

Islamism in Turkey from a socio-political aspect: Post-Islamism oriented approaches

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Because Islamism emerged as a local socio-political movement in the Turkish modernisation history as an alternative solution to problems in addition to modern ideologies transferred from the West, Islamism has always been a subject of discussion as an important socio-political movement in Turkish political life. However, this movement that emerged in the early periods of the Turkish modernisation history has gone through significant changes in the process to date. Domestic and foreign developments have had an important effect on these changes. Until recently, Islamism claimed to be an alternative to Western political understanding and civilisation, but as a result of being in power lately, it has sought to have a part in the system and to Islamise modernity. This situation constitutes the most important change the Islamic movement has gone through to date. This situation, that is, the transition from being an alternative to being within the system, has brought along debates about whether this can be considered as the end of the Islamic movement, or whether the emerging new situation represents a post-Islamist period. The purpose of this article is to investigate whether the current era of Turkish Islamism indicates a post-Islamist era considering the social and political changes it has undergone from its start to the present day, and to examine the main characteristics of this new era.

KEYWORDS

alternative, harmony, Islamic state, Islamism, post-Islamism

1 | INTRODUCTION

The main subject of Islamism in Turkey is how to adapt to modernisation while remaining a Muslim, or how to remain a Muslim in the period we live in. Whether it is necessary to establish a new regime or state to overcome this problem, or whether these aims should occur by taking over the existing state structure or, alternatively, living under the wings of democracy without interfering with the political system has been a matter of debate in the history of Islamism. The Islamist movement, which emerged in an Islamic world that had been defeated by the West, occupied countries that were less-developed than those in Europe, whose religious understanding had collapsed and who, consequently, were living with outdated religious institutions. As such, the movement has generally taken place in an effort to rectify past understanding, and has always been in search of a new understanding.

Consequently, Islamism, which emerged as both a critical view of the past and an ideology of reaction, has been in an ambivalent state in terms of being both opposed to and in harmony with new ideas within its own history. As the conditions of each period in which Islamism has emerged are different, the movement has undergone significant changes in response to the changing socio-political conditions in place since its emergence. When the problem of living by remaining a Muslim at an individual level is taken up and addressed at social (Islamic nation) and political (Islamic state) levels, we see that the aspects featuring in discussions differ significantly, and it is these discussions that dominate the history of the Islamic movement. In general, Islamism can be defined as a common name for people who act against political imperialism in the Islamic world and against cultural imperialism in Turkey. However, the concept of Islamism began to change after the 1980s, especially after the beginning of the Justice

and Development Party's (AK Parti) rule. Since then, the concept of Islamism has moved towards a very different meaning, and new discussions have emerged regarding whether Islamism can be considered to lie within the Islamist movement or not.

In general, Islamism has been the name given to the opponents of political colonialism in the Islamist world and to cultural colonialism in Turkey. This paper aims to examine the new characteristics of Islamism in its latest state, taking into account the changes it has experienced from its emergence to the present day. This will allow the case to be considered from a comparative perspective, permitting an examination of the periodic differences within the Islamist movement and an evaluation of the current situation.

2 | ISLAMISM AS A SOCIO-POLITICAL MOVEMENT

Since the second half of the eighteenth century, Islamism has progressed through discussions regarding how to respond to the juxtaposition of the Islamic world with modern, colonial Western civilisation under unequal conditions. In the 19th century, it emerged as a movement that was the product of the secularising modernisation that started in the Islamic world under the influence of the West, which had become a global power. Therefore, the idea of Islamism emerged as a part of the reform/modernisation movements in the Islamic world and in the Ottoman lands, before beginning to be ideologised depending on the change in political and intellectual positions (Gencer, 2013, p. 74).

At first sight, Islamism has an appearance that makes it possible and necessary for two lines that seem paradoxical to coexist. On the one hand, from a religious and traditional perspective it opposes some ideas, institutions and practices, attitudes and ways of life that have been brought about or proposed by modernising movements; on the other hand, however, it reinterprets religious thought and the concept of jihad, strengthening the thoughts and sentiments of the Muslim people as a way to resist the colonialists and to adapt to the ideas, institutions and practices brought in by modernisation. This indicates that Islamism perceives European or Western civilisation both as an enemy and as a model that should be followed and imitated (Alam, 2009, p. 356).

This situation was not only an initial feature of the Islamist movement, but has existed throughout its history. In other words, the Islamist movement has been politically dissident and intellectually critical, yet also has a harmonious attitude and is willing to participate in new comments and new political and social processes. That is, it has turned into an ideological movement that brings about an idea of liberation by making the modernist, the religious conservative and the religious into a socio-political project—a discourse (Aykaç & Durgun, 2018, p. 157). This is the reason why, as a product of modernisation, Islamism is a movement that generally has modern qualities in terms of its ways of thinking and acting. In Muslim lands that are faced with development or underdevelopment problems in modern times, the Islamic movement has manifested itself as a

developmentalist, internally enlightened (puritan), revolutionary, ummahist and libertarian ideology. According to these features, the Islamic world argues that the problem of the occupation and exploitation of Muslim countries by colonialist European states can only be solved by following the authentic sunnah of Islam, the Quran, and the Prophet Muhammad, all of which value reason and science; in other words, it can only be solved by following the example set by the Golden Age.¹

Therefore, an important issue for the Islamist movement is whether the practised religion is the true religion, and how the true religion can be understood. In other words, it is concerned with how to understand the belief principles of Islam and how to test their authenticity, which has become one of the most fundamental intellectual issues discussed within the Islamist movement. In addition, the problems of administration and freedom in Muslim lands and how they can develop a more effective resistance against imperialist occupation has been one of the main pursuits of Islamism in the political sense (Yıldırım, 2016, p. 37). In short, Islamism's defence of the Golden Age's practices and the return to first sources and its demands to open the gate of *ijtihad*, which has been the subject of discussion for centuries in the Islamic world, are efforts to purify Islam from understandings that are based on *bidah* and from superstitions that are responsible for the bad state of affairs and backwardness. For this reason, the search for a union of forces (pan-Islamist politics), with the aim of getting rid of the problems of the Islamic ummah, is the main motivation behind the emergence of the movement.

Each of these features of the Islamist movement has been put forward by various thinkers, such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Syed Ahmad Khan, Tunisian Hayreddin Pasha and Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, who all lived in different regions of the Islamic world and in different periods, and who all interpreted Islam quite differently. Therefore, as can be seen here, Islamism has developed around many different centres. The actions and ideas of Muslim scholars and intellectuals in the North African region, the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, the Islamist activities originating in Egypt and the actions and ideas of the Muslims of Central and Southeast Asia have all had very important effects on the formation of the Islamic movement. Some interpretations date the historical influence and sources of Islamism back to the *tajdid* and revival movements, to the Wahhabi movement and to Ibn Taymiyya and Ahmed ibn Hanbal in the pre-modern Islamic period (Bulut, 2013, p. 343).

3 | ISLAMISM IN THE TURKISH CONTEXT

When specifically considered in the Turkish context, it is possible to date the first period of Islamism back to the Selim III era, when the Ottoman modernisation had begun (1870–1908); in other words, to the beginning of the schooling (secular schooling) process. We can see that the first discussions to be associated with Islamism (the imitation of the infidel, the science–religion conflict, dress code, foreign

¹This covers the first period of Islam; namely, the period of the prophet and the four caliphs.

teachers, foreign languages, new schools, etc.) started in these years. The dual structure (school–madrasa) initiated by the process of schooling created a multifaceted mentality and a change of vision by bringing about areas of discussion such as the religious field, understanding of science, and sources of knowledge. With the edicts of Edict of Gülhane (Tanzimat) (1839) and Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856 (Islahat) (1856), the areas of reform and, parallel to this, the issues under debate expanded from the caliphate–sultanate system to the legitimate administration by moving towards the fields of law, political thought, the structure of the state, institutions, the definition of ‘nation’, rights and freedoms, and regimes (Kirman, 2006, p. 147). All of these topics became major debates in later periods of Islamic thought.

