vein, Karabıyık strongly disapproves of the fact that regardless of genre, Turkish television series depict women as the sole reason for unhappy, problematic marriages. While male leads are characterized as flawless, understanding, charismatic characters, women are represented as the main reasons for misery, divorce, and unhappy children that are neglected because of their mothers’ desire to have a career (Karabıyık, 2015b).

On the issues of news about celebrities, the glamorous world of show business and stories that highlight family values, pious journalists again use conservative as well as secular arguments. While condemning the relationships of celebrities for undermining traditional family values, they also resort to secular feminist arguments when narrating the divorces of celebrity couples. One prominent example is the public divorce of actress and singer Hüllya Avşar and businessman and former athlete Kaya Çilingiroğlu in 2005, after Çilingiroğlu was caught cheating with his long-term girlfriend, Feraye Tanyolaç. Çilingiroğlu married Tanyolaç in 2009, when their illegitimate son was two and a half years old, and they divorced in 2014.

The celebrity couple's story was the most intriguing gossip of the new century and was closely followed by the media. Conservative newspapers condemned the fact that through such stories, celebrities undermine the importance of family as an institution and set a bad example for society. When Çilingirođlu married Feraye Tanyolaç in 2009, Özlem Albayrak mentions the event in her column and criticizes their relationship using a feminist language while denying their arguments. She questions why no one was bothered when Çilingirođlu said "she deserved me" about his bride Feraye Tanyolaç. She describes Çilingirođlu as a man with a God complex because of the attention he received from women – a superhero-for finally agreeing to marry his long-term girlfriend. She then asks whether these men and women are really modern or civilized, or if they are just reproducing the patriarchy that they are supposedly against. She even argues that conservative women are gradually creating awareness about the problems and starting to object to the roles cast for them, while secular women are not even aware that they are downtrodden or oppressed. She criticizes secular feminists using their own arguments.

Aile kurumunu ünlüler sarsıyor

Ünlülerin evliliklerinin sabun köpüğü gibi dağılmasının aile kurumunu sarstığına dile getiren Avukat Dr. Zülfiakar Özkan, "boşandık ama dostuz" sözünün yalan olduğunu, ünlülerin yaşadığı hayatın referans alınamayacağını söylüyor.

ANŞE OLGUN / İSTANBUL
Boşanmak için kendisine bayıran çiftlerin sorunlarını NLP (Beyin dili programlaması) tekniğiyle çözen ve çiftlere en iyi zamanda sözde danışmanlığı hizmet veren Avukat Dr. Zülfiakar Özkan, geçtiğimiz hafta tek celsede eşle boşanan Hülya Avşar'ın aldığı boşanma emriyle evliliklerinde sorun yaşayan kadınlara hareket geçireceği günü gündele: Toplamında daha çok da referanslık hasretini eden yeni boşananları vevdigi karar ve orantılı kerek kararlarına verirken referans alan kadınlardan bu boşanma kararıyla cesaretlendirdiğini savunan Özkan'a göre aile kurumunu...

Aldatılan kadın Hülya Avşar gibi davranıyor

Eşi tarafından aldatılan kadınlara boşanma kararı alınırken oluşan etrafın duyulup duyulmaması önemsedilerini belirtir Özkan. "Eğer duyulmamasına izin vermiyorsanız eğer herkes bu olayı duyuyorsa kadın, eşinin kendisine karşıyorsa karşıya karşıyorsa mane diyecektir" diye. Fakat bu olay nasıl davayla? Özkan'a göre, bu olayın yapılmadığı en büyük riski alanı olan kadın oluyor. Bir erkek kendisini vevdigi emre ve bayıran boşanmalarına saldırmak istiyor. Ancak erkeklerin yüzde 90'ından fazlası emirlerini boşanmadan önce üçüncü kadına vermektedir.

her geçen gün büyük sorunlar yaşıyor ve duyulan şeyi giderek azalıyor. Bunun en güzel örneği ise rakamlardan ortaya koyduğuna söylüyor Özkan, her yıl boşanan çift sayısında artış olduğu gibi evlenen çift sayısında da her yıl bir önceki yıla göre düşüyor olduğunu belirtiyor. Her yıl ülkemizde ortalamla 30 bin çiftin boşandığını ve 3 milyon ailede ise sorun yaşandığını belirtir Özkan, aile kurumuna çok acil sahip olmasını gerektiğini...

Yüzde 80'ini barıştırıyor

Boşanma için kendisine bayıran çiftlerin yüzde 80'ini büyük bir beklentiyle boşanarak vevdelerini dağıtmasını istediğini dile getiren Özkan, boşanma olaylarındaki artışın sebebiyle eşlerle beraberlikle yaşadıkları sorunları çözmek yerine kasa yoluna sorduların kararlaştırılmak için boşanma kararını aldıklarına iftiale ediyor. Örne boşanmanın ardından aile sorunlarını boşadığına alını örnekte Özkan, televizyon kültürüne bakıldığında zamanın parçalarının ailelerde yapıları ile ilişkileri daha net görmemizin mümkün olduğunu belirtiyor. Bunun en güzel örneği ise gençliğin genelde çuvarlanarak bir özel odasında ölü ölmekle bulmaları bu Türk'ün hayat olduğu gerçeğinde...

"Boşandık ama dostuz" yalanı

Özkan, boşandıktan sonra karara karışma geçen sanatçıların "ayrıldık ama eşimle hâlâ iyi bir arkadaşay ve dostuz" sözünün koca bir yalan olduğunu söylüyor. Bu açıklama yapan son bir kişi isim İsmail Aydın ve Hülya Avşar'dan yola çıkan Özkan, bu sanatçıların basına açıklama yaptıkları kullandıkları vevdeleri...

Genelde erkekler kusurlu

Avukatın yanında aile danışmanlığı hizmeti veren ve yurt dışındaki hacetlerden bu konuda fikir alınarak NLP Trainer olan Zülfiakar Özkan, boşanma davalarının yüzde 90'unun siddetli geçimlilikle çıktığını ve bu davaların yüzde 70'inde erkeklerin yüzde 90'unda ise kadının hatalı olduğunu söylüyor. Davanın taraf olarak kadın ve erkeklerin eşli olduğunu belirtir Özkan, kadının ekonomik durumu ve gelir seviyesi yükseldikçe boşanma kararını daha kolay alabildiğini belirtiyor.

diğerinin kendi sözlerini açıkça yalandığına belirtiyor. Açıklamaları sırasında yüzdelerine yalan güttüğünü belli bölgede neyi neyi yüzlerini kapayamadığını ve becerilerini konuşurken refleks olarak geriye çekmelerinin bunun en açık delili olduğunu dile getiren Özkan, kendisine bayıran ve boşanan çiftlerin durumlarından da yola çıkarak şunları söylüyor: "Çiftler zaman çok ciddi sorunlar yaşadıkları zaman boşanma kararını alıyor ve boşanınca bu sorun çözümü oluyor. Ya da gerginlik hâlâ devam ediyor. Bugüne kadar boşadığını çiftlerden daha sonra sanatçıların dedikleri gibi bir iyileşme olan herkes hiç görmüden. Boşanan çiftler tam terisi birbirini yiyor. Sanatçıları boşandıktan sonra aralarında hâlâ dostluğu devam ettiren söylemlerinin altında yatan şey farklı bir şey. Çünkü birbirlerinin gerek yüzlerini birbirine ve bu sadık olan ortay çıkmasını istemdikleri için birbirleriyle bir aralarında iyi görünmek zorunda hissediyorlar."

Figure 7.15 Commentary by a lawyer and family counselor stating that the exposed lifestyles of celebrities endanger and undermine sacred family relationships. Reprinted from "Aile kurumunu ünlüler sarsıyor," by A. Olgun, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 14. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

7.5.7 The Cell of Nations: Family

In line with traditional, conservative thinking, pious media in Turkey rejects the idea that society is an artificial, social construct and views it instead as an organic, living entity, the parts of which work together just as organs do within the human body. Through this analogy, it presents family as the smallest unit of society – the first cell of social life. It portrays family as the most dynamic, efficient resource of a society (Gürdoğan, 2005b) and the main source of power behind the market economy and pluralist democracy. Due to its importance for strong, well-established nations, the family is always conveyed in the pious media as an institution to be protected and enriched at all costs.

Gürdoğan (2005b) highlights the vital role of families for social, political and economic life as follows:

In every society, family is at the center of economic, political and cultural life. Individuals are the cornerstone of family and family is the cornerstone of society. The power of a society comes from the solidarity and cooperation between families. . . . Societies exist with individuals who are conscious of their mission to find their spouses and occupations. Home constitutes the cultural, work constitutes the economic front of life.⁹ (p. 13)

Apart from being the nucleus of society, families are seen as children's first teacher and as the guarantor of the future of nations, civilizations, and mankind. Hatemi (2006) and Beşer (2014a) argue that no system has so far managed to provide an alternative to family when it comes to the education of children. Similarly, in line with official state ideology, it has been discussed on numerous occasions that a strong, moral, traditional idea of family insures the persistence of powerful nations and the history of mankind.

With respect to discussing family, pious media draws a sharp distinction between what this institution means in the West and in the East, arguing that modernity and globalization threaten the core values of the true, Eastern family. Ali Nur Kutlu (2014) explains that the strongest aspect of Eastern societies, especially of Muslim ones, is the value they place on family. Modernism, however, is taking over this fundamental aspect and destroying it with tough economic conditions and technological innovations. Similarly, after participating in a workshop on family, religion, and society, Beşer (2015d) discusses in his column how the perception of family is different in the West.

I realized that when it comes to family, we are not talking about the family as it is understood in the West. Not only our methods, but our

9 “Her toplumda aile ekonomik, siyasal ve kültürel hayatın merkezinde yer alır. İnsan ailenin, aile de toplumun temel taşıdır. İnsansız aile, ailesiz toplum olmaz. Toplumun gücü, aileler arasındaki yardımlaşma ve dayanışmadan kaynaklanır. . . . Toplumlar eşini ve işini bulan misyonunun bilincindeki insanlarla ayakta durur. Ev hayatın kültürel, iş de ekonomik yüzünü oluşturur.”

material is different. What they call family is a nuclear one that consists of a husband and wife. In fact, nowadays, even more atomized, “single parent” families are being discussed. However, in the Quran, the family is not described as a unit that only includes a husband and a wife. Family is a private body that originates from the uterus, husband, and wife and expands around duties and respect.¹⁰ (p. 19)



10 “Aile derken bizim Batı'nın anladığı aileden söz ettiğimizi farkettim. Yani sadece metodumuz değil, üzerinde konuştuğumuz nesnelere de farklı. Onların aile dedikleri şey genellikle karı kocadan oluşan, haz eksenli çekirdek ailedir. Hatta şimdilerde daha atomize ‘single parent’ ailelerden söz ediliyor. Oysa Kur'an-ı Kerim’de sadece karıkocayı çağrıştıran bir aile anlayışı ve kavramı yok. Rahm çekirdeğinden filizlenen, belki karı kocadan başlamak üzere dairesel olarak genişleyen, ibadet ruhu içeren bir görev ve saygı eksenli mahremiyet yumağı var.”

Hayat, ailenle güzeldir



"Umut Mevsimi" (Bee Season)

1992. ABD yazarı Sara "161" başlık.
Yönetmenler: Scott McGehee ve David Siegel
Oyuncular: Richard Gere, Juliette Binoche, Flora Cross,
Mia Farrow, Kate Bosworth
Özellikler: Amerikan MFAA Kurumu
10 / 10 puan
(Bu filmi düşünün: sabırsız ve bazen sert dışa vurular
nedensizce 13 yıldan fazla önceki bir filmle aynı
birlikte izlenim sağlar.)

Scott McGehee ve David Siegel'in ortaklaşa yönettiği "Umut Mevsimi" çağdaş Amerikan ailesindeki çözümlerin nedenlerine gik tutarken, aslında Türkiye gibi üçüncü dünya ülkelerini adım adım kuşatan benzer toplumsal tehlikeleri de gözler önüne seriyor...



HAYATIN FİLMİ

Her yılın başında bir film olan "Amerikan Güzeli"nden başlayarak bu yıl sonuna kadar, Hollywood'un geçmiş yıllarındaki yeni bireysel değerlerin aile kurumunu nasıl da paramparça ettiğini anlatan sayıda bir yapıt daha. İnsan sıcaklığına sahip, sorgulayıcı ve dürüst... Çiğre yönetmesi bir film olan "Umut Mevsimi" neden böyle olduğunu bilmiyoruz) yazar Myla Goldberg'in kendisine büyük bir hayran kilesi topluyor olan aynı adlı romanından uyarlanmış. Filmin başrolünde, yıllarca partizan miser tarzı filmdeki "yakaşıkli bir" karakterle genç kadını kabını fethetmek sonra 1980'lerin ortalarından itibaren sinemada radikal bir konum değişikliğine giden Richard Gere var. Gere, ailenin "reket" (ki artık Türkiye'de bile yok edilemeye çalışılmıyor, Amerikan toplumunda böyle bir kavram kaldı mı bilmiyoruz) Saul Naumann rolünde son derece başarılı bir oyuncudur.

sergiliyor. Filminde eşi Miriam rolündeki Fransız oyuncu Juliette Binoche'ü ise daha çok Avrupa'da çektiği filmlerden tanıyoruz. Zaman zaman Hollywood'a da konuk olan Binoche, bu öyküde Gere ile uyumlu bir ilişki oluşturuyor. Ancak "Umut Mevsimi"ni asıl yıldız hiç kuşkusuz ki Erika rolündeki Flora Cross... Bu rolü ilk önce -son yıllarda çocuk oyuncuların kalitesine dönmüş- Dakota Fanning'in canlandırdığını düşünmüştük, ancak Fanning'in programının yoğunluğundan dolayı rol son anda Flannery'ye kalmış. İncece pek de iyi olmuyor.

çünkü beyazperdenin daha ilk kısmını derinleştirmede devleşen çok yernekli bir yıldız adayı kazandığını görüyoruz. "Umut Mevsimi", bir zamanlar çok övülen, her fırsatta yüceltilen ve örnek gösterilen mutafakandır. Amerikan ailesinin esas yapılarından sonra geldiği bugünkü gösteriyor. Hem de son derece etkileyici bir sinema diliyle. "Amerikan ailesinin bugünü" dediğimiz şey de aslında bizlerdir, yani Türk ailesinin bes, bilmediğimiz en iyi sonradan geldiği hallinden başka bir şey değil. Değerli mesajlarla bezenli bu filmi aile öyletirmeye bakılır izleyebilirsiniz.



Küreselleşme aileyi vuruyor

Uluslararası Aile Sempozyumu'nda konuşan Prof. Dr. Zaim küreselleşmenin aile yapımızı olumsuz etkilediğini söyledi

ŞAMİL KUCUR
İslami Araştırmalar Vakfı ile Başbakanlık Aile ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Genel Müdürlüğü'nün birlikte düzenlediği "Uluslararası Aile Sempozyumu" Eresin Otel'de masaya yatırıldı. Türkiye ile Türk Cumhuriyetleri, İslam ülkeleri ve

Avrupa'dan 60 bilim adamı, üç gün boyunca aileyi ve uygulanan politikaları tartışacak. İlk günde konuşan Prof. Dr. Sabahattin Zaim, dünyada yaşanan küreselleşme politikalarının Türk ailesini olumsuz yönde etkilediğini söyledi. Zaim, "Aile

değerlerimizi vakit kaybetmeden ele alıp değerlendirmeliyiz" dedi. Prof. Dr. Ömer Çaha ise seviyesiz programlar ve internetin aileye zararlarından bahsetti. Pakistanlı Rektör Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad da dünyada son yıllarda dayatılan küresel politikaların sadece İslam ülkeleri ve aile kurumu için değil, bütün insanlık için bir tehdit olduğunu söyledi.

Figure 7.16

In the first clip, a review of the movie *Bee Season*, the critic comments that the film showcases the deterioration of family values in the United States and warns readers that if not taken seriously, Turkey will face the same problems in a decade. Reprinted from "Hayat, ailenle güzeldir," 2006, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 15. The second covers a speech made by Professor Sabahattin Zaim at the International Symposium on Family, where he commented that globalization threatens the traditional family

values of Islamic countries. Reprinted from “Küreselleşme aileyi vuruyor,” by Ş. Kucur, 2005c, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 9. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Conservative media is concerned that hegemonic Western culture threatens the true meaning of family, creating a melancholic, unhappy society, and calls for the regeneration of traditional family values and structures. In fact, after 2013, conservative media’s disquiet resonated at the government level, as well. While the family has always been ideologically important for the AKP government, family-based social policies and state initiatives to strengthen the family gained momentum starting in 2013, along with government level emphasis on reproductive policies and women’s role within the family. “In line with this conservative discourse in policy circles, the Family and Social Policies Ministry has initiated . . . an expansive policy agenda ostensibly designed to protect the family [including] education seminars, publication of books for families, organization of international conferences, and implementation of new social transfer programs like conditional cash transfers” (Yılmaz, 2015, p. 372).

To give an example, in summer 2013, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy introduced the *Aile Olmak* (Becoming a family) project, and Erdoğan himself attended the press launch. During his speech, Erdoğan called on women to have at least three children, declared abortions and cesareans a menace to Turkish society, and urged young bachelors to get married as soon as possible. The project, along with similar ones,¹¹ was welcomed by the conservative media and covered in great detail.

11 *Ailem Türkiye (My Family Turkey)* 2005, *Aile Büyük Ödülleri (Family Awards)* 2013.



Aile büyük ödülleri

Başbakan Erdoğan, konuşmasının ardından 'Aile Büyük Ödülleri'ni eşi Emine Erdoğan ile verdi. Yazar Gülten Dayıoğlu, yapımcı Osman Sınay ödül alırken, "80'ler" dizisinin ödülünü ise dizinin başrol oyuncularından Şoray Uzun aldı. Ödül töreninde Kırkkale'den 86 yaşında ve 49 torun sahibi Fatma Sümer ile çocukları, gelinleri ve torunları hep birlikte katıldı. Ankara'nın Çubuk ilçesi'nde oturan, 65 yıldır evli olan, 8 çocuk ile 40 torun sahibi yaşlı çift de Erdoğan çiftinin elinden ödülünü aldı.

Batı'nın sıkıntısını biz de yaşamayalım

Üç çocuk çağını yineleyen Başbakan Tayyip Erdoğan, **"Bir çocuk iflas, iki çocuk da iflas demektir. Üç çocukla yerinizde sayarsınız.** Bizim artış hızımızı artırmamız, bunu başarmamız lazım. Şu anda Batı bundan dolayı sıkıntı içinde. Ama biz Türkiye'yi bu sıkıntı içine sokmak istemiyoruz" dedi

Figure 7.17 (Top) A news clip covering the details of the Becoming a Family Project. The headline reads "Giant step towards return to the traditional family." Reprinted from "Geleneksel aileye dönüş için dev adım," by A Mallı, 2013b, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 12. The second caption reads Tayyip and Emine Erdoğan handing the Family Awards to winners. Reprinted from "Batı'nın sıkıntısını biz de yaşamayalım," 2013, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 15. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Tek aile bile önemli

Evlilikleri kurtarmak için hayata geçirilen 'Boşanma Süreci Danışmanlığı' adlı projenin ayrıntılarını Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Fatma Şahin anlattı. Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı'nın düzenlediği 'Kadına Yönelik Aile İç Şiddetin Önlenmesi Projesi'nin açılış töreni sonrası gazetecilerin sorularını yanıtlayan Şahin, boşanmaların azaltılacak aile danışmanlığı hizmeti hakkında "Bir aile bile mutlu ve huzurlu bir şekilde yoluna devam ederse bu hepimizin kazancı olacak" dedi. 2011 yılında geniş kapsamlı bir araştırma yaptıklarını ve boşanmanın nedenlerini analiz ettiklerini anlatan Şahin, "Yıllık evlenme oranı 600 bin. Bunun 100-120 bini boşanmayla sonuçlanıyor. Boşanmaların yüzde 80'i yeniden evleniyor. Bunların yüzde 17'si ise eski eşle yeniden evleniyor" dedi.

DETAYLI ARAŞTIRDIK

İnsanların eski eşle neden tekrar evlendiğini araştırdıklarını belirten Bakan Şahin, "Yüzde 17 rakamı, yılda 20 bin evlilik demek. 'Bu insanlar (eski eşle) neden yeniden evleniyor?' Bunu araştırdık. Gördüğümüz şeydu ki, çiftler iletişimsizlik, ekonomik sorunlar gibi birtakım nedenlerle boşanıyor. Bunun üzerine bakanlık olarak 5 ilde pilot çalışma yürüttük. Aile Mahkemesi hakemleri ile biraraya geldik ve hakimler kendilerine gelen dosyaları bize aktardı. Sonuçta, ayrılmak için mahkemeye başvurmuş 450 çiftten 75'i boşandıktan vazgeçirilerek evlilik kurumunu devam ettirme kararı aldı" ifadelerini kullandı.

TERAPİ KURTARACAK

Evliliğin devamı için çiftlere 'aile terapisi' hizmetinin verileceğini belirten Şahin, bunun için gerekli hukuki altyapıyı oluşturduklarını söyleyerek "Bir aile bile önemli. Tamamen insanların özgür iradesine bağlı. Bir zorunluluk yok. Bu desteği almak isteyen herkese bunu hazırlayacağız. İlk aşamada 4 seansa başlatacağız. 4 seansa sonunda aile kendi karar verecek. Daha derin seanslar ve danışmanlık hizmeti gerekiyorsa farklı yöntemlere geçeceğiz. Gerekirse ailelere maddi destek de sunacağız" şeklinde konuştu. **ANKARA**

Bir yılda **600 bin evlilikten 120 bininin** boşanmayla sonuçlandığını açıklayan Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Şahin, hayata geçen '**Boşanma Süreci Danışmanlığı**' adlı projenin bitme aşamasındaki evlilikleri kurtaracağını söyledi. Şahin, "**Bir aile bile mutlu ve huzurlu bir şekilde yoluna devam ederse bu hepimizin kazancı olacak**" dedi

Şiddete jandarma siperi

Kadına yönelik aile içi şiddete mücadelede bugüne kadar attığı pek çok adımın bir yenisini daha ekleyen Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı, 'Kadına Yönelik Aile İç Şiddetin Önlenmesi' projesini hayata geçiriyor. Projeye kamuoyunda farkındalık oluşturularak aile içi şiddete dur denilecek. Proje'nin tanıtım toplantısında konuşan Jandarma Genel Komutanı Servet Yünlük, "Kadına şiddete karşı hedefimiz sıfır tolerans" dedi.



Karakola kadın eli değmeli

Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Fatma Şahin, Türkiye'nin ilk kadın jandarma komutanlarını tanıttı. Şahin, "Gördüğünüz gibi kadın eli her kademeye değişiyor. Bu ilklere çok önemli her alanda, bizim kadınlarmızın duygusal zekası yönetime gücü her alanda değişiyor. İnşallah sayıları da artacak. Kadına hizmet kadın bafes açısıyla, kadın zekasıyla çok daha güçlenecektir" dedi. İlk kadın karakol komutanlarından Jandarma Binbaşı Songül Yakut, Ankara Beypazarı'nda 3 yıl süreyle ilçe jandarma komutanlığı yaptığını söyledi. Ordu Mesudiye'nin kadın karakol komutanı Jandarma Astsubay Üstçavuş Şenay Haydar ise "Kadın olarak değil ama karakol komutanlığı zaten zor ve yoğun emek isteyen bir görev. Kadın olarak herhangi bir sıkıntısını yaşamıyorum" dedi. Yakut, şiddete uğrayan kadınların kesinlikle 156 jandarmaya ve 155 polise başvurmaları gerektiğini anmsattı.

'Erkeklik değil ürkeklik'

Tanıtım toplantısına katılan Avrupa Birliği Bakanı Egemen Bağış, kadına şiddetin karşısında jandarmamızın siper, bakanlıkların ve Avrupa Birliği'nin ise kalkan olacağını söyledi. "Kadına şiddet yasalarda değil kafalarda bitir" diyen Bağış, "Bir erkek kaba kuvvetine güvenerek bir kadına şiddet uyguluyorsa bu kahramanlık değil korkaklıktır. Erkekliğin haysiyeti ka-

dına indirilen ilk tokatla birlikte sifra iner. Zira kadına şiddet erkeklik değil, ürkekliktir" ifadelerini kullandı. Son 1 yılda kadınlara yönelik çok önemli adımlar atıldığını ve kadınların pozitif ayrımcılık uygulamaları tek kesim olduğunu hatırlatan Bağış, "AB'ye açılan kapının kilidi kadınlarımızın gömüllerindedir. Türk kökenli bir Avrupa Parlamentosu üyesinin söylediği gibi 'AB'ye damız girmeyiz' diye konuştu.

Çözüm süreci PKK'yı çözdü!

Çözüm süreci terör örgütü PKK'daki kopuşları hızlandırdı. PKK'nın Kuzey Irak'taki kamplarından değişik tarihlerde kaçan aralarında 6 çocuğun da bulunduğu 13 PKK'lı, Şırnak'ın Si-lopi ilçesi yakınlarında bulunan Habur Sınır Kapısı'nda güvenlik güçlerine teslim oldu. Silahsız olarak teslim olan PKK'luların önce sağlık tesislerinden geçirildiği ve daha sonra sorgularının yapılması için ilçe Jandarma Komutanlığı'na götürüldüğü belirtildi. Dün gelen haberle son 15 günde

teslim olan örgütü üyesi sayısı 30'un üzerine çıktı.

YİNE İŞ MAKİNESİ YAKTILAR

Öte yandan terör örgütü şantiye basıp iş yapmaya devam ediyor. Genelkurmay'ın internet sitesindeki açıklamada, bölücü terör örgütü mensuplarına Bingöl'ün Genç ilçesine bağlı Yazkonagi köyü Doğanlar mahallesinde İl Özel İdaresine ait bir adet patetli dozerin yakıldığı belirtildi. Açıklamada olayla ilgili soruşturmanın sürdüğü kaydedildi.

Figure 7.18 The Minister of Family and Social Policy Fatma Şahin at the launch of the "Divorce Process Consultancy" project, the fun-

damental aims of which, she underscores, is to save marriages. Reprinted from “Tek aile bile önemli,” by A. Mallı, 2013, Yeni Şafak, p. 17. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

While their main concern is the effects of Western-dominated culture, technology, and modernism, pious columnists, especially female ones, also criticize the conservative Muslim community for their approach to family. In one column, Ayşe Böhürler, a prominent figure of women’s empowerment in conservative circles, criticizes the Muslim community as well as the urban secular culture. She refers to an article written by a well-known pious writer, columnist and intellectual Nazif Şişman and criticizes the conservative community for attributing significant importance to family but do not discussing the contemporary problems that traditional families face. Instead, repeating the cliché, they burden women with the responsibility of protecting the family by themselves. She is apprehensive that conservatives do not always have the best idea about what family means. Instead of focusing on the problems and causes of the deterioration of domestic values, these circles take the easy way out by assuming that women are the sole homemakers. Women are held responsible for the success and upbringing of children while men, who hold themselves responsible only for their jobs, claim no responsibility in this process, other than becoming weekly “mall-dads” on Sundays. She criticizes this nostalgic, cowardly attitude of the Muslim community and tries to convince its members to start strategizing by taking the realities of the contemporary socioeconomic system into account. Times have changed, men indeed have an important role in making the family home, and they are equally responsible for the proper upbringing of children. She thus expects the Muslim community to keep up with the times and start thinking rationally about the modern problems of the family.

