From the Conservative Discourse to the Compromising Discourse: An Analysis of the "New Muslim Intellectual" Within the Frame of Rising "Islamism" in Post-1980 Turkey

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Abstract

After the military coup of 12 September 1980, the field of intellectual production in Turkey has gone through a structural transformation with the strategies conducted by state policies. The most prominent "intellectual breakthrough" in the process of transformation was executed by the Islamist intellectuals. This enterprise, which is also known as "the new Muslim Intellectual movement" in the literature, led Muslim section who for many years has had an ambivalent relationship with the political field to "discover politics". Until the 80s and the middle of the 90s, the new Muslim intellectuals had constructed an opposing intellectual discourse which had been established on the disagreement between modernity and the Islamic. For Muslim sections, the dominant figures of this innovative discourse were leading Muslim intellectuals like İsmet Özel, Rasim Özdenören and Ali Bulaç. However, the AK Party's coming to power in the 2000s with an Islamic ideological background, especially successful mobilization of the Islamic movements in harmony with capital have caused erosions in arguments which the new Muslim intellectual had once supported. In this context, the main argument in this paper is that, in contrast to the authoritarian identity of the official ideology, Islamic intellectuals, who have entered into a relative alliance with different ideological positions under the title of "democratic republic", have become the discourse producers of liberal positions. Another factor within this position shift is the economic-political process which is nowadays called the "Protestantization of Islam".

Keywords: The field of intellectual production, the new Muslim intellectual, the Islamic movement, Modernity, the AK Party.

1. Introduction

The present field of intellectual production in Turkey has undergone a major transformation with the effects of the strategies conducted by *state politics* after '12 September 1980'. The said transformation gained acceleration as ideological-discursive practice, which was put into action by the Motherland Party (ANAP) which had come to power in 1983 and which coded all ideological methods existing pre-1980 as "outdated ideological passions" (Erdoğan and Üstüner 2005: 658). Thus, the two poles of the tension between "the intellectual production" in the field of ideological production of the 1980s and "ethical-political engagement" were broken antagonistically and two of the valid positions gained clarity:

    (a) Those who believed the coordinates of the intellectual production should be determined completely on the *benefit* of construction of the political positions,

    (b) Those who proposed to focus the act of criticism on individual production and initiative by moving away as much as possible from the organized engagements in the political field (Göker 2004: 16).

In this respect, the first position was polarized mainly between the discourses which can be evaluated as "*post-ideologies*" and "*classical ideological discourses*" like Kemalism and radical Islamism (Erdoğan and Üstüner 2005: 658). In this study, by focusing on the first position on the axis of the said polarization, we will attempt a structural analysis of "the new Muslim intellectuals" as the leading activators in this position. Moreover, together with the changing position of "the new Muslim intellectual", we will try to analyse the historical background of "the discovery of politics" with the 1980s by the Islamic movement, which had emerged in the last phases of the Ottomans as "a statist solution option" (Aktay 2005: 16) to save the state.

However, we will claim that their positioning corresponds to two distinct phases which transform the process from within: a discourse which had started in the 1980s and continued towards the half of the 1990s and which was adorned with "opposing" motives; a more liberal positioning with the 2000s which has developed a contact with the power on compromising ground and which has a different coordinate order from the previous position.

However, it should be noted first that the limited nature of empiric and theoretical studies on "the intellectual field" in Turkey makes it compulsory to look for answers for the relationship between the intellectual field and post-1980 processes on the hypothetical level. Therefore, the arguments put forward here will naturally be arguments open to refutation, confirmation by empiric studies and investigation.

2. State Mentality versus the Islamic Movement

The Islamic thought and movement which represent an important field within the modernization story of Turkish history have so far gone through four basic phases. The first of these phases is the "modernist approach" which can be summarized as "*adoption of Western technique and preservation of Islamic culture*". Secondly, the modernist approach which had formed the basic Islamic paradigm for many years is followed by the phase of "orientation towards Sufism" which had taken place particularly within the frame of the authoritarian modernization process in the One Party period (1923-1945). Generally, this second phase is also characterized as "marginalized". On the other hand, the Islamic movement's content and form change, which has been connected to the "right-wing politics" of the Democrat Party in 1950s, constitutes to the third phase. Then, beginning from the late 1960s, the fourth phase, which had gained acceleration with the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979 and lasted till February 28 1997, is described by the process in which the Islamic movement assumed a "conflicting" nature (Kentel 2005: 722). This conflicting phase prompted Muslims to search for the political representation of the religion both in the political field and intellectual fields by dismissing the Islam of the Republic of Turkey as mere religion, life style and a cultural ground. According to many researches, the Islamic movement, as a societal and political phenomenon, formed its essential identity after September 12, 1980:

> In Turkish intellectual life, a distinctive, unique kind of formation has been taking place since the 1980s, in which a new religious class of intelligentsia with an Islamist worldview began to dominate both the intellectual and public discourse. I contend that their ascendance constitutes a challenge to the Kemalist and secularist intellectual discourse. Their importance and effect is increasing considerably (Karasipahi 2009: 191).