Although the roots of Islamist thought and movement can be traced back to the time of Selim III, it is possible to consider it as an independent movement during the Second Constitutional Era. A religion-centred nationalist ummahism that occurred after the Second Constitutional Era brought forward the search for a new Islam and new morality centred on a return to religious sources and the Golden Age. In line with this approach, the idea of an Islamic unity that cares for the future emerged as a movement in search of a social structure, nation and ummah with strengthened connections; one that practised solidarity through freedom, goodness, fellowship, justice, unity and furtherance by gathering around a national religious idea and reaching beyond the Ottoman lands. As such, the case should be considered from a comparative perspective, in order to indicate the differences between the various periods of the Islamist movement and to evaluate the current situation (Tuncer, 2020, p. 149).

The Islamist movement was in its infancy until the Second Constitutional Era; however, it expanded its areas of discussion after this period, reaching a position whereby it could have its own independent media organs. This independent media, for the first time in the Islamist movement's history, made it possible to develop an inclusive perspective of the flow of politics, areas of reform and daily life, and provided the opportunity to reconstruct the movement's adherents' own language and world of thought, introducing new conditions and modern possibilities. Indeed, Islamist thought in Turkey put forward opinions in many areas, ranging from religious to political, from morality to the regulation of daily life; as such, it was frequently on the agenda during the Second Constitutional Era, at which point it attained its own intellectuals and influential media organs. The Islamist movement came to the fore in this period because it included more of the aspects of modernisation (nationalism, Westernisation, freedom, progress, solidarity, etc.) than other ideologies (Kara, 2013, pp. 24–25).

In general, Turkey's Islamism did not have a problem about being local or foreign in its first period. However, the socio-political developments in the post-World War I period changed this. As the discussion ground of Islamic thought evolved post-World War I, it started to differ from Islamism in terms of content and style. Ultimately, the climate of thought, the understanding of politics, and the actors all changed. However, there were also perspectives that continued; specifically, the Islamists' idea of constitutionalism in the last period of the Ottoman Empire was reflected in the Republic through the Union

and Progress movement. There was no difficulty in transforming the concept of Mesveret (consultation) into religious content through the concepts of Mesveret and shura and sharia and maslahah; the idea of constitutionalism (referring to the parliamentary and constitutional system) was easily aligned with the ideals of the Golden Era, and this interpretation had a transformational effect on the caliphate–sultanate system. Indeed, explanations for and defences of the Republic, and of later democracy, within the religious framework were mostly achieved through the same method (Bulaç, 2004, p. 58). Political developments, such as the legal end of the Ottoman Empire, the abolition of the Caliphate and the establishment of many nation states in the lands left over from the Ottoman Empire, had a significant effect on post-war Islamism. These events combined to drive the Islamists into a more rejectionist and takfiri position; as a result, their relationship with society became increasingly tense.

4 | ISLAMISM FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE REPUBLIC TO THE 1960 COUP

The Ottoman Empire ended after World War I and a secular Republic was established in its place, meaning that the Islamists had to adapt themselves to changing conditions. With the Lausanne process, the dissolution of the First Grand National Assembly, the three important laws passed by parliament on 3 March 1924 (the abolition of the Caliphate, the Unification of Education Law/Tawhid-i Tadrifat, and the abolition of the Ministry of Sharia and Foundations), the Takrir-i Sükûn Kanunu (Law on the Maintenance of Order) and the closure of the tekkes (1925) as a result of Sheikh Said rebellion in Eastern Anatolia, the Islamist movement progressed through a very different path, resulting in the foundation of the Republic.

The conditions that emerged after 1924 were the most troubled and difficult years for Islamism. As its recently acquired media organs were closed in the last period of the Ottoman Empire, the act of publishing books and articles was made impossible, attempts to intervene in the religious field increased, religious education at every level was reduced to a minimum and religious groups were dispersed or, in some cases, forced to flee (Berkes, 1978, p. 525; Kara, 2013, p. 27). Therefore, as a result of the implementation of radical Western reforms, the publishing of religious works was not efficient nor active in the first years of the Republic, because the one-party Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi; CHP) government controlled both the political sphere and other spheres, in line with the reforms. For example, the government put religious worship in a new form, different to the known methods, by making the language of worship Turkish, performing the prayers with music, and placing benches in the mosques to sit on during prayer, and so on. This was carried out under the chairmanship of Fuat Köprülü of the Darülfünun Theology Faculty in 1928. Such policies, which affected religious life, created a serious obstacle to Islamist intellectuals' ability to become visible in the political and intellectual arena in the new period (Ueno, 2018, p. 384). Therefore, due to the gap in the period after 1924 in Turkey, the prominence of intellectuals and literati, and community-sect

members and journalists recently, was the result of such political developments. The most significant act paving the way to this change (in terms of both the human element and content) was the closure of the madrasahs and tekkes and the disruption and discrediting of the vein of science and knowledge.

In summary, the Westernising radical reforms carried out in the first years of the Republic and the strict, pressured policies applied to the Islamic opposition deprived the Islamists of this period of the opportunity to express their ideas and projects openly. The demands for 'an Islamic political regime' that were openly voiced by the Islamists during the Second Constitutional Period were replaced by studies in social fields such as 'saving faith' and 'preventing the oblivion of the Qur'anic alphabet' in the first years of the Republic (Aykaç & Durgun, 2018, p. 158). In the new era, Islamists paid more attention to discussing the future of Muslim society, rather than to the current political structure and its organisation as a nation state. According to them, 'If the state is not Islamic, the society that accepts this political structure and obeys such a state is not Islamic either'. At this point, a period of struggle against the 'inner enemy' and a desire to make the people conscious Muslims again came to the fore, rather than a resistance against the foreign enemy and the invader (Bulut, 2013, p. 344).

With the regulations made, Islamists started to think that Islamic rules were no longer dominant; in other words, that they were in a non-Islamic political structure. For this reason, their main purpose was to re-Islamise this new structure, primarily socially. This situation, which began during the Republic's single-party period, started to change with the transition to a multi-party political life. In post-World War II circumstances, the impact of the changing international political climate and the search for Turkey's obligations in the international political arena involved the revision of Turkey's single-party ideology. This situation brought the softening of Turkey's strictly secular policies to the agenda; these policies were extremely restrictive for Islamic thought, as they had been to other political thoughts and movements. In the words of Şerif Mardin, 'defining these softening attempts as Islamic activities is not possible' (Mardin, 1991, p. 35). In addition, after 1924, the distancing between the Islamic world and Turkey (which, again, was due to World War II) began to change in the evolving political environment; this new period was conducive to the development of Islamic thought.

Developments in the CHP during the transition to multi-party life signalled that a different situation was emerging, changing the religious practices that had been defined during the single-party period. The arrival of Şemsettin Günaltay, one of the young Islamists of the Second Constitutional Era, to the post of Prime Minister in 1949 was, in a sense, a sign of this change. In the same year, the introduction of selective religious courses to the fourth and fifth grades of primary school and the adoption of a law enabling the establishment of Ankara University's Faculty of Theology were the other developments in this area.

At this time, democratic debates brought religion into the field of discussion. Discussions about the role of Islam started to spread rapidly in the country from 1946, growing further with the expansion of freedoms in the 1950s. In 1950, 19 of the mausoleums that had been

closed since 1925 were opened to visitors, the Adhan began to be recited in Arabic again, and arrangements such as the opening of 7-year Imam-Hatip Schools in 1951 and of Islamic Institutes in 1959 were very important and unexpected developments (Alam, 2009, p. 363). In short, with the transition to a multi-party system, the demands of the Muslim people came into play and the DP (Democrat Party) won in the 1950 elections. Democratisation movements, which started with changes to the internal and external political atmosphere at this time, started to highlight religion (namely Islam) as the highest source of value and legitimacy in society. In addition to these developments, which were moving towards relative freedom, publishing associations were established and mosques were built; education and cooperation schemes were instigated and the sects and communities that were pushed underground during the single-party period and which had been subjected to oppression and intimidation started to (albeit cautiously) undertake visible activities in multi-party political life. All of these factors denoted an important change (Kirman, 2006, p. 151).

In the relative freedom that emerged under multi-party political life, copyrighted works were written with the aim of informing the public about religious life, and studies concerning how Islam viewed different dimensions of life were put forward. However, when these studies were not sufficient (in other words, when it was not possible to meet the prominent needs of the religious field) translation activities started. It is a known fact that translation activities in general are very effective at changing the field of thought. The activities that emerged at this time were very effective at changing the character of the Islamist movement. In addition, the translation activities carried out at this time not only translated the works of Muslim thinkers, but also those of some Orientalists who had written works on Islamic society and history (Bulut, 2013, p. 352). Within the framework of the translation of classical works that began when Hasan Ali Yücel was the Minister of National Education, the Oriental Classics were translated into Turkish.