7.5.8 *Forming a Sacred Bond: Conservative Media’s Perception of Marriage*

Defining marriage – a faithful, lifelong union of a man and a woman – as the first step towards forming a family, conservative media has traditionally

strongly supported early marriage and having multiple children as soon as possible. In fact, it is argued on numerous occasions that late marriage is the core reason for increased prostitution, adultery, loveless marriages, a high divorce rate, and even birth defects (Beşer, 2014c). These social problems arise because what marriage means in the modern world and what it refers to in religious (Islamic) sources are not the same. While the former encourages a nuclear family and independence from elderly relatives, what Muslims understand from marriage is a lifelong union of families and relatives, expanding its area of influence with children and moral values. That is why it encourages young people to marry young and celebrate private and public financial support programs and government's incentives to help university students get married before completing their degrees.

While conservative journalists traditionally favor early marriages, they oppose child marriage and acknowledge the rights of women to a divorce. Prominent Islamic scholar and *Yeni Şafak* columnist Professor Hayrettin Karaman (2010a, 2010b, 2010c) underlines numerous times that forced marriages made without the consent of the woman are void, there is no Islamic law that orders minors to be forcibly married, and Islamic law gives both men and women the right to apply for divorce. That is why when well-known businessman Halis Toprak at the age of seventy-one married a seventeen-year-old teenager in 2009, the conservative media opposed this matrimony and found it unnatural. The story occupied the Turkish media for some time in summer 2009. Newspapers *Yeni Şafak*,¹² *Sabah*,¹³ and *Zaman* consulted doctors and psychologists about the nature of this relationship, and all agreeing that wide age gap was a problem for a healthy relationship and criticized the fact that his bride was a minor.

12 54 yaş farkı çifte istismar. (2009, August 15). *Yeni Şafak*. Retrieved from <http://www.yenisafak.com/gundem/54-yas-farki-cifte-istismar-205050>

13 Halis Toprak'ın yaptığı evlilik modern kölelik. (2009, August 1). *Sabah*. Retrieved from https://www.sabah.com.tr/yasam/2009/08/01/halis_toprakin_yaptigi_evlilik_modern_kolelik

Yeni evli kredisi için üst yaş 26

Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanı Fatma Şahin, yeni evlenecek çiftlere verilmesi öngörülen devlet kredisi konusunda sosyal paylaşım sitesi Twitter aracılığıyla açıklamalarda bulundu. Fatma Şahin, konunun henüz tasarı halinde olduğunu, netleşmediğini ve bunun çocuk teşvik paketi içerisinde yer alacağını söyledi.

DÖRT YILDA GERİ ÖDEME

Şahin, "Üniversite mezunları için üst yaş sınırı 26 olarak uygulanacak" dedi. Verilecek kredinin 4 yılda geri ödeneceğini dile getiren Şahin, şöyle konuştu: "Kredi tutarı en fazla 10 bin TL olacak, kredi vadesi 1 yıl geri ödemesiz toplamda 4 yıl olarak uygulanacak."

ÇOCUK VARSA ÖTELENECEK

Şahin, "Geri ödeme sürecinde çocuk sahibi olunması durumunda kredi geri ödeme taksitleri 1 yıl süreyle ötelenecek" ifadelerini kullandı. Fatma Şahin, çiftlerden birisinin yetim olması ve devlet yurtlarında kalmış olması durumunda ise kredinin 2 yıl ödemesiz olmak üzere toplam 5 yılda geri ödeneceğini dile getirdi. **HABER MERKEZİ/ANKARA**



Karatay parasını geri aldı

Kendilerini polis ve savcı olarak tanıtan şüpheliler tarafından dolandırılan ünlü diyetisyen Canan Karatay, emniyete gelerek parasını geri aldı. Bankadan çektiği 50 bin dolar ve 10 bin lirayı dün iki ayrı parka bırakan Karatay, şüpheliler Ahmet Ö., ve Mehmet K'nın adliyeye sevk edilmesinin ardından Asayiş Şube Müdürlüğü'ne geldi. Burada yaklaşık yarım saat kalan Karatay parasını alarak emniyetten ayrıldı.

Figure 7.19 Details of credits for "newlyweds" supported by the government. Reprinted from "Yeni evli kredisi için üst yaş 26," 2013, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 20. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Columnists writing in conservative newspapers see marriage as a moral and spiritual union and present arguments in favor of prearranged marriages. But to do so, they legitimize their approach by comparing the nature of prearranged marriages with a very modern phenomenon: Marriages arranged online. Fatma Barbarosoğlu (2015b) in *Yeni Şafak* celebrates the union of a young pious couple, narrating that they married after only hearing about one another during family talks. After sharing their story, Barbarosoğlu comments that their marriage would not be accepted by those who criticize prearranged

marriages in modern times, but immediately states that people who meet through the internet and get married are in fact no different than marriages arranged by families. Those who find the latter normal should also have an open mind about the former, she adds, even though she expressed her negative feelings about internet marriages.

Conservative newspapers and their columnists measure the status of happy marriages with reference to secularist aspirations, even though they resort to both Islamist and secular arguments to legitimize the critical role marriage plays in personal as well as social development. In one of his columns in January 2006, writer Kürşat Bumin criticizes a municipality that handed out booklets on marriage to newlyweds. Citing the booklet, which advised men to marry virgins and find a wife that has a “lower status” than him and discouraged women from working outside the home, Bumin disapprovingly points out that municipalities do not have the right to interfere with the traditional moral values of the natio. He condemns this particular municipality for encouraging marriages that undermine gender equality and disempower women.

Along the same lines, conservative media promotes the idea that marriage should be based on mutual love and respect, mostly through editorial pieces that include views of experts, counselors and psychologists. In 2005, *Yeni Şafak* printed an article by the Directorate of Religious Affairs advising married couples to constantly exchange words of love. In 2010, the newspaper covered a conference on effective communication skills within the family and quoted a psychiatrist that advised couples to show interest in each other and spend time together to keep the love alive in a marriage. Similarly, in April 2013, a full page was dedicated to the family and marriage counselor Serhat Yabancı, announcing the key values of a happy marriage: Be your true self around each other, look at one another with loving, caring eyes, allow no room for physical or emotional violence, accept one another’s faults, apologize and move on, and base the marriage on mutual rights and responsibilities. Finally, in line with the government’s increased focus on family policies starting in 2013, the pious media reproduces the official narrative by promoting marriage and the benefits associated with it. Readers are constantly reminded of the socioeconomic advantages of a married life and the positive impact of having a

spouse on one's health: Marriage reduces the risk of heart attacks, eases recovery from injuries and illnesses, and encourages the adoption of healthier daily routines.

Evde maske takmayın

■Mutlu evlilikte fedakarlık vardır. Fedakarlıklar, karşılıklı ya da fark edilimesi beklenen amaçlar için yapılmaz. Eşler, fedakarlıklarda, kendinden ödün vermezler. Yapabilecekleri kadarını yaparlar. Bu nedenle de yaptıklarımdan dolayı soruşturma işlemekle kalmazlar.

■Mutlu evlilikte bafalara çok önem verilir. Eşler birbirine sevgi dolu bakarak, Gözlerden sevgi ve umut akar.

■Mutlu evlilikte, herkes kendisi gibiler. Madde tüketmek, duruma göre hareket etmek zorunda kalmazlar. Eşler, birbirini okuduğu gibi kabul ettiği için, rahat ve benliğinden davranışlar ve duygular yaşanır.

■Mutlu evlilikte, kadın-erkek arasında eşitlik veya istisnasız savaşçı yoktur. Cinsiyetin getirdiği özelliklere saygı duyulur. Öncelikler anlaşılır.

Farklılıkların da üstünlük olmadığı feni haldedir.

■Mutlu evlilikte şiddet yoktur. Öfke gösteren olursa tüm sorumluluğu alır, karışmadan, dikkatin nedeni olarak suçlanmaz.

EV İÇİNDE İŞ BÖLÜMÜ OLMALI

■Mutlu evlilikte sorumluluklar ve iş bölümü eşlerin yeteneklerine ve güçlerine göre paylaşılır. Başarımlar ya da geleneksel roller kesin değildir. Herkes başarıyı olduğu alanda ön plana çıkarılır.

■Mutlu evlilikte, öfkeler ve benlikler birbirlerine, zannedile ve uygun üslupla ifade edilir. Hata yapan hatasız kabul eder ve özünü diler.

■Mutlu evlilikte, kızca dimesek ya hatasız kabul etmek bir saygınlık göstergesidir. Kimse kızca dimeseyi bir ego veya güçsüzlük olarak algılamaz.

■Mutlu evlilikte hata yapan kızca diler ve geneli alma konusunda sorumluluğu üstlenir. Eşler de birbirinin samimiyetinden dolayı cabuk affedicidir.



Evlilik fedakarlık demektir

Mutlu evlilik, faturaların ödendiği, çocuğun ihtiyaçlarının karşılandığı, iş ve ev sorumluluklarının yerine getirildiği bir sistem değil herkesin kendini **huzurlu** ve güvende hissettiği bir sistemdir

Aliniz, arkadaşlarınız sizin erdemlerinizle ilgilenir. Herkes sizin için birşeyler yapar. Hediye alanlar, destek olanlar, yardım edenler... Hepsi sizin mutlu olmanız için. Evlilik süreci böyle başlıyor işte. Yeni bir hayat, yeni uğraşlar ve en önemlisi sevdiğiniz kişiyle bir ömür geçirmeye başlıyorsunuz. Bu süreçte çok çok önünde "Acaba mutlu bir evliliğim var mı?", "Mutlu evlilik nasıl olur?", "Bütüncül ödenim yeter" gibi sorular çımsilele diler. Ölsün. Aile ve EVLİLİK Danışman Serhat Yabancı, mutlu evliliğin ne olup olmadığını ilginç ipuçları verir.

Yabancı şundan söyledi: Mutlu evlilik faturaların ödendiği, çocuğun ihtiyaçlarının karşılandığı, iş ve ev sorumluluklarının yerine getirildiği bir sistem değildir. İyi bir evlilik, herkesin kendini huzurlu, mutlu ve güvende hissettiği bir sistemdir. Mutlu evlilikte hoş görü vardır.

GÜLER YÜZ GEREKLİ

Her hatanın peşine düşülmez. Eşler birbirinin hatalarını bazen görmesinden gelir, bazen de uygun bir buluşma rahatsızlıklarına ne yaptıkları gerektirir. İfade eder. Mutlu evlilikte güller yüz vardır. Sakalasma, esprili iletişim vardır. Eşler, birbirinin pakalarını almada bir şeyler aramaz. Şakaların kimse ilgisizliğine yormaz. Şakalar ve espriler, karşılıklı saygı veya hassas noktaları tüketme yapılmaz. Evde güler yüz olduğu sürece de gerçeklik olmasın.

"Mutlu evlilikte kimse niyet sorgulayacağı olmaz" diyor Yabancı, "Her yanlışlar hem de eşler, söylemleri de eşlerim de olduğu gibi kabul eder. Duyulan ve görülenler esas alınır. Altmada bir şey aramaz. Bulunulmayan ve şaşkınlık yaratır durumlar da ise bu durum ifade edilir. Kızca yerine açıklama beklenir. Genelde Seven kiskanır" denir ancak mutlu evlilikte, kiskanmak sevginin göstergesi değildir. Çünkü iki taraf birbirine sonuna güvenir. Kiskanmak yerine destek olmak ve salıplannmek vardır" şeklinde konuşur.

Figure 7.20 Full page dedicated to the secrets of a happy marriage by a family and marriage counselor. The picture is worth noting, as it depicts a husband doing housework, breaking with traditional stereotypes of the roles of men and women in families. Reprinted from "Evlilik fedakarlık demektir," 2013, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 23. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.



Evliliğin hem kalp sağlığı yönünden, hem de kalp krizine bağlı ölümleri azaltması açısından kalbe iyi geldiği söyleyen Liv Hospital Kalp Sağlığı Kliniği'nden Kardiyoloji Uzmanı Doç. Dr. Alp Burak Çatakoğlu, evliliğin yararlarından bahsetti. Doç. Dr. Çatakoğlu, "Evlilik hem kadında hem de erkeklerde kalp krizi riskini azaltıyor. Daha önce yayınlanmış bazı çalışmalarda, evliliğin kalp hastalıkları yönünden riski azaltıcı etkisi gösterilmişti ama bunlar daha çok erkek hastalar üzerine yoğunlaşmıştı. Yeni yapılan araştırmalara göre hem kadın hem de erkeğin akut koroner olaya bağlı bir kalp krizi ve ölüm olasılığının belirli oranda azaldığı ortaya çıktı" diye konuştu.

Figure 7.21 *Yeni Şafak* presenting arguments in favor of marriage and reporting on research that revealed that married people are healthier and live longer than unmarried people. Reprinted from "Bekarlık sultanlık değil!," 2013, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 23. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Conservative Arts and Culture: An Unsuccessful Journey

Despite the fact that conservatism in Turkey originated and grew in the cultural realm and was then gradually incorporated into the mainstream political sphere in the 1950s, according to conservatives, culture is the most neglected and unsuccessful area of transformation under the leadership of the AKP when conservatives have the most political power in the country. While the political leaders – specifically Erdoğan – started speaking publicly about the shortcomings of the AKP government in this realm starting in 2016,¹ conservative journalists had long before raised their concerns and criticisms. As early as 2005, *Yeni Şafak* columnist Mustafa Kutlu criticizes how cultural activities such as cinema, music, and theater were transformed into pillars of the capitalist entertainment industry, and calls for the need to penetrate a new lifestyle different from the deleterious effects of this so-called entertainment – one built upon moral, local culture and traditions. Stating that lifestyle and

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- 1 Speaking at the 2016 Presidential Culture and Arts Grand Awards, Erdoğan was quoted in the Turkish media as saying: “I am very sorry that in two areas we just could not have reached the level we aimed to reach. One is education and the other is culture and the arts. I believe we have an obligation to make these two areas our top priority” (“Sadece iki alanda arzu ettiğimiz seviyeye ulaşamamış olmaktan dolayı fevkalade üzgünüm. Bunlardan biri eğitim diğeri kültür sanattır. Bu iki alanı önceliklerimizin en başına çıkarmak mecburiyetimiz olduğuna inanıyorum.”) (“Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Kültür ve sanat alanında kötü taklitler yaptık,” 2016).

civilizations are inherently based on and shaped by religion, he criticizes modern, European civilization, backed by technology, for destroying this core and allowing local and national values, culture, and the true elements of civilization go extinct. Other columnists such as Yasin Aktay (2006) raises similar concerns, criticizing municipalities and local authorities for equating culture with free pop music concerts while in reality the level of true culture and entertainment were inversely proportional. This false perception, often called popular culture, has taken over the true, high culture as a result of the dominance of modernism's over the society.

While concerns about the lack of cultural progress are raised from time to time, heated media discussion arose for the first time in late 2009 in the aftermath of a column by *Zaman's* editor-in-chief Ekrem Dumanlı entitled *Muhafazakar Kesim'de Derin Boşluk: Kültür-Sanat* (A fundamental gap in the conservative circle: Culture and arts). In fact, prior to Dumanlı's column, popular conservative author and *Zaman* columnist İskender Pala launched a series of articles entitled *Kültürel Meselelerimiz* (Our cultural issues), touching on different aspects and problems of conservative circles' approach to culture. For a month, Pala discussed music to theater, cinema, book fairs, the media, the culture-civilization relationship, and the monetization of culture, noting that Turkey's right had fallen short in transforming the cultural realm and fostering artists and cultural ambassadors. Describing culture as the "soft spot" of the AKP government, "in this country, conservatives have become rich, become scientists, and even risen to the political power. But while doing all of this, they have missed their culture (I exonerate very few but high-quality authors, poets, and artists), they could not manage to become artists"² (Pala, 2009a, p. 21), he added. Throughout his columns, he called for a quest within the right to initiate an expansive transformation process of culture and the arts and challenged conservative bureaucrats and capital owners to invest in their future (Pala, 2009b).

While Pala's article series continued, Ekrem Dumanlı, who shared Pala's concerns, published his column which was long-debated, especially with respect

2 "Bu ülkede muhafazakarlar zengin de, patron da, bilim adamı da oldular, iktidar bile oldular, ama bütün bunlar olurken kültürlerini ıskaladılar, (az sayıda ama yüksek kalitedeki yazar, şair ve sanatçıları tenzih ederim) sanatçı olamadılar."

to his mention of the overwhelming presence and dominance of leftist circles over the cultural realm. Like Pala, he warned and called on *Anadolu kaplanları* (Anatolian tigers) to stop being ungenerous to cultural activities and to invest in artists, especially in the younger generation trying to make room for their own voices in arts and culture.

Dumanlı's article sparked a media debate within conservative circles – including among capital owners – which gradually involved the “other side,” as well. Ömer Lekesiz (2009) was one of the first conservative columnists to comment on Dumanlı's article. He stated that before criticizing the indifference of *Anadolu kaplanları* to cultural infrastructure, it is important to first question the attitude of conservatives themselves towards supporting cultural and artistic productions. While it is true that the left dominated the cultural realm, this has more to do with the current kingdom ruling conservative cultural life. Many talented artists, musicians, and actors could not find space to raise their voices because they refused to obey the rules of capitalism and produce work just to sell and make more money. So, the talent is indeed there; the key is to change the system from within to make a true transformation. In a similar vein, Fatma Barbarosoğlu from *Yeni Şafak* highlighted that it is a matter of process and that positive developments were under way, especially when it came to investments in arts and culture with conservative capital (Barbarosoğlu, 2009). *Milli Gazete* columnist Hüseyin Akın shared similar views and commented that the reason for this gap is not a matter of competency but rather a result of conservative's indifference towards their own people, their growing interest in other people's lives, and overwhelming desire to make even more money. He called this void “economic intoxication” (Akın, 2009). Influenced by Dumanlı's column, *Zaman* dedicated a two-page editorial in the next weekend's issue to the comments of various pious artists and conservative capital holders.

Their comments reveal the perception of conservative capitalists towards arts and culture. Asya Bank General Manager Ünal Kabaca, for example, blames the lack of quality artistic production by conservatives, commenting that they have difficulty finding cultural activities to sponsor that “fit their criteria.” On the other hand, film director Mahmut Fazıl Coşkun expresses dis-

appointment in the conservative capitalists for prioritizing short-term commercial success over deeper, more sophisticated cultural production. Boydak Holding CEO Memduh Boydak and Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği or MÜSİAD) President Ömer Cihad Vardan, on the other hand, state that culture and arts are matters of awareness and require a certain level of education and training. They criticize themselves for not doing more and promise to make culture a priority in the long run.



Figure 8.1 *Zaman's* editorial on the perception of conservative capitalists towards art and culture. Reprinted from "Muhafazakar sermaye sanattaki boşluğu doldurabilecek mi?," by Özarslan, S., 2009, *Zaman Pazar*, pp. 6-7. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Dumanlı's article generated interest in the non-conservative media, as well. Prominent columnist Ezgi Başaran from *Hürriyet* newspaper, Nedim Saban from *Birgün*, and Cihat Aktaş from the daily *Taraf* were among the years to comment on the discussion. Başaran (2009) criticized both Pala and Dumanlı

for wanting to foster easily controllable artists, rejected their insistence that art education be “local and national” on the basis that these are out of date, and accused them of supporting and popularizing artists only because of these artists’ Islamic identities even though they are not competent enough to succeed on their own. Nedim Saban (2009), on the other hand, focused on Dumali’s views on the hegemony of the left wing over culture and arts and his call for conservative capitalists to be invested in this realm. Based on the belief that artists grow through pain, he insisted that it would not be enough for the government and pious capital holders to pour money into these artists and activities; in order for conservatives to foster truly successful representative artists, they first need to become the opposition. The reason the left is successful in this realm is their memory of the painful history of the 1970s and 1980s. Cihat Aktaş (2009) was another columnist to share his views on Dumanlı’s column from the other side, commenting that while pious circles have problems expressing themselves in the arts and literature mostly to protect their privacy, their works do not receive the attention they deserve as they are lost between the lines of the vague concept of conservatism.

As this debate continued, another development product a different discontent with the conservative approach to culture to the surface. On 12 December 2009, Istanbul took over the 2010 European Capital of Culture title from Vilnius, and on 16 January 2010, the city formally launched its year as European Capital of Culture with a spectacular opening ceremony that marked the beginning of “about 520 projects, two-thirds of which are related to historical heritage and the remaining to arts events” (“Istanbul launches year Europe Capital of Culture,” 2010).

Conservative media’s discontent with Istanbul becoming the Europe Capital of Culture was first raised with the question of Istanbul was a European city. One of the most vocal conservative journalists on this point is Akif Emre from *Yeni Şafak*. In his column on 21 January 2010, five days after the opening ceremony, he criticizes both Westernists who rejected their own history entirely and desired to be accepted by Western civilizations as well as the conservative power circles that believed that the Ottoman Empire was part of European history. He believes that the latter narrative is as preposterous as the

former, given that it is also an orientalist perspective. He defines the title European Capital of Culture as a “European straitjacket” enforced on Istanbul, which is inherently an Islamic city (Emre, 2010a).

The discussions on this topic became heated and turned into an us versus them argument when Nobel Prize-winning author V. S. Naipaul was invited to attend the European Writers Parliament as a guest of honor as part of the European Capital of Culture program. In 2001, at a book reading, the same year he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, he made critical remarks about Islam. Naipaul accused Islam of enslaving and attempting to wipe out other cultures. “The writer compared the religion to colonialism, saying Islam “has had a calamitous effect on converted peoples. To be converted you have to destroy your past, destroy your history. You have to stamp on it, you have to say ‘my ancestral culture does not exist, it doesn’t matter’” (Page, 2010).

Poet and philosopher Hilmi Yavuz was the first to criticize Naipaul’s invitation in his column in *Zaman*. He was followed by the broader Turkish media including columnists Cihan Aktaş, Rasim Özdenören, and Akif Emre. All condemned the organizer’s decision to invite such a disrespectful person as a guest of honor and called for the invitation to be rescinded. Akif Emre (2010b) leveraged the incident to again underscore that from the beginning, the European Capital of Culture “shenanigan” contradicted the soul of Islam and was managed with an orientalist mind. He heavily criticized conservative authorities that supported the program for their desperate need to get the attention and approval of Western media and culture, which was overwhelmingly made up of leftist-secularist intellectuals. Similar arguments were made by columnists like Hakan Albayrak (*Yeni Şafak*) and Necmettin Turinay (*Yeni Akit* newspaper) as well. Albayrak (2010) criticized those justifying Naipaul’s attendance as an act of tolerance towards multiculturalism, while Turinay (2010) pointed out that this debate itself revealed an internal degeneration within conservatives. Following the media backlash, Naipaul was pulled from the writers’ conference, and conservative media welcomed the development.

KİBARCA 'GELME'

Müslümanlara hakaret eden İngiliz yazar Naipaul'un İstanbul'a "onur konuğu" olarak davet edilmesine yazarların tepkisi sonuç verdi. Avrupa Kültür Başkenti Ajansı, Naipaul'un çalıştığı ajansa durumu iletip davetin iptalini teklif etti. Naipaul'un de teklifi kabul ettiği öğrenildi. Ajans, yazarın onur konuğu olarak geçtiği bülteni ise yeniden düzenledi.



Cihan Aktas

İlk uçakla oradayım

Naipaul'e yapılan davetin iptal edilmesinin ardından, daha önce toplantıya katılmayacağını açıklayan yazar Cihan Aktas da kararını değiştirdi. İran'da bulunan Aktas, Yeni Şafak'a yaptığı açıklamada, "Yarın ilk uçakla Türkiye'ye dönüyorum. Sunumumu yapacağım" dedi. Organizasyonda yaşanan krizi "kansızlığa" bağlayan Aktas, "Dijital Çağ'da Edebiyat" ana başlığı altında tebliğini sunacak. Naipaul davetine tepki gösterip toplantıya katılmayacağını açıklayan yazar Beşir Ayvazoğlu'nun da toplantıya katılması bekleniyor. Yazar İskender Pala ise Naipaul'un toplantıda özür dilemezse tebliği sunmayacağını açıklamıştı.

İSTANBUL

İstanbul 2010 Kültür Başkenti Ajansı'nın destekleriyle düzenlenen Avrupa Yazarlar Parlamentosu, eserlerinde Müslümanlara hakaret eden Hint asıllı İngiliz Yazar Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul olmadan başlayacak. Müslümanlara "parazit" diyerek hakaret eden İngiliz yazarın, ajansın girişimleri sonrasında toplantıya katılmama kararı aldığı öğrenildi. Naipaul'un, Yazarlar Parlamentosu'na "onur konuğu" olarak davet edilmesine aydın ve yazarlardan gelen tepkiyi ilk kez Yeni Şafak manşetine taşımıştı.

AJANS 'LÜTFEN' DEDI

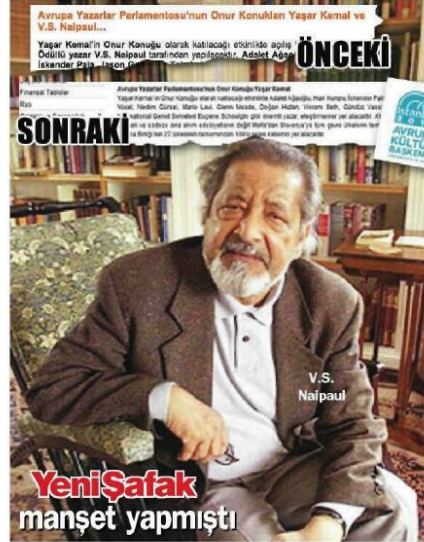
Kamuyuundan yükselen tepkiler üzerine Nobel Ödüllü Naipaul'un "onur konuğu" olarak çağrıldığını açıklayan ajans yönetimi önceki gece yaptığı toplantıda, yazara yapılan davetin iptal edilmesine karar verdi. Organizasyon yetkilileri, çözüm olarak Hint asıllı İngiliz yazarın toplantıya gelmesi durumunda önce konuşma yapmamasının uygun olacağına karar verdi. Buna göre bugünkü etkinliğe katılacak yazara "Nazik bir iletişim dili" kullanılarak konuşma yapmaması teklif edilecekti. Ancak tepkileri dikkate alan 2010 Ajansı, Naipaul'un çalıştığı ajansa durumu iletip, davetin iptal edilmesini teklif etti. Naipaul'un de teklifi kabul ettiği öğrenildi.

O BÜLTEN DE DEĞİŞTİ

Kült Artistic Reflex tarafından içeriği belirlenen, İstanbul 2010 Avrupa Kültür Başkenti Ajansı'nın desteğiyle gerçekleştirilen Avrupa Yazarlar Parlamentosu ile ilgili basın bülteni de değiştirildi. 2010 Ajansı yetkililerinin, bültende "Onur konuğu olarak geçmiyor, haberler hayal mahsulü" şeklindeki açıklamasına rağmen bültenin yeniden hazırlanması dikkat çekti. Bültünde "Onur konukları Yaşar Kemal ve Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul..." ifadesi yerine, "Avrupa Yazarlar Parlamentosu'nun Onur Konuğu Yaşar Kemal" başlığı kullanıldı. Naipaul'un adına ise yeni bültünde yer verilmedi.