If the subject is approached in terms of historical background, as is known, in September 12, the state tried to construct its own legitimacy with references borrowed from religion with one aspect, and therefore religion found a chance to acquire a political identity and equip itself with a political function more than ever during the Republican period (Kurtoğlu 2005: 214). The faster growth of Islamic thought when compared to other rival thoughts and the increasing visibility of the "revandicative" vein in the public domain which was blended in Islamism due to the political tensions experienced in the foundation of the Republic are considered as the most important perspectives of the post-coup period. After this period, the Muslim section discovered politics and started to master the grammar of political practices and to apprehend the nature of political participation. Other results of this effectiveness in the political field are the meeting of the Muslim sections with the capital and money gaining a quite important function for the mobilization of the Islamic movements.

However, behind this process of discovery and political participation, the political strategies of the structure which had come to power with September 12 also played an important role. While the state sometimes uses Islamic thought especially against "the threat of communism" in metropolises, it also, in accordance with the Kemalist restoration that it aims for, sometimes draws "the borders" of the movement by depicting the Islamic MSP (National Salvation Party) as one of the justifications for the military coup. Even if it can be said that the dual strategy of the Turkish state paradoxically has contributed to the rise of Islamism, the actual motivation behind the expansion of Islamic thought is different: "the economic-political orbit" which was followed by the regime of September 12; that is processes like urbanization, internal migration, expansion of the education, transformation in the patterns of income distribution as the outputs of neo-liberal policies accelerated the mobilization of the social groups on which Islamic thought is fed and based (Çiğdem 2005: 30).[1] This expansion accelerated further due to the fact that some post-1980 religious groups and sects had dominated one of the wings of the Motherland Party (ANAP) which had come to power with the military intervention (Tapper 1991).

Considering that due to its secular structure it would not be credible if it directly expressed the national compromising discourse that it wants to form, the state called for the religious circles, mainly religious sects, on condition that they remain within the borders drawn by itself; they, then, entered into the public space thanks to the distinct relationship they set up with the state. Inviting mediators by bestowing them an autonomous space in which they may spread their beliefs, the state also donated them a right to gain strength which remained out of its political control (Groc 2009: 206-207).

In this context, having started to view society as an object of politics and proposing a kind of "anti-social engineering" project, Islamism was compelled to undertake "a functional role" to protect the status quo (Çınar 2005: 176). Thus, despite the ambiguous relationship between power and religion (the effort to remove Islam from the political field, while attempting to institutionalize the idea of official religion as the basic component of the state structure), the post-1980 Islamic thought has become an increasingly effective part of the social and political life (Buğra 2002). The determiner in this process is that Islamic thought had completed its own development and pedagogy within the authoritarian climate established by 'September 12'. In this respect, "the new Muslim intellectual type's" apprehension about democracy, which will be analysed in detail, will also be shown to be involved in the argument mainly in the public sphere (Çiğdem 2005: 30), because the recognition/expansion of "Islam" in the public base, which continues to determine the symbolic system of political mobilizations, paved the way for the Muslim intellectuals to present their opinion in a systematic way from a religious point (Subaşı 1996: 21).

At this point, primarily, "the pure causality model" should be mentioned, which is used to explain the rise of Islam after the 80s by the observers who in the analysis exclude the parameters of the relationship between the state and religion in Republican Turkey (Cizre 2005: 83). If the defect of this explanation model cannot be revealed, the structural configurations of the power which lie in the background of the new Muslim Intellectual's participation in the public sphere would be neglected; therefore, the strengthening of the position of the Muslim intellectuals in the intellectual field will necessarily have to be explained with reference more to the self-evident practices of those thinkers. As is known, many writers from various ideological routes have associated the strengthening of politicized Islam in the 1980s with the failure of the Kemalist modernization project which lies at the core of Republican ideology. For instance, while the Islamic writer Faruk Yanardağ associated the Islamic awakening with the complete bankruptcy of Kemalist secularism (1992: 3-10), Ömer Laçiner, one of the editors of the socialist *Birikim* journal, also proposed a similar approach: The final failure of the Kemalist Westernization movement has revealed radical Islam (1989: 6-10). Moreover, by defining Islamic movements as a "petit bourgeois rebellion" through a similar reductive logic, some social scientists too have associated the expansion of the movements with the fruitless modernization process of the Republic (Toprak 1988; Tapper 1991). In this respect, while the Islamic boom which corresponds to the aftermath of September 12 in Turkey has been reduced to the rhetorical dichotomy of Kemalizm-Islamic, the relationship between the two which rests on the mutual interaction is bypassed.