These copyright and translation activities were very important to the revival of the development of the Sufi, literary and cultural understanding of Islam in the 1950s and beyond. Relative relief occurred in the field of public speaking and in the discussion of religious issues upon the transition to democratic politics; translation activities made a very important contribution to the religious and spiritual values being discussed. This was done so in a way that emphasised the importance of social life, rather than individual or conscientious life in general. Previously, in the period between 1924 and 1950, published works containing religious content placed great importance on a rational approach to Islam, in parallel with a religious understanding of the Republic administration. Although the same sensitivity was maintained after 1950, the difference in the new period was seen in the publication of works that discussed the social and political aspects of Islam and the Islamic world (Bayraktar & Durgun, 2010, p. 78). Therefore, compared to the previous period, we see not only the publishing and translation of works that highlight moral and worship-based dimensions of religion, but also an increase in muamelat (documentation).

Despite the relative relief, in terms of religious life, that followed the transition to multi-party political life, some restrictions from the one-party period still remained. Consequently, since the Islamist movement could not emerge as an autonomous and independent socio-political movement, it tried to find a place for itself under the umbrella of conservatism, nationalism or holiness. It is worth noting that the adjectives 'nationalist', 'conservative' and 'sacred' are still actively used in Turkish political life to describe this situation. According to the Republic's official ideology, the dissolution of history, traditions and religion was seen as forming an intertwined situation in one programme; however, for nationalist conservatives or religious scholars, defending religion over history or criticising the Republican ideology through history was seen as a way of self-existence. Here, the concept of nationalist conservative or sacred thought was chosen as a way to be distinguished from official nationalism, which emphasised pre-Islamic Turkish history and pre-Islamic Anatolian civilisations, as well as from nationalism that emphasised only a certain lineage. This preference also means to open a strong space to the religious field, even to the history of Muslim Anatolia after 1071, the Seljuks and the Ottomans, and national values (Batuman, 2018, p. 41).

In the post-World War II Constitutional Period, the rank of a great and sainted sultan, and the idea that Cevdet Pasha was the greatest thinker, emerged as a continuation of this approach to and style of opposition. These symbolised names were transformed into a tool used to highlight the differences between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic: Ottoman sultans and the caliph, and so on were pitted against the founding staff of the Republic. Therefore, it is more appropriate to consider the most important thinkers of the period (such as Nurettin Topçu, Sezai Karakoç and Necip Fazıl, who are now referred to as Islamists) and their media organs under the heading of conservative/religious nationalism, not Islamism. This is because the word 'Islamism' was used for a very long time throughout the history of the Republic, up to as late as 1971 (Yıldırım, 2016, p. 248).

5 | 1960 MILITARY COUP AND DEVELOPMENTS

The 1960s, which started with a military coup, witnessed the efforts of civil bureaucratic Turkish military circles to re-establish the ideological foundations of the state, which was secular, positivist and enlightened (Önen, 2020, p. 151). Therefore, the 1960 military coup (in line with the efforts to re-establish the ideological foundations of the state) also affected religious life, religious thought and religious movements. The ideological movements that started in Europe in general in the 1960s also affected Turkey, especially in terms of the ideological differentiation that started among the youth, which diversified publishing in the field of political thought in Turkey. There was at the time a remarkable increase in the publication of both copyrighted and translated works on social justice, on a criticism of capitalism, and on the relationship between Islam and socialism.

During this period, there was also a significant increase in the number of translated works; the idea that, since the beginning of

Westernisation, thought in Turkey was mostly based on translation and the fact that one of the first acts in the Westernisation period was to establish a 'translation board' are the most important indicators of this. It is for this reason that the development and accumulation of Turkish intellectual property during the modernisation period was based on the country's relationship with Europe and on translations from the West. This situation, which happened in every field, also happened in the field of religion (Bulut, 2013, p. 345). The ability of conservatism and tradition to express itself in the new period was made possible mostly through the West. It should not be forgotten that Western researchers had an important influence on the emergence and formation of Turkism, which is supposed to be the most local thought movement.

In short, regardless of the political field, Turkish thinkers of the time were mostly using Western sources of thought. As such, efforts in the 1960s to build an independent, critical and revolutionary Muslim identity that could differentiate itself from a nationalist, sacred and conservative understanding, mostly through translated works, had increased (Batuman, 2018, p. 44). To achieve this goal, Islamism in Turkey started to reckon with local Western-oriented elites, with colonialism and the positivist identification with Western civilisation, and with the dominant religious understanding in Turkey at that time. However, in accordance with the changing political and social circumstances of the period and in line with the most prominent standpoint in the Islamic movement, it was mostly Muslim, not Western, countries that had benefited from the religious works translated in the 1960s. At this time, due to the political climate of the period, attention was given to the works to be translated that discussed an understanding of Islam and that took an integrated socio-political approach. In addition to translated works, such as Sayyid Qutb's book *Social justice in Islam*, the publication of copyrighted works on 'Islam and socialism' also appeared at this time. In this way, the understanding of religion, which was previously reduced to a conscientious and moral level, was replaced by social and political problems, and the search for social justice, economic development and a *new state administration* style came to the fore.

Behind their insistence in this period that Islam had a unique economic system, the prominence of the developmentalist approach and the widespread approach to the country's problems from an economic perspective both had a significant effect. During the period, as a reflection of looking at socio-political problems from an economic perspective, an economy-centred perspective came to the fore within the Islamist segment; as a result, there was a significant increase in the presence of both translated and copyrighted works on interest and interest-free banking issues within the framework of Islamic economics, serving as an alternative to the current dominant understanding (Başkan, 2018, p. 279). This is partly the reason why, in addition to the translation of Sayyid Qutb's *The Battle Between Islam and capitalism*, there were works by thinkers such as Nurettin Topçu, who came to the fore with his philosophical criticisms of capitalism.

In this way, it can be seen that Islam has an answer for and an opinion on the issues, such as economic and social justice, that Turkey and the world were discussing, and, as such, that it should be

considered as an alternative. At this time, the Islamists (who were influenced by the slightly increasing actions of the political left) wanted to emphasise that they did not adopt a capitalist way of life, that Islamism has a 'socialist' character, and that it constitutes a third style, beyond the global polarisation of capitalism and socialism. In other words, it was claimed that Islam, as a social and political system, differs from both capitalist and socialist systems because it both allows individual property and gives importance to the distribution of social justice. Thus, it was intended that Islamism would open up a separate field, distinct from modern Western ideologies.

In order to clarify this situation, eyes first turned to Muslim lands. This was an opportunity to encounter the translations from Egypt and the Indo-Pakistani region and the new religious understanding they were bringing about. It was not a coincidence that it was mostly Egyptian and Indo-Pakistani intellectuals that led the efforts to ideologise Islam through the search for an alternative to the West in the Islamic world; these regions had suffered the most-severe colonisation by the West and had struggled to establish a nation state in order to gain independence from Western colonial powers. For example, the Jamaat-e-Islami of Abul A'la Maududi was a thought-and-action movement that emerged in the process of liberating the Indian continent from being a British colony and establishing Pakistan as an independent Islamic Republic.

Established in such an environment, the Jamaat-e-Islami movement naturally concentrated on producing solutions and alternatives to problems related to political, economic, legal and social structures, with studies including words such as Islamic constitution, Islamic government, Islamic state, and so on. However, this search, which did not have a very local tone other than the conceptualisation of the Islamic state or the use of Islamic terms and symbols, was mostly based on Western political concepts or their adaptation (Hallaq, 2013, p. 31). In this way, with British colonialism on the one hand and the efforts to establish an independent Islamic state by fighting against Hindu oppression on the other, the movement had a resistant, fighting spirit that was trying to show that Islam was a political, economic and social project (Bulaç, 2004, p. 65). In addition, the intellectuals of the Pakistan had the opportunity to transform Islam into an ideology that could compete with the increasing number of ideological movements. They aimed to spread it to the Islamic world as an ideological trend through their knowledge and use of English, the colonial language, which enabled them to access and benefit from Western resources more easily (Gencer, 2013, p. 73).

