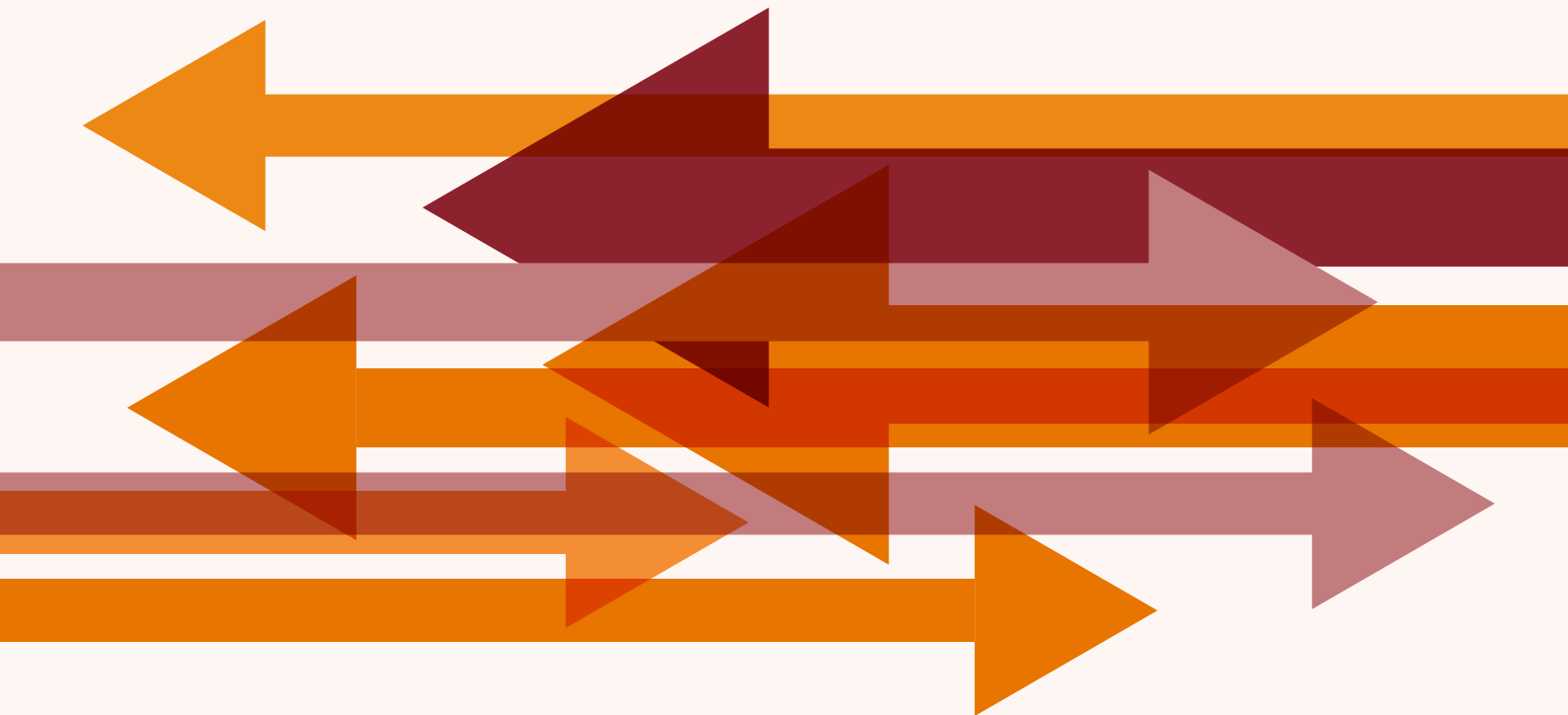# TESEV

REFLECTIONS ON TURKEY:
ISLAMIC MIDDLE CLASSES AT A GLANCE

Reflections on Turkey: Islamic Middle Classes at a Glance

TESEV

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Turkey's economy grew fast as it was opened up progressively since the 1980s, its financial sector was stabilized and reformed after 2000, and the structural change and urbanization have unlocked productivity gains from the reallocation of labor to higher value added activities. The AK Party government's social policies have been supportive of inclusive growth benefiting from the fiscal space generated by conservative fiscal management after the 2001 crisis. Through the decade, macroeconomic discipline was maintained and governance improved significantly, supported by the anchor of the EU accession process. This, coupled with political stability, ensured market-based policies were sustained, allowing the private sector to prosper and the growing economic clout of a new generation of Anatolian entrepreneurs to emerge. As a result, the middle class expanded with the entering of prospering periphery ("Islamic population") into the center.

The urbanization of prospering middle classes has led to radical changes in the lifestyles of the majority of citizens, creating new political demands and contributing to the rise to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). As AK Party's policies are expected to build of the rising İslamic middle class, understanding their evolution through this process of rapid structural change is significant in order to gauge what this would mean for a "New Turkey"?

This study attempts to identify the areas and directions of change, with a view to determining what kind of dynamics and expectations the rising level of welfare has created in Turkey, how they have impacted the perceptions of the society about democracy and whether they have resulted in any views and attitudes similar to those in western societies. In order to do so, this study compiles and analyzes the studies conducted by research institutions like KONDA, TESEV and Pew during the last 20 years regarding perceptions of the society in Turkey. It also includes a closer look into the issues where surveys seemed to fall short, through observations from focus group discussions.

The first and foremost observation that field studies and focus group discussions commonly support is that the perception and understanding of religiosity among the middle classes are changing rapidly although the "Islamic" nature is very strong. We are facing a dynamic that demands material welfare, that understands freedom increasingly on a individualistic level and that is motivated to adapt to the global environment in line with these goals.

We believe that the observations put forward by this report are crucial in understanding the political and sociological evolution of Turkey, as perceptions, expectations and demands of the rising middle classes will be most important in determining the policies of today's governments. Through this report, TESEV hopes to contribute to studies on Turkey's middle classes and to policymaking based on sociological research.

Introduction

Theoretically, the most prominent and accentuated dynamic of the modernization mechanism is the relationship between welfare and democracy. According to modernization theories, modernization comes along with welfare, and an increased level of welfare brings along secularization. Populations that are secularizing and having increased economic resources would demand democracy with the desire to influence the political area. This mechanism, which can function in the other way around as well, also envisages that the establishment of democracy could raise the level of welfare.

This approach also asserts, implicitly, that modernizing societies would resemble Western societies as their level of income rises over time. However, as we observe in the case of Turkey, these dynamics may function in different ways in non-Western societies.

During the period between the foundation of the republic in 1923 and AK Party's rise to power in 2002, Turkey has experienced a centralization process based on a "Turkish and secularist" identity, while other identities have been deprived of both political and economic opportunities. This deficiency in the field of democracy has affected the level of welfare as well; for example, despite the global growth between 1980 and 2002, Turkey's per capita income has practically stayed the same.

With AK Party coming to power in 2002, the Islamic section has managed to create its own bourgeoisie and middle class, backed also by globalization and the post-modern criticism. However, rather than creating a secularization that diminishes the religious congregation, this modernization has on the one hand expanded the congregation and on the other hand altered the meaning of religiosity. Religiosity has been adapted to the requirements of daily life and the equation of morality with religiosity has been impaired, while Islamic and secularist congregations have miscegenated and everybody has become more or less "religious". In other words, democratic demands are expanding, level of welfare is rising and western lifestyle and values are increasingly getting a foothold in the Islamic section of the country. However, this does not represent a breakaway from religiosity as suggested by modernization theories, but rather the diversification of religiosity and developing a new identity within a pluralist structure.

What do field studies and focus group discussions tell us?

By compiling the studies conducted by institutions like KONDA, TESEV and Pew during the last 20 years regarding the perceptions of the society in Turkey, we tried to identify the areas and the directions of change, with a view to determining what kind of dynamics and expectations the rising level of welfare has created in Turkey, how they have impacted the perceptions of the society on democracy and whether they have resulted in any views and/or attitudes similar to those in western societies. Following this compilation, we wanted to have a closer look into the issues where these studies seemed to fall short of, through focus group discussions. A brief summary of our findings as a result of these studies is presented below.

a) Political institutions and rights

Studies suggest that there has been a large positive change in the society's attitude towards political rights and freedoms, but the Islamic section still preserves its sensitivity about religious differentiation and a political tension that keeps a dichotomy of secularist/religious alive still continues.

On the other hand, for example, sharia is supported as a religious symbol of a fair and ideal society, rather than being a political demand even among the Islamic section. Likewise, greater importance is attached to political parties' improving the economy, protecting rights and freedoms and combatting corruption, rather than safeguarding religious values. Common demands include the regulation of state-religion relationship by an independent and pluralist organ, provision of religious education by the state in a manner that respects the multiple-identity characteristics of the country, and rights of individuals in religious congregations being guaranteed by the state.

Another noteworthy fact is that the Kurdish community is better poised than the other sections of the society to adopt the norms and the institutions of democracy, due possibly to the fact that this issue is directly associated with its own conditions of existence. Another striking fact is the tendency of social sections to waive rights and freedoms to the extent to which they feel threatened (by external or internal factors).

	1999			2002/3			2006/7			2012		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA
Political Institutions and rights												
Recognition of different ethnic groups							30.10%	42%	27.90%	42.70%	31.80%	25.50%
Sharia	21%	67.90%	11.10%	16.40%	74.10%	9.50%	8.90%	76.20%	14.90%			
Freedom of expression							89%	9.50%	1.60%	91.20%	5.80%	3%
Uncensored press							77.20%	20%	2.80%	78.80%	16%	5.20%

Source: (TESEV, Religion, Society and Politics in Changing Turkey, 2006), (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012)

b) Family, women, sexuality

The findings in this area suggest that these three subjects constitute some of the most important areas of change in Turkey, where the patriarchal mentality and traditions fed by religion are very strong. For instance, family continues to be perceived as the most important institution to be conserved; tolerance towards different sexual identities remains much lower than the tolerance to different ethnic identities. Likewise, broad sections of the society support the view that "chastity" is the most important characteristic of a woman, and that the primary role of a married woman is to serve her husband.

However, while no flexibility is observed in the role of woman in the religious area, a significant positive change is observed in the perceptions about the position and the role of women in social life. Female participation in the work force and politics is supported, but the society preserves its conservative approach on women' participation at work to the extent that it raises the possibility of the negligence of woman's duties at home.

	2006/7			2012		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA
Family, woman, sexuality						
Sexual orientations different from that of the majority (like homosexuality) should be lived freely	38.10%	57.70%	4.20%	39.10%	54.40%	6.50%
Women must have equal rights as men	86.80%	11.80%	1.40%	87.60%	9.90%	2.50%
Women can work successfully at every job that can be done by men	79.10%	19.80%	1.10%	82.30%	16.10%	1.60%

Source: (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012)

c) Group affiliations, individualism and tolerance

Individuals in Turkey have just recently begun expanding their social, cultural and economic lives beyond the boundaries of their congregations, and establishing relations with people from other congregations. For this reason, it would not be incorrect to state that the secularist/religious and Secularist/Sunni alienations still continue. Findings in this area suggest that Turkish society, which seems to be very tolerant when asked abstract questions, starts perceiving the people and views from other congregations as a threat when asked concrete ones. In this context, the majority still continues to prefer living in the same neighborhood with people similar to them, to speak to them only and to keep others away from their families.

While a growing trend of tolerance is observed overall, it should be noted that Secularism is the only indicator that related to decline in tolerance.

	1999			2006/7			2012		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA
Group affiliations, individualism and tolerance									
Non-Muslims being able to exercise and maintain their own religions and cultures freely				82.60%	14%	3.40%	86%	10.10%	3.90%
"I would prefer a Muslim tenant"	51.90%	40.20%	7.80%	50.90%	30.20%	18.90%			
"If two groceries are selling a good at the same price, I would prefer the one known to be religious"	49.30%	39%	11.70%	49.60%	32.60%	17.80%			
"Man is weak; he would go astray without an authority ruling over him."				69.70%	24.90%	5.40%	60.30%	34.20%	5.50%

Source: (TESEV, Religion, Society and Politics in Changing Turkey, 2006), (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012)

d) Opinions about market economy, class differences and the Western world

The Islamic section, which has evolved rapidly during the last two decades, has increasingly made its mark on Turkish economy as capital holders and white-collar employees. It is possible to state that this section, which does not seem to have experienced any problem in adapting to the requirements of the market economy in general terms, has developed a realistic approach to business life; that religion has lost its importance in business decisions, and honesty and hard work have been adopted as the basic values.

There is a tendency towards individualization across the country and this process of individualization moves faster in areas that are under the control of the individuals, such as economy, but more slowly in areas that require leadership, such as politics. Interestingly, individualism is much greater in lower and middle classes than in upper classes. In line with these findings, the desire of lower and middle classes that are in the periphery to enter the system is pluralizing the economic structure and opening it up to competition.

On the other hand, it is observed that the society's perception of the West became more introversive. Considering that this process is also accompanied by an intensive period of opening and globalization in Turkey, it is possible to conclude that the self-confidence and the prospects of the

Turkish society have risen, and that the Turkish society considers other societies from a much more egalitarian perspective, while its judgments are getting harsher.

	2002/3			2006/7			2012		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA
Opinions about market economy, class differences and western world									
"Everyone gets to the position he/she deserves in the society"				73.20%	21.80%	5%	63.00%	31.10%	5.90%
Perception about the US	30%	54%		10.5% *	79.5% *		15%	72%	
Perception about the EU				27%	58%		21%	60%	

Values are the average of two years.

Source: (Pew, The Great Divide, 2006), (Pew Global, How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other, 2006), (Pew Global Attitudes, 2007), (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012).

Conclusion

When field studies are combined with focus group observations, we see that the two sets of findings largely support each other and that the perception and understanding of religiosity are changing rapidly despite the "Islamic" nature of Turkey's new middle class. We are facing a dynamic that demands material welfare, that increasingly understands freedom from an individualistic perspective and that is motivated to adapt to the global environment in line with the asserted goals.

In addition, we can state that for the first time Turkey is experiencing a miscegenation that combines the secularist and the Islamic sections. Results of the field studies and the focus group discussions suggest that the new middle class in Turkey could be rather eclectic as a natural consequence of this miscegenation, that it attaches importance to pragmatic and interim balances, and that it does not take offense at bearing contradictions. For example, although democracy is essentially viewed as majoritarianism and the functions of state are expressed as introducing measures, frameworks and limits on freedoms, a balance is sought in the end, affirming, "a relinquishment of freedoms is acceptable only to some extent". It is possible to argue that individuals want freedom to gain strength against both the state and congregation. In line with this observation, we can anticipate that the young generation will increasingly move out of the congregation.

In a situation where individualization is inevitable, and even demanded among the young generation, family is viewed as the only institution that could prevent finding oneself in a vacuum; therefore the society is still very conservative as far as women and family are concerned. Positive developments in this area can be listed as the concepts of morality and chastity increasingly becoming extra-religious; life style, rather than religion, gaining prominence in attitudes towards women, and the participation of women in the work force.

In short, the "new middle class" which has been flourishing in the last three decades in Turkey with an accelerated impetus under the AKP governments, points to a sociological base stuck between the desire for change and adaptation, and the motive of conserving identity and moral values. It is possible to infer from this base and what has been experienced to date that integration with the West will spread onto family and all spheres of social interaction, beginning with the youth and

women; that it would encourage individualization on the one hand and the demand for fundamental rights and freedoms on the other. This implies that the new middle class trends of Turkey would move the country closer to the daily life perception of the West.

2. **FIELD STUDIES**

INTRODUCTION

Modernization theories are often based on the assumption that an ideal society should be culturally homogenous and leveled. While individual differences maintain their independence within the socio-political culture surrounding them, the codes of living together are internalized by the same individuals. Thus, individuals who do not resemble each other in terms of personal requests and preferences form a society within a common framework of cultural values. It has been commonly recognized that modernizing societies will look like each other in time with the contribution of positivism, which has explicitly and implicitly affected most of modernization theories.

The most prominent and emphasized dynamic of modernization mechanism is the association between welfare and democracy. According to such modernization theories, the adoption of modern rationality would ensure better use of resources, promote entrepreneurship and create a middle class. A rational vision would drive masses towards secularization, and detach them from a lifestyle dominated by religious rules and congregational ties. Furthermore, as a natural consequence, the same masses would demand democracy and seek to influence the political field. Many theoreticians have argued that once this relationship is established it would start working in other way around as well, i.e. welfare would rise as democracy settles, and political reforms would connect societies to global market economy.

These approaches have made it usual to look into developing countries from a very orientalist prism. It has been anticipated that these societies would look like western societies over time, and as their level of income rises, and that they would converge western democracies in terms of mode of governance. It should be noted that shifts that prove these expectations right are more likely to take place during periods of globalization and countries are more likely to affect and look like each other. It would not be surprising that this interaction occurs in the form where the weaker converges and looks like the stronger. However, the presence of such a process would not necessarily imply that modernization occurs in non-western countries in the same way it does in western countries. For instance, the formation of the middle class, the secularization tendency and the establishment of democratic mechanisms may occur more differently from the West, thus yielding different results.