However, the pendulum in the strategy of the secular state against Islam has swung between *suppression* (controlling the appeal of the Islam before the public) and *compromise* (using the religion on the political scene when necessary), and the base and the content of the post-1980 Islamic movement was transformed:

> There is such a basic feature of the Turkish radical Islam that it both distinguishes itself from the previous movements, and represents its historical continuity with the National Salvation Party (MSP). By establishing a symbiotic connection between a non-Muslim modernism and a rigid Islamic belief in which opportunism left its mark, the movement could satisfy the modernist demands of the base and could expand its political ground by assembling different components both in and out of the process of election (Cizre 2005: 105-106).

Here we will claim that this "symbiotic bond", the process *between non-Muslim modernism and the Islamic faith in which opportunism left its mark*, overdetermines the content and form of the discursive formation which will be constituted by the new Muslim intellectual type. Accordingly, we will claim that the new Muslim intellectual has formed the discourse and the position which he invades in the intellectual field within the frame of the orientation of the state by Islam. In other words, we will pursue a route that will confirm that, as Meeker also points out, after a period of ideological exhaustion, this type of intellectual emerged as he was perceived as an exact alternative to the conflicting structures of modernism, that is the state's own ideological apparatuses (1991).

3. A Discourse Based on the Antagonism between Modernity and the Islamic

The existence of the phenomenon of the new Muslim intellectuals, which has started to occupy an important place in the present field of intellectual production in Turkey with the 1980s, emerged as an indication which revealed the necessity to re-design the perspective towards the Muslim sections (Toprak 1985: 144). Since this intellectual community has begun to gain serious esteem opportunities in cultural power elites and by attempting to acquire a position out of the deep-seated left-right polarization of the 70s this community has tried to distinguish itself within the field. The traumatic effect created in the public sphere by the process of social fragmentation of the 70s, the non-compromising nature of the Turkish state in terms of secularism (Göle 1994: 123), the above-mentioned persistent structure of the state to control Islam and most importantly the economical and social transformations in the fabric of the Turkish community legitimized the birth of this public speaker group.

These new public speakers ruthlessly criticize the Republican political and cultural institutions and argue that the lifestyles of Muslims should be re-designed in accordance with Islam. They differ from those pre-1980 Islamic thinkers in terms of the jargon they use, the literary products they refer to or analyse, and the attitudes they maintain towards Westernization and secularism (Meeker 1991: 190). According to some interpretations, this new intellectual type possesses the profile of "public elite" in terms of characteristics. Coming from various professions like journalism, authorship, public service and academia, the new Muslim intellectuals have constructed their thoughts in a different way from secular, positivist, socialist or nationalist intellectual types by establishing them on an aesthetic ground. The fact that artists like the novelist Rasim Özdenören and İsmet Özel, who had started his intellectual life as a poet, had become the dominant figures of the post-1980 new Muslim intellectual type prove this thesis. Gaining public visibility after the 1980s, from panel discussions to TV channels, from newspapers to radio programmes, these intellectuals have searched for the contemporary problems of Turkey and Islam within the world system in a critical manner. Liberalization and democratization processes, shaped by the Motherland Party (ANAP) as the ruling party, made this leap among the Muslim intellectuals more appealing. Intellectuals like Ali Bulaç, İsmet Özel, Rasim Özdenören, Abdurrahman Dilipak and İlhan Kutluer enjoyed tremendous popularity.

Thus, the Muslim intellectuals, who have begun to find a voice in the field with essay, in the journal area and as newspaper columnists, produced didactic texts which offered sound guidance concerning the way the politic-critical and pious should follow.[2] Considering the appeal to the section with an equal social and educational capital of their own as a priority, the Muslim intellectuals have adopted writing as a principle especially by *totally dismissing the problem of how a compromise could be achieved between East and West*.

This *denial-based stance* acts as a key to understanding the ideas of the new Muslim Intellectuals because the question of how an Islamic society should be integrated with Western science and technology is meaningless. To this pointless question of the Modernist approach the new Muslim intellectuals give this reply: The technology and the science applied in the West do not comply with Islam. Therefore, the common mistake of the first period Islamic philosophers is the fact that "while they attempted to develop an Islamic version of institutions using Western concepts, due to the feeling of inferiority against the power of the West, they cut their ties with the specificity of Islamic perspective" (Meeker 1991: 191). In this context, the passage from *Üç Mesele* (Three Matters) should be quoted in which İsmet Özel, one of the most paradigmatic examples of the new Muslim intellectuals, formulates technology as wildness, civilization as decay and alienation as pride:

> When we consider technology, civilization and the idea of alienation as evils to be avoided, necessarily we find ourselves in a radical position. The denial of technology, civilization and the idea of alienation push us to exist in a place out of the world where we dwell both in terms of values and conditions. In other words, the place that radicalism will take us is nowhere but utopia. If we fall into the clutches of radicalism and utopia, we would imprison the Three Matters largely into deadlock; because the experience has shown that to propose radical and utopian solutions to the problems of the modern world is to invite every defeat beforehand (2006: 195).