O. Turan



İngiltere'nin Nobel ödülü alması yaşanan tek yazar olan Naipaul'un Türkiye'deki davete gelmeyeceğine ilişkin haberler, ilk kez dün İngiliz basınında yer aldı. Önceki gün Evening Standard gazetesi, internet baskısında Naipaul'un Türkiye'ye gelmeyeceğini yazdı. Haber dün sabah saatlerinde doğrulandı ve resmi olarak Naipaul'un İstanbul'a gitmeyeceği duyuruldu. Yazar Hilmi Yavuz, kitabında Müslümanları "parazit" gibi ifadelerle suçlayan, Cemil Meriç'in "Allah'ın belası" dediği Naipaul'un İstanbul'a onur konuğu olarak davet edildiğini ilk kez köşesinde yazmıştı. Yeni Şafak yazarı Salih Tuna da köşesinde tepkisini dile getirmişti. Yeni Şafak 21 Kasım'da Naipaul davetine tepkileri manşetine taşımıştı.

Figure 8.2 Media celebrating the withdrawal of Naipaul's invitation. Reprinted from "Kibarca 'gelme,'" by O. Turan, 2010a, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 11. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Two years after the European Capital of Culture debacle, the conservative art and culture debate resurfaced again in March 2012 when the general secretary of the presidency of the republic, Mustafa İşen, stated in a meeting that his government had a responsibility to form the structure and basis of conservative art ("Muhafazakar sanatın yapısını oluşturmalıyız," 2012). This statement came after İskender Pala's column criticized a play performed at the Istanbul City Theatre, *Daily Obscene Secrets* by Marco Antonio de la Parra, for being exhibitionist, obscene, and banal (Pala, 2012a). Pala's column sparked a heated public and political controversy, and the play was eventually removed from

the program after seventy performances. In the aftermath of this debate, Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş “amended the regulations of the City Theaters, which are run by the Metropolitan Municipality, to increase the influence of civil servants in selecting the repertoire and to better control the artistic content of the theater” (“Turkish Prime Minister’s bid to privatize theaters,” 2012). Despite numerous protests by actors and actresses if the theatre community, then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan applauded the decision and proposed to “privatize all of Turkey’s state-run theatres, and to remove all of their funding” (McCall, 2013, p. 252).

Sabah columnist and art critic Hasan Bülent Kahraman was one of the first media representatives to share his opinion. He gave an interview to *Akşam* newspaper about the debate and his view on conservative arts and culture. Beginning by pointing out the differences between the understanding of conservatism in Turkey and in Europe, he states that Turkey’s mistake comes first from its ambition to regulate, arrange, and control the conservative realm – a side effect in a society the ties with its cultural history of which were cut in a traumatic manner. He believes that what is being created in the name of conservative art in Turkey is nothing more than imitative. For conservatives in Turkey, the West is still the primary cultural window; hence, in Turkey, a liberal rather than conservative perspective is being formed. The way for the society to create its own cultural *sonderweg* is to establish the classics as a make guiding light, update and internalize them and make peace with cultural accumulation (Tatlıpınar, 2012).

Two days after Kahraman’s interview, a leading figure of the debate, İskender Pala (2012b), published a column with the sensational title *Muhafazakarın Sanat Manifestosu* (The art manifesto of a conservative). Pala begins by celebrating the fact that in this era, the Turkish society is demanding to learn more about culture and the arts and in which there is discussion of what conservative art actually means – though he finds the definitions limiting. Defining a conservative as someone who is dedicated to national and moral values, works and traditions and wants to protect, sustain and maintain them, he draws up a twenty-bullet-point manifesto. The intent is not to define “conservative art” but rather to define art as a conservative (p. 25). He summarizes the conservative perception of arts and culture.

1. Conservative art is the aesthetic dimension of the efforts of a society, whose ties with the past were cut traumatically, to bond and reconcile with its true self.
2. Conservative art originates from the society's own identity and is made visible in its heart.
- ...
6. Conservative art is civilian; it opposes government control. It favors government support not as a "boss" but as a sponsor.
7. Conservative art is not religious art, but it definitely considers religious sensitivities.
8. Conservative art does not fight with the public. . . . For example, it is against vilifying Islamic values in a society where the majority of the population is Muslim.
- ...
12. Starting from the principle that the classics are always open to re-interpretation, conservative art tries to reinterpret and reproduce rather than repeat or imitate classical art and culture.
- ...
14. Conservative art stays a step ahead of the Western artists that try to explore our geography's productions and supports producing what is ours first, in same quality.
- ...
17. Conservative art is a perception of civilization and aims to produce a balanced qualitative-quantitative civilization from a rich historical, cultural legacy.³ (Pala, 2012b, p. 25)

3 "1. Muhafazakâr sanat (MS), geçmişiyile bağları travmatik biçimde koparılmış bir toplumun öz benliğiyle barışma çabasının estetik boyutudur.
2. MS, toplumun kendi kimliğinden kaynaklanıp bağrında görünür kılınan sanattır.
...
6. MS, sivildir; devlet eliyle kontrole karşı çıkar, devletin patron değil sponsor olarak katkı sağlamasından yanadır.
7. MS, din eksenli bir sanat değildir, ama dini duyarlıkları mutlaka dikkate alır.

Pala defines conservative art through discursively constructing the other. He details what conservative art is by criticizing the policies of the republican revolution, the orientalist perception dominant in arts and culture, and the derogatory attitude of liberals towards the artistic production of conservatives.

Pala's views on conservatism and conservative art are also echoed by *Sabah* columnist, academic, and historian Şükrü Hanioglu. Hanioglu, too, believes that the debate lies fundamentally in the conceptualization of conservatism, which is – contrary to the common belief – is not the antithesis of the West, is also a modern phenomenon and cannot be solely understood with tradition. Conservative art needs to signify continuity, reinvent itself, and remain aligned with the prevailing zeitgeist. “Unless this culture is reinvented, it is impossible to revive just by protecting the form. In a society where people think they create ‘conservative art’ by protecting tradition through using ancient words, it is not ‘tradition’ but only the shape of it that is protected,” he adds⁴ (Hanioglu, 2012).

Another conservative figure that supports these arguments is columnist Taha Akyol (2012) from the mainstream daily *Hürriyet*. He maintains that there can indeed be such thing as conservative art. He asks whether anyone can deny the artistic abilities of European conservative artists such as Chateaubriand, Soljenitsin, and T.S Eliot. He gives divan literature and Ottoman

8. MS, halk ile kavga etmez. . . . Mesela nüfusunun kahir ekseriyeti Müslüman olan bir toplumda İslami değerlere küfredilmesinden rahatsızlık duyar.

...

12. MS, Mehmet Akif veya Necip Fazıl'a kapılanıp kalmadan Nazım Hikmet veya Orhan Kemal'i, Karacaoğlan veya Şeyh Galib'i, Dostoyevski veya Dante'yi vb. harmanlayarak üretim yapma idealini taşır.

...

14. MS, kendi dinamiklerini tükettiği için bizim coğrafyamızın ürünlerini keşfetmeye çablayan Batı sanatçısından evvel davranıp kendisine ait olanı aynı kalitede üretmekten yanadır.

...

17. MS, bir medeniyet bakış açısıdır ve zengin tarih/kültür mirasından dengeli bir madde-mana medeniyetini en gelişmiş biçimiyle üretme çabası taşır.”

4 “Bu kültür yeniden üretilmediği sürece onu biçime sahip çıkararak canlandırmak mümkün değildir. Eski kelimeler kullanmakla ‘geleneğe sahip çıkıldığı,’ bu yolla ‘muhafazakar sanat’ yaratıldığının düşünüldüğü bir toplumda ise “geleneğe” değil, ancak onun “biçimi” yeniden üretilir.”

architecture, ornament, and music as fascinating examples of conservative art, and suggested that republican conservative writers Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Yahya Kemal, and Peyami Safa as the proof of conservatives capable of producing art. He believes that concepts like conservative and secular art are “imagined categories in our heads” (Akyol, 2012).

Hakan Arslanbenzer from the conservative daily *Milat* also contributes the debate by focusing on the issue of form versus tradition. Like Hanioglu, Arslanbenzer criticizes the conservative mentality of reinventing or restoring traditional culture by changing currently available forms or suggesting a few ideological concerns while maintaining the status quo and calling it conservative art (Arslanbenzer, 2012).

Columnists Mehmet Ocaktan from *Star* newspaper and Mustafa Miyasoğlu from the Islamic daily *Yeni Akit* are also among the conservative columnists that join the debate. They both see conservative art as a made-up concept as art has its own unique values. Miyasoğlu additionally criticizes Pala’s loosely drafted manifesto and strongly rejects the concept of conservative art. He believes that conservatism is political rather than an artistic concept and that applying this concept beyond its context would potentially create problems. He states that conservatives have and will continue to have art, but there is no such thing as “conservative art.”

On this discussion, non-conservative media agrees with conservative counterparts that conservative art is a flawed term and that the conservative government has not made progress in this realm. Many key figures from other dailies including Ataol Behramoğlu (*Cumhuriyet*), Murat Belge (*T24*), Murat Bardakçı (*Habertürk*), Kadri Gürsel (*Milliyet*), Akif Beki (*Radikal*) also mention the discussion in their columns throughout April 2012. This bloc rejects the idea of conservative art. Ataol Behramoğlu (2012) and Murat Belge (2012), for example, base their arguments on the grounds that by definition, art and culture cannot protect, preserve, or reject change. Art symbolizes something new, and every artistic production is unique. It is for this reason that Belge rejects the concept of conservative art, but he comments that the content of art can be conservative. Akif Beki from *Radikal* newspaper calls conservative

art a “freaky concept,” while Kadri Gürsel (2012) blames the repressed mindset of conservatives ruling the country for their not being able to progress in the cultural realm.

Debates on terminology aside, these discussions reveal how conservatives in Turkey perceive arts and culture, as well as the fundamental features that they believe it should possess.

First, they presume art and culture to be inherently ideological realms and believe that they cannot be examined separately from ideology and social realities. Rejecting the idea of *l’art pour l’art*, they hold that artists and cultural productions should serve an educational function and should have the mission of reinforcing appropriate traditions and values. Columnist Mustafa Kutlu, for example, occasionally argues that in addition to being convincing, artistic productions should also be useful and effective. Similarly, another intellectual author, Ümit Aktaş, explains in his argumentative book on the relationship between literature, ideology, and poetics:

(Now) we can talk about what art and artists should conserve. Art must conserve its “principles” that will carry it ontologically to the upper levels. I don’t think we should call this conservative art. I believe that it would be more appropriate to call it “traditional art” that arises from a sacred tradition. . . . An attitude that separates principles from reality, beauty from knowledge, knowledge from experience, experience from morality and action, sharia from craft and reality, and that ultimately assumes that art is an independent area liberated from knowledge, morality, principles, and divine inspiration points to an entirely Western understanding of art. This perception does not bring development: It symbolizes sinking deeper and deeper with every flutter.⁵ (Aktaş, 2012, pp. 10-12)

5 “(Şimdi,) sanatın ve sanatçının neyi ‘muhafaza’ etmesi gerektiği meselesine gelebiliriz. Sanat, kendisini ontolojik olarak üst konumlara taşıyacak olan ‘ilkelerini’ muhafaza etmelidir. Bunun adına muhafazakar sanar denmesi taraftarı değilim. Bunun yerine kursal bir gelenekten neşet eden ‘geleneksel sanat’ denmesi daha uygun olur kanaatindeyim. . . . İlkelerle hakikati; güzellikle bilgiyi; bilgi ile deneyimi; deneyimle ahlakı, eylemi; şeriatla marifet ve

The frequently referred-to principles that must be conserved and reflected in art and culture are “local and national” traditions and values. While what constitutes local and national remains vague, in most stories it takes form around three fundamental issues: Ottoman history, Islamic rules and values, and anti-modernism and anti-Westernism.

Despite political power and a theoretical consensus on what kind of culture should prevail in Turkey, conservatives admit publicly that they are not so successful in putting these ideas into practice. In fact, art and culture is one of few areas that conservatives in Turkey admit the inadequacy. Conservative media is also not shy to voice shortcomings in this realm.

But this does not mean that there is lack of effort. Conservative media plays an important role – a pioneering one – in supporting initiatives in this realm. It overwhelmingly promotes artists, writers, musicians, painters, and fashion designers that it believes fit the criteria of local and national (artists that produce Ottoman-themed work and have an Islamic, religious identity). It is devoted to reviving Turkish traditional arts (marbling, miniature, Islamic calligraphy, divan literature, poetry, traditional, and Sufi music) that it either believes are on the point of sinking into oblivion or are not getting the attention they deserve. And it blames the radical policies of the early republic and the deleterious effects of modernism and Westernism for this cultural and moral demise.

These efforts by the conservative media are particularly focused in three areas: Music, literature, and cinema. It places significant importance on music and literature as it sees these as the purest, most local and national forms of art in which the Turkish nation had a long and glorious history. Cinema, on the other hand, is important because it is long seen as the flagship of Western, modern art and as inherently contrary to Turkey’s traditional values; hence, it should be avoided. Conservative media’s efforts on this front focus on breaking this taboo and reconstituting cinema as a conservative realm in which the deleterious effects of modernism can be overcome from within.

hakikati birbirinden ayıran ve nihayetinde de sanatın, kendine ait, bilgi, ahlak, ilke ve vahiyden bağımsız bir alanı olduğu varsayımıyla hareket eden bu tutum tümüyle Batılı bir sanat anlayışını imler. Bu sanat anlayışı, ‘yükselişi’ değil, her çırpınışında biraz daha derine batmayı işaret eder.”

§ 8.1 Literature

Literature is (also) a human destiny. It is a ball of human destiny that is shaped by myths, sagas, folk tales, stories, poems. All of these are mirrors of the human soul. Every society relays the adventure of its soul through these mirrors. . . . A great man of literature is the one who represents the culture and civilization to which he belongs most efficiently and effectively. . . . The most important resources for a man of literature are religion, history, culture and civilization. A true man of literature is one who never forgets the responsibility of his pen and writes accordingly while determining the destiny of his nation.⁶ (Doğan, 2010b, p. 11)

Description by columnist Mehmet Doğan accurately summarizes the conservative approach to literature. As in all other art forms, conservative circles attribute significant moral and cultural responsibility to literature and equate a true literary work with those that master a nation's cultural canon. In other words, literary productions are evaluated and reported in the media based on their ability to express national and local traditions, culture, and values.

Based on this premise and starting from the argument "there can be no civilization without literature and no literature without civilization" (Gürdoğan, 2010), conservative media focuses on literature that promotes historical books and those that criticize modernism and Western culture, introduces the conservatives of the new republic as the representatives of local literature, and popularizes poetry as the highest, most local form of literature.

6 "Edebiyat (da) bir insan yazgısıdır. Efsaneleri, destanları, masalları, hikayeleri, şiirleriyle çizilen bir insan yazgıları yumağıdır. Bütün bunlar, insanlığın ruh aynasıdır. Her toplum, kendi ruhunun macerasını bu aynalarda aksettirir. . . . Büyük edebiyatçı, mensup olduğu kültür ve medeniyeti en yetkin ve en etkin seviyede temsil eden yazardır. Din, tarih, kültür ve medeniyet bir edebiyatçı için en önemli kaynaktır. Kendi milletinin yazgısını belirlerken, kaleminin sorumluluğunu hiç unutmayan, yazılarını ona göre kaleme alan adamdır, gerçek edebiyatçı."

8.1.1 *Ottoman Novels against Vampires: Reviving a Glorious History and Culture through Literature*

Conservative media is the most articulate supporter of the government's efforts and policies to revive Ottomanism in the cultural realm. It shares the AKP's fascination with Ottoman history and supports its subtle yet expeditious cultural revisionism and its glorification of the Ottoman past. In addition to extensive coverage of Ottoman-themed festivals, fashion shows, movies, and television series, conservative media also encourages the empire's cultural rehabilitation through books that shed light on the unknown glory of Ottoman history. Semi-academic studies that uncovered the culture, politics, and bureaucracy in everyday Ottoman life as well as biographies of sultans and other key figures in the empire are extensively covered. Books that challenge or rewrite the well-established narratives of official republican history gain significant media attention.

Abdülhamid'in doktoru ajandı

Tarihçi Dr. Hüseyin Özdemir daha evvel kalp krizinden öldüğünü açıkladığı Abdülhamid'in bu kezde özel doktorunun ajan olduğunu belgelerle sunuyor ve pek çok gayri müslim komiteci doktorun da çift taraflı ajan olduğunu belgeliyor.



Abdülhamid'in veremden değil, kalp krizinden öldüğünü, yazdığı kitapla ortaya koyan tarihçi Dr. Hüseyin Özdemir, şimdi de daha ileri bir araştırmaya imza atarak Abdülhamid'in özel doktorunun ajan olduğunu 'Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bürokrasi' adlı kitabında belgelerle kamuoyuna sunuyor. Tanzimat ve Islahat fermanlarıyla Osmanlı bürokrasisi içerisinde gayrimüslimlerin hâkimiyet kazandığını ve en sağlam yer zannedilen II. Abdülhamid Han'ın yanbaşımda bile ajanların cirit attığını belgelerle ortaya koyan Özdemir, Mavroyani Paşa' yı bir örnek olarak ele alıyor. Özdemir araştırmasında şu sözlere yer veriyor: "1902 yılına kadar Mavroyani Paşa Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in özel hekimiydi.

Saray doktoru olarak V. Murad'ın da doktoruydu.

KOMİTEÇİ DOKTORLAR

Dr. Mavroyani tarihçilere göre çift taraflı ajandı. Tanzimat sonrası Osmanlı bürokrasisini belgelerle inceleyen bir araştırmacı buna çok da şaşırılmaz. Müslüman memurların nasıl geri plana itilip aşağılandığını, gayrimüslim memurların da nasıl en yüksek mevkilere, en gizli yerlere ulaşabildiklerini biraz araştıran görür. Gabriel Noradonkyan adında bir Ermeni komitecisi Hariciye Nazırı yapılır da Saray doktorları, gizli polis müdürü niçin ajan, komiteci olmasın? Bunun bariz bir misali Mavroyani'dir." ©AYFER MALLI - ANKARA



Figure 8.3 A research book review by *Yeni Şafak*. The book reveals that Sultan Abdulhamit's doctor was a spy. Abdulhamit is a hateful, autocratic, pan-Islamist ruler in the official republican history. He is one of the Ottoman figures being reinterpreted in the AKP period as a misunderstood, visionary that made a mark on near history. Reprinted from "Abdülhamid'in doktoru ajandı," 2013, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 19. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Novels taking place in Ottoman times are welcomed, especially when written by popular writers. When Elif Şafak's *The Architect's Apprentice* hit the shelves in late 2013, for example, *Yeni Şafak* published a full-page interview with the popular novelist focusing extensively on the book's plot, the construction of Istanbul in the sixteenth century by the Ottoman architectural mastermind, Mimar Sinan. Interview questions focused on why she chose to write a novel set in the Ottoman Empire and her thoughts on the Ottoman history. Both the

headline and the respective subtitles in the Sunday supplement highlighted this theme. The front page snippet read, “There are many things about the Ottoman Empire that warm my heart,” and the full-page coverage used the caption, “I am a daughter of this soil, I will surely write about the Ottomans” (Solak, 2013, p. 1, 7).



Figure 8.4 Reprinted from “Osmanlı’da kalbimi ısıtan çok şey var,” by H. Solak, 2013, *Yeni Şafak Pazar*, pp. 1, 7. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Regardless of the writer or genre, books related to Ottoman history that are promoted in conservative, mainstream dailies have one thing in common: They glorify – and do not criticize – the Ottoman system. Books that argue negatively about the empire or the sultans or that question the reasons behind their fall do not get exposure in conservative media.



Sultan Vahideddin'e 'hain' demek büyük haksızlık

1922 Kasım'ında sürgüne gönderilen son Osmanlı padişahı Vahideddin'i anlattığı kitabı 14. baskısını yapan Yılmaz Çetiner'e göre Vahideddin'e 'hain' demek büyük haksızlık. Yazar, 'resmi tarih böyle dese de sivil tarih aksini belgeler' diyor.

■ ÖMER ÇAKKAL

Son Padişah Vahideddin kitabının yazarı gazeteci Yılmaz Çetiner, Türk basınının duayenlerinden. Mesleğe 1940'de başlayan Çetiner, yıllarca dünyanın sonurlu bölgelerinde görev yaptı. Kızıl Çiğir lideri Mao'nun da aralarında olduğu dünya liderleriyle röportajlar gerçekleştirdi. Yanında yetiştirdi, her ikisi de 150'lüklerden olan Tank Mümtaz Göztepe ve Refiğ Cevat Ulunay'dan ötürü yakın tarihe ilgisizlenen Çetiner, okuduğu kitapların ve saltanat ailesinin varisleriyle yaptığı görüşmelerin neticesinde 1993 yılında Son Padişah Vahideddin kitabını kaleme aldı. Milliyet'e yazan Çetiner'in kitabının 14. baskısı geçtiğimiz günlerde Epsilon Yayınları'na yapıldı. Çetiner'e göre yakın tarih, uzun bir dönem mübaleğat, belgelere dayanılmadan yazıldı.

Kitabınız yayımlandığı 1993'ten bu yana 14 baskı yaptı. Son baskıyla eklemeler oldu mu?

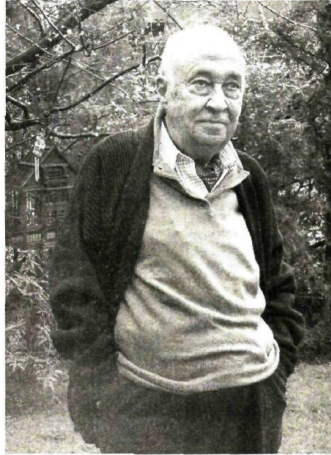
Anlatılan olayların gödişatını değiştirecek bir eklemeler olmadı. 14. baskıya yaptığım en önemli eklemeler Sultan Vahideddin'in Hicaz'da yazdığı Risalesi. İlginçtir, Sultan bu risalede tarihin akışını değiştiren olayları kendi gözünden yorumluyor, bazı konuları aydınlatıyor.

Önceki baskı kapaklarında genç Vahideddin fotoğrafı varken yeni baskıda fonda kadınlar olduğu halde ihtiyar Vahideddin fotoğrafı kullanılmış. Bu seçimin neyin işaret?

Ben Neslişah Sultan da dahil hepsine sordum. Saraydaki hayatınız nasıldı, herkes hatırlar mıydı, başlarız örtülü müydü, diye. Dediler ki baba: "Bizim saygımız Viyana Sarayı gıyıldı. Paris ne gıyorsa, bir hafta sonra burada da onlar gıyıldı." Bunu vurgulamak istedim. Sürgün yıllarında bile saltanat ailesinin yaşantısı bambaşka. O kadar ısraf var ki, para yetiştiriyor.

Resmi tarihin sorgulanması istediği, Latife Hanım'ın mektuplarının açılmasının gündeme gelişyle bir kez daha ortaya çıktı. Ne dersiniz, sivil tarih araştırmaları söğük resmi tarih öğretilerinin yerini alacak mı?

Bu işin ne olacağı daha belli değil. Ama insanların tarihi, sivil kalemle öğrenmek istediği doğru. Bugüne kadar tarih, belki de şartlar oyle gerektirdiği için çoğu kez mübaleğat, belgelere dayanılmadan yazıldı. Vahideddin'in ihanetle suçlamak çok ağır. Şartları hazırlayıp Mustafa Kemal'i Anadolu'ya gönderen de Vahideddin; ama devletin çöküşünü durduramama da Vahideddin.



'Şahbaba bu işin şahbabası'

Evinde görüştüğümüz Yılmaz Çetiner, yakın tarihin artık sivil araştırmalardan öğrenildiğini söylüyor ve sözlerine sunu ekliyor: "Bunu lütfen yaz. Murat Bardakçı'nın 'Şahbaba' kitabı bu işin şahbabası. Çünkü Şahbaba bütün bilim adamlarına da tarih öğrencilerine de çok büyük malzeme sunar. Ailenin sandığını falan verdiler çünkü ona. O da hakikaten çok çalıştı. Benim kitabım onun kitabının bir özeti değil ancak."

Abdülhamid 'kızıl sultan', Vahideddin 'vatan haini' olarak anlatıldı yıllar yılı. Oysa kitabınızda vatan haini bir Vahideddin'e karşı karşıya değiliz...

Yapanların hepsi ölmüş gitmiş. Ben derim ki Vahideddin'e hain demek haksızlık. Zira hain olmadığını gösteren belgeler var ortada. Tanrıman idian kaman çıkardı. Mustafa Kemal hakkında. Ama bu idamı geçemediğimizi belli. Haini yerine talihsiz ve acizdi demek daha uygun. Hastaydı da zaten ciğerlerinden.

Sultan Vahideddin'in sefalet dolu bir hayatı mahkum bir halde yalınca memleketlere sürgüne gönderilmesine Rauf Orbay, Refet Bele ve Kazım Karabekir gibi önceki saltanat ve hilafete karşı daha üst düzey pa-

şalardan tepki gelmedi mi?

Allah rahmet eylesin. Rauf Orbay'ın böyle hataları var ki. Rauf Orbay, Refet Bele, Ali Fuad Paşa ve Atatürk'ün olduğu bir toplantıda saltanat ve hilafeti coşkuyla savunurken, kısa bir zaman sonra saltanatın kaldırıldığını mecliste vekillere coşkuyla duyuruyorlar. Ben anlamadım bu işi. Refet Paşa üç gün önce padişahın eteğini öpüyor. Ama sonra Mustafa Kemal'in yanındadır.

Sizce yeni Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, Osmanlı mirası olan Osmanlı'nın ailesine haksızlık etti mi? Vahideddin ve ailesi İstanbul'da yaşamasına devan ettirilebilir miydi?

Hayır. Sonuçta bu bir ihtilal. Ülke dört bir yandan işgal edilmiş. Eğer Osmanlı aile İstanbul'da kalsa, ikinci gün ikilik çıkacaktı. Peki bu kadar ağır ceza verilmesi miydi sorusuna cevabım şu olur: Ben bir insan olarak çok üzülüyorum ailenin sürgüne gönderilmesine. Bu çok ağır bir şeydir.

Figure 8.5 Another example of reinventing the republican narrative of the Ottoman Empire. The article features the author of research on the last Ottoman Sultan, Mehmet VI, claiming it is unfair to call him a traitor for not supporting M. Kemal Atatürk – a narrative that dominates the official republican history. Reprinted from "Sultan Vahideddin'e 'hain' demek büyük haksızlık," by Ö. Çakkal, *Yeni Şafak*, 2005, p. 18. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Another theme among books promoted in the conservative media is nostalgia for the past, especially for old Istanbul. This fascination is in fact related to the "Ottomanization" theme mentioned above. As Bartu (1999) suggests, in their

attempts to revitalize the Ottoman past, “everything Ottoman becomes a symbol of Islamic ideology and can be utilized as a powerful political tool to challenge the Turkish secular enterprise Istanbul, the glorious capital of the empire, is a key symbol of this revival” (pp. 38-39). That is the reason why in one interview, the renowned conservative poet Memduh Cumhur states that “we have lost the civilization of Islam in Istanbul, and we have to resurrect it here”⁷ (Eker and Hıdır, 2015, p. 90) and why journalist Yusuf Kaplan argues that when Istanbul is rescued, the entire world will also be rescued, as Istanbul is the center of the universe.



Figure 8.6 Interview with Yusuf Kaplan about his works concerning the 2010 European City of Culture activities. Reprinted from “Dünya İstanbul’la kurtulur,” by B. Sönmezışık, K. Sönmezışık, 2010b, *Yeni Şafak Pazar*, p. 1,6. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

7 “Biz İslam medeniyetini İstanbul’da kaybettik, yine İstanbul’da ayağa kaldırmak zorundayız.”

Other newsworthy themes for the conservative media are criticisms of modernism and Turkish nationalist project and real-life stories of the Islamist other: Biographies of the students who suffered under the headscarf ban, victims of the 28 February post-modern coup, and those whose lives were made difficult because of the pressure on religion under the secular republic. Especially starting in the AKP's third term, the number of novels and memoirs focused on reconciling with the anti-Islamism of the republican past significantly increased.