Although the eventual outcome demonstrates an orientation towards the economic and political systems present in the West, the social and cultural grounds that produce this outcome in non-western societies may differ from those in the West. As a matter of fact, Turkey is experiencing a peculiar modernization adventure with her large Muslim population, congregational structure, and state structure that is not able to get rid itself from authoritarian laicism, nationalism and statism.

What's different with Turkey?

For starters, the basic proposition of modernization theories that suggests a correlation between welfare and democracy is (obviously) present in Turkey as well. However, the first 80 years of the Republic demonstrates that the particular nature of democracy in the country has negatively affected its welfare. In other words, the lack of democracy has not only implied the concentration of social surplus value in the center and its use by a limited group, but it also resulted in a radical deterioration of income distribution, thus kept total national income at a low level. Nonetheless, the issue is not limited to centralization in the economic sense, since seeing as the political center was has also been established on a sociocultural basis since laicism and nationalism have been used to narrow down and solidify the public area. As a result, the desirable citizen has been defined as 'Turkish and secular', and those not covered by this definition have been deprived of the public resources distributed by the state.

The functionalization of Republic as such has given the power and authority to a certain minority, and has identified this minority as the legitimate owner and ruler of the State. Thus, congregationalism has not disappeared following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, which indeed had such a structure, but a new and powerful congregation was created around the state. The consequences of this were the Kurds' inability to acquire their identity rights, and the exclusion of Islamic section from the system both politically and economically. An authoritarian interpretation of laicism has led to the perception of religious people as "reactionary" in line with a modernist and positivist understanding, and as a group that must be ruled by the seculars.

This system has maintained its presence by limiting democracy and by not allowing for democratic initiatives to find ground. As a matter of fact, the first 30 years of the Republic passed under the rule of a single party system, the subsequent periods of "democracy" were restructured with military interventions every ten years, and eventually during the 30 years following the 1980 coup, the judicial system was designed with a "pro-statist" structure so that the system could maintain its centralized nature without any need for a military intervention. Given the fact that this country has not made any headway for a long time although it was the fourth biggest economy of Europe in the beginning of the twentieth century and was way ahead of Germany in terms of national income in the wake of World War II, one could hardly ignore the link between this fact and the tutelage regime it was ruled by. In fact, despite the global growth between 1980 and 2002, Turkey's per capita income remained almost the same.

'Winter' and 'spring' of Turkey?

1990s are critical in understanding the change in Turkey today. During that decade, the system was driven towards a point where it could not reproduce itself; citizens were murdered directly by the state, within the politicians' knowledge, in connection with the Kurdish issue. The Kurdish community was terrorized as a whole, and the Islamic section was exposed to a great pressure blacklisting, exclusion and punishment mechanism. This decade has witnessed a total politicization of the judiciary, which resulted in the judiciary's becoming an independent political actor and significantly losing its legitimacy; and in the reorganization of the public domain by the military tutelage, and with the support of the secularist bourgeoisie and media.

However, the same decade also witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany. In the meantime Turkey was under the impact of two big and new waves. One of these waves was globalization which connected Turkey to the rest of the world and made its Islamic identity meaningful again. The second wave was post-modern criticism which reinstituted self-confidence among those with Islamic identify and sensitivity. The combination of these two facts has led the Muslims in Turkey to understand that the West is not doing everything well after all; that the West is not more "progressed" than them in an absolute sense, and that their Islamic identity had a vital role in building the future.

Moreover, the same decade simultaneously witnessed the emergence of a new intellectuality and a new bourgeoisie within the Islamic society, and the differentiation and the pluralization of Muslims within themselves. What was being experienced was a peculiar secularization process, and its first fruit in the political area would be the establishment of AKP... Following the 'winter' of the '90s, the period following 2002 became a sort of 'spring'. The Islamic section became a part of the higher income groups, thus receiving better education, learning foreign language, and making the biggest of their investments in children. This process did not only create a new bourgeoisie and a new middle class, but also a new understanding of cities and urban living: It freed Anatolian cities from the hegemony of Istanbul and Ankara, and established a direct contact between them and the global world.

As a result of this process the large Islamic section who were kept outside the center till then moved towards the center and captured the center politically. Behind this dynamic is a type of secularization not anticipated by any of the modernization theories: Secularization did not downsize the religious congregation, but rather changed the meaning of religiosity. Religiosity went hand in hand with individualization, and secularization served the deepening of the internal dynamism by keeping individuals within the congregation, instead of excluding them. Muslims, who sought to live according to their religious beliefs earlier, chose to adapt their religiosity to the requirements of day-to-day life, and everybody became 'religious' to a certain extent according to his/her own understanding of the concept. By consequence, Islamic congregation constantly grew and eventually formed the electoral base of AKP.

One of the most important consequences of this secularization has been the disruption of parallelism between morality and religiosity. Today, Muslims no longer think that it is necessary to be religious to be moral, which encourages the transitivity and the hybridization between the Islamic and the secularist groups. This has resulted in the support of democrats in the secularist section for the reforms of AKP governments, and the change of regime has been secured as such. The self-confidence now associated with the Islamic identity reduced the Muslims' need for Turkish identity, and the "Turkish-Islamic synthesis" imposed by the tutelage regime collapsed. This also paved the way for an Islamic government to take steps towards resolving the Kurdish issue and making civic reforms. Considering that this leap towards democracy is ultimately a total move against the official ideology, it is possible to understand why AKP is insistently pursuing, advocating for and safeguarding the EU membership process

This transformation adventure of Turkey also explains why its economy could weather the global economic crisis. Turkey has almost become a different country and made a leap in terms of both social energy and government capability during this process. On the other hand, the primary motive

of the society has been reshaped as opening up and adapting to global world, and this dynamic has been borne essentially by the Islamic section. Today, democratic demands are expanding, the level of welfare is rising, and western life style and values are finding a greater place within the Islamic section. However, this implies the diversification and the reinstitution of religious identity within a pluralist structure, rather than a move away from religiosity that is suggested by the modernization theory.

WHAT DO FIELD STUDIES TELL US?

By compiling the studies conducted by institutions like KONDA, TESEV and Pew during the last 20 years regarding the perceptions of the society in Turkey, we tried to identify the areas and directions of change, with a view to determining what dynamics and expectations the rising level of welfare has created in Turkey, how they have impacted the perceptions of the society about democracy and whether they have resulted in any views and attitudes similar to those in western societies. The results compiled from these studies are discussed below under the headings of "political institutions and rights", "family, women and sexuality", "group belongingness, individualism, tolerance" and "opinions about market economy, class differences and western world".

a) Political Institutions and Rights

Political and Civic Rights and Freedoms

Political rights and freedoms are basically expressed through identities in Turkey. Civic rights, however, are conceived within the framework of the needs of congregational life. In this context, on the one hand the freedoms concerning the Secularist and Kurdish identities and the situation of women wearing a headscarf, and on the other hand the demands and judgments regarding labor life and institutionalization gain importance.

But, before that, it would be useful to have a look at the way in which the dilemma of military coup/Islamic fundamentalism, which would directly affect all rights and freedoms, is perceived by the Islamic and secularist groups, as this distinction still represents the most important factor determining political attitudes. Keeping in mind that AKP basically represents the Islamic section and CHP represents the secularist section, we encounter the following data: While the most important threat is military coup for 71% of AKP supporters, this rate is only 12% for CHP supporters. On the other hand, while fundamentalism is perceived as the biggest threat by CHP supporters, with 41%, it is so for only 6% of AKP supporters (Konda 2010).

As for comparisons regarding identity rights; the rate of AKP supporters who agree with the statement 'state must support different religious beliefs' is below country average, while the rate of those who agree with the statement 'state must support the Secularist citizens so that they can live in accordance with their religious beliefs as they wish' is at the level of country average. But the ideas of allowing Kurds to receive education in their mother tongue and state support for various ethnic

groups so that they can maintain their traditions receive greater recognition among AKP supporters than Turkey average (Konda 2010). These data demonstrate that Islamic section may feel hesitations about religious differentiation, but is more prepared to bear ethnic differentiations.

Chart 1

"According to a view, our country has been recently experiencing a polarization and tension regarding ethnic identities. To which side do you see yourself closer in this polarization?"
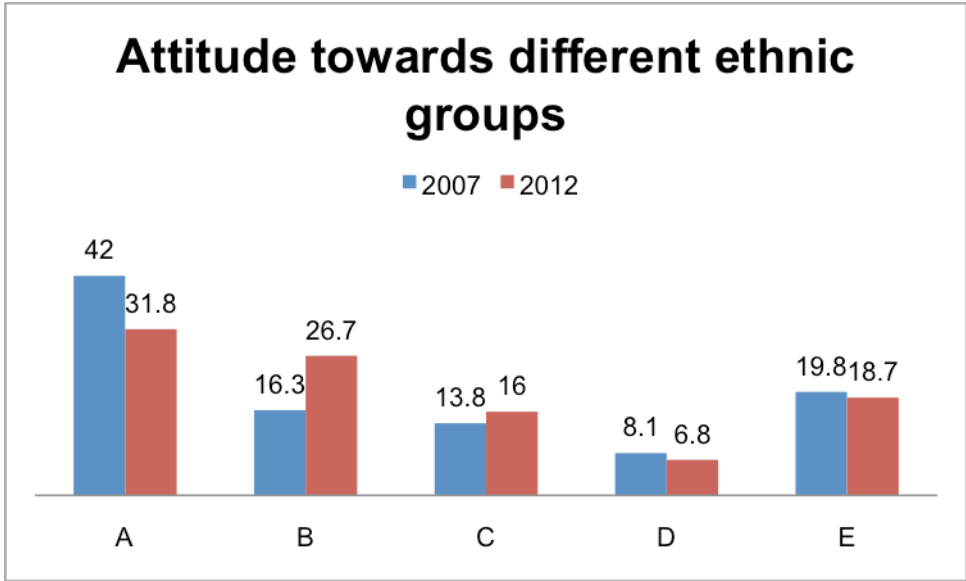
(Values are percentage values.)
A: I see myself closer to the side that wants every ethnic identity to fully adopt Turkish identity.
B: I see myself closer to the center that reconciles both Turkish identity and the cultural rights of ethnic groups.
C: I see myself closer to the side that wants the own languages and cultures of ethnic groups to be recognized.
D: I do not think there is such a polarization.
E: I don't know / No answer.
Source: (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012)
Respondents: Overall population

As for the issue of headscarf, about which the Islamic section is most sensitive among all the other identity rights and freedoms, the most critical datum is that the rate of people who object to headscarf ban has stabilized around three times the rate of people who support headscarf ban, between 1999 and 2009. On the other hand, the rate of people who support the ban has risen to 25% from 20% during this course of time (Religiosity in Turkey, 2010). This result indicates that Islamic life style has been internalized and is perceived as a fundamental right, on the one hand, but a core group of people reacting to Islamic identity has been formed in the secular section, on the other hand.

The questions regarding the restriction of rights and freedoms, used in the studies by Hakan Yılmaz in 2006 and 2012, are useful in reflecting the general change of norms in Turkey although data are not available to help us distinguish the Islamic section. It should be noted that the statement 'rights and conditions must not be restricted under any condition' receives a support of around 80-90 percent regardless of what the subject matter is, and the statement 'rights and freedoms may be totally restricted as necessary' receives a support of approximately 10%.

What's interesting is where the biggest change has occurred during the 6-year period. The rate of people who agree with the statement "everybody's right to freely express his/her ideas may be totally restricted as necessary" has declined to 5.8 percent from 9.5 percent during these six years. The rate of people who agree with the statement "The right of non-Muslim citizens to freely exercise and maintain their own religions and cultures must never be restricted" has increased to 86 percent from 82.6 percent, and the right of those who think that "this right may be restricted as necessary" has declined to 10.1 percent from 14 percent. On the other hand, the idea that "right to live freely in accordance with one's sexual orientation even though it might be different from that of the majority (e.g. homosexuality) must never be restricted" receives a support of only 38-39 percent in both studies. While the rate of people who think that "this right may be totally restricted as necessary" has declined slightly, it is still 54.4 percent as of 2012. In other words, while tolerance for "classical" religious and ethnic identities is high in Turkey, the attitude towards different sexual orientations brought along by modern life continues to be very conservative, which is not limited to the Islamic section only.

As for civic rights and freedoms, the rate of people who agree with the statement that political parties may be restricted as necessary has declined to 7 percent from 11 percent between 2006 and 2012. While the rate of those who think that individuals must be able to freely become members of labor unions and civil society organizations and labor freedom must not be restricted because of such memberships rose to 84.2 percent from 76.8 percent, the rate of those think that these freedoms may be restricted as necessary has declined to 9 percent from 16.6 percent. The rate of people who think that media freedom may be restricted has declined to 16 percent from 20 percent. Finally, while the rate of people who object to restriction of right to congregate and demonstrate rose to 79.7 percent from 67.5 percent, those who think that this right may be restricted as necessary declined to 14.3 percent from 27.2 percent (Yılmaz, *Conservatism in Turkey*, 2012).

Table 1

Can our rights be restricted?
A: Everyone should be able to freely express what he/she thinks
B: Non-Muslim citizens should be able to exercise and maintain their own languages and cultures
C: Everybody must be able to freely live his/her sexual preference that is different from that of the majority (such as homosexuality)
D: Political parties should be able to make their voice heard and compete freely under equal conditions
E: Everybody must be able to freely become members, and work for, associations, labor unions and similar non-governmental organizations
F: Newspapers and television channels should be able to operate freely without being subject to any censor
G: Everybody must be able to participate in meetings and demonstrations to express their problems

	It must never be restricted		It can be completely restricted		I don't know / No answer	
	2006	2012	2006	2012	2006	2012
A	89	91,2	9,5	5,8	1,6	3
B	82,6	86	14	10,1	3,4	3,9
C	38,1	39,1	57,7	54,4	4,2	6,5
D	86	88,2	11	7	3	4,8
E	76,8	84,2	16,6	9	6,6	6,8
F	77,2	78,8	20	16	2,8	5,2
G	67,5	79,7	27,2	14,3	5,3	6

(Values are percentage values.)

Source: (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012).

Respondents: Overall population

We should also add a finding regarding inheritance to these data. 94.5 percent of people with religious belief favor equal distribution of heritage between men and women. This rate goes down to 91 percent among those who define themselves as "religious" and to 86.9 percent among those defining themselves as 'devoutly religious' (Konda, *Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life Survey*, 2007).

In conclusion, it is possible to state that Turkey has, as a whole, recently started adapting to the institutional structure of modern life in terms of rights and freedoms, but is experiencing a big positive breakthrough in norms. While the Islamic section is more sensitive about religious differentiations due to the nature of its own identity, it still recognizes the rights of all other established congregations. As regards ownership of the modern institutions of a democratic order and functions expected from them, Islamic section can be said to be shifting towards a more liberal

conception together with the whole society. However, it should be noted that this outlook has emerged alongside a political tension that keeps the dichotomy of laicism/religiosity alive.

Freedom of Expression and its Restriction

In line with the rising norms in the field of rights and freedoms, the concept of freedom of expression receives a great support in general, and the restriction of this freedom is disapproved. For example, the statement "the freedom of individuals to express themselves as they wish must under no condition be restricted" is approved by 79.9 percent of people across Turkey, and disapproved by only 7.3 percent. However, when the question implies statements that contradict with the set of values of the majority, the rate of approval declines. The statement "As a society, we must not be required to tolerate the views that are totally contrary to the ideas of the majority" is approved by 57.1 percent and disapproved by only 19.8 percent. In other words, the rate of people who approve freedom of expression in principle declines by three quarters when such expressions are against the ideas of the majority. This demonstrates that the issue of freedom of expression is still viewed as an "ideal good", and is not above the ideological stances implied by real life (TESEV, *Religion State Society*, 2007).

Analyzing this issue gets even easier when a concrete and controversial matter is in question. When a question asked in the same survey is analyzed with all sub-groupings, the laicism/religiosity dichotomy becomes very clear.

The question is: Should it be conceived as an indispensable outcome of democracy and freedom of expression to continue publishing the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in a Danish newspaper despite all objections of the Islamic world? The answer options were: "Yes, such publications are an inevitable result of freedom of thinking and expression" or "such publications must be banned".