In this direction, the new Muslin intellectual's "appeasement assignment" will be to analyse phenomenon of technique, civilization and alienation not within Western thought patterns but within the light of Islamic principles. Moreover, the title, "*Beginning to think as a Muslim*", which İsmet Özel had planned to use in the first edition of the book but then cancelled (Aktay and Özensel 2005: 785), gives important hints on the attitude that the new Muslim intellectuals, and accordingly Muslims, should adopt against the West.

İsmet Özel, who symbolizes the sharp break from the civilization-centred route constructed especially by Kısakürek-Karakoç within the Islamic ideology, claimed that the concept of civilization includes class, decay and exploitation. Civilization is the manifestation of Western superiority and an "Islamic civilization" that will be understood in this context embodies two dangers: acceptance of non-Islamic qualities of the Muslim communities in their heyday as a model and suppression of Islamic anxieties by humane designs and principles of civilization construction (Özel 2006: 119-144).

Main ideas in *Çağdaş Kuramlar ve Düzenler* (1987), which was published in 1976 by Ali Bulaç, who had become prominent in the same period as Özel, and which became popular among Muslims, also gives hints concerning *the new attitude which denies identification of the Islamic principles with Western concepts and ideologies*. According to Bulaç, in a period when Muslims go astray with every modernist concept and principle, the special mission and role of the Muslim intellectual is to act as an "alerter". Against this specific menace, the Muslim intellectual is responsible for the construction of the bond between modern life and Islamic faith and practices in a way that enables the rebirth of the Islamic community. Articulating the criticism that prominent Muslim thinkers like Mehmet Akif and Cemalettin Efgani had constructed their opposition to modernity within modernity and thereby they had been mistaken, Bulaç points out a question as the main point of departure: "Not the question 'why Islam dropped behind against the West' should be considered as the product of a pathological confusion like Cartesian, progressive and analogical thinking, but the question, 'what is the response of Islam to the modern world?' should be asked" (Bulaç 1992: 28).[3]

As can be understood from these two examples, the new Muslim intellectuals try to revive the effective domain of Islam on the level of modern problems which concern the world and the country, and they even try to overcome the anxiety which emerged in that by being transformed again into a powerful rhetoric, religion will give meaning to society before the intellectuals (Subaşı 1996: 164). On one hand, they deny the civilization perspective which forms the backbone of the Turkish Islamism (Duran 2005: 152), on the other, they integrate this target with their existence in the intellectual field by trying to find ways to possess a Muslim living style and ideology.

The new Muslim intellectuals generally talk about morality and ethics and they do this with reference to Islamic principles. They design their discourses on the basis of the principles of Shariah depending on Quran, Sunnah and Hadiths, which they perceive as the measure of everything. In this context, the basic stress by which the first period Muslim intellectuals distinguish themselves from puritan Muslim fundamentalists (Karasipahi 2009: 57) is their commitment to the original sources of Islam and purity of the sacred.

Thus, the new Muslim intellectuals, who claim that the modernist Islamic understanding which includes the denial of Western science pacifies the religion by replacing an understanding which is totally against the Muslim consciousness, have assumed special functions in the constructions of the Islamist ideology. One of the most important reflections of this construction has been "the reinterpretation of the history of Islam". The intellectuals, who perceive the one thousand four hundred years period following the *Asr-i Saadet* (the Age of Bliss) as alienation from Islam, coded an understanding which compromises with modernity as a "submissive attitude". All these arguments are the results of a belief concerning the necessity of taking back Islam to its own track.

However, this stance, based on the denial of the modernist attitude, has been structured at a point which intersects with multi-dimensional criticism of policies pursued in regard to religion in Republican Turkey. In the 1990s, the most important discussions in this critical line had been carried out around Ali Bulaç's "Medine Vesikası"[4]. "The official Islam" depiction in the text, which has also attracted the socialist left and in which Bulaç claimed that in the twentieth-century, the Muslim section had presented two different senses of Islam, official and civil, has been fairly central to political imaginations of the new Muslim intellectuals.