As studies on the understanding of the Islamic state were based on the nation-state model, the trauma of being defeated or a lack of caliphate for a new type of Islamist politics was somewhat overcome; in a way, a new ummah reality was adopted for the post-Caliphate conditions, which ensured that Islamism remained relatively independent from colonial conditions. Although the circumstances for the emergence of the Jamaat-e-Islami and Muslim Brotherhood movements established and developed in Pakistan and Egypt were different, it was due to the changing socio-political conditions that the agendas of both movements were very different to the Islamist agenda of the 19th century. First of these differences was the

abolishment of the Caliphate; the main goal of Islamist movements in a world made up of nation states was to show that Islam could be a political alternative to the dominant Western paradigm, to show that the values lost by Muslim individuals were not historical, that Muslims could live in the world of 'non-Islamic' nation states and that they could rebuild an understanding based on Islamic values (İşcan, 2006, p. 127). For this purpose, the efforts of scholars (such as Hassan al-Banna, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood) who were thought to have a suitable understanding of the period, and of thinkers such as Abul A'la Maududi, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, were accelerated in the second half of the 1960s (Başkan, 2018, p. 278).

During the same period, another Islamist thinker at the centre of the Islamist movements in Turkey was Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani. Nabhani is a name that has frequently come to the fore, both in the 1960s and after, due to the activities of the Hizb ut-Tahrir movement in Turkey, of which he was the founder. However, Nabhani's works were published and translated illegally in the restricted environment of the time. Nabhani, as opposed to the likes of Hassan al-Banna, Maududi and Sayyid Qutb, tried to substitute the caliphate state model instead of the Islamic state model. An attempt was made to introduce a Jordan-based caliphate state structure, as a kind of new version of the Caliphate that was eliminated in 1924. As in every Islamic group, Nabhani's movement sought to show that Islam was different from other ideologies and an alternative to all of them; his statements that 'blasphemy is one nation', that 'Muslims should work in a certain method and strategy' and that 'their principles can only be taken from the Quran and Sunnah' reflected this situation (Bayraktar & Durgun, 2010, p. 126).

Islamists, using translations and copyrighted works, were trying to put forward the idea that Muslim individuals and the communities they form are different to the other thought movements that were present in Turkey in many aspects, ranging from matters of faith to morality. This style of action would largely break the nationalist conservative line by transforming the Islamic issue into a separate movement with its own peculiarities regarding social and political problems in Turkish political life. In this way, Islamism, which gradually became autonomous and turned into an independent movement, sought to re-Islamise the society; that is, it sought to rebuild Turkish Muslim society. This approach is methodologically similar to the efforts of the Republican political elite to adapt Turkish society to a modern understanding.

Since the 1960s was a period when the search for an alternative civilisation was strongly motivated, the civilisation discourses of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek (one of the leading nationalist conservative writers of the period) and Sezai Karakoç also gained importance. These writers' works (which contain the narrative that Islam, as a religion, is not responsible for any backwards behaviour in Muslim societies in the fields of science and technology or in relation to the development of the West, in line with the nationalist-sacred understanding) tried, in a sense, to remove the psychological frustration of the Muslim masses. Although criticisms of Islamic culture and its past by local Westernist-Enlightenment intellectuals were accepted to a certain extent during the period, Muslims were blamed as the culprits, not Islam itself.

Karakoç's conceptualisations, such as 'the return of a personal local culture' and 'resurrection' reflect this situation (Karakoç, 2012, p. 36). The transformation of Islamism into an intellectual, rather than a scientific, movement was partly due to the nature of the political climate of the period; mostly, however, it was due to the effect of psychological defence mechanisms (Başkan, 2018, p. 360).

Graduates of Imam-Hatip Schools, the Islamic Institute, and the Faculty of Theology, who have been gradually increasing in number since the 1950s, have contributed either directly or indirectly to a modern, rather than a traditional, understanding of Islamic thought (Alam, 2009, p. 360). According to these thinkers, the rights/superstition distinction turned into an Eastern–Western civilisation distinction, and marginalisation was experienced, in which the two civilisations essentially excluded each other's existence, whereby the existence of one depended on the absence of the other (Gencer, 2013, p. 89). In line with the increasing political dynamism at this time, young people tried to get answers to questions that had not been answered or to new questions from the works of their countries' local thinkers; when they could not find answers there, they turned to the outside. Thus, the effects of different thinkers in the Islamic world have actually found a place in Turkey's Islamism.

It is possible to deduce this from the characteristics of the works that were published. In previous periods, works that supported the idea that Islam is a rational and modernist religion, from a conscientious and individual dimension, were published; in the 1950s, works demonstrating that Islam is not against science and that Islam is very important to science were added to these (Derin, 2012, p. 26). This attitude demonstrated that the psychological defence mechanisms that had existed since the beginning of the Islamist movement against a Western understanding were still strongly present; indeed, the works that were translated were mostly of this nature, and the translation and publication of such works popularised this understanding throughout the 1950s. However, the 1960s highlighted a different need by the Islamist movement, prompting its adherents to seek a place in social life that supported their Islamic identity. They moved away from a defensive attitude towards the West and the idea that the very existence of Western civilisation was thanks to Islamic civilisation was brought forward. In other words, Islamist circles claimed that Western civilisation had taken a lot from Islamic civilisation; they started to search for self-confidence by translating the works of both Muslim and Western researchers into Turkish in order to find the necessary support on this matter (Yıldırım, 2016, p. 33). The trend towards the translation and publication of such works was connected to Muslim intellectuals' wish to free themselves from the humiliation that existed on a cultural scale, to respond to the values of Western civilisation, and to restore their self-confidence.

This understanding, which was mostly formed through translations, influenced a much larger group in the following years. This new understanding was prone to a simple and narrow understanding of religion that was centred on a return to resources and, to a large extent, new Salafism and that had a Wahhabi disposition. This understanding was activist, radical, made strong political demands, was an opponent of the regime and a supporter of jihad, had a weak contact

not only with the history of the Republic but also with Ottoman history, generally looked for Islamist history at Muslim countries (Egypt, Pakistan, then based in Iran) rather than in Turkey, had a dismissive attitude towards the concepts of ummah (and sometimes of taqfir and shirk) and leaned towards traditional Islam and, accordingly, to Sufism, sects and communities (Kara, 2013, p. 32). Therefore, we can see that they started to pursue a state model suited to this point of view, which came to the fore in the 1960s. This is the reason why, in the 1960s, politicisation increased in a different way to that seen in the previous period, and why there was an increase in the translation and publication of works that focused on political issues and whose titles included phrases such as Islamic state, state in Islam, Islamic administrative organisation, and so on.

The interest in the political field was especially highlighted the legal field. In a sense, the legal field was seen as the essence of business; accordingly, it was emphasised that the idealised state model should be governed by Islamic sharia, rather than by a secular legal system (Hallacı, 2013, p. 99). In addition, the understanding of how education, social traditions and customs could be compatible with Islam was another issue that was discussed. Here, there was a development that emerged that opposed the entire political and social field, not limited to clashing with and opposing existing statesmen or staff. The search to understand Islam as an independent political structure was gradually strengthened from the 1950s onwards, leading to the argument that Islam is a complementary or integral element of the existing social and political structure (Derin, 2012, p. 29). In other words, the main emphasis of the published works was that Islam should not be understood as an element of social integration, but as a religion that establishes a system in its own right.

Based on this understanding, an idea of Islam that was in opposition to the current system, and even in conflict with it, became more widespread. This kind of understanding resulted in certain differentiations and conflicts, not only with Islam's opponents but also within Islam itself, namely in groups known as Islamist in Turkey until this time. Translated works had an especially important effect on the emergence of all this conflict. These works were effective not only at facilitating the emergence of new groups, but also at shaping the traditional understanding of religion. This situation has created certain problems during the healthy course of the intellectual development of the Islamist movement, because the prominence of translated works made it difficult for Turkey to return to and use the experience, knowledge, and domestic Islamist resources it had from before 1960, and even before 1924.