BİR HESAPLAŞMA KİTABI Zamanın Tanıkları

Ülkemizde otobiyografi, biyografi ya da sözlü tarih çalışmalarının eksikliğinden bolca söz edilir. Ne var ki bu çerçevede eni konu düzgün bir çalışmaya da rastlamak pek de mümkün değildir. O nedenle sanki her yeni gün hafızasına format atılan bir toplum misali tarihteki serüvenimize kaldığımız



yerden, yani şimdiki zamandan, devam ediyoruz. Geçmiş dönemin tanıklarından, birikiminden ve tecrübelerinden yararlanmadan, el yordamıyla geleceğimizi kurmaya talip oluyoruz. Ancak şimdikiye kadar bu konuda pek de başarılı olmadığımız, şimdi de takılı kalmamızdan belli oluyor. Halbuki zamana tanıklık edenlerden öğrenecek o kadar çok ayrıntı, çıkaracak o kadar çok dersimiz var.

İSLAMCILIĞA BAKIŞ

Yeni Şafak'ın deneyimli muhabir ve editörü Emeti Saruhan işte böylesi bir boşluğu doldurmaya talip olmuş. Gazeteye yaptığı söyleşileri, tarihe not düşmek daha doğrusu bir hafıza üretmek adına kitaplaştırmış. Son dönemde yeniden yükselen İslamcılık tartışmaları için hem önemli bir kaynak hem de katkı olması açısından kayda değer nitelikte bir çalışma olmuş "Zamanın Tanıkları." AK Parti'nin iktidara gelişi, "Arap Baharı"nın etkisiyle, Fas'tan Endonezya'ya İslamcı hareketlerin ülkelerinde iktidara talip oluşları, bu hareketler ile ilgili yalnızca bölgesel değil, küresel bir merakı da gündeme getirmiş durumda. İşte Emeti Saruhan'ın kitabı, Türkiye özelinde konuyla ilgili önemli bir boşluğu, İslamcılık düşüncesini dendiğinde aklı gelen isimler ve o yolda yürüten önemli düşünce insanlarının sözleri ile dolduruyor.

Gazeteci Emeti Saruhan Yeni Şafak gazetesinde yaptığı söyleşileri Zamanın Tanıkları adıyla bir kitapta topladı. Pınar Yayınları arasında çıkan kitaptaki söyleşiler İslamcılığın dün-bugüne uzanan serüvenini isimler üzerinden ele alıyor.

Geleceğe not düşmek

Kitabı oluşturan 28 söyleşide hem dünya hem bugüne hem de geleceğe dair işaretleri görebiliyor, izlerini sürebiliyoruz. Kitapta konu edinen isimler aslında hem kendileriyle hem de 100 yıla yaklaşan Cumhuriyet tarihi ve onun İslam ve Müslümanlarla ilişkisine dair bir hesaplaşmayı da barındırıyor. Birbirinden dikkat çeken kişisel serüvenler ve hikayeler ile, Cumhuriyetin farklı dönemlerine ve o dönemlere damga vurmuş Necip Fazıl gibi isimlere yapılan göndermeler ile yakın tarih içinde bir yolculuk gerçekleştiriyoruz.

ÖNEMLİ BİR KAYNAK

Kitap İslamcılık geleneğine dikkat çekmesiyle önemli bir kaynak. Ayşe Hümeysra Okten, Fırat Mehmet, Hayreddin Karaman, İsmail Kazdal, Rasim Özdenören, Atasoy Müftüoğlu, Hasan Aycın kitapta yer alan isimler arasında.

Figure 8.7 Reporter Yassıkaya promoting a newly published book on the experiences of Islamist figures that suffered under the policies of the republic. Reprinted from "Bir hesaplaşma kitabı zamanın tanıkları," by S. Yassıkaya, 2015, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 18. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

As with everything else, conservative journalists are critical of the Western influence and hegemony over literature as well. They condemn the popularity of low-quality genres that had taken the world – including Turkey – by storm. The glut of vampires in books and subsequently in films and television shows initiated by the success of the *Twilight* novel series, for example, became a target of conservative media.

Twilight is a vampire-theme fantasy romance series authored by writer Stephanie Meyer. The series consists of four novels featuring the romance of an asocial teenage girl (Bella) with an immortal, 104-year-old vampire (Edward) and her complicated relationship with a young werewolf that ends up with the marriage of Bella and Edward with Bella turning into a vampire herself. The novels were published between 2005 and 2009 and were overwhelmingly popular around the world among younger population, winning numerous awards and breaking best-seller records. Following the success of the series, they were made into movies five times between 2008 and 2012, grossing over \$3.3 billion worldwide.

The first book of the series was translated into Turkish in 2008 and immediately became popular among Turkish teenagers and young adults. The first and second movies were in cinemas in 2009 and were watched by 329,220 and 1,243,754 people, respectively.⁸ Conservative media also noticed this success and touched on the growing trend the weekend following the release of the second film. In her article about how the town Forks, the primary setting of the series, had become a popular tourist destination, Yaprak Aras (2009) from *Sabah* describes *Twilight* as “the novel series by Stephanie Meyer, who introduced the concept of ‘pedophile vampire to fall in love with’”⁹ (Aras, 2009) to the literature. In a similar vein, cinema critic Ali Murat Güven dedicates his column that weekend to the vampire genre with a negative tone. In his commentary entitled *Anti-kahraman Olmaktan Çıkartılıp “Fetiş Nesnesi”ne Dönüştürülen Vampirler* (Vampires were once “anti-heroes” are now turned into objects of fetish), Güven mentions how vampires had been addressed in cinema and literature throughout modern history. He states that in the traditional narrative, vampires are narrated as intriguing but ultimately scary, vicious villains that deserved to die – as immortality is not something to be desired, anyway. But since the 1990s, and especially with the *Twilight* series, vampires are turned into role models that gave young people the message that with gorgeous bodies, charisma, talent, success, a never-ending flow of money, and over-the-top sexual performance, they were living the time of their lives. This

8 Box Office Turkey data, <https://boxofficeturkiye.com/karsilastirma/?karsi=95>

9 “Edebiyata ‘aşık olunacak sübyan vampir’ kavramını getiren Stephenie Meyer’in Alacakaranlık serisi”

change in narrative, according to him, is an unfortunate mistake, as it also leads to an increase in meaningless, cruel violence among teenagers. He then calls on the millennial fans of these vampires not to be fooled by these characters, as they are in fact the unhappiest people on earth. His message failed to get through: According to box office numbers, the final two movies in the series generated even larger audiences with 1,379,487 and 1,417,752 people watching them, respectively, in cinemas in Turkey.¹⁰

8.1.2 *Poetry as the Highest Form of Literature*

Poetry holds a special place in the Turkish conservative thought, partly because conservatives see it as the only form that is truly local and traditional. They regard all other prose forms – especially novels – as new literature genres introduced under Western influence and hegemony. As opposed to these forms, poetry is identified as a communication tool – a “carrier of ideas” (Kutlu, 2013). It is particularly for this reason that conservative media canonizes local and national poets as role models to which the contemporary conservative movement can turn for inspiration.

8.1.2.1 *The Üstad: Necip Fazıl Kısakürek*

Among the intellectuals that influenced Turkish conservative thought, the Islamist-conservative poet Necip Fazıl Kısakürek is by far the figure that has come to the fore during the AKP period. As Taner Timur (2013) suggests, “Necip Fazıl Kısakürek has never been a figure that was ‘misunderstood’ or kept in the background. He was a man of cause and always managed to create a team of devotees. But admittedly, he has never been praised or put forward as a mentor as much as he was [during the AKP period.]”¹¹ Above all others, Erdoğan admires this poet, reciting his poems in public speeches and underlining on every occasion that understanding “Kısakürek is a precondition to understand the great ‘cause’ (‘dava’) that the AKP represents” (Alaranta, 2015).

10 Box Office Turkey data, <https://boxofficeturkiye.com/karsilastirma/?karsi=95>

11 “Necip Fazıl Kısakürek hiçbir zaman bu ülkede anlaşılmamış, gölgede kalmış bir yazar muamelesi görmedi. Belli bir davanın adamıydı ve her zaman kendisine bağlı bir mürit takımı yaratmayı başardı. Fakat kabul edelim ki hiçbir zaman [AKP döneminde] olduğu kadar yüceltilmedi ve bir “mürşid” gibi ön plana çıkarılmadı.”

He and the AKP leadership see Kısakürek as a comrade and his life and ordeals as a guide for themselves and future generations.

In addition to extensive coverage of events and speeches Erdoğan and the AKP devoted to Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and his thinking, the conservative media praises and canonizes him as a legendary cultural leader. He is commemorated every year on his birthday by columnists, new books featuring his life and thinking in are promoted on newspapers, and his cause – especially his understanding of civilization – is covered extensively in opinion pieces and columns. Conservative media admires him for either abandoning his cause nor becoming mesmerized by fame as well as for his courage to express his thoughts even though they contradicted the official narrative. It highlights his criticisms of the West and of the secular republic for deriving from the path of Islam as guidance for future generations. His belief that the new generation has a mission to re-explore Islam is often relayed as a grand mission to fulfill.

8.1.2.2 Mehmet Akif Ersoy and Others

Mehmet Akif Ersoy, the author of the Turkish national anthem, is the second most important figure following Kısakürek that the Turkish conservative media popularizes during the AKP period. Especially since 2010, as the pious media reviews, there is a significant increase in the number of books written about Ersoy's life and thinking, along with the Turkish translations of his poems. Just like Kısakürek, Akif represents a true national intellectual and opinion leader in the conservative media narrative, especially because of his Islamist identity.

Mehmet Akif'in şiiri imanından doğdu

'Mehmed Akif Ersoy, sadece şair kimliğiyle değil birçok yönüyle de örnek bir insan profili çiziyor. Ancak yeterince tanınmıyor, iyi anlaşılıyor. Gazeteci Abdurrahman Şen'in hazırladığı Bir Destan Adam Mehmed Akif Ersoy derlemesi bize Akif'i sporcu, neyzen, camideki şair ve daha birçok yönüyle anlatıyor

SEVİL KUZU

İstiklal Marsı, Safahat, Çanakkale Destanı, imnini Milli Mücadele'ye adanmış şair Mehmed Akif Ersoy'un önemli eserlerinin sadece birkaçı. İstiklal Marsı'nı Türk milletine hediye ettiği için Safahat'ta yer vermediğini söyleyerek, bu marsı bizlere bir emanet olarak bırakan şair Mehmed Akif Ersoy'u anlamaya çok daha fazla ihtiyacımız olduğu şu günlerde önemli bir eser daha şair hakkındaki kaynaklar arasında yerini aldı. Bir Destan Adam Mehmed Akif Ersoy, Abdurrahman Şen'in derlemesiyle önemli bir eksikliği gidermiş olacak. Kitapta, Akif'i yakın dostlarının ağzından dinliyoruz. Çanakkale Zaferi'nden sonra daha cepheyi görmeyen Çanakkale Destanı'nı yazan şairi, Doktor İhsan, 'Şiiri imanından doğdu' diyerek özetliyor. Süleyman Nazif ise, şairin bu ilhamını şiiri ilahi olarak tanımlıyor. Abdurrahman Şen'le Mehmed Akif Ersoy'u ve şiiri genç nesile doğru tanıtmaya yönündeki çabalarını konuştuk.

■ Mehmed Akif Ersoy'a "Destan gibi bir adam" cümlesiyle özetliyorsunuz, niçin destan gibi bir adam?

Mehmed Akif Ersoy, bizim gerçek anlamda milli şairimiz. Bütün şairler, edipler eserlerinde kendilerini bahsedebilir. Fakat Akif'te bunu görmüyoruz. Onun sadece dini, milleti, vatanı, hayrati, ilkesi var. Eserlerinde kendinden ve ailesinden bahsetmez. Birçok tanımla-

ma var. niyetim bunlara bir ilave yapmak değil ama sadece Çanakkale Destanı'nı bile yazsaydı, onun için yine destan gibi bir adam diyebilirdik. Milli Mücadele için yaptığı fedakarlıklara bakıldığında insanüstü yaşantısı, idealistliği, yazdıklarıyla ve yaşadıklarıyla destan gibi bir adam var karşımızda. O yüzden kitabı bu isimle verdim.

■ Kitabınızda Akif'i yakın dostlarından okuyoruz. Mesela, Doktor İhsan 'Akif'in şiiri imanından doğdu' diyor.

Evet, onu iyi kavrayabilmek için hakkındaki önemli kaynaklara ulaşmak gerekiyor. Bunlardan en önemlisi yakın çevresinin hakkındaki düşünceleri.

Akif'in şiiri imanından doğdu deniyor, çünkü o zamanın önemli şairlerini Çanakkale Sevası sonrasında Çanakkale'ye götürüp oraları gezdiriyorlar ki Milli Mücadele rubunu anlatılabilsinler diye. Ama bu rubu, Çanakkale cephesini geçmeden Necid çölüne gidiyor orada Mehmetçik'le yapıp kalkan Akif'ten öğreniyor. Süleyman Nazif onun için diyor ki 'Bu ancak şiiri ilahi olabilir, bu normal

bir şair ilhamıyla yazılmaz' diyor. Bu imnün ora başka birşey yazdırıyor.

SAFAHAT VE MODERN ŞİİR

■ M. Akif, "Dil çok önemli, dilde şive de önemli" diyor, ama bizler Osmanlıca'na da yeterince değinmediği bir toplumda yaşıyoruz. Dolayısıyla onun şiirlerini de tam olarak anlayamıyoruz.

Mehmed Akif, 'sokak ve katbe ağzını aruz gibi şiire sokan adam' diye tanınır aynı zamanda. Safahat'ta modern şiirin çok güzel örnekleri var ama, onu aruzla yazmaz. Her Türk gencinin Safahat'ı okumaya, anlamaya ihtiyacı var. Akif'i tam okuyan bir toplum değildir. Safahat herkesin evinde vardır, çünkü çok satılan bir kitap ama acı okuyan çok az. Safahat'ın bütün olarak okunduğunu zannetmiyorum. Dilin gerçeğe olarak gösteriyorlar. Bu aynı bir eksiklik, ikincisi o iddiamız elimizden alındı. Çünkü son yıllarda Akif'e ilgili çok ciddi kitap çalışmaları var, Safahat'ı günümüz Türkçesiyle şiirleştirerek, yama orijinallerini de koyarak yayınlamalar. Okuyanlar anlaşılmayan kelimeleri araştırıp öğrensinler, onun ne demek istediğini anlasınlar.

Onu doğru anlamak da önemli değil mi?

Evet, bu toplum olarak ayrı bir eksikliğimiz. İyi ya da kötü niyetle, bazı taraflarını gözardı etmiş olabiliriz. Yazar kitlesi bile Akif'in nesirlerini okumuyor, halbuki nesirlerinde güncel cevap verecek çözümlerimiz, anlatımlarımız var. Akif'in Sebiller'ine de değeri olduğu okuyuların tarafımızdan uygulanmamış ya da uygulanmayan bekleyen çözümler olduğunu göreceğiz.



Üstadın eserleri okunmuyor

■ Mehmed Akif kitabınızda çok yönüyle on plandı. Milli marşımız şair, müderris, hariz, hatip, görecü, ney le özelliklerle meşgul olan bir mükemmellik, baştan bir yüzüdü. Birinci Büyük Millet Meclisi'nde Burdur Mebusu, aruz Türkçe'ye uyarlayan şair, büyük bir fikir adamı ve söyleyiş yazdığını yapan örnek bir insandır, diyebiliriz. Ama bu tanımların bile yetersiz kalabilir.



Akif sinema diliyle anlaşılacak

■ Mehmed Akif hakkında bu kadar az şey yazılan bir ortamda sizin çalışmanız nasıl başladı?

Kitap, 2007 yılında bu yana yapılan çalışmaların ürünü. Bir yandan da İstiklal Marsı'nın kabul edildiği 12 Mart tarihine kadar hazırlık çalışmaları devam ediyor. Benim de bu konuda görevim, hazırlığın yapıldığı çalışma.

Mehmed Akif'in 75. vefat yılında hakkında yapılan önemli eserlerin yeniden yayınlanması, Safahat'ın anlaşılabilir nüshalarının yeni baskılarının bölce

yapılması, halka dağıtılması, Sebiller'deki yazılarının günümüz gençliğine kazandırılması, iyi bir Akif niyetlenmesi yazılması ve bunun Şiiri-Diyadin Tiyatrosu'nda oynatılmasının sağlanması bir film hazırlığı için de aynı zamanda, senaryosu tamamlanmış. Hedefimiz filmi 27 Aralık 2011'e yetiştirmek.

■ Paki senaryoyu nasıl yazdınız, onu her yönüyle nasıl tanımlıyorsunuz?

Bunları düşünüp film hazırlığına başladım. 2 yıllık bir çalışmam sonucunda senaryoyu yazdım. Akif'in hayatını ilaveye ihtiyacı yok.

Figure 8.8 Interview with the author of a Mehmet Akif Ersoy biography. The subtitle comments that Ersoy is an exemplary figure, yet his true value is neither recognized nor well understood. Reprinted from "Mehmet Akif'in şiiri imanından doğdu," by S. Kuzu, 2010, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 18. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Besides Kısakürek and Ersoy, popular literary figures often mentioned in the conservative media include Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Peyami Safa, and Nurettin Topçu. All are regarded as part of a national canon whose genius and thinking are underappreciated (Kutlu, 2010). Books written by or about them are always significantly covered.

Edebiyatımızın kapısını dünyaya Tanpınar açtı

6. Uluslararası İstanbul Tanpınar Edebiyat Festivali, 'Şehir ve Yolculuk' temasıyla dün başladı. 11 Mayıs'a kadar devam edecek festivale yerli ve yabancı yazarlar katılıyor. Festivali düzenleyen Kalem Ajans'ın sahibi Nermin Mollaoglu, Tanpınar'ın Huzur romanının 42 dile çevrildiğini belirterek, Türk edebiyatının Tanpınar'la dünyaya açıldığını söylüyor.

YUSUF GENÇ

Bu yıl 6.sı düzenlenen İstanbul Tanpınar Festivali dün başladı. Festivalin bu yılki teması "Şehir ve Yolculuk". Okullarda ve pek çok kültür merkezinde 11 Mayıs'a kadar devam eden etkinlikte yerli ve yabancı yazarlar biraraya geliyor. Vehbi Koç Vakfı'nın sponsoru olduğu etkinliği düzenleyen Kalem Ajans'ın sahibi Nermin Mollaoglu, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ın eserlerini dünyaya tanıtan isim olarak biliniyor. Mollaoglu, yurt dışında düzenlenen festivallerin benzerlerini Türkiye'de de yapmayı düşündüğünü ve İstanbul Tanpınar Edebiyat Festivali (ITEF)'nin de bunun ilk adımı olduğunu söylüyor. Mollaoglu'na göre fuarların yanı sıra festivallerin de kitap sektörüne doğrudan ve güçlü katkıları var.

TANPINAR, TÜRKİYE'Yİ TANITIYOR

Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ın eserlerinin dünya edebiyatında saygın bir yeri olduğunu belirten Mollaoglu, "Tanpınar, benim en sevdiğim yazarlardan birisi. Birçok ülkeye ilk önce Tanpınar'ın eserlerini sattık. Amerika'ya da Rusya'ya da, Hindistan'a da sattık. Tanpınar Tamil diline bile çevrildi. Bizim için kapı açan bir isim" diyor.

HUZUR ERMENİÇE'DE

Bu yıl altıncısı düzenlenen Tanpınar Edebiyat Festivali'nin hem Tanpınar'a hem de Türk edebiyatına doğrudan katkıları olduğunu söyleyen Mollaoglu, ilk başladıklarında Tanpınar'ın eserlerinin çevrildiği dil sayısının yirmi civarında olduğunu, bugün ise 42 dile Tanpınar'ın okunduğunu söylüyor. "Dünyaya Tanpınar'ı öğretirken biz de çok şey öğrendik. Tanpınar'la öğreniyoruz, Tanpınar'la Türkiye'yi öğretiyoruz" diyen Mollaoglu, geçtiğimiz yıl gittiği Ermenistan'da Ermenice'ye çevrilen Huzur romanının büyük bir ilgiyle karşılandığını aktarıyor. Mollaoglu, Tanpınar'ın Türk edebiyatında bir referans noktası olduğunu belirtiyor.



Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar dünyada en çok okunan Türk yazarlarından.



Yabancı misafirlerimiz var

Tanpınar Edebiyat Festivali

Festivali kapsamında dün gerçekleştirilen ve Andrzej Bart, Cem Erciyes, Wojciech

Kuczok ve Zygmunt Miloszewski'nin sunum yaptığı Çağdaş Polonya Edebiyatı başlıklı programın ardından bugün beş ayrı etkinlik gerçekleştirilecek. 'İnsan Unutur' başlıklı programda Andrzej Bart, Ayşegül

İTEF STANBUL TANPINAR EDEBİYAT FESTİVALİ
ŞEHİR VE YOLCULUK
City and Journey
11-14 Mayıs 2014 / İstanbul / Türkiye

Devecioğlu, Douwe Draaisma ve İlnka Parei, Sismanoğlu Megaro'da bir araya gelecek ve bir ülkenin yok oluşu, darbe ya da iç savaş gibi travmatik toplumsal olaylar

bireyleri nasıl etkiler? Öykü zamanının içinde veya dışında bu türden toplumsal ve tarihi olayları dekor alan yazarlar ne türden anlatı stratejileri izlerler? Toplumların hafızası var mıdır? gibi başlıklar etrafında konuşacaklar.

Figure 8.9 “Tanpınar opened the gates of our literature to the world.” Reprinted from “Edebiyatımızın kapısını dünyaya Tanpınar açtı,” by Y. Genç, 2014, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 19. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

§ 8.2 Music

The conservative media approach to music represents the application of the main elements of Turkish conservatism to the perception of art forms: Criti-

cizing the early republican regime and modernization, promoting and encouraging the revival of and art that thrives on local and national values, and denouncing the negative, deleterious effects of Western-dominated popular culture.

Conservative circles prefer the term *musiki* to music (*müzik*) as the former is an older, more traditional word that connotes a spiritual meaning referring to religious, Eastern, traditional roots. Music is seen as the highest form of art, an incredible “harmony of science” (*ilim*)¹² (Çetinkaya, 2016, p.17) made for and derived directly from God, a feature that differentiates it from other art forms. In fact, it is underlined that both Eastern and Western music originated from holy religions. The roots of Eastern music are in mosques and dervish lodges and the Western music originated in churches and synagogues (Eker and Hıdır 2015, p. 13). Conservatives see this as a proof of the indispensable relationship between music and religion. Yalçın Çetinkaya, for example, describes music as a “divine gift” (Çetinkaya, 2016, p. 141) and believes that it is the proof of God’s existence.

Creating an incredibly detailed, magnificent harmony without any discrepancies, deficiencies or mistakes is the cosmic proof that there is one, unique creator, “La ilahe illallah,” the owner of the entire universe and beings, full of endless science.¹³ (Çetinkaya, 2016, pp. 20-21)

Similarly, in the book *Müzik Söyleşileri* (Music conversations) recommended by Ömer Lekesiz in a column in 2016, the renowned conservative flute (*ney*) player Sadrettin Özçimi comments that Islamic “art forms are performed to

12 “The difference between *ilim* and *bilim* is accounted for by academics from Islamic circles as such: ‘We should note first of all that those who talk about a conflict between religion and science refer to *bilim* (science) not *ilim*. *İlim* is a word that connotes “light” and “religion” . . . *Bilim* on the other hand is a composition of darkness and chaos on the basis of its assigned role. While *ilim* is born in us [our land] and has got its essence from us, *bilim* is a product of the West with its rationalism, positivism” (Yasin et al, 1998, p. 61).

13 “Bütün varlık aleminde en küçük bir çelişki, eksiklik ya da hataya yer vermeden ve çok ince hesaplarla bu muhteşem ahengi varetmek, bütün kainatın ve varlık aleminin, muazzam *ilim* sahibi, eşi, benzeri, ortağı bulunmayan tek yaratıcının varlığının yani ‘La ilahe illallah’ın kozmik anlamda ispatıdır.”

serve the Quran, and musiki is seen as a way to fulfill the hadith “recite it [the Quran] with a melodious voice”¹⁴ (Eker and Hıdır, 2015, p. 180).

In line with this view, conservatives establish a direct link between music, civilization, and culture. In fact, *musiki* alone is seen as the sole symbol of the civilization (Eker and Hıdır, 2015, pp. 74, 296). Çelik describes it as the best way to express emotions, history, and culture and the beauties of the past (p. 125). Çetinkaya underlines that musiki has always been an indicator of the society and comments: “Without the values and the culture of living that feeds musiki, it is obvious that there is a problem with the musiki that we took for granted”¹⁵ (p. 290).

The belief in the link between music, civilization, and culture is foremost reflected in the conservative media through promoting traditional Turkish music. Folk music, religious dervish and Sufi music, and arabesque music as well as local musical instruments are highlighted and interviews with popular musicians as well as through the introduction of new books, exhibitions, and albums in those genres. Interviews with pioneers of Turkish music focus on an argument that those musicians’ success comes from the simple formula of embracing what is local and national. Interview coverage almost always reflects this message. The headline of an interview with the inventor of arabesque music, Orhan Gencebay quotes his words: “I did not deny my culture, I broke taboos.” Similarly, a pioneer of the Turkish pop music, Erol Büyükburç, states that his musical philosophy originates from religious Sufi music.

14 “Bizim sanatlarımız kesinlikle Kur’an-ı Kerim’e hizmet etmek gayesiyle icra edilir. Musiki, ‘Onu güzel seslerinizle süsleyiniz’ emri gereğince bir hizmet yolu olarak görülür.”

15 “Musikiyi besleyen değerler ve yaşam kültürü yoksa, var olduğunu zannettiğimiz musikide bir sorun var demektir.”



Figure 8.10 (Left) Interview with Orhan Gencebay. Reprinted from “Kültürümü reddetmedim, tabuları yıktım,” by Ş. Kucur, 2005a, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 21. (Right) Interview with Erol Büyükburç. Reprinted from “Müziğimin felsefesini Mevlevilikten aldım,” Ş. Kucur, 2005b, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 2. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

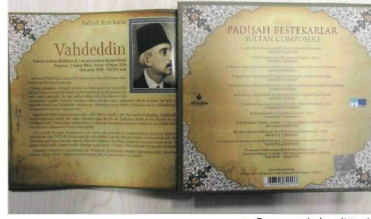
Another way of promoting local Turkish music is tracing the musical traditions of the Ottoman past and reviving long-forgotten musicians and musical instruments (*çeng*, *ney*, *ud*, *tanbur*, etc.). Conservative media occasionally highlights the musical abilities of the Ottoman sultans with the aim to correct the image of orientalist, uncultured, ignorant Ottoman rulers – a public image that, according to them, Kemalists imposed since the foundation of the new republic. In a similar vein, musicians that play and perform unique Turkish musical instruments and sounds are featured in weekend supplements as proof that Western music is not the only source for local artists: They can turn to their rich, cultural roots to create a more local, relatable music that reflects their true selves.

BESTEKA PADIŞAHLAR tek albümde

Bestekar padişahlar, musiki albümünde bulundu. İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür A.Ş. Osmanlı sultanlarından II. Bayezid, IV. Murat, I. Mahmut, III. Selim, II. Mahmut, Abdülaziz ve Vahdeddin Hanlara ait 12 besteyi bir araya getirdi.