As may be expected, the rate of respondents deeming such publications normal rises in direct proportion to level of education and income. The highest rate is among the graduates of high school and college, with 20 percent, and among respondents with income of more than one billion TL (in today's figures, around 2,500 TL) with 24.3 percent. Overall, 15% of respondents see these publications as a consequence of freedom of expression, while 73 percent of respondents say that "such publications must be banned". As for regional analysis, the approval of such publications is highest in metropolitan cities (22.3%), declining by half in coastal regions (9.9%), and amounting to only 2.9 percent as average of other regions. The answer 'such publications must be banned' is supported by 66.2, 78.6, 86.9 percent, respectively. These data suggest that Turkish society converges to the western style of perception and judgment at points where it comes into contact with modernity, but is still very far away from that point as a whole society, and that exposure to modernity serves both an integration and differentiation function. However, it should be noted that these results relate to the religious domain and in particular a matter that is deemed sacred. If freedom of expression was tested in a concrete issue experienced in another field, the rate of those supporting a liberal attitude would form the majority, and would be around twice as much as the prohibitive attitude, as suggested by various studies.

In terms of identities, while the rate of support provided by individuals defining themselves as "secularist" and "in the middle" to the freedom of expression in this particular case was 23.5 percent, the support provided by the respondents defining themselves as "Islamist" was 7.9 percent. In terms of religiosity, while 36.1 percent of the non-religious respondents opted for the first answer, only 10.7 percent of the religious respondents opted for the first answer. Likewise, the rate of support among the respondents defining themselves as leftist is around three and a half times higher than the rate of support among those defining themselves as rightist (27.2 and 7.8 percent, respectively). When this question is asked to women, 21.1 percent of women not wearing headscarf and 5.8 percent of those wearing headscarf deem the publication of these cartoons as freedom of expression.

These answers suggest that the attitudes towards the freedom of expression are very much associated with identity and do not reflect a principled approach. On the other hand, in all categories, the rate of respondents disapproving such statements about Prophet Mohammed is much higher than the rate of approving respondents. This may be due to the presence of a cultural religiosity covering everybody in Turkish society, or may have possibly be an expression of the overall distrust of the West as this particular event has occurred in the West.

Looking from the perspective of political parties, we see that the greatest support for freedom of expression has come from the CHP voters, in line with the previous data (30.1%). 7.5 percent of AKP voters see these actions as a consequence of freedom of expression. Interestingly, the rate of support among the voters of DEHAP (representing Kurds at that time) was only 6.5 percent. In other words, the issue of freedom of expression concerning the religious domain does not seem to be correlated with ethnic identity.

In conclusion, it is not possible yet to state that there is a principled understanding of freedom of expression that is above identities. On the other hand, it should be underlined that the particular case addressed here is the most "extreme" case for Turkish society. Therefore, the rates here are probably reflecting the most "conservative" attitude possible as regards freedom of expression. It should also be noted that this survey was conducted at a time when the subject matter was intensively discussed and even democratic columnists were criticizing these cartoons. Many intellectuals from the secularist section stated that these cartoons could be viewed as a natural consequence of freedom of expression in a liberal system, but that the extent to which they serve democracy and culture of living together in a society involving diversity should be questioned. The evaluation of above answers within this intellectual context would be helpful in reaching a better conclusion.

Support for Democracy as a Political System

The extent to which democracy is adopted can be addressed at two levels: the ownership of norms viewed as the fundamentals of democracy on the one hand, and of the institutional structure of a democratic order on the other. The key subjects that may be raised here could be listed as free circulation of political ideas, separation of powers, freedom of press, freedom of political parties and military tutelage.

Overall, Turkish society is supporting democracy, but democracy has not been fully internalized and received ownership. Furthermore, this attitude is fed by identity-related and political conflicts within itself, and the issue of democracy is by some degree settled on the laicism/religiosity dichotomy.

While 54.7 percent of the society disagrees with the idea that national problems can be solved by military regime rather than elected governments, 26.8 percent supports this proposition. As for the issue of freedom of press, which has become more controversial due to ideological divides, the statement "newspapers must not be shut down even if they publish articles against national interests" is supported by 45.4 percent of the society, whereas 36 percent supports the idea of shutting down newspapers (TESEV, *Religion State Society*, 2007).

The way in which this hesitant attitude towards democracy reflects on different cultural identities is interesting. While another survey reveals a 34% support for military interventions when necessary, this rate was 44 percent among CHP voters and 49 percent among MHP voters (KONDA, *Polarization in Politics and Society*, 2010). On the other hand, 25 percent of AKP voters and 9 percent of BDP voters support this statement. The highest rate of support for the possibility of shutting down political parties is again among CHP and MHP voters (59% and 63%, respectively), whereas this rate is 42% for AKP voters and 9% for BDP voters. Kurdish community seems to have a clearer stance in this regard and looks ready to adopt the norms and institutions of democracy more than any other community. Considering that this is directly associated with the conditions of its existence, this support is not surprising. As for AKP, the 42 percent rate is very high within its own context, indicating that the voters of AKP are also part of the authoritarian political culture in Turkey. However, more determining for national politics is that AKP voters, who are mostly Islamist (although they include non-Islamic elements) are more pro-democratic than the CHP and MHP voters who are largely secularist. Nevertheless, this finding should be interpreted within certain limitations. As a matter of fact, the support given by AKP voters to the statement 'the country must be governed by democracy in any case and under any condition' is below the country average. The contradiction here is probably associated with the phrase 'in any case and under any condition', since the nationalist character of AKP voters is presently very strong and this phrase which implies an uncertainty could have been perceived as referring to extraordinary conditions where the country is under threat. In any case, we can state that the democracy tendency of Islamic section is tightly linked to the conditions limiting itself and that it will adopt democracy to the extent it will change these limiting conditions. The secular section seems to be ready to move away from democracy to the extent they feel unsafe about the possibility of democracy to create a threatening situation.

Perhaps we can better interpret the perception of democracy with the help of two different data sets. While the rate of those who say that they would abide by a law that conflicts with religious values is 26 percent, the rate of those who say that they would continue acting in line with religious principles is 67 percent (*Religiosity in Turkey*, 2010). This answer reflects both the devotion to religion and the understanding that laws have no linkage with democracy. Because the Islamic section has lived under an oppressive regime under the name of democracy to date, they have perceived laws as the dictates of the regime, not as choices made by the society. Furthermore, we can infer that the laws which disregard social life and the preferences of the religious groups could only find a formal field of application.

A second dataset concerns the change in the choice of "most important institution that must be preserved" between 2006 and 2012. While the rate of respondents opting for state as the most important institution declined to 15.5 percent from 18.8 percent, the rate of respondents opting for family rose to 50.4 percent from 45.6 percent. Interestingly, the rate of respondents opting for "nation" and religion" remained the same with 11 percent and 22 percent, respectively (Yılmaz, *Conservatism in Turkey*, 2012). It may be surprising that a society which states that they could even disobey laws when religious requirements are in question attaches smaller importance to the institution of religion than family, but the Islamic traditions in Turkey imply forming and maintaining a family as one of the main functions of religion. Therefore, the 'benefit' of religion is associated with the ability to produce an orderly social life. On the other hand, modernity makes family even more important and makes this aspect of religion more valuable. This is because in the chaotic atmosphere of modernity, it is necessary both to keep the family together and to adapt it to modernity, and protect it from the drawbacks of modernity at the same time. This finding explains how both secular and religious tendencies are strengthening at the same time, and why this has occurred thanks to the change in the perception of religiosity. Considering that this period also witnesses a move away from the statist perception, the shift of the religious sections towards democracy can combine with the process of creating a new understanding of religiosity.

In conclusion, it is possible to state that the support of Islamic section for democracy is based on pragmatic and vital reasons, rather than being based on principle. However, this makes democracy much more concrete for them. Democracy seems to be a desirable, but not an absolutely necessary, "carrier for the expansion of their "elbow room," for their inclusion in the social life and for their adaption to the modern world as long as it does not come in a military package.

Support for Sharia as a Legal System

Throughout history, Sharia has found a place in political terminology as a concept used in the sense of "justice". As long as Islam served as a basis for the legitimacy of Ottoman state and ensured public order, the country was already ruled within Sharia law, or was considered so. Therefore, this term entered the political terminology after the 18th century when the modernization process began, and it basically implied an objection to bad government. However, against the strict laicism of the Republic, 'Sharia' was increasingly restored to its religious meaning and implied an alternative to the system. Therefore, the recent demand for Sharia rule represents on the one hand the quest for justice against the unjust treatment of the Islamic segments of the society, and on the other hand a new order expressing the combination of 'right' life and 'right' state. It is possible to state that the first meaning has weakened and the second meaning has become more prominent following the rule of AKP. A critical detail worth noting here is that it is unacceptable to object to Sharia Law for a real Muslim, since, according to Islam, Sharia is the general truth that should cover all aspects of life .

The same question has been asked in a series of surveys conducted on this subject matter, and these surveys have been compiled under a single study (TESEV, *Religion State Society*, 2007). Findings of 6 surveys conducted between 1995 and 2006 to seek answers to the question "Would you like to have a religious state ruled by Sharia law be established in Turkey?" can be summarized as follows (as

percentages of no/yes answers): 1995 (61,8/19,9), 1996 (58,1/26,7), 1998 (59,9/19,8), 1999 (67,9/21,0), 2002 (74,1/16,4) and 2006 (76,2/8,9). Two separate periods can be clearly inferred from these answers. While the demand for state ruled by Sharia law was around 20-27 percent during the period 1995-1999, when military tutelage was at highest level, Islamic parties were being shut down and illegal oppression was imposed on headscarf, the rate of answer 'no' was between 60 and 68 percent. In 2002, when AKP came into power, the demand for Sharia rule declined remarkably, and by 2006, decreased by at least 50 percent relative to 10 years ago. On the other hand, the rate of respondents who clearly state that they do not want Sharia rule increased by around 20 percent. This is partly due to the fact that the Islamic section has faced a softer state following the AKP rule and that its representatives are governing that state. It should be noted, however, that the understanding of religiosity has also changed rapidly and the concept of 'Sharia' has become an ideal norm rather than being a regime that is applicable in the short term.

Therefore, it seems that the demand of Islamic section for Sharia rule in Turkey was basically a symbol developed against a state order that excluded them. To the extent that daily life became more relaxed and free, the demand for Sharia rule decreases, and the content of this concept restores to its own religious meaning.

Would you prefer a religious state ruled by sharia in Turkey?
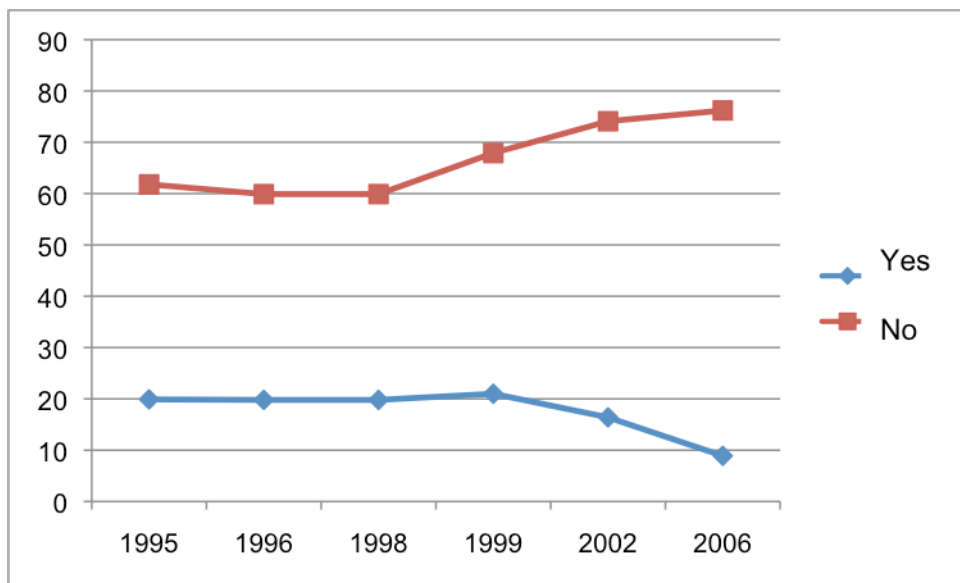
(Values are percentage values.)

Source: (TESEV, Religion, Society and Politics in Changing Turkey, 2006)

Respondents: Overall population

Religious Principles in the Constitution

Considering that Sharia rule would bring along an order based on religious principles, a desire to include those principles in the Constitution would be expected as well. However, no political party or group has expressed such a demand to date in Turkey. For instance, there is no demand for making

Fridays an official holiday. The rate of those who want the Islamic penalties imposed in the past in Islamic societies to be included in laws is less than 1 percent (TESEV, Religion, Society and Politics in Changing Turkey, 2006). On the other hand, there seems to be no study that has taken up the issue of including such religious rules in the Constitution. However, similar rates of answers would not be surprising.

An interesting discussion regarding Constitution took place on the occasion of the constitutional package brought to referendum by AKP government in 2010. The main subject of discussion was democracy, whereas religious subjects were not brought up at all. While 89 percent of AKP supporters viewed this package as a requirement of democracy, 86 percent of CHP supporters defined it as a step towards dictatorship (KONDA, Polarization and Politics in Society, 2010). However, even the secularist section did not argue that these constitutional amendments had a religious basis.

Religious principles are found to be meaningful by the Islamic section in Turkey due to their ability to regulate social life. The idea that these principles should not be included in the Constitution dates back to almost 200 years ago. For this reason, such requests only function as the material for ideal world conceptualizations of some devoutly religious circles, and are found unrealistic and unserious by the society in general.

Separation of Religion and State Institutions

The state tradition in Turkey continues carrying the heritage of Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, there is an institutional structure whereby the state defines and controls religion. On the other hand, there are many religious congregations which have emerged during the same historical process and maintain their own different understandings of religion as independent from the state. This requires approaching the issue from two angles: the function of Religious Affairs Administration, which is part of the State systematics, and the demands and preferences of religious congregations.

There seems to be a strong preference by the majority of the society for keeping the Religious Affairs Administration in the Constitution: 84.3% (TESEV, 2012). This may be due partly to the desire to avoid any further unnecessary social dispute. Another reason is the concerns of a vast majority, including those from the Islamic section, that a very chaotic social structure could emerge and the competition among the religious congregations could reach undesirable dimensions if the State withdraws from this area. As for the function of Religious Affairs Administration, only 15.9 percent of the society thinks that this institution should serve the Sunnis only. The remaining argue that this institution should serve all sects, and their religious representatives must have a place within the institution. 78.1 percent of people think that an institution independent from the State and Government must be created if the Religious Affairs Administration is not included in the Constitution. The rate of respondents agreeing with the statement "It must be completely removed, and each religious institution and sect must execute religious services with their own capacity" is 21.9% (TESEV, 2012). In other words, the society wants the Religious Affairs Administration to maintain its existence, to become independent and pluralize its services. The fact that this demand for pluralization is not politically voiced either by the Sunni or secular section implies that this demand has indeed remained as a norm only.

According to the same research, there is a strong support also for the independence of congregations from the state (72.3%). The rate of people concerned about this possibility is 14.3%, which probably reflects the secular section. More importantly, while the statement "The government must be able to intervene against pressures which every citizen may be exposed to by his/her group, cultural identity or congregation" is supported by 84.7% of people, only 5.2% objects to this statement (TESEV, 2012). It should be noted that this is a very interesting finding. For many years, the generally accepted assumption has been that particularly the religious congregations in Turkey inflicted a great pressure in individuals due to their strictly patriarchal structure and that the members of congregations assented to this. However, the preference mentioned above demonstrates that there is a very common desire among individuals in congregations for the protection of their personal rights by the state.

These findings imply that the actors in the Islamic section want to exist as independent from the state, but request state protection for both institutionally and individually, i.e. they agree to become a part of the general legal system.

Role of Religious Political Parties

Unlike what has been observed in the Islamic geography, although there have been political parties with religious sensitivities, there has never been a "religious" political party in Turkey. The parties created by the "National Vision" movement, which have been shut down and re-opened under new names many times, basically followed a nationalist and development-oriented path and advocated both political freedoms and liberation of Islamic life style in the social field. None of these parties made efforts for incorporation of religious rules into the legal system or making religious traditions into rules. However, they could not prevent the suspicions that they strove towards such an ideal.

After it was understood that the sharia threat was largely something fabricated by the state intelligence service, it does not make a sense to conduct a field study on this matter anymore. We have in hand a question that defines the subject matter on the basis of freedoms: "Do you think there should be political parties doing politics on the basis of religion in Turkish political system?". This question was asked twice, in 1999 and 2006, and the following answers were received: While 24.6 percent of respondents said 'yes', 60.6 percent said 'no' in 1999. In 2006, however, the rate of respondents who answer the question as 'yes' increased to 41.4 percent, and the respondents who said 'no' declined to 53.6 percent. It seems very meaningful that the rate of indecisive respondents has declined to 5.0 percent from 14.8 percent during these 7 years (TESEV, *Religion State Society*, 2006).

The reason of this change is certainly the rule of AKP governments. While this has radically reduced the rate of indecisive respondents and pushed people to take sides, it also seems to have paved the way for the understanding that religion-based political movements should also benefit from being present in the public area, which other ideologies have been benefiting. In other words, the shift here suggests a demand for equality, rather than domination of religion in politics. Therefore, this answer may be interpreted as both the start of the religious section's claiming rights and their rising self-confidence during recent years.