However, studies into local accumulation of knowledge also took place. As stated above, the periodicals *Diriliş* (*Resurrection*) edited by Sezai Karakoç, *Hareket* (*Movement*) edited by Nurettin Topçu and *Büyük Doğu* (*The Big East*) edited by Necip Fazıl Kısakürek were the most influential journals in this context. These journals had an effective language that emphasised Islam and civilisation, and cared about Ottoman–Seljuk heritage and Sufism and about opening up to the local/national Islamic geography, without drowning in slogans. This dynamism in the cultural and intellectual sphere during the period was reflected first in the social field, then in the political field. It separated culture and intellectualism from the nationalist religious wing they

were in before and caused the Islamist movement to emerge as a separate identity (Kara, 2013, p. 33). The National Order Party (Millî Nizam Partisi, MNP) founded by Necmettin Erbakan, which emerged in the political field in the last years of the 1960s and promoted organisation of religious concerns, took its place in the political scene as a separate independent political party. The Erbakan movement, which came from a nationalist–sacred state line, contributed to the integration of radical movements into the system by balancing them or drawing them in line with legitimate politics; at the same time, it was also preparing the ground and opportunities for the party to continue its activities more easily. According to Mardin, the MNP/MSP is a rural social movement; it is different to the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt and the Maududi movement in Pakistan, which aim to connect modernism and Islam (Mardin, 1991, p. 35).

The Islamist movement, which manifested itself as a separate political movement, was also very sensitive to developments in the international arena. In addition to the influence had by translated works, developments in the socio-political field were also influencing the Islamist movement, which emerged as an independent and autonomous movement. Indeed, a people's revolution resulting from a seizing of power by Islamists occurred in Iran in the late 1970s, Afghanistan's Islamist resistance movement emerged as a response to the invasion by the USSR, Islamist prominence could be seen in the Palestinian issue and international political events such as the Iran–Iraq war caused the Islamist segment in Turkey to focus more on events and ideas abroad and to develop an internationalist perspective. The Islamic revolution in Iran, especially, resulted in hope in Turkey that it could realise a revolution similar to that of Iran (Aykaç & Durgun, 2018, p. 162). However, the Iranian revolution had given rise to different perceptions in Turkey. While the revolution in Iran caused uneasiness in Ankara and anxious silence in traditional religious circles and in the centre of the MSP, it created mixed feelings, especially among radical Islamists and religious youth, who greeted it with great enthusiasm as a victory for Islam.

As in previous periods, the Islamic revolution in Iran effectively boosted translation activities in Turkey, whose Islamism once again became more prominent, opening the door to new discussions and ideas in Islamist circles. By the end of the 1970s, two new elements were added to publishing translated works that started in previous years. Translated works by thinkers such as Ayatollah Khomeini, Ali Shariati, Abolhassan Banisadr, Ayatollah Montazeri, Ayatollah Beheshti, who were the leading figures of the period connected to the Iranian revolution, began to enter the world of ideas in Turkey more frequently at the end of 1970's. Unlike previous translation efforts, for the first time in Turkey's history books by Shia writers were translated into Turkish at scale; this established a new connection with Shia culture and brought Sunnism and Shiism, two rival schools in the Islamic world, closer to each other than ever before (Bayraktar & Durgun, 2010, p. 82). In such an environment, it is possible to talk about the increasing development of a sharp rejectionist attitude towards the state and society that diverges from a historical point of view.

The second element was the translation of the works by authors such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Rene Guenon, who were known at

this time as writers from the traditional school. Their influence on Islamist movements has also been quite different to the rest. During the period, in addition to the existence of works corresponding to the modernist, radical, revolutionary, Wahhabi and Salafi interpretations of Islam, almost all the works by authors such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Rene Guenon, who interpreted Islam in a more traditional and mystical style, were translated into Turkish at this time (Bulut, 2013, p. 366). By increasing these translation activities, very different fractures in and understandings of Islamism were revealed in Turkish society. These works not only generated a new audience in Turkish Islamism for the authors, but also influenced the known opinion leaders of the Islamist movement.

6 | ISLAMISM IN THE NEO-LIBERAL ERA

After the 12 September 1980 coup, in which neo-liberal politics were prominent on a global scale, Islam and Islamist issues started to be discussed in Turkey again, at various scales. After this period, the understanding of religiosity began to change; religious groups changed their strategy and acquired new gains by joining the bureaucracy, the capital and press circles. At this time, although the Islamic movement tried to maintain its existence as an alternative movement, with the intellectual accumulation and capacity to act it inherited from the 1970s and the psychological support it received from the Iranian revolution, it still tended towards harmony with the existing political system in the 1980s and beyond. In other words, with the emergence of a neo-liberal understanding of politics, important changes happened in the Islamic field, and the tendency to harmonise with the current world order was strengthened by a move away from the search for alternatives. The nation-state structure, which was seen as one of the main achievements of anti-colonial nationalism in these years, gradually began to lose its legitimacy. Most nation-state structures took an autocratic structure and failed to develop.

Up until this time, however, the nation-state style of political structure had been seen as the ideal model. A religion-centred nationalist ummahism, after the anti-colonial nationalist movements, adopted the 'non-capitalist path of development' and Marxist ideas in which the term 'revolution' clearly resonated. The Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions inspired radical Third-World generations, especially the youth, to adopt a revolutionary ideology with a secular character. After Cuba, guerrilla strategy witnessed successful revolutions in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Grenada in the 1970s, and in the 1980s, the Shining Path dominated left-wing politics in Peru. Likewise, the revolutionaries found a new ally in Christianity² under the name of

²Liberation theology emerged as a movement centred on the liberation of the poor, which became its starting point. In liberation theology, the teachings and revelations of Jesus are reread and interpreted in a way that takes care of the poor. While liberation theology's interest in the poor is an end in itself, Islamism's interest in the poor is a tool used to mobilise them and establish an Islamic order, because the aim of Islamist movements is to establish an Islamic order. In short, Liberation theology is not a form of cultural identity like Islamism, so it has a different basis to the birth of Islamism. The main goal for Islamists was not the liberation of the poor, but a call to Islam, and this invitation still continues to guide them (Bayet, 2013, pp. 292–293).

Christian liberation theology. In this new alliance, the priests and clergy were trying to lead social revolutions and changes in their societies.

It can be seen here that there was a tendency towards religion not only in Muslim lands but also throughout the world (Kepel, 1992, p. 63). The roots of this orientation, which became evident in the 1980s, actually date back to the years before 1980, because the effective revolutionary approaches of the Cold War period showed themselves in the political movements and organisations that appeared in the Islamic world. In the years leading up to 1980, leftist guerrilla movements, such as the Zufar Liberation Front in Oman, the People's Fedailer Organisation and the People's Mojahedin Organisation in Iran and the Marxist Palestine Democratic People's Liberation Front (led by Nayef Hawatmeh) in Palestine were examples of this situation (Bayet, 2013, p. 397). In addition, militant Islamist movements had been fighting the secular states in Muslim lands since the 1970s and had benefited from the revolutionary ideas of Abul A'la Maududi and Sayyid Qutb. Sayyid Qutb's work *Signposts along the road* became almost the Islamist counterpart of Lenin's work *What is to be done*, which was an important work in leftist political understanding during the period. Indeed, this book guided pioneering Muslim militants, who would seize an ignorant state by force and build an Islamic order, and the strategies of militant Islamist organisations such as Al Jihad, al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, Hizb ut-Tahrir and Lashkar-e-Taiba.

The revolutionary attitude of the militant Islamists was in stark contrast with the attitude of the reformist, adaptive and electoral Islamists, who wanted to act within the current system (İşcan, 2006, p. 130). After the 1980s, with the rise of neo-liberal political understanding, Marxism-Leninism and its revolutionary ideas, which had influenced Islamism and about which books on Islam and socialism had been written, began to decline. With the end of the Cold War, and especially after the collapse of the USSR and socialist Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, the spell cast by the idea of revolution was mostly broken. The collapse of the socialist system meant the end of the idea of revolution and state-centred politics and perspectives. Statism was now disparaged as hierarchical, inefficient, oppressive and an erosion of individual autonomy and initiative.

The anti-statist and market-oriented development of neoliberalism, which started with Ronald Reagan in the USA and Margaret Thatcher in the UK, spread to many parts of the world and immensely contributed to a change on a global scale. By the end of the 1980s, most of these post-colonial states began to shed whatever was left of their distributive 'socialism', 'social contract' and populism. Instead of the concepts of socialism, state and revolution, the terms 'civil society', 'public sphere' and 'reform' became more widespread. Reform or gradual change became the main strategies at play. International non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charities and governments all played important roles in spreading this new discourse to the world. For example, the term 'revolution', which was held in high esteem in Iran in the 1980s, began to lose its magic towards the end of the 1990s, and the concept of reform became more important than revolution.