İSTANBUL

Sür ve musikiye gönül veren Osmanlı padişahlarına ait besteler, İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür A.Ş. nin, "Osmanlı Türk Müziği Antolojisi" çalışmalarını kapsamında albümleştirildi. Sanatçı "Padişah Bestekarlar" adlı albümde Osmanlı sultanlarının bestelerini Serdar Sengül seslendirdi. 12 bestenin yer aldığı albüm bestekar padişahların hayat öykülerini anlatan 32 sayfalık bir de kitapçık eklendi.



HEM SÖZ HEM MÜZİK SÖLENİ

İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür A.Ş. tarafından hazırlanan albümde 7 padişahın güftelerinin yanı sıra pesrevleri enstrimental olarak da dinleyicinin beğenisine sunuldu. II. Bayezid'a ait Neva Pesrevi, IV. Murat'a ait Hüseyin Pesrev, I. Mahmud'a ait Uşak

Pesrev eserlerine albümde enstrimental olarak yer veriliyor. Albümde güftesi III. Selim'e ait 'Pir Pir Cefa Hoş Dilerdir', Sultan II. Mahmud'un 'Hüseyin Olmadan Mağdur' ve 'Hicaz Kaleşer', Sultan Abdülaziz'in güftesi olan 'Ey Nevbahar-ı Husn-ü An' ile Sultan Vahdeddin'in güftesi 'Mürume Yurdlarımızdan Çıkan Siyah Duman' eserleri seslendirildi.

Tabutuna haciz konan sultan

Güfte ve pesrevlerine yer verilen tüm padişahların hayatına dair ilginç bilgiler bulunduğu kitapçıkta ise ilginç hayat öyküleri anlatıldı. İşte kitapçıktan bazı ilginç detaylar: **Sultan Vahdeddin:** Padişahlığın kaldırılması ve tenkitler nedeniyle yurtdışına çıktı. Birçok teklifi reddedip İtalya'da oturma kararı aldı. Cenazesi Türkiye'den istenmediği için Türkiye'ye getirilemedi. Borçları nedeniyle tabutuna haciz kondu. Suriye Devlet Başkanı cenazeye sahip çıktı ve tabutu Suriye'ye getirtti.

Devleti de yönetim BESTE DE YAPARIM

Sultan Abdülaziz: Başlayan itibarlı sonrasında zorla tahttan indirilip ötürüldü. Oysa bu padişah Osmanlı Devleti'ni dünyada ikinci veya üçüncü duruma getirmeyi başarmıştı. Öktüğünde 46 yaşında olan padişah bestekar, şair ve ressamdı. **II. Mahmud:** Hat sanatçısı olması yanında, şair, bestekar yönüyle de tanındı. Arapça'nın yanı sıra Farsça'ya da hakimdi. **I. Mahmud:** 24 seneye tahtta kalan I. Mahmud, sanatkar yönüyle en fazla "Sabkati" mahlasıyla tanındı. Bu mahlasla önemli eserler veren I. Mahmud 58 yaşında vefat etti. Bir diğer mahlas padişah da **IV. Murad** oldu. Sultan Murad "Muradi" ve "Şah Murat" mahlaslarıyla çok sayıda eser verdi.



Figure 8.11 *Yeni Şafak* promoting a new compilation album of the compositions of various Ottoman sultans. Reprinted from "Bestekar padişahlar tek albümde," by O. Turan, 2010b, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 2. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Müzikal kültürümüzle barışma zamanı

Çocukları içindeki müzik yeteneğini ortaya çıkarmak ve onardaki klasik Türk müzisine olan önyargıları yıkamak için "Seslerin Sırmı" isimli çalışmaya imza atan Yurdal Tokcan ve Feride Koç, müzikal kültürüyle barışık bir toplum bilinci oluşturmak istiyor

Büyük bir merakla beklenen müzikal kültürümüzle barışma zamanı. Çocukları içindeki müzik yeteneğini ortaya çıkarmak ve onardaki klasik Türk müzisine olan önyargıları yıkamak için "Seslerin Sırmı" isimli çalışmaya imza atan Yurdal Tokcan ve Feride Koç, müzikal kültürüyle barışık bir toplum bilinci oluşturmak istiyor

İNCELEME
Klasik Türk müziği dışlanmasından dolayı bir o kadar zorlaşmış. Hala bir emel konuşmaları yapılmış olsa da bu yıl eğitimler alınması ve müzikal kültürümüzün geliştirilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış. Klasik Türk müziğindeki her türlü kayıpların giderilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış. Müzikal kültürümüzün geliştirilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış. Müzikal kültürümüzün geliştirilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış.

BÜYÜKLENERJİ
Klasik Türk müziği dışlanmasından dolayı bir o kadar zorlaşmış. Hala bir emel konuşmaları yapılmış olsa da bu yıl eğitimler alınması ve müzikal kültürümüzün geliştirilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış. Klasik Türk müziğindeki her türlü kayıpların giderilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış. Müzikal kültürümüzün geliştirilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış.

BATIKÜLTÜRÜ
"Türk müziği çok büyük bir değer. Onunla çocukları müzikle tanıştırmak için bir projeye başlamıştık. Çocuklar Türk müziğiyle tanışıyor. Çocukları müzikle tanıştırmak için bir projeye başlamıştık. Çocuklar Türk müziğiyle tanışıyor. Çocukları müzikle tanıştırmak için bir projeye başlamıştık. Çocuklar Türk müziğiyle tanışıyor."



Yurdal Tokcan, Ard Sanat Merkezi'nde ulusal derinliğiyle...

Henüz metot kitabımız bile yok

Öğretmenlerin genelde sınıfın en iyi öğrencilerini seçtiği bir müzik eğitimi yapıyor. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı'nın hazırladığı "Türk Müziği" kitabı, henüz piyasaya çıkmamış. Henüz metot kitabımız bile yok.

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Minyatürlü müzik tarihi...

Minyatürlü müzik tarihi

Minyatürlü müzik tarihi... Klasik Türk müziğindeki her türlü kayıpların giderilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış. Müzikal kültürümüzün geliştirilmesi için çalışmalar başlatılmış.

Figure 8.12 A full page in *Yeni Şafak* dedicated to an interview with a classical Turkish music composer focusing on his criticisms of the dominant Western music and how Turkey's rich, traditional music history is underappreciated. Reprinted from "Müzikal kültürümüzle barışma zamanı," by H. Karaburç, 2014, *Yeni Şafak Pazar*, p. 2. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

8.2.1 *Criticisms of Contemporary Turkish Music*

Contemporary music and pop culture are occasionally criticized in the conservative media for copying a hegemonic, Western music that is compatible with neither the Turkish musical notation system nor social values. The disharmony is explained in an interview with poet and musician Memduh Cumhur as follows:

In the Turkish musiki system, sounds within an octave do not align as the sounds within an octave in the Western music system do. It might not be the best example, but you cannot make tahini halva with cocoa. With cocoa, you make chocolate. If you force tempered sounds of the Western music onto Turkish musiki, it will not be Turkish musiki and neither will it be universal. To become universal, you first have to be very good at the local level so that you can be accepted by everyone. If you imitate world forms, you become a copy-cat. You lose your originality.¹⁶ (Eker and Hıdır, 2015, p. 75)

Western music's incompatibility with Turkish local values is a topic often touched on in conservative media. Western, popular music is interpreted as a style imposed on society in a top-down manner by Western elitists who claim that embracing this alien music is the only way to achieve cultural modernization (Çetinkaya, 2013a). The roots of this "twisted" line of thinking lie in the wrongful policies of the early republican period. Music was used as a tool to consolidative the groundless modernization efforts of the new republic. This so-called music revolution was based completely on rejecting the local and traditional and copying the Western style, ignoring the fact that it is incompatible with Turkey's long-established cultural and musical history.

16 "Türk musiki sistemindeki bir oktav içerisinde yer alan sesler, Batı müziğinde yer alan bir oktav içeriisindeki sesler ile örtüşmüyor. Yani çok nahoş bir benzetme belki ama kakaoyla tahin helvası yapılmaz, çikolata yapılır. Batı müziğindeki tampere sesleri Türk musikisine zorla tatbik etmeye kalkarsanız o Türk musikisi olmaz, evrensel de olmaz. Evrensel olması için öncelikle mahallide çok üstün bir seviyeye geleceksiniz ki onu dünyaya kabul ettiresiniz. Yoksa dünyanın kalıplarını taklit olarak giyerseniz, taklitçi olursunuz. Orijinalitenizi kaybedersiniz."

Batılılaşmayı abarttık ortaya arabesk çıktı



Cumhuriyet'in batılılaşma ilkesini ve Osmanlı'dan kopuşu çok fazla abarttığını anlatan Yeni Türkü Grubu, müziğimizi Türkçe Sözlü Hafif Batı Müziği, Türk Halk Müziği gibi kompartimanlara ayırdığımızı söylüyor. Kültürün dayatılmayacağını altını çizen grup üyeleri, "Yanılıklarının en büyük ispatı arabeskin ortaya çıkmasıdır. Çünkü siz ne kadar dayatsanız da insanlar kendi hayatlarında ifadesini bulan kültürlerini devam ettirmeye çalışacaklardır. Arabesk de böyle bir ihtiyacın ürünüdür." diyorlar.

Figure 8.13 Interview with renowned local band Yeni Türkü. The headline reads, "We've exaggerated Westernization and arabesque music was born as a result." Reprinted from "Batılılaşmayı abarttık ortaya arabesk çıktı," by B. Sönmezışık, K. Sönmezışık, 2010a, *Yeni Şafak*, pp. 1, 4. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

According to conservative media, this top-down cultural reconstruction process failed. On one hand, the lack of moral and spiritual connection with the type of music imposed on society resulted in new musical styles such as ara-

besque music. On the other hand, it gave way to the cultural and moral degeneration that the country is experiencing today, especially among the new generation. One of the largest media discussions on the latter issue concerns the case of Alevna Tilki. In 2016, a sixteen-year-old pop singer Alevna Tilki topped the charts through her single *Cevapsız Çınlama* (Missed ringing), which went viral among Turkish teenagers. But perhaps what made her nation-wide famous is a controversy over her being allowed to perform in night-clubs, an incident which resulted in investigations that put Tilki in the headlines in almost all mainstream entertainment media.

The pro-government media, especially *Sabah*, initiated a backlash against the stardom of Alevna Tilki. It launched an extensive campaign blaming the parents of Tilki for child exploitation, interpreting the situation as a matter of child abuse and a public disgrace. Through referencing specialists, doctors, and other artists as well as regulatory frameworks regarding child labor – and backed by other media channels – *Sabah* consistently covered the issue in the headlines and urged society to rise up. When Tilki was banned from performing in venues with age restrictions, the pro-government media reported the ban as a victory. As Mehmet Yılmaz (2016) from *Hürriyet* comments, it was on the verge of organizing a firework shows in celebration of the ban.



Figure 8.14 Coverage of Ayleyna Tilki in *Sabah*, celebrating her ban from nightclubs – hence the end of child exploitation – twice in two days. (Top) Reprinted from “Kanun devrede Ayleyna güvende,” by O. Toracı, 2016, *Sabah*, pp. 1,7. (Bottom) Reprinted from “Sömürü bitti,” 2016, *Sabah*, p. 1. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Even though the hegemonic Western pop culture and its deleterious effects on society – especially on teenagers – is a major topic of discussion in the conservative media, Western music is not entirely rejected or labeled as harmful or toxic. In fact, at a certain level, Western music is admired and even promoted by the conservative media. To give an example, in 2010, *Yeni Şafak* columnist and lecturer Yalçın Çetinkaya, who is perhaps the most well-known figure with respect to music among conservative circles, was assigned to teach in New York for a brief period of time by his university. In columns he wrote for the newspaper during his time there, he expressed his admiration for the city’s cultural life. When sharing his experience in concert venues like Carnegie Hall or musicals like *West Side Story*, he compared the American and Turkish cultural realms and came out in favor of the former. In one of his columns

on 5 September 2010, he shares his personal story of being fired from his position at *Cemal Reşit Rey Concert Hall* in Istanbul and comments:

In Istanbul, no matter how innovative or important the ideas you have, you first have to convince a few people who occupy certain positions. But in the cultural environments of cities like New York, there are no such complications. Without having any other ulterior motives, managers solely look at the content, quality, and contribution of the project to city culture. . . . That is why New York has become “New York.” Otherwise how could they have discovered a skinny Italian child such as Frank Sinatra or a dark-skinned talent like Louis Armstrong (or many others)?¹⁷ (Çetinkaya, 2010a, p. 4)

Similarly, in the week following this column, he wrote about how seeing *West Side Story* on Broadway during a fast and being mesmerized by the quality of the show. He questioned why Istanbul, a city that has a longer history of culture and arts than New York, could not put on shows of this quality, and he commented that the difference lies in the importance placed on culture and arts by society in general and by municipalities in particular. He argued that in the cultural venues of New York, art is performed for art’s sake – to make art-lovers happy by acknowledging the significant importance culture plays in the development of society.

Another angle from which conservative media discusses Western music is an argument that the music of the Western world actually originated in the East. Again, Yalçın Çetinkaya (2016) has strong opinions about this argument and defends occasionally it in his newspaper and magazine columns. His claim rests on two fundamental assumptions: That important figures consid-

17 “İstanbul’da ne kadar ilginç ve önemli fikir ve projelere sahip olursanız olun, bunları öncelikle birtakım masaları işgal etmiş adamlara kabul ettirmeniz gerekiyor.

Ama New York gibi şehirlerin kültür ortamlarında böyle kompleksler yok. Yöneticiler, başka hesaplara girmeden sadece projenin içeriğine, niteliğine ve şehir kültürüne katacağı değere bakıyorlar. . . . İşte bunun için New York New York olmuş. Yoksa Frank Sinatra gibi sıksa bir İtalyan çocuğunu, Luis Armstrong gibi kara derili bir cevheri (ve daha nice cevheri) kim ve nasıl farkedebilirdi acaba?”

ered to be the founders of the musical realm – including Pythagoras, Confucius, Mevlana, Cüneyd-i Bağdadi – are all from the East and that the most prominent musicians of the Western world such as Mozart and Bach were influenced by the works of Eastern musicians and philosophers. In one of his bylines entitled *Müzik Doğu'dan Gelir* (Music comes from the east), he maintains that the most intriguing philosophies, theories, and melodies were all generated in the East. He states that explaining music through the language of the universe was indeed a practice unique to the Eastern world. Similarly, in numerous columns, he reveals that Mozart and Bach were influenced by Turkish-Ottoman music and the philosophy of Celaleddin Rumi. One interesting column is about Spain's traditional flamenco music and that its roots in fact lie in the East (Andalusia). After giving a long history of the connection and the influence of Arab music on flamenco, he comments “there are a lot of similarities between a flamenco musician's ‘an a kampani’ and a muezzin in Istanbul calling people to prayer. That is why it is hard to say which part is Arabic. But the patterns and the way the sound is used are definitely eastern, not western”¹⁸ (Çetinkaya, 2010b, p. 10).

8.2.2 *What is Acceptable Music?*

Western influence over music in general is a major point of criticism in the conservative media. On occasion this criticism is also directed at how conservatives perform music, as well. In other words, conservative intellectuals also disapprove of where conservative musiki is headed. As music is seen as an integral part of Islam, performed only to understand oneself and God (Eker and Hıdır, 2015, p. 204), they condemn those who generated music for entertainment purposes and particularly the popularization of religious music through media. For example, in one of his interviews (Eker and Hıdır, 2015), conservative intellectual Timuçin Çevikoğlu criticizes the growing genre of contemporary Islamic popular music (green pop) and argues that in the effort to preserve an authentic, religious, national musical heritage and to win over

18 “İstanbul'da namaz için insanları çağıran müezzın ile Flamenko müzisyeninin 'an a kampani'si arasında çok büyük benzerlik vardır. İşte bu yüzden şurası veya burası Arap demek zor. Fakat bezeme, sesi kullanma şekli kesinlikle batılı değil, aksine doğulu.”

a wider audience, green pop is in fact damaging the cultural life of society. Quantity takes precedence over quality, corrupting and trivializing the true essence of traditional, regional musiki.

In contrast with efforts like green pop that, while they retain many musicians from their roots, sound increasingly Western, conservative media proposes the practice of a true Islamic music. It puts forward this Islamic musiki – performed in the name of God, for God – as the healing power vis-à-vis the deleterious effects of popular culture, which it describes as an individual and collective inferiority and vulgarity taking over society (Çetinkaya, 2013b).

The basic qualities of this rightful, acceptable form of music are mapped out in detail by the conservative media. The correct form of musiki is described as “good, just and decent; compatible with natural and moral norms” (Çetinkaya, 2013b). It is a music that takes its inspiration from the Quran and that has a moral duty to educate others and remind them of their religious tasks and duties (Eker and Hıdır, 2015, p. 255). Based on this definition, conservative media rejects church music as it contradicts the basic principles of Islam, but it accepts that other decent and beautiful Western music such as Bach’s cello suites – which were composed independently from the God of the church, as compatible with Islamic musiki. In other words, what musiki ought to be is determined not by the religion of the composer or performer, but their intent and motive. This determines whether the content contradicts the basic principles, rules, and discipline of the religion of Islam.

§ 8.3 Cinema

Conservative circles in Turkey have a relatively new, contested relationship with cinema. In the 1960s and 1970s, in reaction to mainstream Turkish cinema during the boom years of *Yeşilçam* (literally green pine, a metonym used to refer to the homegrown Turkish film industry), Islamist intellectuals began to propose a national (*milli*) cinema as an alternative to the immoral, Western-influenced, degenerate *Yeşilçam* genre. In 1964, renowned Islamic film critic and later director Yücel Çakmaklı published an article in the Islamic journal *Tohum* (Seed) arguing that the mainstream *Yeşilçam* cinema is alien to the social, moral, and cultural realities of the traditional Turkish society; a true

Turkish national cinema culture can only be achieved if the filmmaking industry prioritizes films that reflect and encourage the traditions and values of the Muslim Turk. “Çakmaklı’s call for an Islamic national cinema in the 1960s was followed by others who argued that Muslims should stop seeing cinema as sin and rather use it like a ‘weapon’ for Islamic jihad, holy war, i.e. as a tool of the struggle for propagating Islam” (Kaya and Azak, 2015, p. 261).

Starting in the 1970s, this new perspective on cinema was widely recognized by conservative intellectuals and film makers in Turkey. Starting with Çakmaklı’s *Birleşen Yollar* (Crossroads) in 1970, Islamic cinema pursued a national cinema in the mainstream style, even using popular Yeşilçam stars of the era, as was the case for Çakmaklı’s *Zehra* (1972) starring Ediz Hun and Hülya Koçyiğit, *Memleketim* (My country) (1974) starring Filiz Akın and Tarık Akan, and Salih Diriklik’s *Gençlik Köprüsü* (Bridge of youth) (1975). Despite high expectations, however, these movies did not become popular among the society, and their influence remained limited even within Islamic circles.

The rise of political Islam and its increased visibility in the public sphere after the 1980 military coup revived the discussions regarding the creation of a national, moral, traditional cinema. National cinema, which “entered a period of recession both theory wise and practice wise from 1976 onwards” (Kaya and Azak, 2015, p. 269), was resurrected under the name white (*beyaz*) cinema during the Islamic revival of the late 1980s and early 1990s, a period where “the use of mainstream modern forms to convey the marginal message of Islamism gained momentum . . . in the form of Islamic TV and radio channels, pop music, cafes, holiday resorts and so on” (Kaya and Azak, 2015, p. 265). The success of the first movies in this new period encouraged others to deal with more radical and contemporary issues.¹⁹

When the AKP came to power in 2002, it further promoted these forms that aimed to transform “modernity from within by reconfiguring content

19 *Yalnız Değilsiniz* (You are not alone) and *Sonsuza Yürümek* (Walking to infinity) are examples. *Yalnız Değilsiniz* (1990) focused on the struggles of young Islamic women who were not allowed into universities because of their headscarves – the hot sociopolitical debate of the era. The latter, *Sonsuza Yürümek* (1991), told the radical story of the turn to religion of the daughter in a wealthy, secular family. Both were directed by the leading leading figure of cinema, Mesut Uçakan.

without rejecting the form” (Kaya and Azak, 2015, p. 265), and the party encouraged the emergence of a new conservative culture. The expansion of Islamism into the public sphere, especially through the mainstreaming of conservative media, enabled the promotion of desired forms of popular culture to a wider audience.

At first, this newfound area of freedom created high hopes for the actualization of the white cinema dream. While fundamental points of criticism towards dominant Hollywood genres and Turkish cinema remained the same, conservative intellectuals in the early 2000s heralded the emergence of a moral, national cinema. In a column in September 2006, Yusuf Kaplan criticizes conservatives for failing to develop a language in the cultural realms of cinema, music, performing arts, and architecture. The fundamental premise of the national cinema movement, he claims, was that even though cinema was originated in the West, it is nevertheless just a form of art that can be shaped and transformed in line with your own social dynamics and traditional, cultural codes. He then puts forward director Osman Sınav as a pioneer making that happen in Turkey.

The first decade of the 2000s under AKP rule also saw a momentum in conservative filmmaking industry. Movies *The Imam* (2005), *Takva* (Piety, 2006), *Anne ya da Leyla* (Mother or Leyla, 2006), and *Dabbe* (2006) were promoted and celebrated in the conservative media. When *The Imam*, a movie directed by İsmail Güneş that follows the story of a challenging life of a young IHL student and his path to find his true self was released in late 2005, the conservative media cheered for its success. The screening schedule of the movie was covered in newspapers for weeks, and prior to the premiere, *Yeni Şafak*'s weekend supplement included exclusives with the director and lead actor. Pious columnists including Özlem Albayrak (2005b) and the film critique of *Yeni Şafak* Ali Murat Güven mentioned the movie in their columns. Even though Albayrak criticized the inadequate storyline and mediocre visual quality of the movie, she nevertheless celebrated the movie for “tapping the untapped” and turning the spotlight on the problems of the other that are usually ignored in mainstream cinema. Güven made similar but rather lighter criticisms regarding the quality of the movie and instead celebrated the resurgence of white cinema. He was therefore disappointed by the movie's poor box

office performance. In a column on November 2005, approximately a month after *The Imam*'s premiere, Güven shared his frustration with the fact that the movie had reached only 80 thousand people, while *Maskeli Beşler* (The Masked 5), “the most meaningless movie I have seen in recent years” (p. 11) he commented, was viewed by over half a million in less than two weeks. He blamed IHL students and alumni for this failure and claimed that because of their ignorance, no one in their right mind would now take the problems of IHL students seriously or bother to invest in a movie about them.



Figure 8.15 Ali Murat Güven's column about the poor box office performance of *The Imam*, in which he blames IHL students for not supporting the film. Reprinted from “Ben, seni ve filmlerini seviyorum İsmail Güneş,” by A.M. Güven, 2005, *Yeni Şafak*, pp. 1,15. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Takva and the horror movie *Dabbe* performed better at the box office, perhaps because *Takva* starred the beloved film and theater actor Erkan Can²⁰ and the

20 Can won the Golden Orange for Best Actor and the Asia Pacific Screen Award for Best Performance by an Actor for his role in *Takva*.

latter film was the first serious example of horror filmmaking in Turkish cinema (Lines, 2015). Initial reactions in the conservative media to these two movies were overwhelmingly positive. *Yeni Şafak* nominated *Takva* for best movie of the year and described it as the “painstakingly real story of those who call themselves ‘pious’ while at the same time struggle to reconcile (or make peace) with modernity”²¹ (Güven, 2006g, p. 15). *Dabbe*, on the other hand, was celebrated for being the first Islamic horror movie of Turkish cinema and proving that it is possible to shoot crowd-pulling, local thrillers without being influenced by the dominant, imperialist Western, American horror genre.

As in the case of *The Imam*, *Anne ya da Leyla* was released with the overwhelming support of the conservative media. The director of the film, Mesut Uçakan, a leading figure in the white, national cinema movement, was an important reason for this support and for high expectations in conservative circles.

“Anne ya da Leyla” geliyor

Yönetmenliğini “beyaz sine-
ma” akımının (vaktiyle bu
güzel ve anlamlı tanımlamayı lit-
eratürümüze kazandıran sevgili
Abdurrahman Şen ağabeyin
kulakları çınlasın!) öncü yönet-
menlerinden **Mesut Uçakan**’ın
gerçekleştirdiği “**Anne ya da
Leyla**”, 5 Mayıs 2006 Cuma günü
Türkiye sinemalarında gösterime
girecek. Uçakan’ın 1995 yılında
çektiği “**Ölümsüz Karanfil-
ler**”den bu yana gerçekleştirdiği
ilk uzun metrajlı film projesi
olan “**Anne ya da Leyla**”, yitik
sevgilisini arayan bir genç adam ile henüz



bebekken kendisini bırakıp
giden annesinin peşine düşen
bir çocuğun yollarının Beyoğlu’-
nun arka sokaklarında
kesişmesini anlatıyor. İnsanları
yutan semt Beyoğlu, aslında aynı
kişiyi aramakta olan bu iki yol
arkadaşına da benzer türden
acılı tecrübeler kazandıracaktır.
Fazla söze hacet yok sevgili
Uçakan... Ayrıntılı biçimde
tanıtmak için filminin basın gös-
terimini sabırsızlıkla bekliyorum
ve her zaman için yanındayım.
Yeter ki sen bize böyle güzel ve
anlamlı öyküler anlatmaya devam et...

Figure 8.16 Newspapers celebrating *Anne ya da Leyla*. Reprinted from “Anne ya da Leyla geliyor,” by A.M. Güven, 2006e, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 20. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

21 “Türkiye’nin bir taraftan kendini ‘dindar’ diye tanımlayan, ancak diğer taraftan da moderniteyle ister istemez uzlaşmaya (ya da barışmaya) çalışan insanların ‘sapına kadar gerçek’ öyküsü bu...”

When the film premiered in early May 2006, however, the result was again disappointing. The film was criticized by columnists such as Fadime Özkan (2006), Özlem Albayrak (2006a), and Ali Murat Güven (2006f) for its ambiguous storyline, poor performances by the actors, and bad cinematography. In her column in April 2006, Fadime Özkan expresses disappointment with the movie.

I will cut to the chase: I'm not sure if this 'thing' I watched is a movie. I don't want to hurt anyone, especially not the director who has a long history in the filmmaking industry and who signed his name to many good films, who publishes a magazine called *Sonsuz Kare* that I love, and who returned to cinema after ten years. I have no doubts about anyone's merit and effort, but I have to ask: With its many ambiguities, is the director truly satisfied with *Anne ya da Leyla*?²²

While other critics made similar comments, *Anne ya da Leyla* was nevertheless praised for signaling innovation within Islamic cinema and for being a pioneer of white cinema in the new century.