On the other hand, we can approach this subject from the opposite side and question what the society expects from the political parties. According to the findings from a questions asked in the same survey seeking to identify which factor played a role when voting for a political party, with multiple acceptable answers; the adoption of religious values by the party is deemed as a positive factor by 78.2 percent of respondents. However, it should also be noted that 84.2 percent of respondents have chosen the answer that the party must adopt secular republican values. The three statements which have received the highest rates of acceptance are beyond these two statements, and refer directly to issues of modern democratic life: political party must "effectively fight corruption" (92.6%), "protect human rights and freedoms" (91.5%) and "be believed to improve the economy" (90.8%).

In conclusion, because religious political parties do not have a historical background, the Islamic section wants that such parties "should be able to exist" rather than "must exist", but when practical politics is in question, their primary concern is economic success and establishment of rights, as expected from modern parties.

Use of Religious Symbols in Public Area

Due to her peculiar history, the use of religious symbols in public area has become an "issue" after the proclamation of republic. While religious symbols of any religion and sect could be used in public area under certain rules during the Ottoman times, the new regime prohibited all of them by law and even death penalty was imposed for those who disobeyed this rule. After the 1980 coup, the issue focused totally on headscarf. While the state was willing to overlook the symbols of other religions, those people wearing headscarf were deprived of their education and employment rights. Therefore, the discussions have recently concentrated basically on the extent to which women wearing headscarf can be free in social and public areas and which rights they can exercise.

As a general finding, these rights and freedoms have received growing acceptance during the last two decades, and at present roughly 75 percent of the society is against the obstacles before women wearing headscarf. This support covers not only the girls in primary and secondary schools, but also women working as judge, prosecutor and teacher (KONDA, *Polarization in Politics and Society*, 2010).

A study which allows for a comparison between 2003 and 2007 reveals that the rate of respondents who think that female civil servants must not wear headscarf was 37.4 percent in 2003, but this rate has declined to 19.4 by 2007 (Konda, *Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life*, 2007). On the other hand, this radical change does not conceal the fact that smaller but more conservative groups have formed on both of the secular and Islamic wings of the society. For instance, 10 percent of women wearing headscarf think that all female civil servants must wear headscarf, and thus the countrywide rate comes about as 5.8 percent. But 50 percent of the women wearing headscarf think that "every civil servant must be able to wear headscarf if she wishes so". A conclusion of the survey is that as religiosity increases, the likelihood headscarf being seen as a "symbol" decreases. However, it should be noted that 10 percent of religious people see headscarf as a symbol as well. On the other end, there is a secular core group which is categorically against headscarf. However, it is possible to state that this group is rapidly shrinking, and falling below 10 percent. Still, 33.9 percent of women who do not wear headscarf see headscarf as a symbol of conflict with laicism.

What do you think about civil servants wearing a veil?

	2003	2007
None of them must wear veil.	37,4	19,4
They must be allowed to wear veil as they wish.	62,6	68,9
All of them must wear veil.	-	5,8
No opinion.	-	5,9

(Values are percentage values.)

Source: (Konda, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life, 2007)

Respondents: Overall population

In conclusion, the use of religious symbols in public area is decreasingly seen as a social and cultural issue. However, it should be emphasized that explicit or implicit hurdles could still not be overcome particularly in labor life. In this context, it is observed that even in the companies owned by bosses from the Islamic section, women wearing headscarf can usually find jobs in lower levels and those who are university graduates face difficulties in finding a job.

Support for Religious Education at Schools

One of the most important undertakings of the republican regime has been the restriction, and almost prohibition, of religious education while "secularizing" the school system. Therefore, the most important social demand of Islamic section after headscarf has been the provision of religious education to children, and this demand was tried to be met by opening Quran teaching courses and *Imam-Hatip* Schools. Together with AKP governments, while religious education had the opportunity to diversify, this issue could still not be resolved.

When the respondents were asked where they wanted their children to receive religious education, 44.2 percent answered "within family", 26.1 percent "at Quran teaching courses", 19.7 percent "at school" and 5.9 percent at "*Imam Hatip* Schools". Assuming that the vast majority of respondents who answered "within family" are from the secularist section, it becomes apparent that the Islamic section needs public support for religious education. When the respondents were asked where they wanted to send their daughters for summer camps, 46.6 percent preferred "Quran teaching courses", and 24.7 percent preferred foreign language courses. When the same question was asked for boys, the rates were 39.3 percent and 21.8 percent, respectively (Konda, *Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life*, 2007). These responses demonstrate how strong the demand for correct and reliable religious education for children is in the Islamic section. Obviously, religious education is not a priority for the secularist section, which form roughly one third of the society, and the demand for Quran courses can be assumed to be coming totally from the Islamic section.

On the other hand, in a way that makes us think that Quran courses are seen as an alternative emerging from necessity, the idea that religious education must essentially be provided at schools

receives a very high support. The rate of respondents who want compulsory religion classes in public schools is 82.1 percent, which shows that some of the secularists are also open to religious education. However, the demand for a monolithic religious education is weak. While 37.8 percent of respondents say "no" to teaching other religions besides Islam in religion classes, 59.6 percent supports this idea. Likewise, while 61.5 percent supports teaching Secularism in religion classes, 33.9 percent opposes to it, which suggests that almost half of the Sunnis support the teaching of Secularism (TESEV, *Religion State Society*, 2006).

Another survey addressing the position and contents of religion courses in the curriculum reveals that while 50.1 percent of respondents want the 'Religious Culture and Morality' course to be compulsory, 46.3 percent wants it to be optional, and 3.6 percent thinks that it must be removed from curriculum. 23.1 percent of respondents think that only Sunni Islam must be taught in these courses, whereas the rest of respondents think that all sects and faiths, as well as Islam, must be taught in these courses (TESEV, 2012). It is observed that there has been a significant shift towards pluralist perspective between 2007 and 2012, and that the rate of those who want only Sunni Islam be taught has declined to 23 percent from 38 percent.

In reply to the question 'Do you think evolution theory should be taught to students beginning with upper secondary education, or should only creationism be taught, or should both of them be taught together?', 11.3 percent said 'evolution theory should be taught'; 41.5 percent said 'only creationism should be taught' and 43 percent said 'both of them should be taught together'. The religious perspective maintains its weight; even in the secularist section, the respondents who want only evolution theory to be taught remain in minority and the option of teaching both of them together becomes more prominent. Even if we assume that the respondents who think that only creationism should be taught are all from the Islamic section, we see that this at least one third of section which form two thirds of the society favor the teaching of both theories together.

In conclusion, we observe a hybridization in the demand for acquiring religious information. This demand is still very strong in the Islamic section and they want this education to be provided by the state. However, it is evident that some of the secularists also have such a demand. On the other hand, there is a trend that this education should be more pluralistic and inclusive. It is possible to state that the Islamic section has been shifting towards a more pluralistic perspective in recent years, whereas there is also a softening in the perception of religion in the secularist section, which can serve a common ground for living the religion.

Funding of Religious Institutions and Government Supervision

Except for the Religious Affairs Administration, most of the religious formations in Turkey are used to survive independently from the state historically, and have been funded directly by individual donations and foundations. While there is a common belief that these formations should be subject to routine supervision by the state, it is also considered commonly that strict secularist state policy would be unjust and would be used as an instrument of pressure to push religious formations into difficulty intentionally, and even to shut them down. As a consequence, religious institutions have tried to position themselves as far possible as from the state and made efforts not to establish any relations with the state. Therefore, religious congregations have not been requesting any religious

service from the state in Turkey historically. However, after AKP came to power, it is noteworthy that the Islamic section tends to embrace the state more, and thus have expectations from the state.

As regards the organization of religious conferences and ceremonies by municipalities on occasion of the "holy birth week", while 55.1 percent of respondents with "religious belief" approve such events, 30.9 percent disapproves them. In the "religious" category, 78.3 percent of respondents approve these events, while 11.3 percent disapproves them. Interestingly, in the "devoutly religious" category, the rate of approval is 78.1 percent, but the rate of disapproval remains at 7 percent. (KONDA, *Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life*, 2007).

This change in the Islamic section can be interpreted as a kind of peace-making with the state. Besides the fact that the visibility of religiosity in public area has become legitimate, a pluralistic understanding of democracy in the Islamic section may also have been influential in this shift in thinking. After so many years during which laicism has prevented the visibility of religiosity, the religious section may be wishing to guarantee their visibility through official approval as well.

b) Family, Women, Sexuality

Role of Women in the Society, Economy and at Home

The issue of women's role in the society is one of the most important areas of tension and change generated by modernity in Turkey, where traditions fed by patriarchal mentality and religion are very strong. Besides the nature of husband/wife relationship, whether women can appear in public areas and when they do so, the areas in which their activities receive approval constitute a basic indicator. In this context, the secularist/religious dichotomy may be assumed to play an active role. But, besides this, it is also observed that different life styles are getting increasingly more determining in the understanding of women and their role. Together with increased welfare, urbanization and globalization, different life styles are emerging in every section of society, a hybridization and convergence is occurring, and thus the role of women is moving outside of religious context.

Beginning with conservatism in women/men relations, the rate of respondents who do not find themselves conservative at all has declined from 21.1 percent to 15.7 percent, and the rate of those who find themselves totally conservative declined from 35.2 percent to 30.0 percent between 2006 and 2012 (Yılmaz, *Conservatism in Turkey*, 2012). On the other hand, the rate of those who find themselves as 'somewhat conservative' increased to 49.9 percent from 39.5 percent. These data reveal that life styles have pluralized to prevent the secularist/religious polarization, and have produced a culturally hybrid 'middle class'. During the same period, the rate of support for the idea that a woman wearing headscarf can be a modern woman having equal rights with men has increased to 88.3 percent from 84.5 percent. The proposition that "all women, regardless of whether they wear headscarf or not, are exposed to pressure and oppressed by men" receives 64.5 percent support in 2006 and 71 percent in 2012. On the other hand, when taken as independent from faith, 87 percent of respondents think that women must have the same rights with men in politics, labor and family life, and 81 percent of respondents think that women can be as successful as men in all jobs.

Conservatism in Relations Between Women and Men
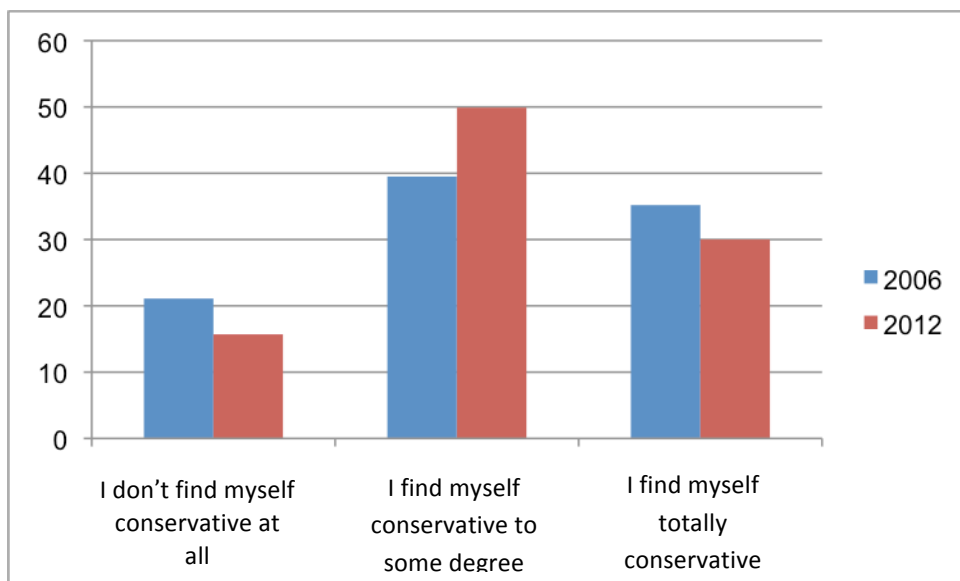
Source: (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012)
Respondents: Overall population

When we get directly into religious area, we can more clearly see the direction of change. 37.5 percent of respondents agree with the statement that every woman who defines herself as Muslim must wear headscarf, whereas 60.8 percent disagree with this statement. The rate of respondents who think that "Women who do not wear headscarf cannot be regarded as Muslim" is only 16 percent, whereas the rate of respondents who oppose to this statement is 81.8 percent. The comparison of 2006-2012 reveals that there has been a positive change towards tolerance in both answers. As regards the marriage institution, 89.3 percent of respondents with "religious belief", 86.7 percent of "religious" respondents and 81.2 percent of "devoutly religious" respondents opposed to the statement that "a man with the financial means to do so can marry a second wife," and even among the devoutly religious respondents, the rate of approval has been 14.2 percent. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that the attitudes of religious people towards religion have not changed. The rate of approval for allowing women to participate in Friday praying and funeral praying together with men has been 18.0 percent among respondents with religious belief, 11.6 percent among religious respondents and 8.6 percent among devoutly religious respondents. The rate of disapproval is 68.1 percent, 79.4 percent and 82.4 percent, respectively. In other words, while a flexibility is not observed about the role of women in the religious area, perceptions about the position and role of women in social are changing.

Table 2

Women's Rights

A: A woman who wears a veil can also be a modern woman with equal right with men.

B: Women and men must have equal rights in politics, in labor life, in the society and in family life.

C: Women can successfully work in all jobs men do.

D: Every woman who calls herself a Muslim must wear veil.

E: Women who do not wear veil cannot be considered Muslim.

	I agree		I disagree		No answer	
	2006	2012	2006	2012	2006	2012
A	84,5	88,3	14,6	9,9	0,9	1,8
B	86,8	87,6	11,8	9,9	1,4	2,5
C	79,1	82,3	19,8	16,1	1,1	1,6
D	38,8	37,5	60	60,8	1,2	1,7
E	18,9	16	79,3	81,8	1,8	2,2

(Values are percentage values)

Source: (Yılmaz, Conservatism in Turkey, 2012)

Respondents: Overall population

As regards the concept of decency (honor), in which religion and tradition are closely linked, even 10.1 percent of women who do not wear headscarf said "yes" to the question whether women wearing headscarf are more decent, whereas 51.7 percent of women wearing headscarf replied this question as "no". On the other hand, one third of women wearing headscarf state that women wearing headscarf are more decent. When the same question is asked to men who want their wives or relatives to wear headscarf, a higher rate of respondents stated that wearing a headscarf had nothing to do with decency (46.2 percent vs. 39.5 percent). The answers to this question in Turkey in general reveal that the rate of respondents who do not agree with the idea that women wearing headscarf are more decent than others is three times more than those who agree (65.8 percent vs. 22.2 percent).

However, when the subject matter shifts more towards tradition, the imaginary equality of women with men weakens. The rate of respondents who think that the decency of a woman is more important than anything seems to be fixed around 80 percent on average. 70 percent of respondents think that the primary duty of married women is to serve and support their husbands, and there has been a very little change in this rate in time. On the other hand, the statement "If a working woman disrupts household chores, childcare and service for husband due to her job, then she must stop working and become a housewife" received a support of 65.3 percent and 61 percent in 2006 and 2012, respectively. While the support for the statement "a man may exert violence on his wife as he deems necessary" declined to 20.1 percent from 23.3 percent during the same period, the rate of disapproval increased to 78.2 percent from 75.4 percent.

These answers imply that norms in Turkish society shift towards an egalitarian and liberal understanding implied by modernization. However, these field studies still reveal indications that there is still a large gap when compared with reality. For example, the rate of women who state that they cannot go out with short-sleeved shirt is 69 percent (KONDA, *Women's Awareness of Human*

Rights and Behaviors Survey). 52 percent of women have married through arranged marriage, and 8 percent have married without consent (Konda, *Life Styles Survey, 2008*). Moreover, 69 percent of women are still outside the labor force according to 2009 data of Turkish Statistics Institute.

On the other hand, when asked about whether women should work or not, 61.7 percent of respondents express support for women's participation in the labor force, while 26.2 think that "it depends on circumstances". 80 percent of women not wearing headscarf and 50 percent of women wearing headscarf express support for women's participation in the labor force. When asked about whether women should make the decision to work themselves, 40.3 percent of the society agrees to this, while 26.0 percent disagrees. 59.8 percent of women not wearing headscarf and 31 percent of women wearing headscarf think that the decision to work must be taken by the women themselves.