The strategy of "the official sense of Islam", which has been based on a state project of centralization of the political power, was to be "musliminized from top to bottom". This would mean for a Muslim to be engaged to a totalitarian discourse. "The civil Islam", on the other hand, would be an expression of a "social design" which privileges the ummah over the state. The civil Islam understanding, according to Bulaç, was a project to win not the state but the community since it was convenient for every type of difference due to its pluralist nature. By privileging the periphery against the centre, it aimed Islamization in the base (Sarıbay 1995: 339). This civil socialist comprehension, which was developed by the new Muslim intellectuals as an alternative to the policy carried by the state against religion, is defined clearly in this passage of Ali Bulaç:\

> The civil Islam is an alternative search for a given world. It is holistic in the context of general principles and peculiar only to Muslims and it believes in a saviourship of a pluralist socialist project on the basis of religious, cultural and legal autonomy in or out of Islam (1992: 83).

Therefore, at the same time, the politic and intellectual discussions around the Islamic movement started to carry a meaning which moves beyond the movement. New discussions have emerged in a field woven with many oppositional concepts like State-Civil society, Universality-Locality, Society-Individual. This case proves that the new Muslim intellectuals' roles have had a "transformative" effect even though there are also "status quoist" enterprises in it.

> Some intellectuals coming from the Islamic section indicated how much the Islamic section, which is perceived as a homogeneous community, had been changed; while they tried to comprehend the society they struggled to understand themselves. They offered a plural language to the Muslim individuals who had crushed their own individualities in the process of mutual self-construction of identities, despite the fact that they had been differentiated; they produced the discourse of an "approach to the other". However, what is more important is that they pointed out how religion itself could be and should be lived "relatively" and plural (Kentel 2003: 281).

However, the Islamic intellectuals could not adopt a clear attitude on the relations between the Islamic life style and transformation of the modern world order and their intellectual objections to modernization and secularism failed to form an ideological paradigm. The axis moved to the issue of raising consciousness of the Muslims within the search for the truth. On this matter Binnaz Toprak states that:

> There is talk of a political struggle, but exactly how this struggle will be carried out remains unclear; there is to be a transformation in the course of which modern technology and industry will be destroyed, but what precisely is to replace them is unclear; a reduction of the intricate social, political, and economic relationships or a relatively complex society to their simpler forms is advocated, but no nuts and bolts discussion of the process is undertaken. At this point the new Islamist ideology seems to be geared toward raising religious consciousness alone (Toprak 1987: 15).

In this context, their discourses are not revolutionary but rather resisting, so that this situation perpetrates the mistake to qualify them as radicals. Because, they associate the transformation of the system with the inner transformation of the individual only if people remain loyal to the Islamic principles and norms (see Özdenören 1998: 115). In other words, from the point of view of the new Muslim intellectuals, the Islamic life corresponds to a society comprised of "real Muslims" and the transformation of the existing system takes place within the self (Karasipahi 2009: 59).

However, the rise of Islam should not be evaluated merely as a rise about strategies of the state. The penetration of religion into the depths of cultural codes of society should be considered as one of the basic dynamics of this rise. As Ömer Çaha observes, as the state could not create a spiritual space to replace religion since its foundation, the politics of the Republic regarding religion has become an "etatocratic system" which can be read as the reversal of theocracy (Çaha 2001: 77-89).

As a result, the new Muslim intellectuals, who acquired an important position in the newly shaped post-1980 intellectual field, have developed three intricate attitudes framed as *pluralist* and *denialist*. On the ground of a democratic-pluralist paradigm, they have structured an essential Islamic identity against the Western identity by demolishing Western values.

If we itemize the outputs of the arguments conveyed up to that point;

1. The *intellectual Islamism*, which has developed since the 1960s with its problematic, enquiry-objects and dynamism, had attained an appearance which differs sharply from its own traditional history in the process between the years 1983-93 (the process in which Islamic intellectual discourse embodies opposing motives).
2. "The new Muslim intellectuals" are the most important constituent of this new appearance. These intellectuals have made an attempt to find a balance between the intellectual and the social and to achieve a synthesis between them; and thus, they have become the subjects of this search for balance and synthesis.

The new Muslim intelligentsia, who do not engage in the political field directly and who create *spaces of public initiative* especially through newspapers and journals, could create its own theoretical language due to its distance from political engagement. This is a language which bears opposing motives both in its self-critique of its own intellectual tradition and in its distant position to the ideological structure that the September 12 wanted to create.

3. The intellectual result of the experience gained by the quest of Islamic thought of the 1980s, whose activist side had been at the forefront, has been, on one hand, an exit from the utopia of "Asr-ı Saadet" (The Age of Bliss) of the past, on the other, an exit from the utopia of the "Islamic state" of the future (Kentel 725); and thereby, the radicalism of the "intellectual questioning" got ahead of any political projects. That is, from the point of the Islamic circles, politics have descended from the top to the bottom.