Despite the shortcomings of early examples of twenty-first-century conservative cinema, the conservative media chooses to see the glass as half full and encouraged its mainstreaming. It rejects the old-fashioned Islamic view that cinema is a waste of time – an evil, sinful, Western-dominated form of art from which the pious community should distance itself. In line with the main premises of the successive national and white cinema movements, the conservative media promotes the idea that cinema is as a contemporary art form the adoption of which needed to be molded by local, religious traditions and values. To provide a framework of how this new approach should come into being, Ali Murat Güven (2009a) drew up a fifteen-point manifesto in 2009 on

22 “Lafı dolandırmadan söyleyeceğim: Perdede seyrettiğim şey'in bir 'sinema filmi' olduğundan emin değilim. Anne ya da Leyla, bunca zamandır sinema yapan, iyi ve cesur filmlere de imza atan, Sonsuz Kare adında çok beğendiğim bir sinema dergisi çıkaran ve on yıllık suskunluğun ardından sinemaya dönen yönetmen başta olmak üzere kimse kırılmasın. Kimsenin niyetinden, gayretinden şüphem yok ama yine de sormalıyım: Bir çok belirsizlik barındıran Anne ya da Leyla yönetmenin içine gerçekten sinmiş midir?”

the fundamental qualities conservative screen writers should possess, summarizing the conservative perspective of cinema. The article starts by pointing out that a conservative screen writer must first believe in the oneness of God and his angles and prophets. He rejects the theory of evolution, trusts in the uniqueness of human beings, and is guided by divine judgements. He supports the promotion of good religious behavior on cinema and actively denounces and fights against films that promote bad, sinful, and morally corrupt values and actions including violence, the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, and the promotion of perverse sexuality including pedophilia, sadism, exhibitionism, masochism, and homosexual relationships. A true conservative canonizes family and traditional religious and local values and his knowledge of cinema goes beyond Hollywood culture. Finally, he demonstrates solidarity with conservative colleagues around the world and supports educational forms of cinema including documentaries, short films, and experimental cinema. Güven concludes his manifesto by stating that these points represent the fundamental values, rules, and concerns any true Muslim interested in any form of art should possess.

Starting in 2010, however, the excitement about and interest in the emergence of a true conservative cinema started to fade. Failure to deliver a successful production and the disappointing box office performances of white cinema films – e.g. *Büşra* (2010), *Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (2010), *Eşrefpaşalılar* (2010), and Allah'ın Sadık Kulu (God's loyal man, 2011) vis-à-vis other local productions resulted in increasing doses of criticism in the conservative media. While “other” local productions were breaking records – the *Recep İvedik* series, *Kutsal Damacana* (The holy carboy), and Cem Yılmaz's *G.O.R.A*, *A.R.O.G*, and *Yahşi Batı* (Wild west) – and the media was celebrating the fact that audiences were increasingly choosing Turkish films over Hollywood, examples of white cinema failed to attract attention. Therefore, after the epic failure of renowned conservative director İsmail Güneş's drama *Ateşin Düştüğü Yer* (Where the fire burns), Ali Murat Güven (2012) announced the defeat of white cinema.

The dark drama *Ateşin Düştüğü Yer* is a road movie about honor killings based on a true story that happened in Turkey. It follows an unmarried sixteen-year-old girl who became pregnant and was murdered by her father. The

film was promoted in the conservative media and was even selected as Turkey's Oscar entry for Best Foreign Language Film for the eighty-fifth Academy Awards, though it failed to make the final shortlist. Conservative circles, backed by the government, had high hopes for the film, and its poor box office performance was the final straw. On 13 May 2012, Ali Murat Güven wrote a column entitled “*Beyaz Sinema*” Hareketi (1970-2012): *Ruhuna El-Fatiha* (The “white cinema” movement (1970-2012): Al-fatiha for its soul). He states that despite its shortcomings, he continued to support the white cinema movement and had faith that one day, it would succeed. He even commented to colleagues that *Ateşin Düştüğü Yer* was the turning point of the ill fate of conservative cinema. He was wrong. Society again chose to see culturally and aesthetically insignificant, nonsensical movies like *Recep İvedik* and *Kutsal Damacana*. The conservative community had experienced a cultural disengagement and was defeated by the immoral, degenerate mainstream. He summarizes the overall disappointment of conservative circles regarding the silver screen as follows:

In a community where Muslim solidarity is forgotten, in a liberal capitalist social order in which individualism is almost treated as a hadith, there is indeed no worthy future for “white cinema”, just like there is no future for any other honorable political, artistic orientation... In the end, the hegemonic system successfully managed to annihilate both our sincere ideological, aesthetic search for a better cinema perception and taste and all of our differences that differentiated us from the “flock.”²³ (p. 18)

23 “Müslümanca bir dayanışma duygusunu bu denli unutmuş bir ümmette, her koyunun kendi bacağından asılması felsefesinin neredeyse hadis-i şerif muamelesi görmeye başladığı liberal kapitalist bir toplumsal düzende, diğer bütün onurlu politik/sanatsal yönelimler gibi ‘Beyaz Sinema’ nın da kayda değer bir geleceği yokmuş sahiden...

Velhasıl, egemen sistem, var olandan daha üstün bir sinema algısı ve beğenisine ulaşma yönündeki bütün o samimi ideolojik/estetik arayışlarımızı da, bu alanda ‘sürü’den ayışmamızı sağlayan irili ufaklı her türlü farklılığımızı da en sonunda aslanlar gibi ortadan kaldırmayı başarmıştır.”

Accepting defeat by what they called the mainstream, hegemonic Hollywood discourse, the media coverage turned to criticizing popular local and international genres rather than promoting new white cinema films, given that they had not produced much in the previous five years. An important debate on the cinema front was sparked when conservative *Star* newspaper columnist İhsan Kabil criticized *!f*, a long running independent film festival held every year in cities around Turkey. Kabil expressed his discomfort with the fact that the festival's tenth year was overwhelmingly dominated by films that contained sexuality, twisted relationships (i.e. homosexuality), violence, and alcohol and drug use – issues incompatible with local, traditional, and religious values. He maintained that such harmful content devalues the festival and questioned its support by the government.

'Uluslararası Bağımsız Film Festivali !f' devam ediyor. Çekildiği ülkelerde bile tartışılan 'aykırı' filmlerin bolluğu festivalin değerini gölgelerken, kamu desteğini de sorguluyor.

Tartışmaya 'açık' filmler

İHSAN KABİL / İSTANBUL

İSTANBUL, Ankara ve İzmir'de 16 Şubat-4 Mart tarihleri arasında düzenlenen Uluslararası Bağımsız Film Festivali !f değişik bölümleriyle seyirciyle buluşuyor. 26 Şubat'a kadar İstanbul'a gösterilecek olan filmler, ardından Ankara ve İzmir'i de geçecek. Festivalin özelliği, çeşitli nedenlerle geniş dağıtım ağına çıkmayan veya çıkarmayan yapımların meraklılarıyla buluşturulması. Ancak Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı'ndan da festival destek fonu alan festivale biraz daha yakından bakıldığında, bazı filmlerin içeriklerinin toplumun genel kabul görmüş değerlerinin dışında konulardan seçilmesine özel bir gayret gösterildiği dikkat çekiyor. Bölümler arasında şöyle bir gezinti yapacak olursak mesela, yarışmalı bölümdeki Hindistan'ın Bengal bölgesinden, gösterimi o ülkede yasaklanan ve yönetmenin "genel ahlaka bir saldırı" olarak nitelendirdiği "Pislik" adlı film, hayatın uçlarında yaşayan iki arkadaşın aşırı küfürlü, bol uyuşturucu ve hardcore seks sahneleriyle örülü yaşamlarını sergiliyor.

"Yüksek asit oranlı uyuşturucu"

Hit Filmler'deki Amerikan filmi "Işık Açık Kalsın", iki erkeğin birbirine cinsel yaklaşmasını ve sonra yaşananları işliyor. Aynı bölümde yeralan yine Amerika'dan "Sihirli Yolculuk",



yüksek asit oranlı uyuşturucu LSD ile bezeli bir yolculuğu sunuyor. Yalnızca iki ayın cinsel ilişkilerine ayrılan Gökkuşuğu bölümünde ise 6 film perdeye yansıtacak. Üçü belgesel filmlerden İran'da çekilmiş olan "Koşul", iki genç kızın birbirlerine olan ilgisini cinsel tabanda aktarıyor.

Aykırı ilişkilere yakın mercek

Alman yapımı "Aksak Ritim", iki erkek arasındaki ilişkiye mercek tutuyor. İngiltere'den "Haftasonu", iki erkeğin barlarla yatak odası arasında geçen hayatlarını doğaçlamayla ve gerçekçi anlarla filmleştiriyor. Ayrıca ayın 24'ü gecesi İstanbul'da, Festivalde yer alan yan etkinlikler kapsamında bir Gökkuşuğu Partisi düzenleniyor. "Yol" bölümünde gösterilen Kanada eseri "Bir Gece"de, bir gecelik ilişkinin sabaha kadarki ayrıntıları çiziliyor. E-şikkı bölümünün "17 Kız" adlı Fransız filmi, bedenlerini kullanma hakkı adına hamile kalmaya karar veren bir grup ergenlik çağındaki kızın öykülerini beyazperdeye taşıyor. Benzer içerikte başka pek çok filmin daha yer aldığı Festival kapsamında olumlu ve yapıcı yapıtların gösterimi de sözkonusu olsa da, bir bütün olarak ele alındığında, toplum yapısı ve ahlak değerleriyle çatışan bu tür yapıtların varlığı festivalin değerinden kaybettiriyor ve devlet desteğinin varlığını sorguluyor.

Figure 8.17 Kabil's story in *Star* that sparked a debate between the pious and secular media. The headline reads: "Films that are 'Open' to Debate," alluding to the salaciousness of films chosen for the festival. Reprinted from "Tartışmaya 'açık' filmler," by İ. Kabil, 2012, *Star*, p. 21. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

The first response to his column came from Uğur Vardan (2012), a columnist from the secular mainstream newspaper *Radikal*. Vardan expressed his deep disappointment with Kabil and accused him of reporting the festival to authorities. The argument morphed into a debate when Kabil responded and other columnists on both sides of the issue joined in. While secular columnists supported Vardan and criticized conservatives for demanding censorship, turning a blind eye to the realities of social life (homosexuality, violence, etc.) (Maro, 2012), and rekindling an old blood feuds (Özgüven, 2012), the pious media accused the hegemonic film industry of being alien to the cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic resources of this country and deliberately excluding it from this industry. Yusuf Kaplan and Nihal Bengisu Karaca were two prominent conservative columnists who jumped into the debate. Kaplan was especially interested in the issue and dedicated four consecutive columns to deepening the conservative perspective. He argued that the two most important problems of Turkish cinema are its alienation from reality and the Western, imperialistic, ideologically-disoriented resources on which it is grounded. He maintained that the local cinema should find its true roots, within its own soil and traditions and should face the consequences of acting like a missionary, being shallow, and excluding the principles and values of conservative cinema. On the other hand, the conservative community itself was the target of Karaca's criticism. In her own words, Karaca made a modest contribution to the debate about conservatism and cinema, and argued that Kabil's questioning government support for *!f Istanbul* based on family values was problematic because it had the potential to expand to issues beyond homosexuality and one-night relationships. Above all, she suggested, conservatives fear turning into the other if they try to understand or become tolerant of their stories, and this way of thinking is problematic. When pious circles shut themselves out fearing the deleterious effects of the other, they miss the chance of appreciating what they have. She believed that conservative cinema has a long way to go before turning into a real, successful movement.

Other than the ideological and epistemological problems of contemporary Turkish cinema, conservative media focuses its criticisms on two other dominant themes that became popular in the new century.

In line with the debate over *If* and their perspective on the ideal cinema, the conservative media is hostile towards gay and sexual-themed movies. In 2006, the release of *Brokeback Mountain* about a sexual and emotional relationship between two cowboys, created controversy and disturbance within conservative circles. The film was heavily criticized for scenes where two men are “all up on each other” (Güven, 2006c) and for normalizing this sick, twisted, unnatural relationship. Ali Murat Güven wrote various articles about the film in early 2006, and warned the distributor, Warner Brothers, either to not show the movie in Turkey or do so with an RP18 warning. “This is not Sweden or Denmark; this is a country where sexuality is still a contested issue. . . . So please do the right thing with *Brokeback Mountain*. You cannot bear the sin of presenting such a provocative film in a society that cannot even properly experience ‘normal’ sexuality”²⁴ (p. 13), he added. When the movie arrived in theaters with an RP18 warning in just seven cities and was watched by a relatively small number of people, Güven (2006d) celebrated it as a success and thanked society for exhibiting a moral stance against this abnormal storyline. Sharon Stone’s *Basic Instinct 2* was criticized for similar reasons, and Stone’s performance was described as the pathetic effort of a “forty-eight-year-old menopausal woman” (“Çok mersi, ama biz almalıyım,” 2006).

24 “Burası bir İsveç ya da Danimarka değil; cinsellik konusunda taşların hâlâ yerli yerine oturmadığı Türkiye. . . . ‘Brokeback Mountain’ hakkında lütfen gerekeni yapın sevgili Warner Bros’çular... Daha henüz normal düzlemde bir cinselliği bile doğru düzgün yaşama fırsatı bulamamış sorunlu bir topluma böylesine kışkırtıcı bir filmi sunmanın vebâlini, inanın ki sırtınızdan öyle kolay kolay atamazsınız.”

Çok merisi, ama biz almayalım

Tanınmış Londra'lı psikiyatrist Dr. Michael Glass mesleğinin en iyilerindedir. Dedektif Roy Washburn ondan, ünlü bir spor yıldızının ölümüyle bağlantısı olduğunu düşündüğü güzel ve etkileyici bir kadını değerlendirmesini istediğinde, Glass'ın bütün dünyası altüst olur. Çünkü sorulanan kadın, kitapları en fazla satan Amerikalı cinayet romanları yazarı Catherine Tramell'dir. Cinayet masası dedektiflerinin spotları, yıllar sonra bir kez daha bu gizemli yazara çevrilmiştir.

Hollywood'un –tıpkı yakışıklı aktörler gibi– güzel ve alımlı aktrisleri de posasını çıkartana kadar tepe tepe kullanımının ibretlik bir örneği daha... 1992 yılında gerçekleştirildiği **"Temel İlgüdü-1"** ile kısa sürede dünya çapında bir yıldızla dönmüşen Sharon Stone, 40'larına girmesiyle birlikte sektörde aynen yükseldiği hızla çaptan düşmüş ve artık başrol bulamaz olmuştu. (Ha, şu ünlü **"Kurtlar Vadisi"** macerasını unutmayalım!)

Son derece zeki bir kadın olarak tanınan Stone, 2000'li yıllarda yaşadığı kahredici işsizlik canına tak ettiğinden olsa gerek, vaktiyle bütün dünyada epeyce gürültü koparmış olan bu erotik gerilimin ikinci bölümünde, **"Ben ölmedim, hâlâ dimdik ayakta'yım"** dercesine elinde avucunda ne kalmışsa bol keseden ortaya döküyor. Ancak bu beyhude bir çaba elbette... Çünkü sözkonusu film, insanın nefisini harekete

geçirmek şöyle dursun, Stone'un beyazperdedeki yükseliş ve düşüşünü iyi bilenlerin kalplerinde olsa olsa güçlü bir **"acıma duygusu"** uyandırıyor. Yıllar önce menapoza girmiş 48 yaşındaki yorgun bir aktristin kendisini **"yapımcılara hâlâ para kazandırabilecek değerli bir meta"** olarak sunabilmek için ilk filmi bile aşan böylesine yoğun bir cinsellik dozunun ardına sığınmasını izlemek gerçekten de trajik bir durum. Oysa haurlayanlar olacaktır, aynı aktrist, cinselliğini zerre kadar ön plana çıkarmadığı 1999 tarihli bir diğer filmi **"Gloria"** da ne kadar da içten ve derinlikli bir oyun vermişti. Keza 2000 yapımı **"Güzel Joe"** da da öyle...

Ancak Hollywood kadın yıldızlardan iyi oyunculuk gösterileri falan değil, doğrudan doğruya et istiyor. Eskiyen yüzlerin yerine yeni yüzler, kırışan tenlerin yerine yeni tenler... Bu döngü bugüne kadar olduğu gibi bundan böyle de aralıksız sürecek. Bayatlayanlar en yakındaki çöplüğe fırlatılıp atılacak, onların yerine yarışmalardan ya da model ajanslarından daima yenileri gelecek. Çünkü Amerikalıların o ünlü sözünde olduğu gibi, **"gösteri devam etmek zorunda"**, öyle değil mi ya!

Sharon Stone'un bu filmdeki karelerinden sayfamıza girebilecek bir fotoğrafını bulabilmek bile sorun oldu.



Temel İlgüdü-2

(Basic Instinct-2)

Yönetmen:

Michael Caton-Jones

Oyuncular: Sharon Stone,

David Morrissey, Stan Collymore,

Charlotte Rampling

2005-ABD yapımı, 114 dakika

Dağıtım: UNP

★★

18 yaşından küçükler ve dindarlar için zararlıdır.

Figure 8.18 Review of Basic Instinct 2 in *Yeni Şafak*. On the left, over the picture of Sharon Stone, editors make the cynical comment that the movie was so salacious and sexual that they had a hard time finding a decent picture of Stone to use in the paper. Reprinted from "Çok merisi, ama biz almayalım," 2006, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 15. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

The second dominant criticism of the cinema of the new millennium concerns the popular fantasy, sci-fi genre. Twenty-first century cinema saw an increase in fantasy fiction movie adaptations that broke records at the box office. Conservative media is skeptical of the genre. Popular foreign television and movie series like *Harry Potter*, *the Chronicles of Narnia*, *Twilight*, *Game of Thrones*, and *Merlin* as well as local productions such as *Sihirli Annem* (My magical mother), *Acemi Cadı* (a local adaptation of Sabrina), and *Prenses Perfinya* (Princess Perfinia) are condemned for subliminal religious messages propagating paganism and spreading Christian values. Sabahat Emir (2007) from

Türkiye newspaper, for example, describes the *Harry Potter* movies as “dark and mediaeval” with their witches, spells, devils, and other made-up creatures. She finds them harmful for children. Similarly, in an interview with novelist Gülay Er Pasin covered in *Yeni Şafak*, Pasin comments that today’s record-breaking vampire movies were inartistic examples of popular culture, filled with sexuality and action to impress the youth (Saruhan, 2013). Kurtbay Onur from *Türkiye* makes the harshest criticism of the genre in a column in September 2011, accusing them of brainwashing innocent children with pagan messages. He criticizes Turkish television channels for promoting and broadcasting productions that are incompatible with local and traditional values.



Kilisenin bayıldığı klasik hikâye



Evangelistler'in verdiği tantanalı destekle ABD sinemalarını dört haftadan bu yana kırıp geçiren "Narnia Günlükleri: Arslan, Cadı ve Dolap", dinsel imgelerle bezeli klasik bir çocuk kitabının beyazperdeye çok başarılı bir uyarlaması... Fazla endişeye mahal yok; misyonerler çok sevse de bize bir şey yapamaz!

Arslan, Cadı ve Dolap", "Yüzüklerin Efendisi" ünlü yazarı J.R.R. Tolkien'in yakın dostu olarak bilinen bir başka İngiliz edebiyatçı, C.S. Lewis'in ilk kez 1950'lerde yayınlanmış ve o tarihten bu yana da milyonlarca kopya satarak birer klasik düzeyine erişmiş olan 7 kitaplık ünlü "Narnia Günlükleri" serisinin ikinci hikâyesi... Ancak, yapımında üstlenen Disney şirketi ve -Şirket'ten tanıdığımız- Yeni Zelandalı yönetmen Andrew Adamson'un bu kült seriyi neden birinci değil de ikinci kitaptan itibaren sinemaya uyarlamaya başladığını doğrusu bilemiyoruz. Herhalde "Arslan, Cadı ve Dolap", Lewis'in fantastik dünyasını beyazperdeye aktarmak için görsel açıdan daha ideal bir başlangıç olarak geldi yapım ekibine. Bu arada, filmin önemli bir bölümü de Yeni Zelanda'da çekilmiş ve daha önce aynı bölgede "Yüzüklerin Efendisi"ni gerçekleştiren yerel teknik ekibin büyük ölçüde destek alınmış. O yüzden de savaş sahnelerinde adeta küçükler için yapılmış bir "Yüzüklerin Efendisi" izliyormuş hissine kapılmamak mümkün değil...

Amerikalı Evangelist hareketin temsilcileri bu filmi uzunca bir süreden beri büyük bir heyecanla bekliyorlardı. Beklemekte de kalmadılar. "Arslan, Cadı ve Dolap"ın geçen sonbahardaki ön rezervasyonlarında bu tarihteki bağlı kimi kiliseler tarafından milyonlarca bilet alınıp çocuklara ve gençlere ücretsiz olarak dağıtıldı. Öyle ki bazı Evangelist kodmanların bu klasik hikâyeyi filme uyarlaması için Disney şirketini finanse ettikleri bile söyleniyor.

Ardından gelen önce itelemeden sonra, "Arslan, Cadı ve Dolap" bugünlerde tırtıyı tam anlamıyla gözünden vurmuş durumda... 9 Aralıkta ABD'de ve Avrupa'da aynı anda gösterime giren film, son dört haftadır adeta para baskını meşgul. Öyle ki 180 milyon dolarlık tepkileri yapım bütçesinin üçte birini yalnızca ABD'de daha ilk gösterim gününde kazandı ve şu anda



HAFTANIN FİLMİ

"Narnia Günlükleri"nde küçük Edmund'un beyaz cadıyla tanıştığı ve onun tarafından Türk lokumuyla ayarlılığı sahneler, Batı ülkelerinde bu geleneksel tarıma yönelik yeni bir ilgi dalgası başlattı.

da bütün Batı ülkelerinde işe lideri komumunda. Sizlerin bu satırları okuduğunuz tarih itibarıyla da çoktan kara geçmiş durumda olacak.

USTACA KAMUFLE EDİLMİŞ DİNSEL MESAJLAR

Amerikan muhafazakârlardan gelen bütün bu coşkulu desteğin nedeni ise filmin yüzeydeki hikâyesinin altına ustaca yedirilmiş olan dinsel alt metinler... Siki bir dinde olan Lewis, vakıtle bu kitapları kaleme alırken ilginç fantastik öykülerin ardında çocuklara Hıristiyanlık öğretilerine ilişkin bilinçaltı mesajlar da göndermeyi hedeflemiş. Sözelimi -adı öyküde de aynen Türkçede söylendiği gibi "arslan" olan- baş kahramanlardan "Arslan", aslında kendisini insanlar için feda eden İsa Mesih'i simgeliyor. Düşsel ülke Narnia'da kötü kalpli cadıyla karşı verilen mücadele de

Hıristiyanların "Armageddon" u, yani ahir zamandaki büyük savaştan başka bir şey değil.

Hikâyeye yüselik biraz daha radikal ve zorlama yorumlara göre ise filmdeki kötüler "Türkler" i, olayların yaşandığı Narnia ülkesi ise Hıristiyanlığı elinden alıp Müslümanlaştırılmış olan "Anadolu"yu simgeliyor. Ama doğrusu ya, filmde bu yönde doğrudan ya da dolaylı bir gönderme yakalamış değilim. O yüzden lüzumundan fazla paranoyak davranıp bobin filmde fırtına kopartmaya hiç hevesim yok.

Peki, bu tür dinsel alt metinler, ülkemiz seyircisi ve özellikle de genç kuşaklar için beyin yıkayıcı bir nitelik taşıyor mu diye sorarsanız, doğrusu çok da rahat bir tavırla "taşıyor" diyemem. Bu film Müslüman mahallesinde öyle kolay kolay sabyangoz satılabilecek güce sahip değil. Çünkü bizler

daha sabyangozun ne olduğunu bilmiyoruz! "Narnia"dan bu tür mesajlar çıkarabilmek için en asgarisinden de olsa bir Hıristiyanlık temel eğitimine sahip olmak gerekiyor. Hele de ülkemizde bu filmin hedeflediği yaş grubunun asla böyle bir kültürel altyapısı olmadığı için, fazlasıyla derinlerdeki o simgesel mesajlar pek çok Doğu ülkesindeki genç seyirciler gibi bizimkileri de iskeleyip geçmeye mahkûm... Ona kalırsa, "Sihirli Annem" dizisi simdiye kadar bu filmin verebileceğinden yüz kat daha fazla zarar vermiş durumda genç beyinlere...

KORKMADAN KEYFİNİ ÇIKARIN

Peki, bu denli pahalı bir prodüksiyondan geriye görsel olarak ne kalıyor diye sorarsanız, o zaman da size Lucy Pevensie rolünde şimdiye kadar beyazperdede gördüğüm en sevimli (ve de yetenekli) çocuk oyuncudan biri olan Georgie Henley, çok başarılı görsel efektler ve film boyunca defalarca kullanılan Türkçe "arslan" sözcüğünün yanısıra, hikâyenin hemen başlarında geçen "Türk lokumu" muhabbeti gibi bizim coğrafyamıza özgü bazı küçük göndermelerin de bulunduğu sermpati duyusunu kalıyor derim. Hele de ABD ve İngiltere'de bu lokum işini öylesine ciddi almış durumlarda ki, filmin resmi internet sitesinde Türk lokumunun nasıl yapıldığına dair bir tarif bile yer almaktan. Ayrıca, yine duyduğumuz göre bu lezzeti hiç tatmamış olan milyonlarca kişi de filmdeki sonra Türk marketlerinden lokum bulma derdine düşmüş.

O yüzden, "Narnia"nın Hıristiyanlık kültürünün egemen olduğu ülkelerde yol açtığı tantanadan fazlasıyla çekinmeye ve film hakkında gereğinden öte velleve yapmaya hiç gerek yok. Sonuç itibarıyla, -bugünkü köşe yazımda da belirttiğim gibi- adımızın epeyce az geçtiği, geçtiğinden de çoğunlukla haydutlarla beraber anıldığı dünya sinemasında son derece zarif bir lokum kutusu ve içindeki gıllı lokumlarla birlikte tanınmak da hoş...

Figure 8.19 Review of the *Chronicles of Narnia* by Ali Murat Güven. He states that the movie was supported by evangelists in the United States and includes subliminal religious messages that promote Christianity. Reprinted from "Kilisenin bayıldığı klasik hikâye," by A.M. Güven, 2006a, *Yeni Şafak*, p. 12. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.



M. Kurtbay ÖNÜR
İSTANBUL

Dünyayı saran paganizm hastalığı Türkiye’ye de sıçradı. ‘Putperestlik’, propagandası yapan diziler artık Türk kanallarında da yayınlanıyor.

Türk televizyonlarında yayınlanan dizilerin bir çoğunda “Paganizm” reklamı yapılıyor. Paganizmin, tam manasıyla (çok tanrıcılık) putperestlikten ibaret olduğu biliniyor. Şamanizm’in batı versiyonu da diyebiliriz. Yoğun bir “semboller” kuşağı olan bu kültür; “totemlerle”, “ayinlerle” süsleniyor. Sihir ve büyü ile daha çekici hale getirilmeye çalışılıyor. Son yıllarda İngiltere kaynaklı dizilerin yanı sıra Amerikan yapımlarla bütün dünyada yoğun paganizm propagandası yapılıyor. Daha önce ekranlara gelen Merlin ve Camelot dizisinde paganizm adet ve gelenekleri sunuluyordu. Şimdilerde CNBC-e ekranına gelecek olan ‘Game of Thrones’ adlı dizi de buram buram “paganizm” kokuyor. Put-

perestlik örflerinin sağladığı, paganların serbest dürtüleri ve geleneklerinin rahatlığıyla; çıplaklık, vahşet, büyü ve korku duyguları körpe beyinlere işleniyor.

BEYİN YIKIYORLARI

Ülkemiz televizyonlarında yayınlanan sihir, büyü ve fantastik öğe içeren bolca yapım zaten mevcuttu. Bugüne kadar Sihirli Annem, Selena, Tatlı Cadı, Sabrina, Bez Bebek, Acemi Cadı, Kayıp Prenses, Cinlerle Periler, En İyi Arkadaşım, Kara İnci, Peri Masalı, Prenses Perfiyia, Ruhsar ve Tılsım Adası gibi “pagan” mesajlarıyla yüklü yapımlar çocukları eğlendirip, vakit geçirmelerini sağlasa da aslında onların zihinlerinde telafisi mümkün olmayan izler bırakıyor.