As for the position and role of women in politics, 84 percent of women and 62 percent of men think that women must take a greater role in decision making mechanisms than they do today. 56 percent of respondents think that Turkey would become a better society if the number of female politicians increased. When the question is asked in reverse mode, 71 percent of respondents disagree with the statement "there is no need for women to take a greater role in politics". When the subject matter is further detailed, the statement "even if women enter politics, they cannot have an idea about areas like economy, finance, foreign policy and national security" has been disapproved by 65 percent of respondents, but approved by 19 percent. More critically, the answers to the question "Would you support a woman from your family (wife, daughter, mother) to enter politics and become a candidate for mayor or MP position" are as follows: "I would support" 69.8% – "She should decide herself" 10.8% - "I would not support" 13.1% - "I would not allow" 6.3% (KONDA, *Representation of Women in Politics Survey*, 2011)

To sum up, it is understood that varying degrees of mental evolution is taking place as regards the role of women in various fields. It is observed that there is a convergence towards modern norms as regards the role of women, and the presence of women in labor life and politics is receiving approval. However, when this function conflicts with the role of women at home, the society gets closer to traditions and men become more conservative. Even if the secularist/religious dichotomy among women is valid, the majority of even women wearing headscarf support the increased role of women in public area. In line with this attitude, the organic tie between headscarf and decency is breaking, and an expanding consensus is developing on the incorrectness of practices like polygamous marriage and domestic violence. Hybridization and emergence of a middle class may imply the emergence of a new social category which cannot be categorized as merely secularist or religious. It is possible to state that a new social perspective that wants to respond to the needs of public area, seek gender equality, support liberal norms regarding the role and function of women; but still imagines women essentially in the house and wants to maintain the norms of conservative religiosity is emerging.

c) Group Affiliations, Individualism, Tolerance

Tolerance for Other Life Styles

As a consequence of being a society dominated by congregations, the individuals in Turkey were living their entire lives within the social, cultural and economic boundaries of their own congregation, and did not have to establish relations with members of other congregations, until recently. This is changing today, but still the perceptions about other life styles continue to be fed by symbols rather than direct relations and can possibly strengthen the secularist/religious and Secularist/Sunni alienation.

The idea that inter-religion relations involve tensions and even conflicts is approved by 45 percent and disapproved by 30 percent of respondents. As for international comparison, we see that Turkey is in the same group with Catholic Southern Europe and Asian countries. In the European countries with Protestant populations, the idea that religion leads to conflict rather than peace is more commonly accepted. However, 39 percent of the society in Turkey thinks that religiosity is tolerant, and 37 percent thinks it is intolerant. Looking at the similar international data, Turkey only resembles the Asian country of Philippines, the majority of whose population is Catholic. The rest of the world, including the Catholic countries in Europe, thinks that tolerance decreases as religiosity increases (Çarkoğlu, Religiosity in Turkey, 2010)

According to the same research, a majority of the society in Turkey, with 89 percent, thinks that other religions must also be tolerated. However, when the respondents are asked whether they would accept someone with a different religious belief and perspective to become a member from the list of the political party they consider voting for, only half of the respondents who responded positively to the previous question accepted this (47%). When asked about whether someone with a different religious belief and perspective should be allowed to print and publish books or disclose his/her views, the rate of respondents who accept this is in the range of 35-38 percent. In other words, Turkish society which seems very tolerant when they are asked about abstract norms starts thinking that other persons and views from other congregations may become a threat for themselves when they are asked about concrete facts.

One of the most evident concrete tension issues is the rituals of Ramadan and alcoholic drinks. 81 percent of the society thinks that restaurants may be open during Ramadan month, but this rate declines to 27 percent when the question includes restaurants where alcoholic drinks are served. 13.6 percent of the society thinks that all restaurants must be closed during Ramadan month. However, when the question includes 'restaurants where alcoholic drinks are served' 67.6 percent of the society thinks that they must be closed (Konda, *Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life*, 2007). It is understood that while Muslims think that it is natural that the restaurants should be open during Ramadan, they perceive the issue of alcoholic drinks as a violation of their area of belief.

The issue of abortion may also be taken up in this context. Until recently, the issue of abortion has

been seen as a part of the life style of secularist section, and was disapproved and rejected by the Islamic section. However, the fact that abortion has become more and more common in this section reminds us that the issue is not that simple. While 50.2 percent of the respondents with "religious belief" says 'no' to the statement "In case of an undesired pregnancy, abortion should not be done and the woman must give birth to the baby", this rate is 36.0 percent among the religious respondents and 28.6 percent even among the "devoutly religious" respondents. On the other hand, the rates of respondents who support this statement are 40.2 percent, 52.7 percent and 61.2 percent, respectively. As regards the issue of "shaking hands with women" which culturally divides the Islamic section from the secularist section, the approach of Islamic sections seems to be very complicated. The rates of disapproval for men shaking hands with women are 20.3 percent among respondents with religious belief, 40.9 percent among religious respondents and 48.5 percent among devoutly religious respondents. On the other hand, the rates of approval for shaking hands with women are 74.9 percent, 53.6 percent and 46.7 percent, respectively. While one third of religious and devoutly religious people in the Islamic section support abortion, the majority approves men shaking hand with women. In the group of people with religious belief, representing the expanding group of 'hybrids' and a vast majority of the secularists, the rates are clearly in favor of abortion and shaking hands with women. Meanwhile, the fact that the rates among people with religious belief are relatively closer to the rates among other people as regards the issue of abortion implies that this issue is more of a "women's issue" than a question of religious belief. Considering that there is no gender distinction in all these data and the likelihood of men to be more conservative about these matters, it is possible to infer that women of the Islamic section are much closer to modern life style than is considered.

In conclusion, we can say that the attitude towards different life styles is still not exactly compliant with the requirements of co-existence. Every congregation views others from its own perspective, accepts their existence and rights normatively, but is bothered when other life styles come into closer contact with its own. On the other hand, it is observed that the Islamic section is undergoing this adaptation very rapidly, opening the doors to obscure relationship styles, but does not like the practices that are clearly contrary to its beliefs. The women issue may be a fault line that can break this shell. With the influence of Islamic women's movement during the last decade, today the religious section is getting closer to adopting the equal position of women, which also leads them to adapt to procedures of modern life style.

Interaction with Different Life Styles at Home, at Work and in Social Life

It is obvious that interaction with different lifestyles is increasing more and more in Turkey, and adaptation to this is relatively very quick particularly in the field of economy. However, it should be noted that the cultural differentiation caused by congregationalism could still not be overcome in preferences like neighborhood and marriage relations. Turkish people continue preferring to live in the same place where people similar to them live, interact only with them and not to include others in their families. One of the basic reasons for this is perhaps a clear differentiation in the field of religious belief, since religious values affect social life.

For example, two thirds of the society thinks that life is providential; around 70 percent thinks that one gives the meaning to life himself/herself, and 92 percent thinks that this meaning is strengthened with the existence of God. In these respects, Turkish society is positioned closer to countries with significant Catholic populations, such as Chile, Philippines and Portugal, and countries where religion has started to gain strength again, such as Orthodox Russia and Catholic Slovakia. Meanwhile, although 57.5 percent of people believe that there is only one true religion, 32.3 percent believes that basic truths may be present in many religions. 6.2 percent believes that religious doctrines involve very little truth. When we make an international comparison, the rate of 57.5 percent is higher than the rates in all western countries, and in none of these countries, the argument that there is only one true religion receives more than 50 percent support. In line with this, there is a common thinking in Turkey that good friendships would be established with persons met during the fulfillment of religious obligations. This finding refers not only to a spiritual phenomenon, but also to a life style shaped around social solidarity. In relation to this, we could also add that the Islamic section in Turkey approach very positively to the Muslims (90 percent), with some tolerance to Christians (29.2 percent), and less positively to the relatively less known religions such as Buddhists (18.7 percent), Hindus (19.4 percent) and to the Jews (21.9 percent). And even smaller minority is tolerant to those who do not believe in any religion (13.7 percent) (Çarkoğlu, Religiosity in Turkey Report, 2010).

This background may turn the concept of "alien" to a threat at the global level and creates two types of conservatism. One of them is the feeling of relying more on religion to assure self-security, and the other is keeping the aliens away to the extent possible and blocking them if possible. As a matter of fact, while the sentence "an ideal Muslim society must take the era of bliss[1] as a model" receives 51.4 percent acceptance, the sentence "the primary duty of Muslims is to ensure dominance of an Islamic life style" receives 55.5 percent acceptance. The rates of opposition are 20.2 percent and 24.1 percent, respectively. Furthermore, the rate of approval for prohibition of missionary activities by religions other than Islam is 58.6 percent, and the rate of approval for keeping the Halki Seminary closed is 48.9 percent (the rate of those who want it to be opened is 26.6 percent). As a typical indicator of the worldview, the opinion about Jews may reveal the nature of threat perception regarding the "Jews". 54.8 percent of the society believes that the Jews manage the world economy, and 52.9 percent believes that the influential circles in Turkey serve the Jews. On the other hand, these responses could be due partly to the worldwide skepticism about the Jews and the relationships of Turkish Armed Forces with Israel for many years, outside the supervision of governments. (TESEV, *Religion State Society*, 2006).

The impulse to feel uneasy about aliens and to stay away from them seems to have caused a relative attitude to be taken against concrete situations of social life. Accordingly, there is not much objection to neighbors who are "different" from oneself, but, if possible, a preference to avoid such a possibility is expressed. 75 percent of the society states that they would not object to a neighbor from a different sect, 71 percent to a Kurdish neighbor, 60 percent to a Jewish neighbor, 57 percent to an Armenian neighbor, and 51 percent to neighbors without any religious belief. The only option where the rate of approval declines below 50 percent is the possibility of a homosexual couple, in which case the rate of respondents who state that they would not object to a homosexual couple as neighbor is 33 percent. A more detailed question asked in 1999 and 2006 reveals that there is a very

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[1] In the Islamic tradition, Muhammad's lifetime is referred to as "the era of bliss."

interesting ideological shift in the society. The rate of respondents who prefer a religious Muslim tenant has declined from 40.2 percent to 30.2 percent, and the rate of respondents who prefer a religious Muslim landlord has declined from 37.1 percent to 31.1 percent. Likewise, the rate of respondents who say "if there were two groceries selling goods at the same price, I would prefer the Muslim one" has declined from 39 percent to 32.6 percent during the same period. However, it is interesting that the rate of indecisive respondents has increased, instead of the opposite view (for three questions, from 5.9 percent to 17.6 percent, from 6.6 percent to 16.8 percent and from 9.5 percent to 16.8 percent, respectively). In other words, the more problematic section of Turkish society as regards tolerance has made a move towards greater tolerance, but could still not come to a point of fully adopting tolerance. On the other hand, it should be noted that the rate of answers representing the tolerance side has been above 50 percent in all these questions.

Table 3

Interaction with other life styles
A: If I had a flat for rent, I would prefer a prayerful Muslim tenant.
B: If I were to look for a flat for rent, I would prefer somewhere with prayerful Muslim neighbors.
C: If there were two groceries selling a product at the same price in my neighborhood, I would prefer shopping at the one known to be religious.

	I disagree		Indecisive		I agree		No answer	
	1999	2006	1999	2006	1999	2006	1999	2006
A	40,2	30,2	5,9	17,6	51,9	50,9	1,9	1,3
B	37,1	32,1	6,6	16,8	54,3	50	2	1,1
C	39	32,6	9,5	16,8	49,3	49,6	2,2	1

Values are percentage values.

Source: (TESEV, Religion, Society and Politics in Changing Turkey, 2006) Respondents: Overall population

As for the questions that relate directly to religiosity, a similar shift like the above-mentioned one is observed, where the rate of indecisives is rising and the congregational approach is losing. While the rate of respondents who agree with the statement 'It is important that one's friends be religious Muslim' declined from 61.1 percent to 50.5 percent between 1999 and 2006, the rate of respondents who agree with the statement 'a religious person is more reliable and honest than a non-religious person in commercial life' declined to 42.8 percent from 48.8 percent; whereas indecisives increased from 6.4 percent to 19.2 percent and from 10.8 percent to 20.1 percent, respectively.

One of the most striking results was obtained from opinions regarding the statement "I believe there can be good people among the believers of other religions". While 89.2 percent of the society expressed that they did not agree with this statement in 1999, 4.7 percent expressed that they agreed, and 3.0 percent expressed that they were indecisive. This answer suggests that the issue is beyond the secularist/religious dichotomy and a significant share of the secularist section approaches the aliens from the perspective of Muslim identity, and that they categorize aliens on the basis of religion even if they are not religious themselves. By 2006, however, it is observed that an absolutely weak but relatively large shift has occurred and that a new trend has started. According to

results in 2006, the rate of people who think that there can be good people among the believers of other religions increased to 12.4 percent, and the rate of indecisives rose to 14.2 percent. In other words, the rate of people who do not take a strict position increased by 3.5 times during these seven years.

In order to analyze how the society approaches marriage with 'aliens', we can look at the rates of approval for the statement "I would object to my son/daughter's marriage with someone from a different sect or religion". For daughters, 75.5 percent of the society objected to such marriage in 1999, but this rate declined to 69.8 percent by 2006. For sons, the rates are 70.7 percent and 66.6 percent, respectively. Therefore, it is evident that the issue of marriage with aliens is much more important than gender difference. On the other hand, for the possibility of 'marriage with someone from another sect of Islam' (both sons and daughters), 41.7 percent objected and 46.1 percent approved in 1999. These rates were 50.5 percent and 37.6 percent in 2006, respectively. In other words, it is observed that this section has sharpened the lines of their own identity against other sects of Islam. This may be due partly to the self-confidence given by AKP governments to Sunni Muslims. Another reason could be that the government had tackled possible military coup attempts during the subject period, and the perception that Secularists, as the first sect that comes to mind when one talks about a different sect, stood on the side of the military (TESEV, *Religion, State, Society,* 2006).

Before taking this comparison to present day, it would be useful to have a look at how the Islamic section approached to the issue of marriage in 2007. 85.6 percent of the society in general thinks that both religious and legal marriages are necessary. 10.1 percent thinks that only legal marriage is a must, while only 1.4 percent sees only religious marriage as absolutely necessary. While divorce is perceived as 'normal' by 73.8 percent of the society, this rate is 88 percent among women not wearing headscarf and 65 percent among those who wear headscarf. The rate of people who think divorce is 'not normal' is 9 percent among those who do not wear headscarf but 30 percent among those with headscarf (KONDA, *Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life*, 2007). Although a clear difference is observed between the secularist and religious sections, it is observed that the modern institution of marriage has fully settled, and even among the women wearing headscarf, the rate of those who think divorce is normal is twice as much as the rate of those who think the opposite.

We can see the direction of change more clearly by looking at the conservatism data obtained during the period 2006-2012 (Yılmaz, *Conservatism in Turkey*, 2012). The answers to the question as to whether they are bothered by people not praying or not living in accordance with religious rules are as follows (first figure is for 2006, and second for 2012): bothered by people not fasting during Ramadan, 33.3 percent and 25.4 percent; bothered by people not praying, 26.4 percent and 18.6 percent; bothered by women not wearing headscarf, 21.9 percent and 14.1 percent. The above figures suggest that rates are below 50 percent in cases of religious areas, and there is a trend towards tolerance. On the other hand, the rates of people bothered by homosexuals declined from 728 percent to 68.2 percent, the rates of people bothered by couples living in the same house before marriage from 60.9 percent to 56.7 percent. Thus, the rate of people bothered when sexuality is involved is above 50 percent.

According to the same survey, it is understood that there is a more tolerant approach to individual life. The rate of people bothered by men with earrings has declined from 52.8 percent to 41.9

percent (although this is thought to be associated with sexuality); and the rate of people bothered by immodestly dressed women declined from 52.0 percent to 34.6 percent. The issue of flirting young people creates some unease in 40 percent of the population (and this rate seems to stay constant over time), whereas 60 percent of the society considers its normal. However, the issue of alcoholic drinks still has a negative symbolic function. Although the rate of people who state that they are bothered by people drinking alcoholic drinks has decreased, it is still above 50 percent (from 64.4 percent in 1999 to 52.2 percent in 2012). The way in which single women are perceived can be taken up to demonstrate that modernization has entered the society via women and have changed men as well. The rate of people bothered by women living in a house alone declined from 18.0 percent to 15.7 percent between 2006 and 2012, and the rate of people bothered by divorced women declined from 15.3 percent to 11.2 percent. Considering the other responses, these two rates are very low. However, it should be noted that the softening impact caused by the protective social structure could have played a role in the data regarding women.

In conclusion, it is understood that Turkish society has a tendency towards integration as regards interaction with different life styles, but Muslim identity still plays a significant role in preferences and that this is not something limited to the Islamic section only. While taking shelter in the identity still continues to be an impulse against feeling unsecure in the global context, it is evident that the tendency towards adaptation is dominant as far as modern institutions and daily life are concerned. While the most challenging issue for the society is sexuality in this regard, it is possible to note a very radical transformation towards greater freedom of women and that this transformation has been largely internalized. A particular note should be made of Secularism, since this is the only "regressing" indicator as regards tolerance and could serve as a warning for the problems Turkey may face in the near future.

d) Opinions about Market Economy, Class Differences and Western World

Religion versus Business Life and Wealth

The most important extensions of the sociological change Islamic section has undergone during the last two decades have been in the understanding of urbanization, in the use of leisure time, and new trends and institutionalization brought about by business life. The religious section which traditionally formed the lower-middle classes and consisted of small tradesmen, villagers and workers have increasingly made their mark on Turkish economy as capital holders and white-collar employees. On the other hand, a life style that implies wealth accumulation and extravagance was a controversial issue in Islam. Furthermore, this section was not close to the requirements of modern economic life to the extent they remained within their own congregation. Thus, a need for rapid adaptation came about.