4. In this ten years of "determiner" and "opposing" processes, Islamism has become a noteworthy *formation* which included all of the intellectual activities of this new type of Muslim intellectual. What is more, discourses produced by the new Muslim intellectuals have also attracted the attention of those coming from different intellectual traditions.

5. Consequently, the Islamic option (alternative), offered by the new Muslim intellectuals, incorporates a strong critique of the foundations of Western civilization.

Precisely here, before moving into the section which comprises the main argument, some points should be made clear. It is interesting that in terms of the mobilisation of the Islamic movements, such intellectual productions have had almost any direct influence on the public level. The said discussions and productions have remained rather as the part of the field of intellectual production, because, on the level of discourse and practices, the Muslim section has given more credit to the "cultural meaning frames" which were produced within the community structure. For instance, it is apparent that political figures emerging out of many Islamic communities such as the Fethullah Gülen Movement, which successfully mobilizes human resources by constructing a socialisation space through secular asceticism and which takes strength mainly from the web of informal institutions (Kömeçoğlu 2000: 151), constitute "the public face of the Islam", in Nilüfer Göle's words. Nevertheless, contrary to the attitude adopted by the new Muslim intellectuals against the West, these movements act in a manner that defends capitalism and approves free market and privatization. Therefore, when this topic is approached in respect to the Muslim sections, it can be said that "material process" outweighs the ideological drives and the opposition against the Western-centred modernization practices has eroded the Protestantization of the community structures.

4. Direction Change in the New Muslim Intellectuals: Reasons for the Break and "Compromising"

In the first two parts of the study, it has been mentioned that the Islamism of the 1980s had differed from its own prehistory both intellectually and sociologically, and that crystallized the discourses of the new Muslim intellectuals (on condition that they tolerate certain differences). In this part, we will attempt, within the intellectual field, to analyse the position of the Islamic movement which obtained victory in the 1994 local election and which has started as the *Welfare Party*, whose Islamic identity was apparent, abandoned the attitude of "remaining distant" to the political field, which strengthened its financial existence through examples like *Anatolian Tigers*, which came out of the threat directed to itself on February 28 even stronger, and which has totally changed its fabric with the undeniable success of the AK Party (the Justice and Development Party) after 2000. However, it should be noted first that since our concern is to analyse the break in the field of intellectual production (conditions passing from the adversary discourse to the compromising discourse), the political parameters of the Islamic rise will not be the focus point but the position of the Muslim intellectuals within "the liberalisation of the Islamic intellectual discourse" will be analysed. The thesis that will be put forward in this part is that *the Islamic movement has lost its political language both in the intellectual and actual ground with the accession of a conservative party associated with the movement.*

We may start our analysis with İsmet Özel's quitting writing in *the National Newspaper* (Milli Gazete) in 2003, whom, among the post-1980 new Muslim intellectuals, had reached a considerable audience according to the intellectual strategies he followed. But why do we start our analysis from this event? The quitting of a writer, who is one of the major representatives of the previous opposing discourse, with a strong critical essay from a newspaper which explicitly pursues the Islamic politics, can be read as a symptomatic manifestation of the break from the line that is analysed.

This attitude of Özel reveals serious hints concerning the change of direction in his new Islamic perspective an he who claims that the loss in spirit of cause among the Muslims who strive for the Islamic lifestyle and *erosion* in the Islamic posture had drawn him away from the movement.

Probably, with the effect of the awareness thanks to being an ex-Marxist, Özel entered a critical stance as he perceives that the Muslims have joined in a serious cohesion with market liberalization by abandoning their "protester" political identities. In 2003, as a reaction to the decrease in the dose of opposing after the coalescence with the political power, Özel utters these harsh sentences in *the National Newspaper*:

> "Writing", says E. L. Doctorow, "is like driving at night. You can only see as far as the headlamps allow you; but in this way you complete your travel." If we are to account on this statement, I have also come as far as I can, completed my journey. For me, the travel in the context of journal authorship has been accomplished. I will not write in a newspaper anymore. Having started twenty-six years ago, now there is no moral reason left for me to drive this car, in which I have occupied the driver's seat on one hand to tell something to those whom, I believed, shared my faith and on the other for the struggle to make a living. What was the moral reasoning in my writing? It was to support the Islamic political approach if it wanted to hold its head up high. I thought that I had taken up a very important business with higher functional value. I have never underestimated my efforts throughout the years in so much that I have never written a line that can be replaced with another pen. Fortune has turned, and now it is revealed that *there is not any connection between the circumstance of the scene and my solemnity*, as well as my intentions (Özel 2003). (*emphasis added*)

Here, Özel's cynical attitude[5] is not towards the new formation of the mere movement in the political field. It represents an important warning concerning the necessity to analyse the break of the Islamic movement from its previous position in the 80s by including its intellectual break as well. In this context, we can primarily determine this: the new Muslim intellectual type, who had designed the post-1980 opposing discourse by ambiguously and loosely distancing it from the political engagement, began to differentiate from his previous position especially when Islamism grew stronger both in the economic and political field at the end of the 90s. As the Islamic movement leaked the anti-system tendency of Islamism to the "centre" thanks to the Welfare Party, it became capable of threatening the given hegemony and in this process gained an important dynamism; however, with the February 28 coup, it began to lose its radicalism. At the end of the 90s, the process of "integration into the system" got started; and this made some of the new Muslim intellectuals "the pioneers" of this transition.