Harry Potter modasıyla başlayan pagan misyonu, bütün dizilere, filmlere ve çizgi filmlere sıçramış görünüyor. Psikiyatrist Prof. Dr. M. Kemal Sayar, bu tür film ve dizilerin çocuklar üzerinde büyük bir tahribata yol açtığını söyleyerek, “8 yaşından küçük çocuklar kesinlikle bu tür film ve dizilerden uzak tutulmalıdır. Çocuklar fantastik dünya ile normal hayatı ayırt edemezler. Çocuklar ve gençler gerçek dünyalarını yavaş yavaş algılamaya başlıyor!” diyor ve ekliyor; “Bu tür yapımlar pagan kültürünün propagandasını yapıyor. Filmde gençler izleyiciye evrensel doğrularmış gibi sunuluyor. İnançın temeli olan öteki dünya (ahiret) ile ilgili komik tasvirler yapılarak izleyicinin itikatları muhasara altına alıyor!”

Figure 8.20 Onur’s column on *Türkiye* in which he criticizes the temporary “paganist” genre trend and the fact that these productions are allowed on Turkish television. Reprinted from “TV’de paganizm furyası,” by M.K. Onur, 2011, *Türkiye*, p. 22. Copyright 2017 by PRNet.

Production of Everyday Conservatism in Audio-Visual Media: Conservative Television Channels

The analysis of conservative newspapers within the framework of their role in the production of conservative values has brought some common narratives to the forefront. Overall, the emphasis on Islam and its values, anti-Kemalism and the attempt to revive the Ottoman and Turkic past can be identified as ideas that are prevalent and disseminated by the conservative newspapers and their respective journalists to the wider community.

While newspapers are important subjects for analysis, it is crucial to note that television is the most important mass medium in Turkey. According to research by the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) and Gallup in 2016, 98 percent of households in Turkey have a television, and majority of the Turkish people (83 percent) watch television daily for news. In a similar vein, research by KONDA entitled *Hayat Tarzları 2018: Türkiye’de Zaman Kullanımı* (Lifestyles 2018: The use of time in Turkey), reveals that the average daily viewing time per person is nearly three hours, and almost half of the Turkish population watches television daily, especially in the evenings between 9 and 10. A study conducted by the Turkish Statistical Institute (*Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu* or TÜİK) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) suggests that teenage girls in Turkey spend the majority of their free time watching television (“Watching TV is the top activity,” 2016). And according to another RTÜK research project, the average weekly viewing time of students in Turkey

is twenty-five hours, ten more than the average of students in the United Kingdom (RTÜK, 2016).

This chapter looks at the situation for Turkish conservative television to see whether it also produces and popularizes the same conservative themes and narratives in its programming. In this analysis of the content of conservative television station broadcasts in Turkey, what was aired on TRT and ATV channels for the week of 30 April-6 May 2018 is evaluated based on conservative television stations' role in disseminating the conservative values mentioned above.

§ 9.1 TRT-1

The Turkish Radio and Television Corporation was established in 1964 as the national public broadcaster of Turkey. It launched its first television channel in 1968, followed by a second station, TRT-2, in 1986 as well as by TRT-3 and GAP TV in 1989. "In 1974 the area coverage of the daily regular television broadcasts reached 28% (210.861 km²) with a corresponding population coverage of 55% (19 million people)" ("TRT History," n.d.).

TRT was originally established as an autonomous institution, subject to the provisions of the 1961 Turkish Constitution and in TRT Law. The station, however, lost its autonomy with change spell press to the constitution in 1972, which in an amendment to Article 121 defined TRT as "a neutral public economic entity" ("TRT History," n.d.). The 1982 Constitution also adopted this definition in Article 133.

TRT enjoyed a monopoly in broadcasting until the beginning of the 1990s when private television channels started emerging. "In September 1990, STAR₁, a private television channel, benefiting from the loopholes in the law began broadcasting programmes in Turkish via satellite from Germany" (Gül, 2011, p. 31). It was followed by Show TV, Kanal 6 (Channel 6), Kanal D, and ATV. Only in April 1993 were the necessary regulatory steps taken to legalize and regulate these new channels. In August of that year, Article 133 of the constitution was amended to lift the state monopoly on radio and television broadcasting, and it came into effect in April 1994. "With this amendment,

TRT was once more defined as an ‘autonomous’ institution, at least on paper” (Gül, 2011, p. 31).

The increase in the number of private channels that followed the regulatory change had significant implications for TRT. In the new competitive landscape, TRT was under increasing pressure to adapt to the new rules of tabloidization and commercialization in private broadcasting. “Competition meant a sharp decline in advertising revenues and loss of the audience of the TRT, but during the second half of the 1990s, it also meant the loss of skilled broadcasting labour to the rival private broadcasters which in return influenced the TRT’s programme output very negatively (Çaplı and Tuncel, 2005)” (Sümer and Adaklı, 2010, p. 5). But while the ratings are still dominated by mainstream private channels, TRT is gradually regaining viewers under AKP rule due to the investments in high-quality historical period productions like *Diriliş Ertuğrul* (Resurrection: Ertuğrul). The AKP allocated a larger budget to the institution and increased the number of TRT channels to include a Kurdish and English-language channels. Currently TRT has fourteen television channels,¹ and the oldest of which, TRT-1, broadcasts fraud, general entertainment programming with a schedule featuring local series, Turkish and Hollywood movies, morning healthcare shows, news and current affairs shows, and special events such as the World Cup.

1 These channels are: TRT-1, TRT World, TRT Haber (News), TRT Spor (Sports), TRT Avaz (Turkic countries), TRT Çocuk (Kids), TRT Belgesel (Documentary), TRT Müzik (Music), TRT El Arabia, TRT Diyanet (Religion), TRT Türk, TRT Kurdi (Kurdish), TRT Okul (Education), and TRT 3.

9.1.1 *Broadcast Schedule*

Table 9.1 Television Dayparts

Slot	Time	Day
Morning	7:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m.	Monday-Friday
Daytime	9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	Monday-Friday
Early fringe	4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.	Monday-Friday
Prime time access	7:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.	Sunday-Saturday
Prime time	8:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Monday-Saturday
Prime time Sunday	7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Sunday
Late news	11:00 p.m.-11:30 p.m.	Monday-Friday
Late fringe	11:30 p.m.-1:00 a.m.	Monday-Friday

SOURCE Belch and Belch (2004)

Similar to other television channels, TRT-1 adopts a dayparting strategy² for its broadcast programming. On weekdays, the morning to prime time broadcast schedule remains the same. The daytime schedule begins with the talk show *Pelin Çift ile İyi Fikir* (Good ideas with Pelin Çift) at 9:15. Hosted by an experienced anchor-woman, Pelin Çift, the program targets stay-at-home women and usually consists of two parts. In the first, Çift introduces Turkish chefs who usually specialize in a traditional Turkish dish. As the guest chef cooks the recipe of the day live in the studio kitchen, Çift starts a conversation with the second guest, who is commonly a medical or religious expert. They touch on variety of issues ranging from do-it-yourself beauty products to alternative medicine to preventative healthcare to nutrition to marriage counselling and childcare. The program is followed by a cooking program *Misafirrim Var* (I have guests), and a medical talk show *Doktor Geldi* (The doctor is in the house), the latter of which is hosted by cardiovascular surgeon Halit Yerebakan. Yerebakan discusses a different health problem in each episode and offers healthcare advice, sometimes inviting guests that are experts on the

2 In the dayparting strategy, the broadcast day is divided into identified time periods in which certain programs with similar features specifically targeted to particular demographics are broadcast.

topic. The program is aired with contributions from the Ministry of Health and informs the public of tips for healthy living.³

The daytime schedule continues with the reality competition show *Evlilik Okulu* (Marriage school) at 3 p.m. Each week on *Evlilik Okulu*, five married couples compete to receive the highest score on assignments given by psychologist Yeşim Akıncı. By counselling the couple relationships, the program is designed to solve common marriage problems.

The prime time schedule of TRT-1, which follows rerun episodes of the drama series *Kalk Gidelim* (Let's get up and go) in the early fringe and the news at 7 p.m., is dominated by drama series. Unless there is a special occasion or event such as a holy night or football match, TRT-1 airs a different series every evening during prime time from 8 p.m. to midnight. The late fringe and post-late fringe are once again filled with reruns of drama series – except for Wednesdays when one-on-one discussion show entitled *Pelin Çift ile Gündem Ötesi* (Off-topic with Pelin Çift) is aired. In this late night talk show, Çift hosts a different expert or scholar each week questioning the origins of the world in the light of science, religion, and history.⁴

The morning schedule on weekends consists of series reruns, and prime time is again allotted to drama series. While series that air in weekdays have more serious, intense, historical storylines, those on the weekend tend to be lightweight, family comedies.

3 From the program description on the official website of TRT-1.

4 From the program description on the official website of TRT-1.

Table 9.2 Example Broadcast Schedule of TRT-1 on Weekdays

	30.04.18	01.05.18	02.05.18	03.05.18	04.05.18
7:00 a.m.	<i>Hangimiz Sevmedik?</i> (Who hasn't loved before?)				
9:15 a.m.	<i>Pelin Çift ile İyi Fikir</i> (Good ideas with Pelin Çift)				
11:30 a.m.	<i>Misafirim Var</i> (I have guests)				
1:25 p.m.	<i>Doktor Geldi</i> (The doctor is in the house)				
2:55 p.m.	<i>Evlilik Okulu</i> (Marriage school)				
5:05 p.m.	<i>Kalk Gidelim</i> (Let's get up and go)				
7:00 p.m.	Evening news				
8:00 p.m.	<i>Berat Kandili Özel</i> (Laylat al Bara'at special) <i>Kuran-ı Kerimi Güzeli Okuma Yarışması</i> (Quran reading contest)	Football match	<i>Diriliş Er-tuğrul</i> (Ressurrection: Er-tuğrul)	<i>Mehmetçik Kâtulamâre</i> (Soldiers of Kut al-Amara)	<i>Payitaht: Abdülhamid</i> (Capital: Abdülhamid)
11:45 p.m.	<i>Payitaht: Abdülhamid</i> (Capital: Abdülhamid)	<i>Pelin Çift ile Gündem</i> (Off-topic with Pelin Çift)	<i>Kupa 2018'e Doğru</i> (Towards the World Cup 2018)	<i>7 Güzeli Adam</i> (7 nice men)	

Table 9.3 Example Broadcast Schedule of TRT-1 on Weekends (Excluding News)

05.05.18		06.05.18	
9:55 a.m.	<i>Osmanlı Tokadı</i> (The Ottoman slap)	9:15 a.m.	True Grit (Movie)
12:40 p.m.	<i>Aslan Ailem</i> (My brave family)	11:50 a.m.	<i>Enine Boyuna</i> (At length and breadth)
4:00 p.m.	<i>Misafirim Var</i> (I have guests)	1:00 p.m.	<i>Kalk Gidelim</i> (Let's get up and go)
5:45 p.m.	<i>Ailem, Odam ve Ben</i> (My family, my room, and me)	4:00 p.m.	<i>Misafirim Var</i> (I have guests)
8:00 p.m.	<i>Kalk Gidelim</i> (Let's get up and go)	5:45 p.m.	<i>Ailem, Odam ve Ben</i> (My family, my room, and me)
		8:00 p.m.	<i>Aslan Ailem</i> (My brave family)

§ 9.2 ATV

ATV (Actual Television) was founded by Dinç Bilgin in 1993 immediately after the state monopoly on radio and TV broadcasting was lifted. Dinç owned the channel until 2002 when it was confiscated, and after negotiations with the TMSF, it along with *Sabah* was leased to the Ciner Group. When the TMSF confiscated the media enterprises of the Ciner Group in 2007, ATV continued broadcasting under the Turkuvaz Publishing company, which was itself owned by a group of pro-AKP companies. Çalık Holding held the largest share. ATV operated under the Kalyon Group since 2013 following the acquisition of Turkuvaz Media Group by Kalyon that same year.

ATV is one of the most popular television channels in Turkey. In 2017, ATV became the second most viewed television channel after Star TV (“Star TV 2017'nin reyting şampiyonu,” 2018). The channel is also a strong contender in the distribution of local productions, exporting its drama series to over sixty countries globally.

9.2.1 *Broadcast Schedule*

ATV starts weekday mornings with breakfast news at 8 a.m. The daytime schedule follows with the crime reality show *Müge Anlı ile Tatlı Sert* (Sweet and sour with Müge Anlı, or MATS). MATS, which is anchored by a former magazine reporter, Müge Anlı, has aired on ATV since 2008. The true crime show “focuses on unsolved criminal cases, such as murder, fraud or kidnapping. The program also presents itself as a service provider for those victimized due to the actions of others.” (Işık and Yaman, 2017, p. 73). MATS is extremely popular among its Turkish audience, and in the week of 30 April-6 May its ratings were always in the top twelve each day, often surpassing prime time dramas.

MATS is followed by midday news and the family drama *Beni Bırakma* (Don't leave me), which airs every weekday. Another women's program, *Esra Erol'da* (With Esra Erol) is next in lineup. Following a ban on television dating shows with a state of emergency decree in 29 April 2017 (“Turkey eyes ban on matchmaking shows,” 2017), the program of the popular marriage show host Esra Erol was reformatted as a crime reality show similar to MATS,⁵ and started focusing on real life stories.

After the evening news, just like on TRT, the prime time of ATV is almost entirely dominated by domestic television series, and weekend programming airs reruns of these dramas.

5 Although the format of Esra Erol's show is similar to that of Müge Anlı, the stories that Erol brings to the screen are relatively lighter. Erol does not engage with unsolved murders and focuses rather on the cases of fraud, finding missing people, and reuniting families.

Table 9.4 Example Broadcast Schedule of ATV on Weekdays

	30.04.18	01.05.18	02.05.18	03.05.18	04.05.18
8:00 a.m.		Breakfast news			7:00 a.m. Breakfast news 8:30 a.m. <i>Nihat Hatipoğlu Sorularınızı Cevaplıyor</i> (Nihat Hatipoğlu answers your questions)
10:00 a.m.	<i>Müge Anlı ile Tatlı Sert</i> (Sweet and sour with Müge Anlı)				
1:00 p.m.	Midday news				
2:00 p.m.	<i>Beni Bırakma</i> (Don't leave me)				
4:20 p.m.	<i>Esra Erol'da</i> (With Esra Erol)				
7:00 p.m.	Evening news				
8:00 p.m.	<i>Nihat Hatipoğlu Kan-dil Özel</i> (Laylat al Bara'at special with Nihat Hatipoğlu)	<i>Eşkiya Dü-nyaya Hükümdar Olmaz</i> (Bandits can't rule the world)	<i>Sen Anlat Ka-radeniz</i> (Tell me, black sea)	8:30 p.m. Foot-ball match 9:25 p.m. <i>Kanatsız Kuşlar</i> (Broken wings)	<i>Aşk ve Mavi</i> (Love and blue)
11:00 p.m.	8. <i>Gün</i> (8th Day)	<i>Kim milyoner olmak ister?</i> (Who wants to be a million-aire?)	Son Durak (<i>Last stop</i>)	12:15 a.m. Nihat Hatipoğlu ile Dosta Doğru (<i>Towards friendship with Nihat Hatipoğlu</i>)	Son Durak (<i>Last stop</i>)

Table 9.5 Example Broadcast Schedule of ATV on Weekends (Excluding News)

05.05.18		06.05.18	
10:00 a.m.	<i>Kanatsız Kuşlar</i> (Broken wings)	10:00 a.m.	<i>Nihat Hatipoğlu ile Kuran ve Sünnet</i> (Quran and tradition with Nihat Hatipoğlu)
1:05 p.m.	<i>Aşk ve Mavi</i> (Love and blue)	11:05 a.m.	<i>Dizi TV</i> (Telenovela TV)
3:50 p.m.	<i>Cennetin Gözyaşları</i> (Tears of heaven)	12:35 p.m.	<i>Cennetin Gözyaşları</i> (Tears of heaven)
8:00 p.m.	<i>Kim milyoner olmak ister?</i> (Who wants to be a millionaire?)	3:25 p.m.	<i>Sen Anlat Karadeniz</i> (Tell me, black sea)
11:15 p.m.	Focus (Movie)	8:00 p.m.	<i>Cennetin Gözyaşları</i> (Tears of heaven)

§ 9.3 Daytime Conservative Television: The Family as the Core of Society

The daytime programs of conservative television channels target housewives and stay-at-home mothers. While the formats of the programs differ, they mostly address particular subjects like housework, childcare, and family relationships that reinforce the traditional roles of women as wives, mothers, and homemakers.

TRT-1's entire weekday daytime schedule consists of women-focused programs. In *Pelin Çift ile İyi Fikir*, women learn how to cook a particular dish each day while also learning tips and tricks for healthy living, housekeeping chores, and family communication skills. Within the week of 30 April 30-6 May, the program included a wide range of expert guests and covered topics including recipes for do-it-yourself facemasks, and herbs to boost metabolism, the benefits of the traditional Islamic bloodletting therapy called *hacamat*, dental hygiene, healthy communication methods for families, and preventative measures to reduce the risk of cancer.

Keeping families together and maintaining traditional family relationships are important topics that daytime programs on conservative channels address.

Two programs on TRT-1 that aired within the week of the analysis touch on the same issue, and the program *Evlilik Okulu* that airs every weekday aims to convey the message that the institution of family should be protected and enriched at all costs. On 2 May, for example, the theme of Pelin Çift's program was marriage and effective family communication. Writer and communications professional Fatih Akbaba and lawyer Afet Gülen Büberci joined Çift and answered related questions from the audience. When one anonymous caller explained that she recently caught her husband talking to his ex-girlfriend on social media and asked for advice, both experts and Çift advised to "let it slide" to keep the family together. Büberci stated that Turkish law does not accept illegally-obtained social media content as evidence in divorce cases and said: "You are thinking about whether to tell this to your husband. My advice is not to tell him. At this point, (please) observe whether his emotions towards your marriage and family is still alive and then make a more grounded judgement"⁶ (Çift, 2018a). Akbaba also suggested the woman talk to her husband at the right place and at the right time, but only if it happens again. When the caller said she had felt distant from husband for three months, he said: "This man is acting out of the ordinary for three months. It is obvious that there is a problem. . . . At that point you should first make a self-assessment, then assess his behavior . . . In the end, how will the result impact you? Are you ready for this? if you cannot handle the result, do not follow him, watch him or see this through"⁷ (Çift, 2018a). Çift, on the other hand, advised the woman to treat her husband even better and more intimately than usual. Similarly, in episode 156 of *Doktor Geldi*, Yerebakan and psychiatrist Seren Başgül discussed the importance of healthy communication in families with respect to sexual development and behavior in children. Both doctors underlined that homosexuality is mostly triggered by environmental rather than biological

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- 6 "Şimdi siz soruyorsunuz: Bunu eşime söylemeli miyim? Bence söylememelisiniz. Orada gerçekten eşinizin duygusal anlamda evlilik hayatına, aile hayatına ilişkin duygularının canlı olup olmadığını izleyin (lütfen) ve bunun sonucunda gerçek bir kanaate varın."
- 7 "Üç aydır bu adam zaten standardın dışında. Demekki bir problem var. . . . Öyleyse ben kendimi bir check edeyim, sonra onu bir check edeyim . . . Sonuçta göreceğiniz şey size ne kadar derinden etkileyecek? Buna hazır mısınız? Buna hazır değilseniz takip etmeyin, izlemeyin, bakmayın, sonucu görmeyin."

factors, and emphasized the significance of setting up proper parental images of masculinity and femininity in order to keep children away from these forms of sexual deviance. Yerebakan also criticized Western families and their styles of living for not paying enough attention to the privacy of family members at home – a fundamental value of Turkish culture and religion.

The daytime shows of ATV, *MATS* and *Esra Erol'da*, have different formats than those airing on TRT, but the emphasis on the sacredness of family is a major focus there, as well. As Işık and Yaman (2017) suggest, these crime reality television shows have “a tendency to use individuals’ experience to make moralized arguments,” and they rationalize a “sensitivity-guided moral reasoning” that accepts individuals not as independent human beings but as elements of a community, especially of family (p. 70). For example, on one of these shows an illiterate woman with five children was looking for her biological father, and the man who was likely the father was refusing a DNA test. Müge Anlı called upon the alleged father on live television and warned him that if he was indeed the father and he refused to accept it, he would face social exclusion, as being a good person starts in the family.

If a man is a real man, he will take care of his family. Our society will not accept it any other way. . . . If I was a man, I wouldn't want to see such a person sitting next to me in the coffee house (*kahvehane*). If I was grocery store owner (*bakkal*), I wouldn't even sell bread to him. I would say, “If this person can do this to his own children . . . God knows what he can do to me.”⁸ (Anlı, 2018)

In the same program, she shared her idea of marriage and the gender roles it entails, which was ultimately that of the whole of Turkish society.

In my opinion, the first criteria for being a man or a woman in a relationship is a woman being able to openly tell the man “this child is

8 “Bir erkek de eğer gerçekten . . . delikanlıysa çocuğuna çocuğuna sahip çıkacak. Bizim toplumumuz bunun aksini kabul etmez. . . . Ben erkek olsam ne oturduğum kahvede yan masamda görmek isterim, bakkal olsam ekmek satmam. Derim ki bu çocuğuna çocuğuna sahip çıkmamış . . . Bana neler yapmaz ki diye düşünürüm.”

yours” and the man accepting the fatherhood of the child that comes to life after the marriage ceremony. Any other scenario undermines the true meaning of the institution of marriage. If you don’t accept the newborn, it doesn’t matter if you are married or not. . . . If you are a man, you must accept the child. . . . Fatherhood is fatherhood.⁹ (Anlı, 2018)

Similar messages are conveyed in Esra Erol’s program, as well. In one episode about a woman looking for her biological parents, lawyer Hülya Kuran, who has a permanent place on the program, commented that knowing your biological parents – where you came from, good or bad – is extremely important for one’s socialization and adaptation to society. She encouraged the guest to never stop looking for them, even if it turns out her biological parents are not good people (Erol, 2018a). In a similar vein, when Kuran celebrated the Labor Day of stay-at-home women in the opening of the 1 May 2018 episode, Esra Erol expressed her support and reinforced the role of women as homemakers. Erol commented that women take the lead when it comes to keeping families connected (Erol, 2018b).

9 “Bana göre kadınlık ve erkeğin ilk vasfı bir ilişkide, bir kadının beraber olduğu adama ‘bu senin çocuğun’ diye doğrusunu söylemesidir. Bir erkeğin de nikahı olur olmaz dünyaya gelen çocuğun babalığını kabul etmesidir. O zaman zaten evlilik müessesesinin bile bir anlamı yok. Sen doğan çocuğu kabul etmeyeceksen evli olsan ne yazar, olmasan ne yazar. . . . Erkekse eğer, o çocuğu kabul edeceksin. . . . Babalık babalıktır.”

§ 9.4 Prime Time: Neo-Ottoman Discourse and the Traditional Family



Figure 9.1 Strong, courageous Ertuğrul, played by popular actor Engin Altan Düzyatan. Reprinted from “Diriliş Ertuğrul,” n.d., *TRT-1*, Retrieved from <https://www.trt1.com.tr/diziler/dirilis-ertugrul> . Copyright 2017 by TRT-1.

As with all mainstream television channels, prime time on conservative television is dedicated to domestic telenovelas. During the week of the analysis, there was a different series aired both on TRT-1 and ATV’s screens almost every evening from 8 p.m. to midnight.

State-run TRT-1’s choice of television dramas indisputably openly supports government efforts to restore pre-republican history in the cultural realm. From 30 April to 6 May, new episodes of four television series were aired on TRT-1 in prime time, three of which had a historical, Ottoman or Turkic plot: *Payitaht: Abdülhamid* (Capital: Abdülhamid), *Mehmetçik Kûtulamâre* (Soldiers of Kut al-Amara), and *Diriliş Ertuğrul* (Resurrection: Ertuğrul).

Payitaht: Abdülhamid premiered on TRT-1 in February 2017. The historical period drama depicts important political events in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Ottoman Empire, which was ruled by the thirty-

fourth Sultan, Abdülhamid II. The show focuses on the victories of the empire over Western powers. In an interview, the producer of the series, Yusuf Esenkali, explains the theme as follows:

The series will show the “Greek War” which the Ottomans won after years of losses. The series will also feature the first Zionist Congress, the construction of the Hejaz Railway, and the debate over the lands of Palestine, which the Ottoman Sultan did not give to Western powers. The only message we want to deliver with *Payitaht Abdülhamid* is to “fight until the end.” (“Sultan Abdülhamid’s era depicted in new TV series,” 2017)

In the series, in contrast with the secular republican description of Sultan Abdülhamid as a reactionary, pan-Islamist monarchist who fought against the modernization efforts of the Young Turks, the last sultan is portrayed as an intelligent, charismatic, rational, honest, and just leader. He has tremendous diplomatic skills, and is the leader and protector of Muslims around the world. In episode 49, which aired on 4 May 2018, Abdülhamid single-handedly prevented the assassination of a British diplomat that was intended to kindle world war, exposed the United Kingdom’s secret to start a rebellion against the Ottoman Empire in Bulgaria, had one of his pashas infiltrate the secret meetings of the Zionists, and helped a Muslim community in Liverpool, members of which were arrested for protesting against the United Kingdom’s discriminatory education policies with respect to religion.

In *Payitaht Abdülhamid*, foreign, Western powers are depicted as the ultimate enemy of both the Ottoman Empire and Islam. In episode 49, for example, when police arrested the leaders of the Muslim community in Liverpool, Abdülhamid said: “They are doing this to keep Muslims illiterate. . . . They arrested them to label them as terrorists”¹⁰ (Uzunok, 2018). He also put the British messenger in his place: “Even though Muslims appreciate your science, they know that you will never get your share of wisdom”¹¹ (Uzunok, 2018).

10 “Müslümanları cahil bırakmak istiyorlar. . . . Müslümanlara terör yaftası vurmak için yapıyorlar.”

11 “Müslümanlar sizin ilminizi takdir etseler de hiçbir zaman irfandan nasibinizi alamayacağınızı biliyorlar.”

The series promotes a worldview wherein European powers and religious minorities are the ultimate enemies, seeking to destroy the empire and the national identity.

Mehmetçik Kütulamâre is a relatively new production that debuted in January 2018. The series tells the story of heroic soldiers fighting the Kut al-Amara battle against the British in 1916, which resulted in victory for the Ottoman Empire. The protagonist is a young, brave lieutenant called Üsküplü.

Like *Payitaht Abdülhamid*, *Mehmetçik Kütulamâre* uses an anti-Western, pro-Islamic narrative. Episode 14 of the series, for example, started with a surprise attack by Üsküplü and his soldiers on the British advance guard. Even though they were few in number, they managed to seize the unit. The series again features a British spy, Mr. Cox, who was sent to devastate the Ottoman Empire and undermine the sacredness of Islam.

Of the three series, *Diriliş Ertuğrul* is the most popular. Defined as the “Turkish Game of Thrones” by foreign critics (“Meet your new Jon Snow,” 2018), *Diriliş Ertuğrul* is based on the history of the Kayı tribe and tells the heroic story of how the Ottoman Empire came to be. The series takes place in the thirteenth century and centers on the life of the father of Osman I, the founder of the Ottoman Empire.