As a matter of fact, the available data as to how decisions about business life are taken in Islamic section reveal that a way is sought between the requirements of modernity and congregational requirements. When the respondents were asked "If you were to start a business and you did not have sufficient experience and fund for this, what sort of a partner would you like to work with?", the highest rated quality is "honesty" with 61.5 percent. It is followed by "someone with business

experience" with 13.3 percent, "someone educated" with 11.0 percent and "someone religious" with 9.0 percent. When the question is asked in a more flexible way, i.e. "With which of the following would you like to work in business life?", 37.9 percent of responses was 'someone with a worldview similar to mine', 33.7 percent was "someone from where I was born and grew up", and 25.0 percent "someone religious". Therefore, it is still important to share the same religion and is not easy to give up the congregational security, but the requirements of business life are known and probably there is a shift towards that direction.

The 56.5 percent of respondents think that wealth is something that can be achieved by someone's own efforts, 36.4 percent think that it is God's gift. More critically, 63.1 percent of responses to the question 'What must be done to become rich?' is "to work hard". It is followed by "to be entrepreneurial" with 18.9 percent, and "to be religious" with only 7.6 percent. More interestingly, when the respondents are asked whether one's social contacts are important to become rich, 50.3 percent think that they are important and 48.1 percent thinks that they are not important. In a country like Turkey where the capitalist class has flourished with the help of the state for decades and where wealth depends on economic privileges, the increase in the rate of people who think that social contacts are not essential for wealth may be due to the self-confidence in the Islamic section and the fact that this section is coming from the periphery as well as the structural reforms undertaken in the recent years.

These data suggest that the new religious middle class movement coming from the periphery is increasingly moving away from the traditional understanding and developing a realistic perspective about business life. Although the presence of natural congregational circles still represents an element of security, it is observed that the overall worldview is more important than religious perception. The fact that honesty and hardworking have become basic values may imply both self-confidence and confidence in business environment and market system in general. On the other hand, the traditional belief that God would help someone honest and hardworking indicates that this adaptation process may not necessarily result in moving away from religion.

Individual Interests versus Collective Interests and Authority

It is possible to anticipate that the Islamic section which has traditionally defined individual interests within collective interests may feel hesitations in this regard as they enter into modern life. Likewise, it may also be worrisome to remain "alone" against the world, considering the fact that congregational leadership has been adopted for a long time. Therefore, it would not be surprising that individualization occur gradually in this section, with greater speed in areas under the individuals' own control such as economy, but more slowly in areas necessitating leadership, such as politics.

The proposition "Man is weak; he would astray if there is no authority ruling over him" was approved by 69.7 percent and disapproved by 24.9 percent of respondents in 2006. In 2012, these rates were 60.3 percent and 34.2 percent, respectively (Yılmaz, *Conservatism in Turkey*, 2012). This roughly 10 percent change may be speculated to be due to the change in the world of religious people, considering the women's movement in the Islamic section as well as many other indicators, even if we do not know from which sociocultural circle it originates.

Another proposition that brings old and new values directly against each other may be more revealing. While the proposition "Everyone gets to the position he/she deserves in the society according to his/her own intelligence, skills and actions. Therefore, everyone must assent to his/her position and must not envy others' position" was approved by 73.2 percent in 2006, the rate of approval declined to 63.0 percent by 2012. The rate of disapproval increased to 31.1 percent from 21.8 percent during the same period. Again, there is a 10 percent shift here. Even if we do not know whether these two questions reveal a similar tendency among the same people, we observe a significant tendency towards an individualistic attitude. It should be noted that the phrase "must not envy others' position" at the end of the second proposition involves a morally negative connotation. The responses have been given despite this fact. If the proposition had not contained that phrase, the rate of disapproval for the proposition could have been much higher. In any case, it is an indicator that the responses implying an individualistic attitude have increased by 40-50 percent during the six-year period.

It is not possible to state that Turkish society's reliance on authority and adoption of congregational assumptions have disappeared all of a sudden. However, sufficient evidence is available to the effect that there is a tendency towards individualization, moving away from congregational pressures and questioning the authority.

Support for Market System

The Islamic section which has traditionally remained on the periphery during the Ottoman times, and ideologically during the republican regime, has always found a way to accumulate capital through trade, and integrated into the market system since the 16th century when they first encountered modernity. On the other hand, since interest is regarded by religion as ill-gotten, the discourse that, normatively, banking system must be abstained from has been sustained. As a matter of fact, holdings promising to pay "profit share" based on broad capital partnerships emerged in the mid-80s. However, while some of these companies engaged in fraudulent activities, others were managed very poorly and went bankrupt. Thus, after a short period of search, the conservative business circles in Turkey returned to the requirements of market system and this time adopted all elements of the market system, charmed by the global environment.

Still, the issue of interest seems to be relevant in understanding the norms of groups with Islamic sensitivities. The proposition "It is normal that people deposit their money with banks and earn interest" is approved by 56.3 percent of respondents with religious belief, whereas it is disapproved by 63.0 percent of religious respondents and 68.8 percent of devoutly religious respondents (Konda, *Religion, Secularism and the Veil in Daily Life Survey*, 2007). 25 percent, on average, of religious and devoutly religious respondents deem it normal to earn interest. It should be noted that, overall, the religious individuals represent the largest group with roughly 50 percent, followed by 35 percent who have religious belief, 8 percent who define themselves as devoutly religious, and 4 percent who have no religious belief. Therefore, it is understood that the secularist section essentially defines themselves as having "religious belief". In this case, only 56 percent of even the secularist section approves depositing money with banks and earning interest, which demonstrates how difficult it is to advocate something that is religiously forbidden. However, in practice, there is almost nobody who does not use the banking system and earn interest.

It is possible to argue that various aspects of market system have caused a dichotomy due to religious prohibitions in Turkey. On the other hand, the conservative and religious sections of the society have always supported development and market-oriented rightist policies and parties, and made their choice in favor of private sector and entrepreneurship. For this reason, the choices conflicting with religious rules seem to have been taken out of discussion and adopted, as if a common consensus has been reached. Today, the issues which religiosity raises as problem in public domain do not include any of the economic issues such as market system, credit mechanisms and interest.

Entrepreneurship, Economic Individualism and Religiosity

The Islamic section which has a congregational cultural understanding can naturally be expected to find economic individualism odd. But, proximity to center, rather than religiosity, seems to be the deciding factor in this regard. The remoteness of Islamic section from the center has increased the need and motive for becoming successful with their own efforts, and made entrepreneurship a positive aspect even from the religious perspective.

When we define economic individualism as 'believing that the actual source of wealth and poverty is the efforts and skills of individuals, and disregarding factors like luckiness, destiny and favoritism when explaining economic success' and distinguish the social sections as 'low' and 'high' individualist, we see such an outlook: the rate of low economic individualism is 57 percent and high economic individualism is 43 percent in the "lower class" (33 percent of the society) which mainly involves the traditional religious, traditional rightist and low income groups. These rates are 53 percent and 47 percent, respectively, in the "middle class" (45 percent of the society) which mainly involves the modern religious, new rightist and middle income groups. The rates are 68 percent and 32 percent, respectively, in the "upper class" (22 percent of the society) which involves some of the modern religious and together with traditional leftist and high income groups (Turkey averages are 58 percent vs. 42 percent, respectively) (Yılmaz, *Middle Class in Turkey*, 2007). In other words, the economic individualism of lower and middle classes is much higher than that of upper class, and the main mass of Islamic section is also included in these groups. However, traditional leftists, as in largely the secularist section, follows a very "low" attitude in terms of economic individualism, and is below Turkey average.

As representative of the class dynamics in Turkey, while "middle class" is the one with highest expectation of wealth accumulation among these three classes, "upper class" has the lowest rate of such expectation. The issue of EU helps lay down a more interesting fact: the middle class is a strong advocate of EU and the lower class is a weak advocate. However, the upper class seems to be skeptical about EU (43 percent against EU). This parallelism both implies that the Islamic section is supporting EU membership for economic reasons as well, and emphasizes that EU advocacy is indeed the position of Islamic section, rather than the secularist section which is closer to the West culturally.

When we apply the same class distinction to the leftism/rightism axis according to how people perceive themselves, we see that leftists represent 2 percent of the lower class and 3 percent of middle class. However, 47 percent of the upper class sees themselves as leftist. As for rightists, 29

percent of the lower class and 47 percent of middle class define themselves as rightist. Only 6 percent of the upper class defines themselves as rightist.

In other words, the factors that suppress economic individualism in Turkey are associated with the extent to which the individuals are part of the center politically and ideologically, rather than religiosity. The already wealthy and culturally secularist sections seem to have low individualism and low expectations. On the other hand, the section that consists of modern religious groups, and middle income, probably urban, new bourgeoisie seems to have high expectations, with an aspiration to adapt to the global world, reflecting an economic individualism above country average.

Therefore, with respect to the settlement of market system and its elements, the rise of Islamic section appears to be a positive factor for the establishment of modern political and economic systems of the West in Turkey. The desire of this section, which is far from the center, to enter the system is pluralizing the economic structure and making it competitive. The understanding that success and wealth will come along with individualism and entrepreneurship in such an environment is not contradictory with religious perception at all.

Views about the USA and the EU

One of the most frequently asked questions after AKP came to power was whether an Islamic government would move Turkey away from the West or not. However, AKP quickly made efforts for EU membership, and would probably have made a quicker progress if the "skepticism about Turkey" in the EU had not been influential. This is because they know that the basic rules of democracy will function as long as they can assure becoming a part of western world, which would mean the ruling of political parties with Islamic sensitivities for the time being. As the EU membership process slackened, Turkey started attaching greater importance to cooperation with the USA. However, this time the military intervention of the USA in the Middle East disrupted the process. Islamophobia that emerged in the West during this period and the critical attitude of the media towards AKP in these countries influenced the perception of West in Turkey negatively.

While the average of negative attitude in Turkey about USA was 5.2 points on a scale of 7 in 2006, this rate was above the negative attitude of both Indonesia, Jordan, Egypt and Pakistan, and western Muslims (3-3.5) (Pew, *Global Attitudes Survey*, 2006). The positive attitude in Turkey about USA seems to have declined dramatically from 50 percent to 10 percent between 2000 and 2007. (15 percent in 2012). However, the same year, this rate was 15 percent for Pakistan, 21 percent for Egypt, 30 percent for Germany and 51 percent for UK. While the negative perception about USA in Turkey is 83 percent, it is 68, 78, 66 and 42 percent in the other four countries, respectively. Furthermore, Turkey is the countries that most dislikes the business practices of the USA (with 83 percent). The rate of liking USA's way of doing business declined from 21 percent to 6 percent between 2002 and 2007. Likewise, the greatest estrangement from 'the US ideals regarding democracy' occurred in Turkey during the same period: from 33 percent in 2002 to 8 percent in 2007. The lowest support for "anti-terrorist fight" under the initiative of USA is again from Turkey (with 9 percent). Also, the admiration for the scientific and technologic advancement of USA declined from 67 percent to 37 percent between 2002 and 2007.

This feeling of "total" estrangement from the USA can be linked to the intervention in Iraq. But it seems more likely that this actually reflects the state of mind in Turkey. During the same period, the perception about almost everyone outside Turkey has turned negative. Although the rate of support for the EU was 58 percent in 2004, it declined to 27 percent by 2007. During this period, the rate of negative perception about the EU has risen from 35 percent to 58 percent. An interesting point is that it was 27 percent in 2005 as well. This shows that support for EU has declined by half in a single year (this rate has declined further and reached 21 percent in 2012). During 2004-2007, the positive perception about United Nations has declined to 23 percent from 51 percent (negative perception is 57 percent in 2007) (Pew Global Attitudes, 2007). Overall, the perception about other religions also reflects the same estrangement. While the rate of positive perception about Christians and Jews were 31 and 27 percent, respectively, in 2004, these already low rates have declined to 16 and 15 percent, respectively, in 2006 (Pew, *The Great Divide*, 2006). But the issue does not seem to be the rejection of the West, since the positive perception about Iran has also declined, from 53 percent to 28 percent, between 2006 and 2007.

Therefore, it is possible to suggest that Turkish society has experienced a process of introversion. However, we should also remember that this period was an intensive process of opening up and globalization. In the light of this data, it is possible to think that the adaptation process itself has produced reverse reactions in perceptions. It would be realistic to assume that the self-confidence and expectations of Turkish society have risen, and sharpened its judgments about other societies while looking from a much more egalitarian perspective. In this context, it is obvious that Islam is seen as an embracing and meaningful identity particularly against the western world. The rate of people who think that the relations between the Muslim world and the West are bad is 64 percent (Pew, 2006). While, 79 percent of these people put the blame on the West, 7 percent put the blame on Muslims, and 8 percent put the blame on both. Likewise, as far as the cartoons of Prophet Mohammed are concerned, 84 percent of Turkish society shows the "disrespect of the West" as the reason behind the crisis. 8 percent states the reason to be the Muslim intolerance (averages of western countries are 23 percent and 60 percent, respectively). When this question is asked with the phrase 'Intolerance of Muslims' and even 'Intolerance of some Muslims', we can anticipate that the rate of people to choose these answers will increase. It is obvious that there is a great difference between what the term 'West' means to westerns and what the term "Muslim" means to Muslims. But still there is a new demand in the Turkish society's perception of the West ; this demand reflects the desire to be part of that world, and leads to a feeling of rejection and exclusion as long as it is not realized.

We should remember that 51 percent of the Muslims in Turkey defined themselves primarily as 'Muslim' in 2006 (43 percent in 2005) (Pew, The Great Divide, 2006). On the other hand, those who defined themselves primarily as "Turkish" remained at 19 percent. Nevertheless, this does not suggest that objectivity has been lost or there has been a shift towards a 'jihadist' perspective; rather it goes alongside with a totally contrary perspective: When asked whether there is a conflict between Islamic fundamentalism and modernism, only 23 percent of the society says there is no such conflict. More interestingly, when the people who say there is such conflict are asked on which side they position themselves, the answers are as follows: 39 percent with modernists, 9 percent with fundamentalists, 52 percent neither of them (Pew, 2006).

In conclusion, it is possible to suggest that the Islamic section in Turkey is "redefining" itself at world scale after AKP has come to power, and has started thinking that they have the right to be respected by the westerns. One of the important indicators of this transformation is that the society feels more Muslim when looking at the West, and more "Turkish" when looking at other Muslims. It is possible to state that the desire to attain the equal position it deserves in the global system isolates Turkey as a country in the eyes of the society, but this strengthens the ambition to become part of modernization, rather than a move away from it.

One last issue should be emphasized at this point is that the change being experienced in the Islamic section in Turkey may be compared with other Islamic countries to address it in a broader context. However, there is no significant study in this direction yet. This is due partly to the lack of convincing evidence that such a comparison is legitimate, since we cannot ignore the fact that the stunning changes during the last two centuries have significantly set these societies apart and created different political and social cultures, even if we analyze the social change in Turkey in comparison with that in neighboring countries. One of the most important consequences of this is that almost totally different grounds have emerged in these societies as regards Islamic understanding and religiosity. Therefore, the word 'Islamic' does not have a culturally assembling nature any more. However, in order to be able to analyze Turkey, in comparison with other Islamic countries, we both need to adopt Islam as a meaningful factor and attribute a constant inter-society essence to it. Nevertheless, Islamic sensitivity may create differing modes of religiosity on different social grounds, and various elements of modern world are interpreted within these modes of religiosity. In conclusion, even if such comparative field studies are conducted, they may not be much likely to allow for a real comparison of concepts used in areas like modernity, secularization, integration, women, morality, etc. and their consequences.