As mentioned earlier, in the Islamic circles, the specific function of the new Muslim intellectuals, who had acted as key to undertake the business to find "a balance between the social and the intellectual", also stepped in here. Ahmet Çiğdem's observation is quite meaningful at this point:

> What is intended by the social is the sociological ground on which Islamism is based and this ground is affected almost at all points by the transformation that Turkey undergoes. Besides, there exist various representatives of Islamism which can be inter-accommodated, though not totally identical. It is the intellectuals' business to systematize, assemble and even perform public approvability tests on the voices rising from nongovernmental organizations, private teaching institutions, trade bodies, fraternal and development associations, holdings most of which have now lived out their financial life, and religious sects (Çiğdem 2005: 31-32).

Here, according to our claim, the newly attributed meaning of this function caused the intellectual rise of the Islamic thinking of the 80s to *consume* itself. This mode of consumption was triggered by "the dissolution during the experiences of local and central power" of opposing discourses of some Islamic intellectuals. As the Islamic discourse lost its opposing quality, the egalitarian and liberal ideals had been replaced with "entrepreneurship understanding" which rendered class formations comprehensible. In other words, beginning from the late 90s, *values* have been replaced by *facts*. The belief in the idea that worldly pleasures are also necessary and available for the Muslims has gradually gained a content which legitimizes *class breaks*. Being in power caused sinking of old ideals into oblivion. This mode of *political amnesia* has further increased with the accession of the AK Party as a political formation shaped in company with the Islamic discourses (Aktaş 2009: 666-667). Then, what is the role and position of the intellectuals in this serious visible loss of Islamism which took place thanks to this "intellectual withdrawal"?

We aim to reply to this question by taking at the centre the new economical-political situation formed towards the end of the 90s in Turkey. Especially, with the formation of the capital called "green", investments and entrepreneurship of the Muslim businessmen, expansion of the Islamic educational institutions, and the bourgeoisification of the Muslim middle class, the debate on construction of Islam as a civilization was slipped into the background and the debate on the construction of real-politic manoeuvres was put in the foreground. According to Alev Erkilet, who observes that Islamism was integrated into the system by the institutions which it had produced as an alternative to the system itself (2005: 693), there are two basic reasons underlying the quick departure from the insistence on transforming the language of the Islamic movement into a theoretical one: firstly, the cake put in front of the Muslims in the period of Özal had been too savoury, and secondly, the radicals of the period had had difficulty in absorbing the groups/traditions/movements which could have enabled them to resist this trend.

> The result was that due to the appeal of the cake and the loss of blood depending on that fact, an important part of the radical groups were scattered quickly to the right. However, it cannot be said that those who had tried to keep their feet relatively on stable ground had got over this process without damage. As the excitement of the intellectual production which should be a long term target of the political struggle has gradually begun to weaken and get cold since 1990s, the political struggle was no more an alternative and rather than dynamically following the traces of the Islamic ideals within a given social structure it paved the way for conceptualization of an Islamic movement which was idealized and deferred to future, cut off from reality (Erkilet 2005: 693).

At this point, it can be asserted that against the quick integration of the Muslims into the system, some intellectuals, who possessed opposing arguments which had been distanced to the system in the 1980s (if we exclude some self-criticizing intellectuals), have become defenders of a conservative-liberal discourse. In the background of this dramatic transformation, of course, there is not only the attitude change of the Muslim intellectuals concerning the attainments provided by the *laissez-faire* liberal approach.

The second factor, then, is the location of the staff of the AK Party into the centre of the post-2000 politics, who had to exhibit that they had broken off from their previous radical stance by calling themselves "conservative democrats" not to lose their legitimacy, even though it comes out from the Islamic line. Here, what is determining about our thesis is *the fact that conditions which had produced this formation indeed had paved the way for the end of the Islamic movement which had been shaped in the aftermath of the 80s.* It is apparent that sections within the Islamic thinking, also including the intellectuals, announced their loyalty to the parliamentary democracy on the political level by entering into a liberal direction.

Islamism has followed probabilities which have become generally impossible in the history of Turkey, has constantly inclined towards the anachronic targets, and instead of creating an accessible context as a political project it has followed a line which was concretized by remaining either against or part of macro formations, it could not provide its carrier subjects with a permanent space. Due to this fact, it could easily be integrated into other movements, and has always been open to manipulations (Çiğdem 2009: 121).