In the season 4, *Diriliş Ertuğrul* lead the ratings almost every week. Like the other two, Ertuğrul paints a picture of a Turkish leader who is a man of strength, talent, dedication, courage, and wisdom fighting in a rightful battle against non-Muslim, Western enemies. “Its sentiments are insular and nationalistic” and “express the idea that Turkey has a unique mission as the heir of a great empire” (Armstrong, 2017). In sum, *Diriliş Ertuğrul*, along with other programs with a pre-republican, Turco-Islamic narrative, constitute more than eight hours each week on TRT-1 –almost 10 percent of new content broadcast on the channel.¹²

12 The station broadcasts 24 hours a day, but given that programming from midnight to morning consists of the re-airing of daytime programs, the sum of new content is approximately ten hours a day and seventy hours a week.

Table 9.6 Duration of History-Themed Programs on TRT-1 (30 April-6 May 2018)

Program	02.05.18	03.05.18	04.05.18
<i>Diriliş Ertuğrul</i>	137 min.		
<i>Pelin Çift ile Gündem Ötesi</i> ¹³	63 min.		
<i>Mehmetçik Kütulamâre</i>		138 min.	
<i>Payitaht Abdülhamid</i>			159 min.
Total			497 min.

While TRT-1's prime time is dominated by television series with historical themes, series that aired on ATV are comprised of contemporary family dramas featuring pious families from different regions of Turkey. *Kanatsız Kuşlar* (Broken wings) tells the story of a middle-aged woman struggling to take care of her children after the sudden death of her husband, while *Aşk ve Mavi* (Love and blue) is a love story between the members of two families who are enemies. *Cennetin Gözyaşları* (Tears of heaven) is a format adaptation of a Korean series of the same name, and focuses on the dramatic life of an ambitious young woman with a difficult childhood, finding her biological family and experiencing love for the first time.

Eşkiya Dünyaya Hükümdar Olmaz (Bandits can't rule the world) has a relatively different storyline. It features the life of a mafia personality, Hızır Çakırbeyli, who comes from a rich, powerful family. He enters the realm of the mafia at a young age after his brother was killed. Known for his honesty, justice, and loyalty to his country, Çakırbeyli is backed by the state to unseat the reigning mafia leader who betrays the nation by selling weapons to its enemies. Even though the series features an illegal institution, it has a nationalistic sentiment and in a similar vein to TRT's Ottoman-themed series, it stars a charismatic, smart, honest male figure devoted to the wellbeing of his nation.

13 In the episode that aired on 2 May 2018, Pelin Çift hosted Professor Refik Turan, Chairman of Turkish Historical Society. They talked about the history of Anatolia and how the land of Greeks was Turkified by the Seljuks. They discussed the history of the Seljuk and Ottoman Empires and answered questions from the audience who sent their omments with the hashtag #AnadoluDemek (#AnatoliaMeans). Republican history was absent from the discussion.

Among the series aired on ATV, *Sen Anlat Karadeniz* (Tell me, black sea) is the most successful. It premiered in January 2018 and topped the rating list from the beginning, occasionally surpassing *Diriliş Ertuğrul*, the ratings champion of the previous two years. In the week of 30 April-6 May, too, *Sen Anlat Karadeniz* ranked first in total terms of viewers with a viewing rate of 14.67. It was closely followed by *Diriliş Ertuğrul* with 12.62.¹⁴

Sen Anlat Karadeniz is about a young woman, Nefes, who was sold as a child bride to her rich, abusive husband, Vedat. She and her son were rescued by a modest young man from a rich family, Tahir, who took them under his wings to his home in Trabzon, a city in the Black Sea region of Turkey. The story revolves around the romance between the two, tense family relationships, and an estranged husband looking for revenge.

According to RTÜK, the series dominates the ratings every week but it also receives the highest number of complaints almost every month for legitimizing violence against women and negatively influencing the psychology of children and teenagers (RTÜK, 2018). It also generates criticism on social media from people of the Black Sea region because men of the region are stereotyped as thugs who abuse their wives and children (“Sen Anlat Karadeniz dizisine karadenizden tepki var,” 2018). Despite the criticisms, the second season of the series premiered in fall 2018.

14 From weekly ratings compiled by reytingsonuclari.com: <http://www.reytingsonuclari.com/2018/5/haftalik-dizi-programlari-30-nisan-6-mayis-2018-18-hafta-reyting-sonuclari-h3440.html>



Figure 9.2 *Sen Anlat Karadeniz* is often criticized for scenes depicting violence against women. Reprinted from “İzleyicilerin Sen Anlat Karadeniz isyanı: Kadına karşı şiddeti özendiriyorsunuz”, 2018, *Sözcü*. Retrieved from <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/hayatim/kultur-sanat-haberleri/izleyicilerin-sen-anlat-karadeniz-isyani-kadina-karsi-siddeti-ozendiriyorsunuz/> . Copyright 2016 by Estetik Yayıncılık.

§ 9.5 Religion as the Overarching Message of Conservative Television

On conservative television stations, religion is at the forefront of daily life. From early morning shows to prime time television dramas, references to Islamic reasoning are present in the storylines and overall programming on these conservative channels.

The incorporation of Islam into the broadcast schedule of these channels takes one of two formats: First, programs that are openly Islamic and educate the audience about Islamic theology, and second, the mention of Islam in conventional daytime shows that indirectly inform the audience about being a devout Muslim and relay the message that God is with us all day, every day.

Shows in the former format make up a significant part of ATV's weekly programming. Between 30 April-6 May, four educational programs were aired on ATV, all hosted by popular televangelist Nihat Hatipoğlu. In all of them, Hatipoğlu reads passages from the Quran, tells stories about the exemplary life of prophet Muhammad, and answers audience questions on various aspects of Islam, ranging from Islamic views on sin to acceptable religious behavior to the fundamentals of fasting. He also touches on the social order of the day and gives examples of good and bad behavior in everyday life. On his program that aired on 4 May 2018, for instance, he showed a viral video of a man giving his shoes to a poor child on the subway and walking away barefoot, and he congratulated the subject of the video for being such a devout, exemplary Muslim. By contrast, he shared the story of a five-year old handicapped girl whose parents left her and he condemned the parents for their unacceptable behavior (Hatipoğlu, 2018).

Table 9.7 Duration of Religious Education Programs on TRT-1 and ATV (30 April-6 May 2018)

Program Name	30.04.18	03.05.18	04.05.18	06.05.18
<i>Berat Kandili Özel</i>	132 min.			
<i>Nihat Hatipoğlu ile Berat Kandili Özel</i>	133 min.			
<i>Pelin Çift ile İyi Fikir (Friday Special)</i>			80 min.	
<i>Kuran-I Kerimi Güzel Okuma Yarışması</i>	130 min.			
<i>Nihat Hatipoğlu Sorularınızı Cevaplıyor</i>			66 min.	
<i>Nihat Hatipoğlu ile Dosta Doğru</i>		45 min.		
<i>Nihat Hatipoğlu ile Kuran ve Sünnet</i>				60 min.
Duration				646 min.

As seen in table 9.7, ATV and TRT-1 combined dedicate almost eleven hours of daytime broadcasting to direct religious education. In other words, nearly 16 percent of current broadcasting on conservative television channels (that is, broadcasts of new content) openly aims to educate viewers about Islamic scripture.

In addition to religiously-themed educational programs that are a part of their regular programming, conservative television channels also change their programming on Islamic holy days. On 30 April, both ATV and TRT-1 aired

exclusively religious programs during prime time to celebrate one of the year's five holy nights, Laylat al Bara'at. ATV's program was again hosted by Hatipoğlu, and aired from Sultanahmet Square with live audience. The show was designed to highlight the world of religion as a holy realm. It showed background images of nature, stars and lights that turned blue and space green, which resembled an eerie world existing outside the universe. The choice of location is particularly noteworthy, as Sultanahmet Square was historically the religious center of the city with two important mosques, the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, facing each other at opposite ends. During the show, which lasted almost two and a half hours, Nihat Hatipoğlu explained the importance of Laylat al Bara'at, cited passages from Quran and the life of the prophet Muhammad, and answered audience questions. TRT-1 broadcast its own Laylat al Bara'at show on TRT Diyanet (a religious channel operated by TRT and the Directorate of Religious Affairs), in which the vice president of the directorate, Selim Argun, preached about the necessity of being a good, moral person and recited the Quran from another significant Ottoman mosque, the Grand Mosque of Bursa.

Along with programs that are religious in character, conventional, women-focused daytime health and cooking programs also incorporate religious-conservative education into their program language and routine. For instance, all the presenters on the daytime shows on Friday, 4 May 2018, greeted their audiences saying "Jumma Mubarak." On Fridays, Pelin Çift changes the format of her program and regularly hosts writer and theologian Fatih Çıtlak who answers audience questions and gives advice on matters of daily religious observance. For example, on 4 May 2018, he taught prayers for healing sicknesses, increasing one's livelihood, and deliverance from the evil eye and he explained the true meaning of *dhikr* and the ways of performing it. For the most part, these shows relayed the message that God is close to us, present everywhere around us, and guiding us on a straight path.



Figure 9.3 Screenshot from Nihat Hatipoğlu’s special Laylat al Bara’at program on 30 April 2018. From “Nihat Hatipoğlu ile Berat Kandili Özel,” 2018, *Nihat Hatipoğlu-ATV YouTube channel*, Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9OGshEkR-BRoandt=5991s> . Copyright 2018 by YouTube.

Conclusion

Based on Teun A. Van Dijk's discursive, socio-cognitive approach to news production, this dissertation analyzes how conservative values in the AKP period are produced by the mainstream pro-government media in Turkey. An in-depth critical discourse analysis of the content of two leading newspapers, *Sabah* and *Yeni Şafak*, is made considering four main themes (education, youth, women and family, and culture), which constitute a considerable part of the AKP's social policies as outlined in the party programs and which are critical for measuring the nature and scale of conservatism as an ideology (re)produced by the pro-government mainstream media during the AKP period.

The analysis of coverage on the issue of education in the conservative media suggests that conservative media attributes significant importance to the issue of national education and problems related to it. Education is seen as an ideological battlefield against secularists to protect national values and identity.

Conservative media and intellectuals believe that fundamental problems national education is facing today go back to the improper policies of the newly established republic in 1923, especially in the aftermath of the adoption of the Law on the Unification of Education. With this law, education entered into the service of Western imperialists, and freedom and diversity in education were curbed – a core problem still haunting Turkey today.

In conservative media, the narrative on education rests on three fundamental perspectives: Problems concerning the national education system in general, the issue of religious education, and most dominantly, the position of IHLs in the Turkish education system.

The present Turkish national education system is accused by conservative journalists of having become a tool of Western cultural imperialism that ignores core national and religious values, fostering generations that are estranged from their own culture. To counteract immoral, alienated youth, the conservative solution is to reintroduce the Islamic madrasa system of the Ottoman Empire. That system not only provides an education that reflects who Turkish society truly is, but also promotes more occupational specialization and diversity, decreasing the number of unemployed university graduates. It is argued that although the name is different, many prominent schools in the United States and Europe are already operating de facto in line with the madrasa system.

The European Union accession talks in the early 2000s also provided a new angle from which raise conservative arguments about religious education – or the lack thereof. Conservative media adopts a stance in favor of Quran courses, supports the abolishment of age limits, and promotes a hands-on teaching approach to religious education. This unified media front is broken only by the issue of compulsory religious education, as different columnists raise different opinions on the right way to approach to this issue.

IHLs and their problems, success, and value are the fundamental pillar of conservative media arguments against the national education system. Until the removal of the discrepant coefficient factor in late 2011, IHLs were depicted as innocent victims of unfair, unjust treatment by the state. The dominant narrative rested on students' right to education – how otherwise extremely successful IHL students were underestimated and inhibited by YÖK and the state. After this procedure was amended, the victimization narrative continued, recalling those dark times in history.

IHLs are seen as exemplary schools, homes for role models that possess local, cultural, social and religious consciousness. “Those who graduate from IHLs cannot become drug addicts, psychopaths, and murderers” is a common narrative that readers come across in the conservative media. Only in the last

couple of years have the problems of IHLs (students captured by earthly pleasures, too much use of technology, etc.) started to be voiced by the media, though these problems are touched on in the framework of the general problems of the Turkish education system. Despite this, IHL youth are still seen as the future of the country in the conservative media, supporting similar statements by high-ranking statesmen.

Another valid point for praising IHLs is their contribution to the schooling of girls. Through human-interest stories and commentaries by intellectuals and opinion leaders, it is constantly argued that IHLs contributed significantly to convincing pious parents to send their daughters to school. Because of the solving of the coefficient factor problem and the lifting of the headscarf ban, IHLs are not on the agenda of the media as much as before, but their success continues to be regularly celebrated by conservative journalists.

Closely related to the narrative on the education, the analysis of news production on youth and generational policies reveals that conservative media, which has undergone mainstreaming since the late-1990s, instinctively challenges the republican myth of youth, which gave a new generation an unrealistic, representative role in defending the country. News stories and columns argue that apart from the fact that this mission made upcoming generations politically inactive, it also made them prone to violence as it meant collaborating with the military when necessary. Conservative media suggests that today's youth are the passive victims of capitalism. Excessive consumerism coupled with unlimited, irresponsible use of technology has turned Turkish youth into selfish, unhappy, uncultured, immoral individuals who have lost their sense of community, family, and true morality.

The two most common tendencies that the conservative media observes in today's youth and finds dangerous are increasing moral degeneracy and individualism. As Yusuf Kaplan regularly argues in his columns, Turkey's imperialist culture, education, and media regime are fostering a catastrophic generation that is alienated from its own local and religious culture and values. This is the reason selfishness, violence, adultery, and drug and alcohol addiction are widespread in the country today. Young people who are not guided by Islam, traditional family values and a sense of community cause the moral degeneration of society and thereby cast a shadow on Turkey's future.

Another fundamental point of concern is what Saktanber (2007) observes as a shift in the Islamic identity of youth from a “thoroughly communal identity to an individual one via self-reflexivity” (p. 421). While conservative media promotes the internalization of religious values and Islamic self-reflexivity by the youth, it also criticizes excessive individualism and selfishness and calls for the reinvention of a communal consciousness among the youth. It is constantly underlined that the youth have an obligation to their country, and more importantly, to the entire ummah.

While criticizing the youth of today on one hand, conservative media offers a guideline for what the ideal youth should be, on the other. Exemplary youth, according to conservative media, are individuals who have a national, cultural, and historical consciousness; who act to become selfless, moral, just people with fundamental values; who do not lose themselves in the degenerative, consumerist, devilish offerings of the contemporary capitalist world; and above all, who are devoted to Islamic principles and values. The primary condition for becoming a commendable adult is to embrace religion as the core guiding light – and the rest will follow.

The way that the conservative media is narrating youth is a sign that the conservative media accepts the birth of a new generation, and even “generation units” in Mannheim’s terms, especially after the Gezi Park protests. During and after the Gezi movement, conservative media adopted polarizing language about the youth and contributed to a discourse of antagonistic generation units by pitting ideal, pious (pro-AKP, anti-Gezi) youth against the rebels of Gezi Park (secular, republican, pro-CHP youth). This discriminatory language has become the core legacy of the news articles, columns, and editorials of the Gezi movement and still dominates conservative media when covering stories related to youth.

Apart from the production and reproduction of youth by the conservative media, this analysis also reveals a significant aspect of what conservatism means in Turkey overall and how it actually corresponds to Islamism. Especially in responses to other media and in debates over Erdoğan’s words about male and female university students living together in the same off-campus houses, the conservative media has revealed a heavy emphasis religion (Islam) in its understanding of everyday conservatism in Turkey.

In the eyes of the conservative media, the youth is an important, delicate subject and one of the biggest problems with which the nation must deal. Moral degeneration occurring in various youth groups should be precluded by encouraging young people to start a family as early as possible, educating them to use technologies responsibly, presenting them with good role models, and most importantly, directing them towards the path of Islam. Only if and when Turkey manages to this will it have a bigger, brighter future.

From the 1980s up until the AKP's election victories in 2007 and 2011, the topic of women's rights in the pious media almost exclusively concerned women's right to cover their heads. Conservative newspapers and columnists that acquired more power and underwent mainstreaming during the AKP period tie all gender-based problems to the headscarf ban – how this limited women's individual rights, their role in the public sphere, and their right to education and religious freedom. However, following the AKP's second election success, when the party started signaling a resolution to the headscarf issue, the conservative media began to show interest in women's issues other than the headscarf ban. Even though the approach is shaped and influenced by the headscarf struggle, conservative newspapers and particularly female columnists have an expanded interest in women's rights, especially when it comes to violence against women and women's right to work outside the home.

Pious media and columnists, both male and female, show strong solidarity and have a unified front with respect to violence against women. They condemn gender-based violence on every occasion and condemn it at all costs, regardless of the lifestyles and religious beliefs of the victims. Using secular as well as conservative, Islamist arguments, the conservative media repeatedly conveys the message that violence against women is an unacceptable, heinous crime.

While having a clear, consistent position towards violence against women, the lines blur when it comes to women working outside of home. Given that families cannot be sustained by a single breadwinner in the contemporary socioeconomic system, the conservative community together with the government promotes women's economic empowerment. On the other hand, it still demands that traditional roles in domestic life wherein women are responsible

for raising children and doing the housework continue. It emphasizes the crucial importance of family for the moral, social, and economic development of the nation, encourages women to have at least three children and advises them not to postpone motherhood for the sake of a professional career. While publishing research that reveals that housewives are happier than working women, columnists – especially female ones – simultaneously defend women’s rights to education and participation in the workforce. Some female leads like Barbarosoğlu and Böhürler even criticize their own community, urging pious families to keep up with the times when it comes to discussing gender roles.

It is important to note that the contradictory stance on women’s roles in the economic and political spheres is not unique to the conservative media. It is evident in government policies, as well, signaling a broader value conflict within conservatism in Turkey. Ayata and Doğangün (2017) explain this with the concept of a religio-conservative gender climate and argue that “the AKP has promoted a religio-conservative gender climate that simultaneously trivializes legal advances and unleashes traditional forces in a strongly traditional society” (p. 611). This, in turn, limits the acceptance of women’s rights and female empowerment in society. This is also the reason why despite women’s important role in mobilizing support for the party, the AKP leadership incorporates few women in the party administration, and women’s overall participation in politics remains limited. This is also in line with Ayata and Doğangün’s arguments and reveal that conservative media plays a critical role in sustaining and further expanding this religio-conservative gender climate in Turkey.

Overall, a recurring theme with respect to women’s rights, responsibilities, and roles within society as well as the importance of family for an ideal nation is that the pious media uses both conservative, Islamist and secular arguments to discuss these issues. Especially female columnists for conservative newspapers compare local initiatives and developments to Western standards, celebrate the government’s active involvement in women-related summits and seminars in Europe, and condemn violence against women in Turkey as being inappropriate for a European Union candidate state. They justify women’s right to cover their heads as an issue of human rights and individual freedoms,

and criticize Turkish television series and reality shows for depicting a marriage prototype that confirms the that message women must serve men. In line with Arat's (2016) claims, conservative newspapers and their columnists are heavily influenced by the secular value in which they were born and raised. Even though they are critical of secular women's movements and are openly hostile towards the Western-dominated ideology of feminism, the pious media – and especially female columnists – have internalized the fundamental values and concerns of the feminists of the secular republic.

While this research limits itself to conservative media and its columnists' views on women's rights and problems other than the headscarf issue, the analysis of how conservative media approach to women's issues also provides the basis for a fascinating new area of research. The conservative viewpoint revealed in this research – that the women's rights issues must be evaluated within the broader framework of human rights – brings out the question of how the LGBT community fits into the picture. Further research could focus on questions such as: Does the conservative media and its columnists share the same argument when it comes to LGBT people? What is their attitude towards expanding individual rights to lesbians and gays? What do they think about their problems? How do they relate to LGBT concerns? Which arguments do they use to argue in favor of or against LGBT rights? Where does the LGBT community stand in this religio-conservative gender climate in Turkey? And perhaps most importantly, is there room for expanding gender-neutral rights in Turkey?

The chapter on culture also reveals important findings about the way conservative ideology is enacted and reproduced in news texts about various forms of culture, art, and literature. In fact, in 2013, professor, writer, art critic and *Sabah* columnist Hasan Bülent Kahraman wrote an essay for the magazine *Gelenekten Geleceğe* (From tradition to future). In this lengthy, argumentative essay, he states that conservatism is foremost a political ideology and not a concept originated in literature or culture in general. As it is a political position, conservatism must not be sought along the path of culture to politics, but on the contrary, along the path of politics to art and culture. Kahraman's argument is applicable to how the conservative media approaches, represents and covers cultural productions in the AKP period. On the literature side, it

promotes books that praise historic bonds with the glorious Ottoman Empire and supports the AKP's efforts to revive the Ottoman in the cultural realm. It criticizes West genres that dominate the contemporary Turkish literature. It attributes significant import to popularizing research that attempts to rewrite and correct the official republican narrative. Seeing poetry as the only truly "national" form, it discusses ways to make poetry great again. And above all, it canonizes Turkish poets whose religious, conservative identities and protests against the policies of the secular republic are prominent – figures that the AKP leadership embraced as role models.

While bolstering national intellectuals – who are all poets at heart – the media embraces them for their overarching conservative, religious identities but does not highlight the nuances that differentiate one must's thoughts from the others. Bora (1998), in his reference book on Turkish conservatism *Türk Sağının Üç Hali* (Three moods of the Turkish right), for example, positions the main figures covered in the conservative media as intellectual fathers of different versions of conservatism in Turkey. While Kısakürek can be regarded as the originator of a nationalist conservatism with racist overtones, Mehmet Akif is considered an Islamist-conservative. Tanpınar on the other hand, is a classical conservative in the sense that his conservatism expresses itself not in the political but in the cultural realm. He attributes to religion an ability to strengthen the sense of community rather than seeing Islam as obedience. On the other hand, Bora describes Nurettin Topçu as a revolutionary conservative, regards religious and national bonds as inseparable, criticizes urbanization, and takes a strong position against technology transfers from other civilizations. It is striking to see that the two most frequently highlighted role models put forward in the pious media, Necip Fazıl Kısakürek and Mehmet Akif Ersoy, are those that attribute the most importance to religion (Islam) in their understanding of conservatism.

In conservative media's approach to music, too, the importance of religion is greatly felt. Music as a form of art is different and superior over to art forms for conservatives, as it sees *musiki* an integral part of Islamic doctrine. Deciphering it as a divine talent that should be performed in the name of God, conservatives criticize the dominant Western influence. As always, they blame early republican policies for the deterioration of the authentic Islamic musical

heritage. Through interviews with conservative musicians and performers like Orhan Gencebay that are popular for their anti-Western, local musical styles and through articles that revive the rich musical heritage of the Ottoman past, conservative media promotes the revival of traditional Islamic music that is aligned with the moral, cultural, and national values of Turkish society.

While criticizing popular Western music, the conservative media and intellectuals do not reject the genre entirely and even express admiration for it on occasion. For conservatives, the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable Western music lies in whether or not the content is compatible with fundamental Islamic values.

The same approach by conservative media is not valid with respect to cinema. Overall, the Islamic revival of the 1990s redefined the relationship between conservative circles and cinema. Previously seen as a Western art form from which conservatives should deliberately distance themselves, starting in the 1990s, cinema is redefined by the pious media and its intellectuals as a mere form of art that could be a powerful tool with which to conquer modernity from within. Despite the overwhelming support of the media – and in some cases of the government – white cinema failed to evolve into a permanent genre. Conservative media is sincerely disappointed by this failure and often criticizes itself with respect to the deleterious effects of modernity and the fact that conservative majority does not sufficiently support the new, mainstream Islamic cinema. As of 2018, criticisms of popular contemporary genres still dominate the conservative media, and cinema continues to be a marginal field for everyday conservatism.

Even though art and culture in general are highly intriguing topics of discussion in the conservative media and even though there is lively debate on what is acceptable art and culture and how it should be transformed and promoted, these ideas have not materialized on the social or political level. Despite the media's efforts to revive traditional art forms based on local and national values, pop music still dominates *musiki*, and Hollywood movies are breaking box office records, not white cinema. The failure in this realm is acknowledged and often disapproved by the press, making it one of few areas in which conservative media openly and loudly directs its criticisms to the

AKP and conservative influencers, intellectuals, and decision makers in general. As the AKP and Erdoğan himself are publicly critical of his government's shortcomings in late 2016, more frequent and tougher media criticism and debate can be expected in this realm the near future.

Finally, the analysis of one week of streaming of mainstream conservative channels in Turkey reveals that conservative media as a whole promotes and popularizes the same conservative themes and narratives. As is the case for newspapers, the programming content of television channels also emphasizes on religious values and the sacredness of family as an institution. In an attempt to revive Turkey's glorious history before the republic, it disseminates a neo-Ottomanist discourse mostly through historical series.

The daytime schedules of conservative television channels are dominated by reality programs for stay-at-home women, which reinforces the importance of family and women's role in keeping it intact for social peace and order. The expansion of conservatism in the direction of popular television dramas is prevalent, especially in series aired on prime time on ATV in which traditional, extended families are depicted and marriage is promoted.

Compared to the private broadcaster ATV, series that attempt to revive the pre-republican Islamic imperial past is more prevalent on the state broadcaster. Prime time on TRT-1 is almost entirely dominated by television series featuring strong Muslim-Turkish leaders from history fighting battles to protect the national identity from non-Muslim, Western enemies. The anti-Kemalist narrative is not as apparent on television when compared to written media, though in the thematic focus of the historical dramas, republican history is largely absent from.

Lastly, the most prevalent discourse on conservative television is undoubtedly religion. Between openly educational programs and the incorporation of religious nuances into conventional formats and genres, conservative audiovisual media, like newspapers, disseminate a grand message that God is ever-present as the super-addressee in everyone's lives – guiding and helping people to tell right from wrong.

The research reveals that the AKP introduced a new conservative thinking that differs from the previous mainstream center-right parties, the DP and ANAP. Like them, the AKP believes that family is the core institution and the

basis of Turkish society. Each places emphasis on the importance of shared local, religious, and moral values among citizens, and the doze of religion in the conservative thinking gradually increases with the consequent election victories of these center-right parties. The analysis shows, however, that the AKP's conservatism differs from the previous two in its hostility to the republican revolution and the West. Even though both the DP and ANAP were opposition parties and were against the new republic's radically secular nation-building policies, they did not question or criticize the republican revolution or its leadership as openly and loudly as the AKP. They too believed in the need to create a new national identity, only with less aggressive policies that reconcile economic and technological development with local, religious and moral values. Similarly, both the DP and ANAP adopted a US-centric approach to modernization. Their conservative thinking rested on the aim to harmonize local, cultural values with Western technology and socioeconomic development. The AKP and the contemporary conservative intellectuals, however, openly criticize Western policies, principles, and values and believe that the Western culture and civilization – if there is any – is fundamentally at odds with Turkish traditions and values.

Media in Turkey, both written and audio-visual, plays an important role in producing, enabling, and promoting this hegemonic conservative ideology, put forward by the AKP government. The textual and linguistic analysis of the news stories, editorials, and columns on this particular media suggests that the conservative ideology in Turkey stands on the values of Islam, severe dislike and grudge against the secular republic and the West, and strong interest towards the local, ancient Turkish history and culture that dates back to the establishment of the modern republic, with particular emphasis on the Ottoman Empire. This conservative ideology is pining for a youth with a religious upbringing, a society that rests on a traditional family structure that reinforces conventional gender role orientations, and a social life in and outside of home that represents local and national traditions, culture, and values. While this research shows that such imaginary is represented in the preferred language use of the media, further research is needed to understand and evaluate how this discourse is received by Turkish society.

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