A similar wave of transformation was taking place in both Muslim lands and in other religions. The collectivist spirit of liberation

theology and Marxist terms seen in the Christian world was replaced by evangelical Christianity, a new wave of Christianity (with its Protestant and Catholic varieties) that appeared on a global scale in the neo-liberal era. While liberation theology takes the emancipation of the poor as its starting point, this new evangelism highlighted the unity of faith and destiny within the framework of a neo-liberal logic (Bayet, 2013, p. 398).

In summary, internal and external sociological and intellectual developments since the 1980s accelerated the ideological Islamist movement. The Muslims in that period lived in different circumstances to those experienced by the previous generation: significant social, economic, cultural, and so on changes occurred. They raised their living standards in the cities, had they migrated from rural areas since the 1960s, and started to live in apartments, not in slums. They, women and men alike, began to advance in their careers by taking advantage of secondary and higher education opportunities. This was a very important change, especially for Islamist movements that were looking for an alternative to the system (Kirman, 2006, p. 153). Looking at the publications in the field of Islamism after 1980, it is notable that the search for an alternative to the existing system, which was seen strongly before, has been replaced with an effort to find a place within the existing system. The field of thought and publication trends have also changed in this direction, and we can see a significant increase in the number of publications on this subject.

During 1980's, numerous works were written or translated in many areas, ranging from Islamic legal theory to hadith and sunnah evaluations, to studies of Islamic philosophy, Islamic literature, Islamic sociology, criticism and evaluation of the modernity of Western thinkers and philosophers, and biographies of leading figures, who were symbols of the history of Islamism in the nineteenth century. Numerous translations of works by Islamist thinkers exist, coming from countries such as Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Bosnia, Egypt, Pakistan and Iran, as well as works by Westerners who later adopted Islam (Hamid Algar, Mohammed Assad) and Muslim thinkers and scholars living in Europe and America. In addition to these, studies regarding different aspects and sources of Islam have been carried out (by Annemarie Schimmel, Ignaz Goldziher, W. Montgomery Watt, etc.) as well as studies of the Islamic movements themselves. Many works by Western academicians and Orientalists (John O. Voll, John L. Esposito, etc.) have been translated into Turkish (Yıldırım, 2016, p. 300). As a requirement of the search for adaptations to the existing system, works aimed at condemning radicalism within the Islamist movement have also been translated into Turkish. Authors Mehmet Şevki Eygi and Hüseyin Hilmi Işık (the latter of whom is known as one of the sheikhs of the Naqshbandi order) covered the topic in both their own writing and in their translation work (Bulut, 2013, p. 366).

Another notable feature in the field of copyrighted and/or translated works of this time is the arguments that are defended by these works and the differences seen in their interpretation of Islam. However, despite the abundance and variety of publications, there was still no serious breakthrough at the intellectual level in this period. This is because efforts were made by writers and translators to stay within their borders, with a closed understanding of each interpretation.

These efforts to exist in segments, separated from each other, meant that Islamic writers of the time could not achieve any serious intellectual expansion. Due to the lack of copyright, the different interpretations of Islam that existed during the period were a result of authors trying to express themselves through translated works. In this way, the need for information in areas that were felt to be lacking was met, to some extent, through translated works. Through this undeniable corpus of literature on the different interpretations of Islam, Islamic movements and symbolic figures of Islam emerged, as did writing on the basic sources and concepts of Islam. In a sense, the life of religious thought, which was interrupted by the Republic, reached a certain point through the new forms and features it acquired over a long historical process. Translation, especially, presented the richness and diversity of the Islamic world and Islamic thought to Turkey. For those who actually wanted to take advantage of the opportunity, this richness paved the way for a new understanding of religion and a new vision of Turkey and the world.

It was not only the translated works that contributed to Islamic understanding in Turkey in the 1980s, causing it to act more radically and ideologically for a period of time. In addition to the lineage of the scholars and sheikhs, remnants of the Ottoman Empire, an increased number of theology faculties were established, becoming widespread in the Republican period; the new understanding of religion that emerged also contributed. In this way, the theological understanding of Islam³ that became widespread, in a different way from the past, fed the ideological understanding of Islam in the 1980s. The common point of both religious conceptions (theological Islam and ideological Islam) is the abandonment of sunnah, knowledge of which was considered important to a general understanding of the religion. The abandonment of the sunnah was, in a way, the inevitable consequence of reducing the Islamic religion to sharia. In fact, sharia was emphasised by Muslims in the modern world to such an extent that it tried to be identified as the religion itself, with the motto 'Islam is the sharia'. In comparison, for Muslims in the traditional age, Islam mostly followed the sunnah (Gencer, 2013, p. 86).

In the process of secularisation, the point theological Islam reached was the Quranic Islam, whereas the point the ideological Islam reached was the claim to an Islamic civilisation expressed in terms such as 'the vision of a civilisation' (Gencer, 2013, pp. 86–87). With the re-politicisation of Islamism that started with the 1979 Iranian revolution, in the socio-cultural environment formed by the effect of opposing processes such as depoliticisation and conservatism that started under the post-coup Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi; ANAP) government, discussions on adapting the concept of civilisation, a product of Western secularisation, to Islam came to the fore. Later, with the spread of education, young Muslim academics who went to Western countries and trained there or who were educated in Western languages and influenced by the discourse of

colonial-victim Muslim countries such as Pakistan, revived the discourse of civilisation in the 1990s that had frequently been emphasised in the 1960s. Through this revived debate, the selection, translation and publication of authors and works in the field of thought began. Ziyaüddin Serdar is an author in this field whose work has attracted much attention; his work *The future of Islamic civilisation*, by being translated into Turkish, was effective at shaping Islamist thought (Gencer, 2013, p. 92). Later, the works of influential thinker İsmet Özel were added to this.

The widespread reading of copyrighted or translated works published by non-Islamic publishers and by Islamists was another influential development in the formation of post-1980 Islamist thought. Since the late 1980s, many copyrighted and translated works have been published in fields such as literature, history, philosophy and social sciences in general. During these years, interest in the history of Western philosophy, in contemporary Western philosophies, and in the social sciences has continuously increased, with copyrights, translations, theses and research taking place in the fields in question. In particular, subjects such as modernity, postmodernity, hermeneutics and globalisation were new fields of publication for both Islamist and other publishing houses (Yıldırım, 2016, p. 188). This situation increased the interaction between different currents of thought; it caused the gradual movement away from segmentation and contributed to the vitality of the field of thought by moving into mutual relationships and interaction.

In the 1990s, similar to postmodernity, the Medina Agreement debates took place among the Islamists, within the framework of their search for coexistence. In other words, topics that had strong slogan values and sentiments but which were not well-filled in terms of content (such as literature on coexistence and tolerance—which was becoming increasingly prominent due to the emphasis on mutual interaction—multi-law texts, interfaith dialogue and texts on the alliance of civilisations and on civil society) became an important agenda among Islamist groups and communities. This process, which could easily be articulated through globalisation programs, liberal discourses, a free market, environmentalism, support for the European Union, and democracy, easily marginalised a small number of adversary Islamist circles, making them illegitimate and ineffective (İşcan, 2006, p. 141). In short, the most influential intellectual tendency strengthening the line of harmony and integration in the post-1980s period was realised through an opening towards secular understanding.

The clearest indicator of this new trend in the political scene was the separation of the MNP and MSP from the National Vision and the decision to undertake a fair order project with a high slogan value but weak content under the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi; RP). This project joined the discourses of multi-law and globalisation that had come to the fore under the contemporary conditions (Alam, 2009, p. 353). Through an armed struggle, an attempt to dismiss the concept of political Islam, which is in search of sharia, the Islamic state and a caliphate, was undertaken not only by the opposing front, but also through a condemnation by the new Islamist understanding. Likewise, the increased interest in mysticism in Turkey at the time should be evaluated as the result of efforts to overcome an ideological

³Theological Islam arose from the search for reforms in religion, whereas ideological Islam arose from the search for reforms in the state. While the emphasis on sharia and the state in ideological Islam brings about the neglect of the sunnah as a pattern of authentic religiosity, an intellectual debate in theological Islam becomes a bargain in religion, so to speak, that encompasses the whole religion, especially the hadith and sunnah (Gencer, 2013, p. 95).

understanding of religion (political Islamism) that became increasingly deadlocked (Bayraktar & Durgun, 2010, p. 90). At this time, due to the increasing importance of cultural studies, cultural and moderate Islamic studies were placed in opposition to ideological Islam. In a short period, these conceptualisations had taken Turkey's Islamism under their influence, becoming widely accepted.