	1999			2002/3			2006/7			2012		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA	Positive	Negative	Neutral/NA
Political Institutions and rights												
Recognition of different ethnic groups							30.10%	42%	27.90%	42.70%	31.80%	25.50%
Sharia	21%	67.90%	11.10%	16.40%	74.10%	9.50%	8.90%	76.20%	14.90%			
Freedom of expression							89%	9.50%	1.60%	91.20%	5.80%	3%
Uncensored press							77.20%	20%	2.80%	78.80%	16%	5.20%
Group belongingness, individualism and tolerance												
Non-Muslims being able to exercise and maintain their own religions and cultures freely							82.60%	14%	3.40%	86%	10.10%	3.90%
"I would prefer a Muslim tenant"	51.90%	40.20%	7.80%				50.90%	30.20%	18.90%			
"If two groceries are selling a good at the same price, I would prefer the one known to be religious"	49.30%	39%	11.70%				49.60%	32.60%	17.80%			
"Man is weak; he would astray if there is no authority ruling him."							69.70%	24.90%	5.40%	60.30%	34.20%	5.50%
Family, woman, sexuality												
Sexual preferences different from that of the majority (like homosexuality) should be lived freely							38.10%	57.70%	4.20%	39.10%	54.40%	6.50%
Women must have equal rights with men							86.80%	11.80%	1.40%	87.60%	9.90%	2.50%
Women can work successfully in every job that can be done by men							79.10%	19.80%	1.10%	82.30%	16.10%	1.60%
Opinions about market economy, class differences and western world												
"Everyone gets to the position he/she deserves in the society"							73.20%	21.80%	5%	63.00%	31.10%	5.90%
Perception about the US				30%	54%		10.5% *	79.5% *		15%	72%	
Perception about the EU							27%	58%		21%	60%	

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CHARACTERISTICS OF "ISLAMIC" MIDDLE CLASS ACCORDING TO FIELD STUDIES

a) Political Institutions and Rights

1- The support for democracy and freedom of expression is rising in the abstract sense and as a principle, and universal democratic norms are being adopted.
2- In the concrete sense, the ownership of democracy is still superficial; support for democracy is high but internalization of its requirements is weak.
3- Democracy is pragmatically and vitally a "good" and a need, rather than being a need in principle.
4- "Majoritarianism" underlies the perception of democracy.
5- The concept that is regarded as the indicator of democracy and that carries this ideal is "pluralism".
6- The greatest threat to democracy and to their own fields of life is 'military coup.'
7- There is a high tendency of taking precautions and shifting to a prohibitive attitude when the country is under threat.
8- It is believed that traditional truths are more valuable than laws.
9- Sharia is an ideal norm, but not a regime with potential to be applied in reality.
10- There is no political or social demand for transposing religious rules into laws.
11- As participation in democratic system increases, the demand for and reference to sharia decreases.

b) Family, Women, Sexuality

1- Family is viewed as the most important institution that must be protected.
2- Modernization of family takes place via freedom of women.
3- Gender equality is advocated with regard to inheritance.
4- While the role of religion is decreasing in the attitudes towards women, the role of life style is increasing.
5- Morality and decency are perceived as separate and independent from religion.
6- Objectivity, egalitarianism and tolerance are increasing in the attitude towards women, while discrimination is decreasing.
7- The presence and role of women in labor life and politics are supported.
8- However, there is no change in the social position of women as regards religious practices, and the traditional conception that the primary role of women is at home maintains its strength.
9- Conservative attitude towards different sexual orientations continues.

c) Group Affiliation, Individualism and Tolerance

1- Congregational tendency is determining in social relations and is experienced basically through religion.
2- What is considered sacred by the congregation is more important than the requirements of freedom of expression.
3- The limits of individualization are being forced and stretched while remaining within the congregation.
4- While radicalism based on religiosity and traditionalist conservatism is decreasing, a hybridization involving secularization is expanding but still not representing the majority.
5- The congregation is expected to remain within the legal system, but to be independent from the state.
6- Political parties are conceptualized as modern but respectful to religion.
7- The feeling of ownership for state and service expectations from the state are rising.
8- Religious education is preferred to be provided by the state, since it is trustworthy.
9- Different religions are perceived as a potential threat.
10- While the desire for living together with Secularists is rising in principle, the desire for social integration with them is decreasing.
11- Ethnic differences are not perceived as a social problem or threat.
12- Foreign identities and cultures create a perception of threat and encourage introversion, taking precautions and exclusion.
13- Even if it is not possible to state that tolerance is increasing, intolerance is decreasing.

d) Opinions about Market Economy, Class Differences and Western World

1- Contradictions between the requirements of religion and market system do not prevent modern economic behaviors.
2- While intra-congregational relations are preferred for being more trustworthy, rationalization is increasing in business life.
3- While individualization and entrepreneurship are rising in economy, the need for leadership and desire for collaboration are getting stronger in politics.
4- Expectation for wealth accumulation is high; a middle class and bourgeoisie supporting EU membership are emerging.
5- In line with adaptation to the global environment, the perception about the West becomes more judgmental and skeptical and the negatively perceived acts of the West are attributed to the consideration of Islam religion by the West as odd.
6- In general, the western world is deemed to be unjust, unreliable and to apply double-standards.
7- While Islam is the primary identity when looking at the West, "Turkish" identity is stronger when looking at the Islamic world.

3. **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**[2]

In order to validate the studies and results discussed in the first section of the report, TESEV has carried out focus group discussions in three different cities of Turkey in cooperation with SAM Research Company. These discussions were intended to further elaborate on several explicit and key points highlighted in the analysis of field studies –such as perceptions about Secularists, family life, position of women in family and social life-,to identify potential contradictions and inconsistencies in the findings and scrutinize these with a more detailed qualitative study. Furthermore, Gezi protests which could not be included in the field studies since it was a very current issue, has also been added to the study as a separate section.

When the population of Turkey is divided into four categories (namely "those with no religious belief", "those with religious belief", "religious", and "devoutly religious") as they define themselves, researches indicate that the group who define themselves as "religious" correspond to the conservative middle class who support AK Party and have strengthened after AK Party's coming to power (KONDA, 2011). In other words, the Islamic middle class addressed in this report differs from other groups by their income level and the way how they define themselves (e.g. "religious").

In the light of this information, a sample consisting of people who define themselves as "religious", who support AK Party and who have a monthly household income of 2500-5000 TL has been created for the focus groups. The sample has been selected from the provinces of Denizli and Kayseri that have made a leap in commerce and industry after AK Party came to power, and in Istanbul which receives an intensive migration, so that they can reflect the strengthening conservative middle class and its values.

Focus group discussions for the report were held in Denizli with women on September 03, 2013; in Istanbul with men on September 05, 2013; and in Kayseri with men on September 07, 2013. Nine people participated in the Denizli meeting, and eight people participated in each of Istanbul and Kayseri meetings. Denizli and Kayseri discussions took three hours and Istanbul discussion took two hours.

Demographic information about the participants is provided in the annex of the report.

Findings from focus group discussions are presented below.

a) Political Institutions and Rights

Democracy-Freedom

The views regarding democracy and freedom may be contradictory from time to time. In general, there is a positive perception about democracy. Those who directly oppose democracy are those who directly defend Islamic Sharia rule. What is understood from democracy also varies. For example, democracy is the harmony of people and state or government, for some people. It's the government's ruling of people safely and soundly. For the vast majority of participants, democracy

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implies the election of administrators by the majority, the decisions' being taken by the majority and the compliance of the minorities with the majority norms.

> Democracy is the administration's imposition of its rules to the people smoothly. An administration comes and governs the people without making them sad and cry. And people like that style of administration. It's a living style with the motto 'we are comfortable anyway, let sleeping dogs lie". (İstanbul, 38, Male)

> In my view, democracy is the harmony of ideas and living styles in state. It is the harmony of the life styles of people and their adoption by the state. They must not oppose each other. This is what democracy is for me. (İstanbul, 37, Male)

> If one, I mean the majority, has elected a leader... now we are discussing a subject with you here, for example. You are directing us, and even if we do not agree with you, we are adapting ourselves to certain things here. I mean, the minority has to adapt to the majority. (Denizli, 42, Female)

> It's the way the majority rules. That's the rule. (Denizli, 38, Female)

> But, say CHP has come to power. But my ideas are not in tune with the mentality of CHP. But we have to adapt to the way they rule. We are forced to do so. (Denizli, 40, Female)

Those who defend "Islamic order" directly oppose democracy.

> Now, why is democracy not freedom? We elect some people to govern us. Do they govern us? Do they adopt our ideas? Do they govern us in the way we want? Do they change when they go there? If we want freedom, we must not adopt democracy. We should be ruled by Islam. Islam is freedom, and nobody is objecting to this anyway. Everything has been decided, the rules are clear. I am not in favor of democracy. Let me say that clearly. Let me put it briefly: democracy is not freedom. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

> I think, if we are living in an Islamic country, I want to live my life in accordance with the rules of Islam. This is democracy. Democracy means living more properly both in terms of Islamic rules and moral and ethical rules. Ones who live Islam fully are more moral, more honest and more democratic. (Denizli, 40, female)

Although not expressed explicitly, a subsection of the advocates of the Islamic order approaches democracy still from the perspective of Islam.

> Democracy, freedom means one's ability to do what he believes to be right. You cannot talk about democracy and freedom anywhere where you cannot do what you believe to be right. You don't have this in Turkey, either; you cannot do what you believe to be right; you cannot talk about freedom and democracy here. There is no democracy in Turkey. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

> We, as human beings, must at the first place know what we have been created for. Allah SWT has not created and sent us to earth just to eat, drink, travel, educate our children, live in self-indulgence, climb to the Himalayas or lay on the beaches of the Ivory Coast. First, we must know this. But I understand that we do not know what we have been created for and in

what we must believe. The purpose of our creation requires us to show the right path to other people; otherwise our existence has no meaning. In this sense, democracy is a good thing. As far as we understand, democracy is a method whereby people govern themselves. I mean, you elect someone and you tell him to govern you. This is already a requirement of our belief... In that sense, we must combine democracy with Islam. Our religion has already given human beings the freedom of living, the freedom of religion, and other rights. It has given us all types of freedom. (Kayseri, 39, Male)

Freedom, however, is a more sensitive matter for a lot of the participants. They always emphasize that everyone has the right to live as he/she wishes. They note that their freedoms have been restricted before, but they are freer during the term of this government. Some participants state that they are still not fully free, and that they are treated as minority although they are the majority. Meanwhile, it is possible to state that women are more liberal than men. Particularly on matters concerning women, women seem to have a much more different attitude than men. For example, the statement of a female participant, "Turkey's problem stem from the fact that people are always forced to do things," is particularly meaningful.

Individual freedom extends to the limits of the freedom of other individuals; I mean individuals can be free within themselves. Freedom ends at the point where it intrudes on the freedom of another individual. (İstanbul, 28, Male)

There is no unlimited freedom. Everybody is free in their religion. They can either fulfill the requirements of religion or not, nobody can interfere in this. But this does not mean that heroin, alcohol and gambling are allowed in an Islamic state. There is no such freedom. Nobody is going to touch my property, life and honor, and I will not touch those of others. Freedom is that much. I think any freedom that is not in line with Sharia is not freedom. We are free to the extent Allah allows us. Everybody is free as long as he does not disobey the rules of Allah. (İstanbul, 37, Male)

Such things are not freedom in our society. Such things are not allowed if they touch us. They are allowed to do anything as long as they do not degenerate our customs. They can either believe or not, it's none of our business. But they must not touch our moral values, our religious values. They can do anything by themselves. We are not in a position to call them to account. And we are not allowed to envy their property or honor either. Freedom is good as long as it stays within this framework. Even Allah does not interfere within that framework. He has put that rule. (İstanbul, 37, Male)

Freedom. I see it as something that is not restricted within its own context. Being able to do something without being restricted by family or someone else is freedom for me. (Denizli, 41, Female)

What is freedom? As the other lady said, freedom is the ability to do anything by your own volition, without being restricted by anyone else. I have experienced this, when I was in my home town, I could not do anything I wanted due to my circle. Now I am living in another town, and I am free here. For example, I can go out at 10 pm to drink tea, or to a park. But these are restricted in my home town. (Denizli, 41, Female)

Meanwhile, we should note a vein that could be characterized as democratic. They emphasize democracy in politics, and freedom in individualism. The definition of freedom is based on the protection of lifestyle and freedom of thinking/belief. In this context, it is interesting that they conceive democracy as the protection of minority rights. An equally noteworthy approach is that they attribute the concept of minority not directly to ethnic minorities, but to differing views.

> Turkey's problem stem from the fact that people are always forced to do things. For example Kurds were forced to say that they were Turks… Then, how do people feel? (Denizli)

> Democracy is a work of Greek origin. When I hear the word "democracy," the first thing that comes to mind is the people. (Istanbul, 28, Male)

> In classical terms, we define it as the majority being subject to the minority or the ruling of what the majority wants. Here, what the majority wants rules, and the minority will consent to it. But the majority cannot impose anything they want. They must adjust themselves. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

> It means the rule of people. The minority also has rights against the majority and they must be able to practice their rights freely ... Here I mean the ideological minority. Of course there are ethnic minorities, but we have become nation. The meaning of this is very important. I don't mean the minority in that sense; I mean the ideological minority. (Istanbul, 28, Male)

> All this is because there is no democracy; if there had been democracy, even the minorities could … There is no democracy in this country; you cannot talk about democracy in a country where there is an election threshold of 10 percent. (Kayseri, 37, Male)

> Views of the minority are somehow represented and reflected; this includes the election thresholds. All minorities living in the country, including non-Muslims, must be able to defend their rights. When we talk about our country, we say 90 percent of the country is Muslim. But other minorities must also be able to defend their rights, and then we can talk about democracy. (Kayseri, 37, Male)

> Whoever elected is not elected by the whole country. There are people with differing views. Of course, democracy requires respect to their ideas.

> I think what's important in democracy is not who governs us. Democracy means respecting the ideas of people who do not agree with those who govern us. (Denizli, 45, Female)

However, as discussed in the section of the freedom of women, there is usually a discussion of measure, framework or limit when freedoms are in question. For example, the definition of freedom promptly changes against attitudes not fitting Islam, and the freedom of the others is recognized as legitimate to the extent that they observe the sensitivities of the Islamic section. This is particularly evident on the matter of prohibitions on alcohol.

> Questions marks arise as regards the interpretation of freedom among individuals. Something I consider to be a freedom may be wrong for others. For example, a man eating bread in the street during Ramadan is regarded as disrespectful in a Muslim neighborhood.

The other side may see it as freedom. We must either draw the boundaries of this freedom as a society or a solution must be found. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

That's disrespect for religious freedom. But he can go home and eat kebab or whatever he wants. As our friend said, one can do anything at home, use heroin or euthanize, as long as he does not disturb others. If we are to defend freedom, there is no measure or limit of it. As long as you do not disturb the other side... (Istanbul, 28, Male)

To me, alcohol must be totally prohibited. To protect our children … They may have tendencies. At least boys are more curious about it. I have two sons, and I don't want anything like that. (Denizli, 41, Female)

For example, why is alcohol ban necessary? It is harmful for human body. He drinks alcohol by his own will, but he also harms those around him, beyond harming himself. It creates a domino effect, families are dissolved, and children grow up under the shadow of these events. That's not all… It could do all sorts of damage. This ban is necessary. (Denizli, 40, Female)

But things change when it comes to alcohol. The age of starting alcohol has declined so much. This is threatening our future. And alcohol is not the end point, they move onto drug abuse after alcohol. This is a fact. This is not the case only in Turkey or Denizli. Other countries are also restricting alcohol, because it is something that affects the future of people. No, it must not a total ban. The regulations must only cover the sales points and the age of buyers. Maybe it would be good to regulate them. After a certain age, people can judge it better and consciously, whether it is good or bad. But when you let a child aged 15 or 13 taste it, he gets out of control. But there is no sense in selling alcohol on alleyways. (Denizli, 42, Female)

Another noteworthy observation is that all participants base their views on their own experiences when freedoms are in question. As discussed in the section "Turkey," the periods when their own freedoms were restricted are still fresh in their memories and they still continue to face certain restrictions, which form the basis of their sensitivity on this issue. In particular, the democratic wing emphasizes that they have fought so hard for their rights in the past and now the rights of minorities must be respected alike.

As regards the freedom of expression, for example, AK Party is in power now, but they were the minority in the past. They should have had rights against the majority at those times, but headscarf was a big deal 10 years ago. They were the minority at that time in terms of government. Just like their rights, the rights of women wearing headscarf, had to be defended at that time, today the rights of the minority who do not think the way they think must also be defended. We need a government structure where a section of society does not impose absolute pressure on the other section. (Istanbul, 28, Male)

There is a common consensus about the participation of people in local decision making processes. A vast majority of people think that they must be consulted when a building is planned to be constructed in their neighborhood, for example. They still note that they may not have knowledge

about certain technical aspects, and the experts must be consulted on these matters. Only one or two participants have expressed the view "Our administrators know the best."

> The people living in the neighborhood must be consulted. Because now people want to feel that they are important. Both the people living in the neighborhood and sometimes experts must be consulted; sometimes the government and people do not think the same way. And actually this is what we call democracy. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

> I think we must consider this in several different contexts. First, the people to construct the building must be architects, engineers and experienced people. Also, they must not say 'we are building this here; nobody can say anything about it.' There must be a separate group analyzing the religion, customs and ethnicities of people living there. (İstanbul, 40, Male)

Likewise, every participant thinks that a prime minister or a party leader must make decisions by consulting the people around him. This is basically due to the fact that consultation has an important place in Islam. Some participants add that a strong leader must exert his authority in case of indecision. This view has been supported by the analogy of home life.