The radical changes of the Muslim intellectuals, who are at the helm of these processes of integration in the field of intellectual production as "the symbolic producers" (to express it in the terms of Pierre Bourdieu), have made them defenders of such convictions:

1. To foreground the capitalist and privatization politics against the nationalizing financial politics and
2. To provide minimization of citizens' individual and group autonomy against the expansion of the forms of state authority.

Within the direction of these targets, the Islamic intellectuals, who relatively collaborate with different ideological positions against the authoritarian identity of the official ideology under the top heading of "democratic republic", have become the discourse producers of the liberal positions. This situation, in a sense, can be evaluated as the intellectuals' operation to legitimize the composition of a social justice discourse and movement which is nowadays qualified as the "passive revolution"[6] of the AK Party.

However, even though the trust of the intellectuals for this liberalization has lost its enthusiasm as the AK Party could not fulfil the promised pledges, the intellectuals have moved towards a bourgeois-democratic statist route against militarist thrusts of the right politics.

In this respect, it is possible to assert that, following the victory of the AK Party in the 2007 elections, the intellectuals, who became the defenders of the liberal discourse by relinquishing an Islamic lifestyle that they had once supported, have started to support the AK Party's statist conformism for the sake of anti-militarism.

The situation, which shows how the dynamics of political producers in Turkey are eager to crisis, also shows explicitly how the intelligentsia is dominated within the historical block that the AK Party constructs.

In this context the new Muslim intellectuals generation who validate their words in the public-intellectual field and put forward an opposing political language after 1980 began to defend the identity of "democracy" wholly as a substantial category after 2000. It has been dragged into a compromise position by being promoted to an ideal-democratic decision-maker from the point of the paradigm which political power tries to establish. Therefore it is possible to anticipate this probability: as the public sphere in Turkey proceeds to steer away from the old heteronymous structure, the financial motivations of the Islamic movements, which are success and competition oriented on a micro-level, may increase and this process may also further increase the influence of their formation depending on the principles of the capitalist modernization. Even, now, it can be asserted that it will come to a position in which it will totally be subject to ideas which had been opposed by the practices surrounding the Islamic thinking at one period. For, the "paradoxical appearances" visible today remind us of the Protestant thesis of Max Weber who claims that Islam is "a religion of harmony" and, also, his theory of secularism; that is to say, with the process called "Protestantization", all the steps taken for Islam to be on the scene of history had been tamed by the actors of the Islamic movement itself, and as the result of the mobilization of the Islamic capital which had no difficulty in integrating into global capitalism, there has appeared highly effective *fragmentation* in the *life* and the *consciousness* of the Muslims. As a last word, we can say that *the sincere intellectual struggle that the new Muslim intellectuals had undergone for the Islamic transformation against modernization was defeated by the "Protestantization" that has taken place in the social life.*

Notes

[1] Özal paved the way for such developments by constructing serious substructures which opened the doors of the elitist bureaucratic structure which had been closed for the ordinary man in the Republican period.

[2] On the other hand, the style of the Muslim intellectuals is ironic, comparative and critical. They combine their analytical thought method with a sarcastic and cynical tone. For instance, it can easily be observed that while Özel assumes an aggressive and sarcastic tone, Dilipak assumes a satirical tone and Bulaç prefers an academic tone. However, the common point is that all have a polemical language.

[3] However, most of these intellectuals who criticize the hegemony of the Western institutions and concepts on the Muslims are nourished from Popper's *The Poverty of Historicism*, Kuhn's "paradigm", Feyerabend's *Against Method*, Illich's *Deschooling Society*, Wallerstein's analysis of "world system" (Duran 2005: 153-154). The fact that the *Tezkire* journal, which resists the erosion of the Islamic identity against market culture, today possesses an identity which characterizes "the intellectual Islamism" shows that there exists among the Islamic journals an intellectual attitude which is in constant contact with Western thought. Besides, there are many Western studies like the German economist Ernst Friedrich Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* and philosopher Roger Garaudy's publications concerning Islam which have attracted great interest among the Muslims.

[4] İsmet Özel also penned an essay which displays a hard response for the instrumentalizing attitude of the practitioners of the September 12 for Islam. (1998: 660).

[5] It is interesting that while İsmet Özel claimed that many of those whom, he believed, had taken place in the same front with him, had fallen into the blindness of pluralization, liberalization and political appeasement, he himself, by moving in the opposite direction, undertook the business to create a discourse to construct Turkishness as a hegemonic power in Turkey.

[6] For further information see Cihan Tuğal (2009), *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism*, Stanford Unv. Press.

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