7 | TOWARDS POST-ISLAMISM?

It is clear that Islamism in the Middle East and Turkey is going through a significant change. Islamism, previously seen as a reactionary movement against Western-style modernisation, today has an appearance that is increasingly attached to the current order. The reason for this is the changing socio-political conditions; the diversification of political participation and communication channels across the world has accelerated the transformation of Islamism, which acts as an alternative movement. A model of politics that acts on its own in a unilateral way and imposes ideological cultural and political positions on society is gradually losing its legitimacy. Even so, anti-colonial nationalism, Marxism-Leninism and Islamist movements took place in the Muslim world, serving as movements that, until the 1990s, forced society into ideological, cultural and political positions as a strategy for change.

These movements started to be abandoned in the 2000s (Bayet, 2013, p. 395). After 11 September 2001, old-style policies gradually started to lose their effectiveness in the Middle East. The fact that Islamist examples such as Iran, Pakistan and Sudan, which stand out as the practitioners of the 'Islamic state', all experienced intense crises had an important effect on this. Although many movements in the Muslim world today still aim to establish an Islamic state, unlike in previous eras, they desire to do so democratically, within the framework of the existing constitutional system, and generally reject the use of force or violent strategies. Because regular Muslims saw the Islamists' pursuit of Islamic power as a means of obtaining privilege, they began to refuse the further exploitation of this situation. Therefore, the idea of an Islamic state was gradually abandoned, and the quest to save the religion of Islam from being used as a tool of abuse in the hands of political groups started to gain prominence.

Within the framework of this approach, the search for an alternative seen in the 1980s (such as the Islamic state, Islamic economics, etc.) has weakened, and interpretations of Islam that see it as a complementary element to the capitalist structure, and even as an element that will strengthen it, have become prominent (Yıldırım, 2016, p. 68). For this reason, compared to the previous period, Islamism has changed its strategy and adopted a more pragmatic attitude; it now attempts to act within the current political structure by addressing Muslims in an individual sense. The traditional politics of Islamism are no longer what shape the movement's course of action: a new situation has meant a new era. This period, which is called 'after Islamism' or post-Islamism, has been the subject of controversy, because it has meant the end of an Islamism that is based on the establishment of an Islamic state. At this new stage, the individualisation of religion, as

opposed to the Islamist policy of the state, has become more prominent, and jihadist and Salafi doctrines have been abandoned.

Seen in this way, the term post-Islamism represents a certain period or a historical end, standing out as an empirical category rather than an analytical category. This new stage contains a reaction against the Islamist understanding that has existed so far; the search for harmony within the current political structure cannot be described as a search for Islamism. While Islamism and its revolutionary character reflect Cold War period politics, post-Islamism reflects a changed wish to be in harmony with the current global structure, within the framework of the global changes that occurred in the post-1980 period. Since the early 1990s, the internal dynamics between different movements in the Muslim world have seen those who have been happily enriched under the modern socio-economic and cultural conditions of globalisation (if they are not secular) turn to a different Islam than political Islam: namely, moderate Islam or, more specifically, 'passive religion'. As such, there appears to be both an Islamisation and a post-Islamisation process occurring simultaneously, rather than developments that are a continuation of each other (Bayet, 2007, p. 47).

Islamist politics have not ended with the existence of post-Islamisation. They still maintain their existence, albeit to a more modest extent. What is different, however, is the emergence of a new trend in the Islamic world. This post-Islamist trend has brought forward a language of reform, civil society, accountability, anti-violence and gradual change, instead of the revolution that was once the magical central concept of Islamist politics. Within the framework of this new language that has emerged, post-Islamists avoid the discourse of violence, militancy and revolutionary rhetoric, and have sought to close the gap between democracy and Islam by moving away from an Islamism that aims to establish a religious state, Islamic laws and moral rules. In other words, post-Islamism points to a new political and social situation where even those who zealously defend Islamism are tired. Today, young people, students, women, religious intellectuals and many public employees demand democracy, individual rights, tolerance and gender equality, without leaving aside their religious sensitivity.

These ordinary people force religious thinkers, spiritual elites and political actors into an important paradigm shift. Indeed, in recent years many former Islamist revolutionaries have begun to abandon their former violent exclusionary and revolutionary approaches, ideological perspectives and thoughts on religion as politics. In this respect, post-Islamism is a new stage of Islamism, one that constructs a transcendental logic and strategy for Islamism in social, political and intellectual fields. In this way, almost all of the existing religious movements have sought to develop religious communities under a secular state (Hafez, 2010, p. 46). That is, in post-Islamisation, the understanding of Islamism as an exclusionary and totalising ideology has been abandoned; instead, the emphasis is on an inclusive, pluralist, nationalist and post-revolutionary view. Now, through post-Islamism, there is a quest to combine religiosity with rights, belief and freedom, emphasising the needs of people, instead of duties and a singular authority, pluralism instead of a single voice, historicism instead of fixed scriptures and the future instead of the past. Thus, the previous

basic principles of Islamism have been reversed and Islam has been united with individual choice and freedom, promoting democracy and modernity, albeit to varying degrees. In this way, an attempt has been made to erase the discourse of violence that has strongly penetrated both the ideology and the practices of some, if not all, Islamist movements (Bekaroğlu, 2016, p. 2).

In summary, with a political vision appropriate to the new situation that emerged in response to the crisis Islamism had fallen into (i.e., with the rise of post-Islamism) the belief and desire for the formerly indispensable Islamic revolution and state are now being abandoned. Since the 1980s, the top-to-bottom strategy of Islamisation that had existed since before the re-Islamisation movements has been abandoned, and a transition to a bottom-to-top Islamisation strategy has been adopted. This transition has been, above all, a way of seeking to re-establish an identity in an alienated world that had lost its structural character. Here, priority has been given to the re-Islamisation of individuals, rather than the re-Islamisation of the state. It was considered more reasonable to Islamise the society in Muslim countries, offering it a new perspective, and to thereby spread Islam everywhere (Kepel, 1992, p. 59). Therefore, the new era of post-Islamism represents both a situation and a project; however, this stage is neither anti-Islamic, nor non-Islamic, nor secular. Instead, it condemns task-centred and exclusionary Islamist politics by making an internal and external criticism of Islamism, representing an attempt to reach a rights-centred and inclusive perspective (Bayet, 2013, p. 436). For this reason, we see that most of the Islamists in the Muslim world have been increasingly adhering to modern understandings and conditions for which they previously sought alternatives; they have a desire to be a part of the existing structure and seek to benefit from the opportunities offered by modernity.

Islamism's tendency towards a post-Islamist route has been shown to be a stronger trend in Muslim countries in recent years. The frequent increase in complaints about the dangers, for both religion and the state, of searching for a religious state in Islamic lands supports this. In order to avoid this situation, calls have been made for the secularisation of the state, in order to protect religious ethics in the social field (Bekaroğlu, 2016, p. 11). This scenario can particularly be seen in Turkey; in fact, it is possible to date the beginning of this transformation in Turkey to the early 1980s. Practices such as interest-free banking, which started with Turgut Özal in the 1980s, brought Islamist circles mentally and de facto into a liberal world of politics and economics. The increase in financial possibilities and the new demands and tendencies to conform to the current political structure revealed some new developments in the Islamist segment. Among these, the search for a better-quality education, the learning of foreign languages, the search for an intellectual infrastructure and the establishment of organisations and media channels to serve Islamism are the first to come to mind. During this period, activities in fields such as education, commerce and the press in the sects and communities reached a level far above that seen in the previous periods. This situation meant that the Islamists were integrated into the system, with all its layers and colours, even becoming the carriers of the system after a while. It is seen that the Islamists easily legitimised the

current political structure by moving into the system; that is, the situation was that 'the state was theirs but administered by foreigners' before. This is actually the point that the National Vision that constitutes the main body of the Islamist movement in legitimate politics reached with the post-modern coup attempt in Turkey on 28 February 1997. Following this attempted coup, the National Vision was divided into two groups—traditionalists and modernists—who continued to engage in their political activities within the existing political structure. The modernists came to power in 2002, and continue to rule the country today (Bayraktar & Durgun, 2010, p. 88).

The efforts of the Islamists in Turkey to find a solution to the harsh political violence against the Islamist section that emerged with the post-modern coup attempt, by staying in democratic politics, caused Turkey to emerge as an attractive model in the eyes of the Muslim people (Park, 2018, p. 172). In contrast to Islamophobia, which is caused by the actions and excessive attitudes of terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram and ISIS, which greatly disturbed ordinary Muslims in the Islamic world, the secular sensitivities of Turkish Islamism and its quest to join the European Union are close to the classical Islamist discourse and post-Islamist understanding (Ueno, 2018, p. 385).

Turkey's AK Parti emerged under these conditions. The AK Parti, which was established in the early 2000s and, to date, has been in power for nearly 20 years, is a political movement that has been successful at holding power and ruling, while being unpretentious in its opinions; that is,⁴ it has moved away from Islamist politics and discourse. Güllalp effectively analyses the AK Parti's supporters, emphasising their demands to be recognised (Güllalp, 2010, p. 142). Thus, the line of harmony and integration that started with the RP was taken forward, in line with a post-Islamist understanding, during the AK Parti's rule.

Therefore, if one part of being included in the system in this way is normalisation, the other part means giving up being oneself (Alam, 2009, p. 373). In terms of the current stage, we have been living in a period in which the Islamist political language from the 1980s and 1990s we are accustomed to has been much less pronounced in Turkish political life since the AK Parti came to power. Islamism in the AK Parti period is a Turkish type, implemented in a different style. In this new process, post-Islamism is seen as correcting the excesses of compulsory secularisation by opening up political and economic areas for all religious people in Turkey, rather than bringing sharia in. In short, post-Islamism is clearly a search for a way to show that one can be both a Muslim and a democrat, and that democratic ideals can also take root in a Muslim society.

8 | CONCLUSION

Islamism in Turkey, from its conception until today, has followed a very varied course and its influence has constantly increased. It is

⁴The AK Parti named its political line 'conservative democrat'; however, some call it Muslim democrat, likening it to the democratic Christian parties in the West (Park, 2018, p. 169).

possible to observe this effect from the developments in the field of thought and in its reflection: namely, the field of media and publishing. At the end of the 19th century and in the early 20th century, the existing morality, fatalistic understanding and lifestyle were seen to be behind the defeats and backwardness in the Islamic world. This is the reason that the cynical lifestyle of 'one bite, one cardigan' was made subject to strict criticism and an attempt was made to put forward an active understanding of Islamic morality, in order to build both an active Muslim individual and an active Muslim society. This required the construction of an understanding that emphasised reason-based action, power and strength, enrichment and 'arming with the enemy's weapon', serving as an alternative to Western ideology. The pursuit of such alternatives led to an Islamic ideology that was pitted against the Western ideology, an Islamic state against the modern Western state, an Islamic civilisation against the Western civilisation, an Islamic law against the Western law, an Islamic science against the Western science, and so on. These were the discourses that were, for a long time, highlighted in any understanding of Islamism.

This pursuit aimed to prove that the source and cause of the backwardness and misery experienced by Muslim peoples could not be Islam as a religion. The discourse that 'the fault lies with the Muslims, not with Islam' was a perennial matter of discussion in the Islamic movement. This idea, shared by the overwhelming majority of Muslim intellectuals in the modern period, brought forward a movement to return to original sources on the one hand, which, on the other, garnered a new interpretation of Islam. From this perspective, if the periods of the Prophet and the four caliphs are excluded, it means that the history of Islam was not lived properly and in accordance with Islam. The source of the conceptualisation of 'real Islam vs. historical Islam', which is still a subject of discussion in Islamic thought, is also based on this. While the efforts made towards a new understanding and interpretation opened the door to new *ijtihad*s, the means of understanding and interpreting the religion lacked any method and were unregulated and subject to personal preferences. This situation has increased the problems with tradition, traditional understanding and institutions, and led to the emergence of a narrow understanding of religion and, in a sense, a new kind of Salafism. This new form of interpretation, which did not follow any principles or rules, emphasised adherence to the text in terms of method, harmony with reason and science (and, more precisely, with the modern vision) and compliance with its own affairs.

After the abolition of the Caliphate in Turkey in 1924, the search for new morals and a new lifestyle was shaped mostly through criticisms of Sufism and sects, since the understanding of morality and mentality, lifestyle and even the everyday use of language in the Islamic world was largely shaped around Sufism and sects. In addition, there was an important gap in the understanding of Islamism, in terms of how to pass on the knowledge accumulated during the Ottoman Empire due to the prohibitionist attitude of the Republic during the single-party years. After the abolition of the Caliphate, an attempt was made by countries such as Egypt and Pakistan to close the resulting gap; however, the conceptualisation of an 'Islamic state' was not effective in Turkey until the 1960s started to have an effect on

the intellectual life of Islamism in Turkey. This situation started with the transition to the multi-party political structure that emerged after the authoritarian single-party period, through the increased prevalence of translations.

Due to the democratic political climate that emerged on a global scale under post-World War II conditions, religious groups both in the Islamic world and in Turkey were relieved by and willing to gather under the wings of democracy; at the same time, ideas that were distant from (or even against) democracy started to appear in the social and political arena, such as Necip Fazıl's idea of a supreme state. In the period after 1960, this differentiation became further diversified by increasing ideological movements. Through this diversity, increasingly developed relationships with the Islamic lands and the acquisition of the accumulations of knowledge there by translating religious texts had a great effect. This is because they looked at matters not through internal dynamics but, instead, in terms of external dynamics (namely, from the perspective of Western critical intellectuals) after Egypt, India and Pakistan, or Iran (after the 1979 revolution) prevented the formation of a Turkey-based Islamic understanding. Due to the effect of the translated works, the activism and intellectual Islamism in Turkey did not trouble to care about Turkey, conditions in Turkey, or Islam and Islamism in Turkey, especially in the period after the 1960s.

In the 1980s, the prominence of the neo-liberal politics influenced Islamist movements in Turkey; however, the desire to 'find a place in public life' has come forward, as opposed to the previous efforts to 'find an alternative to public life'. This was a very important turning point for the Islamist movement. Although the effect of the Islamic revolution that took place in Iran was very fresh at the time, it is striking that the neo-liberal politics that came to the fore during this period were more effective on Islamist movements. This situation was magnified in the 1990s, when postmodernism was being discussed, and it strengthened the Islamist search for a place in democratic politics.

The aim of creating an alternative to the Westernisation adopted by the state had, up until this time, manifested itself in different ways. One of these was the National Vision movement, which was designed to do this job in the contemporary legal political arena. The National Vision movement, which became a party and joined political life as the MNP in the 1970s, moved away from the search for alternatives as a part of the fair order programme under the RP in the 1990s, and turned towards a policy that was aimed at improving the system. However, the RP, which was forcibly removed from power by the post-modern coup attempt of February 28, 1997, was first dissolved, then divided, continuing as two different political structures.

From the RP's split came two groups (traditionalists and reformists); the reformist wing is still in power after winning the elections in 2002 under the name of the AK Parti. Under the AK Parti's rule, the momentum behind searches for an alternative, which was once very strong in the Islamist movement, has weakened. The motto 'the state is ours, but others rule', which had existed until recently has now lost its validity. This is because, even though the AK Parti administration claims that it has changed (taking the name of conservative

democrats, rather than Islamists) due to the fact that it has staff who are known Islamists, concepts such as the Islamic state, Islamic economy and Islamic constitution, which were once prominent, have become almost unutterable today.

In the post-Islamist period, the Islamist segment's search for religious individualism and a religious society within the current structure have become more prominent than the search for an alternative. This situation shows that discussions concerning Islam and democracy (two concepts that were previously thought to be incompatible) have gradually lost their importance: only one can exist within the current political structure. When the current period is considered, it becomes apparent that the Islamist movement in Turkey did not go through a paradigmatic change, since it did not have a comprehensive intellectual confrontation with its own past, and was instead subjected to external impositions. Although it closely follows world developments (especially in the Islamic world), Islamists have still not been able to put forward a clear idea of what line of action they will follow.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Research data are not shared.

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