> Consultation is *sunna*. It's the right thing to do. Two heads are better than one. It's not because of a lack of vision, knowledge or capacity. It's an exchange of ideas. It's the right thing to do. One who consults others does not make mistakes easily. We see this in the life of our Prophet as well. There is truth in it. (Istanbul, 37, Male)

> I welcome consultation. But in some cases of indecision, then the leader may exert his authority. He can say 'this shall be done here'. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

> If I may say so myself, I would consult them for anything that concerns them. I consult my family members for 80 percent of the family affairs. ... If I am the leader of the family, I can then exert my authority without contradicting what I have said before. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

Islam- Sharia

For some of the participants, Sharia is a way of belief and living. To them, the question "Would Turkey adopt Sharia?" is meaningless, since "Sharia cannot be brought in, because it already exists and is lived for 1,400 years." Sharia is the rule of Allah; if you live as ordered by Allah, then you are living in line with Sharia. It is not important whether this or that system exists in the country, what's important is the freedom to practice your faith as you wish.

> Sharia would not be adopted. Indeed, this is a wrong expression. Sharia would not be adopted anywhere, it is how human beings live. If we have a constitution now, constitutional right means Sharia. (Kayseri, 39, Male)

> Sharia actually means the rule of Allah. Ottoman state has been ruled by Sharia for 600 years. They have dominated so many states, and they have not cut the hand of even a single person. Nobody has been hung. Nobody was disturbed by the Sharia rule. If we look at the life of our Prophet, I believe there will not be any problem. Actual rule is the rule of Allah. How can we learn about it? We can learn about it by looking into the life of our Prophet, by

reading Quran. Can this state be ruled by Sharia? Not now, it cannot be ruled by Sharia now. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

The understanding of "how to practice Islam" move Sharia from the public domain to the individual domain, it does not imply a political system.

In Kayseri, where moderate Muslims live, it is not important for us whether Sharia comes or not. Even under the existing system, we are appreciating the right to perform prayer five times a day. If there is anything missing, we are trying to correct it and to live spiritually rather than in words. If such an idea leads us to such a system gradually, not instantly, we would welcome it. If not, the current system I have explained is a democratic system. It does not matter much for us; because we know that these are just ways of ruling. Communism is a way of ruling; everything belongs to the state. Citizens need service, the government pays wages, and people do it. If you ask me, as a Muslim, I would prefer communist rule to the current capitalist system. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

For some, legal system is important. As regards Sharia, they refer to the Ottoman state and defend "multiple systems of law".

What have the Ottomans done? Look, we have a single system of law today. What does the Ottoman multiple system of law mean? Today, we do not need Sharia, per se. Do we have Jews, Christians, Buddhists and atheists in this country today? You cannot take all these people and try them in a single court... (Kayseri, 40, Male)

This understanding forces people to make a choice. It is not acceptable to both say 'I'm Muslim' and to disobey the rules of Islam.

We will ask a woman: 'Are you Muslim?' If she says (Yes, I'm Muslim', then she has to wear the headscarf. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

If I have accepted something, I have to do all its requirements. If I have accepted Islam, I will pray five times a day, my wife will wear the headscarf, we will fast, and fulfill all its requirements; and Sharia must come for legal aspects. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

On the other hand, Sharia is a social order for some of the participants. This implies that the rules of the country must be the rules of Allah. And these rules are prescribed in Quran. This approach is also divided into at least two sections. For one section, Sharia is an end in itself, because it is a requirement of Islam. The other section is particularly striking with its emphasis on justice. Sharia is recognized as a direct remedy for various injustices in today's society.

If we add some new laws, it would also be acceptable. For instance, we can add the hand-cutting penalty to the laws today in case a burglar comes into your house and robs you. If this penalty enters the laws, does it mean Sharia has come? (Istanbul, 40, Male)

Do you know what happens to a man who says 'I'm Muslim' but does not pray five times a day, according to Hanafi jurisprudence? He is beaten to death. The Shafii sect is a little bit more moderate; he is just imprisoned. This applies to Muslims only. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

Laicism is the separation of state and religion. I do not favor it. I want religion to be a part of state affairs. I want to be ruled according to Islam. Are our laws French laws? They are imported laws. I want to be ruled by our own rules, by the rules of Allah. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

Even if it is too harsh, it is the useful one for us. A few men have made up some rules. All right, I do not say they are bad. I do not say 'forget about all of them', but I defend and want Sharia. Because our God and Prophet know the best about us. (İstanbul, 37, Male)

Once upon a time, an acquaintance had a bad cheque. We have taken the cheque to the public prosecutor, and filed a criminal complaint. We went to the court; I am the creditor, and the debtor is absent. The judge adjourned the hearing for two months. The debtor is still absent, and the judge has been replaced. He adjourned the hearing for two more months. Two months later, we went again, and the debtor is still absent. Do you know what the judge said? He ruled for dismissal of charges; any imprisonment penalty for the cheque is impossible. How can I adopt a system like this? If we were ruled by Sharia, by religious rules, the state would say 'Come here, you have taken the money and goods of this man. Where are they?' Now you have no such right. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

Allah says "reprisal is life for you". Indeed, if we could apply the principle of reprisal, neither honor killings nor any other murder would happen. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

It should be noted that almost everyone including those who define themselves directly as "pro-Sharia" have a kind of "apologetic" approach regarding Sharia. When talking about Sharia, they do not raise today's Iran or other Arab countries as a model. They argue that the system adopted in these countries is not the "real" Sharia, but that the good practice of Sharia is represented by the Ottoman practice. And they promptly add that nobody's hand has been cut. It is understood that some provisions of Sharia law are perceived to be too harsh by almost everyone. This is expressed by statements like "Sharia cannot come instantly", "it requires a transitional process".

Here, my name is Turkish. Here is Turkey. As I said, our difference with other Islamic countries is that we live better compared to them, even if we do not have Sharia rule in the sense we want. Why? There is something else on the other side. We do not try to understand each other in this country. We do not accept each other. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

You cannot bring Sharia rule in a state all of a sudden... the state cannot accept this at the moment. This nation will not accept it that way. But they will accept it gradually. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

We cannot be like Iran anyhow, that's not possible. In Saudi Arabia, Sharia law applies to the poor; it does not apply to the king's family. If Sharia rule is like it was during Ottoman times, like it was during our Prophet's time, when he said "I will cut even my daughter's arm [if necessary]," then there is no problem. (Istanbul, 37, Male)

But a shift to Sharia rule all of a sudden is not possible in this country. This transition will take years, if such a transition is contemplated. Because a wide variety of people are living here under Turkish identity. I think this country should continue with a softer version of secularism. Sharia rule would take too many lives in this country. I mean during the process of transition to Sharia rule. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

> If a decision were to be taken to adopt Sharia rule in 10 years, we must prepare for it beginning from today, just like the European Union has dictated the harmonization laws to us and we have adopted and applied these laws to our daily life in time. If Sharia rule is to come 10 years later, we can prepare for it beginning from today and then adopt it. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

Meanwhile, it is noteworthy that a kind of atavistic approach has been observed among almost all participants. This attitude manifests itself by references made to the Ottoman state on various subjects, as mentioned above in relation to the Sharia law. Even as regards democracy, Ottoman state is shown as a model, as a friendly monarchy.

> If there is no democracy, then there would be pressure, social pressure. This would not allow individuals to express their views, but rather get into illegal organizations and methods. Therefore, democracy is a must, in the real sense. But, one thing to mention, the Ottoman model can be acceptable. We like the Ottomans- Why? It is a monarchy that allows people to live in the way they want, although it still is a monarchy… (Kayseri, 37, Male)

This "atavistic" approach manifests itself not only in relation to the Ottomans, but also in the context of Islam that forms the shared cultural foundation of participants. The Prophet's sayings, anecdotes, and tales form the main body of this "culture". Meanwhile, there are also views that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the same as the last khutbah (sermon) of the Prophet. The way how this culture has disseminated is another research subject, but the role of media (and social media as well) seems to be clear, besides the influence of the schools, family, etc. (like the English women who undressed and the standstill French man during Gezi demonstrations.)

> They have translated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, into English from the last khutbah of our Prophet. They have taken out some parts, and seen that nothing could be truer. So, they have decided to translate it into English. They have taken out the Allah and similar words. (Kayseri, 39, Male)

As mentioned before, a vast majority of participants have an eclectic way of thinking. They want democracy on the one hand, and praise Sharia law on the other; they want freedom on the one hand, and they are afraid of freedom when they identify it with the West on the other; they say women are very valuable on the one hand, and they say "instead of working for others, they should stay home and work for me" on the other. They want Sharia rule on the one hand, and seem to have adopted the existing system in Turkey on the other. In various contexts, they state that Turkey differs from the Arab world in a positive way. It is understood that the parliamentary democracy lies under this difference. For example, they compare the current state of Egypt to the situation in Turkey between 1940 and 1950, when Turkey was in the process of transition to a multi-party system.

> I would not live in any of the Islamic countries, but Turkey. I would never live in the West, either. I hope they [the Islamic countries] get better as a result of the recent events and become a country like Turkey. If these kings leave and they adopt a system like ours, then I could live there. (İstanbul, 37, Male)

> How many of them are being ruled properly, in compliance with Islam? All of them are ruled by pharaohs, so to speak, the greatest tyrants, they share the wealth with their own

supporters... Islam has the notion of "treasury of Islamic state". This means all the wealth is a common property, a king cannot be the owner of a country. This is not possible. All property is owned by the public, as a national treasure. This is the way it must be... The nearest example is in Syria. The father has died and the son has taken the reign; we do not know who will take the reign after him... Maybe the world does not know about Turkey, but they know about Egypt, they know about the man named Mubarak. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

The Arab world is now experiencing what Turkey has experienced between 1940 and 1950. We came out of war and founded the republic. Then we were ruled by a single party, there was no democracy, since democracy is not possible with a single party. And the people have been exposed to impositions and oppression. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

I have been to Saudi Arabia. OK, I have not seen any indecent women. What a comfortable life, every woman was wearing a headscarf, but this land has a culture... But this nation has a history on these territories, we have a past. Even our laziest man is more hard-working than a normal Arab. This is what I have observed. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

State

The concept of "state", which we have occasionally observed to be used interchangeably with "government," is predominantly understood to be a prescriptive, protective body that gives meaning to human life. The lack of state is compared to destitution or dereliction. At the same time, the state has the roles of legislator, rule maker and enforcer. Participants occasionally view the state as a mechanism that protects the rights of citizens and ensures order and security through these rules and police forces. Even those who define state abstractly, rather than as a singular entity, describe the state as "a set of rules" in this abstract definition. In addition, it is noteworthy that "statism" is regarded as a tradition attributed to both the Ottoman State and to the Republic during Atatürk's time.

> We are always like a finger and a ring, with the state. We cannot exist without state and the state cannot exist without us. It forms our personality. How does it form our personality? May God not leave anybody without government on earth ... State adds value to human beings. It's the state that makes us human. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

> It's not possible without state. The state must be more generous regarding healthcare services. If it was up to me, I would make healthcare services free to everyone. I would make it free for my own citizens at least. But's that's something unprecedented. But one would feel safer that way. (Istanbul, 38, Male)

> Now, state means law. It means the enforcer of laws. It means safety and a control mechanism in the country. That's what I understand. In the end, that was what Ottoman sultans were already doing before the establishment of Republic of Turkey, it was statism. It is the best thing Atatürk has brought to our country. If we had not been statist, I can't imagine what could have happened to our country. (Denizli, 40, Female)

> [If there had not been a state] there would be vacuum. (Denizli, 37, Female)

I think the state must regulate community life, so that it can function smoothly. For example, the state is regulating safety and order. The police officers, the neighborhood officials, everything... The state must function smoothly without imposing too much pressure on people … (Denizli, 45, Female)

In fact, state is an abstract concept. There is no such thing as state. It's just a set of rules. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

When the relationship between the state and citizens is analyzed, two issues are highlighted. First of all, there is a theme of "freedom" that shows up in the discussions. Therefore, while they somewhat tolerate the restrictive role of the rules prescribed by the state, they also object when this restriction reaches the extent of "pressure" or obstructs freedoms. For example, how the state supervision of families makes the children free in Europe is brought up. And it is emphasized that the state must have a similar influence on family in Turkey. However, following such comments, in order to establish the framework and limits of such interventions, they underline the value of freedom to make one's own decisions. The state is not wanted to interfere in social life, but it is tolerated when it's active in certain social areas to ensure security.

In fact, it is necessary for our safety. For people to feel that they can live freely, state must interfere even in the family. This has started much earlier in Europe. We see children threatening their parents after reaching a certain age. They say 'I will call the police'. So, they have been given freedom in both financial terms and in psychological terms. (Denizli, 42, Female)

In the end, whatever people say down at the bottom, the state or government, as our representative, must turn it into reality. Because they are my representatives there and these people must reflect whatever I say here. (Kayseri, 39, Male)

State must not interfere in everything. …State must not interfere with my freedom. (Denizli, 37, Female)

Despite this emphasis on freedom, it was observed that the participants could easily give up their personal freedoms when the question is asked in the form of "relinquishing one's freedom for the sake of social order" rather than "interference of state in individual lives". Although they limit this interference by saying "to the extent it will not crush me", it seems like there is an understanding of viewing sacrifice as one of the rules of society.

Of course, [certain freedoms] must absolutely be relinquished. If not, how are you going to live in a society then? You make certain sacrifices even for your neighbors. (Denizli, 45, Female)

I agree. Certain things must be given up, because there is a rule and we have to obey it. (Denizli, 37, Female)

Sacrifices I make should not crush me. It must not disturb me. I mean, I must not say 'yes I have made a sacrifice, but it has harmed me, my family and children'. (Denizli, 40, Female)

The second highlight is the opinion that the state has a set of responsibilities towards its citizens. As evident from the quote above regarding healthcare service expectations, the state and/or government which collects taxes is expected to represent the citizens and provide certain social services. A source of such expectations may be the perception of state by some participants as a structure consisting of humans and ultimately a set of institutions that are required to value humans. It is interesting that participants frequently refer to communication with prime minister when explaining their relations with the state. What it means for the state to respect freedoms is for prime minister to listen to citizen's problems. And the establishment of order by the state is conceived as the style by which prime minister addresses those who have voted and not voted for him. As a consequence, the concepts of state, judiciary, government and prime minister are conflated0, and state is perceived as a strong port of refuge in the most comprehensive sense.

> Let human live so that the state can live. Human life is 80 years, 100 years. States also have a lifetime. Everything has a lifetime. I think what's important here is humans. In the end, state is made up of humans. Humans come together and create state. And then that state is oppressing humans. This sounds ridiculous to me. (Istanbul, 28, Male)

> Now, what we do here is that we are creating institutions to get our acts together, to make us happy and to run things smoothly. Then, when these institutions lose their humanitarian characteristics, [they] cause trouble for us. We are fighting with the institutions we have established. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

> I mean, prime minister, I must be able to speak comfortably with him. (Denizli, 37, Female)

> As citizens, we have some obligations which the state expects from us. The biggest expectation of state from us is tax payment. I pay taxes to keep the state running, and then I go and vote every four years to elect people to govern us. ... When it comes to the state, for example, prime minister tells us to do certain things and not to do certain things. We must not pass the limits at this point; for example, as a father, you can tell your son not to go out, but when you tell your neighbor's son not to go out, then things get complicated. Why? Because, for example, the Prime Minister may make suggestions to the people who support him. But when he makes suggestions [as to how to behave] to people not supporting him, they can say 'Who are you to tell me what to do?' This is the reason why Gezi protests have broken out. (Kayseri, 37, Male)

Finally, when the concept of "citizenship" was analyzed, participants could state that this was a "meaningless" category. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that although these participants state that they are in minority in some cases, they do not interpret the concepts of citizenship and rights in relation to themselves. Statements like "I am already living my life, it does not add much to my life" demonstrate that citizenship is being taken for granted by these participants, rather than being appreciated. As a matter of fact, when talking about minority rights, some participants say "they too are the citizens of Republic of Turkey, democracy covers them too". That is, the concepts of citizenship and rights exist just on paper, but do not have much role in living experience and memories.

So, in the end, when it comes to myself, I can do whatever.. I am free; I live in a democratic country. I can buy and sell whatever I want. Citizenship is actually not something that concerns me much. (Denizli, 40, Female)

Everybody living in Republic of Turkey is already a citizen. Living together… democracy covers them all. (Denizli, 42, Female)

[Minority rights] must be defended. If they hold an ID card of Republic of Turkey, they are not any different from me. Their rights must also be defended. (Denizli, 40, Female)

Now, they too experience democracy. Minorities too take part in democracy in this country. They too are free. Their rights are also defended. They can also defend their rights when they apply to any court. The fact that they are minority does not imply that they are deprived of their rights. We all experience it. (Denizli, 40, Female)

But this is what they want; they say 'we are the minority'. No my brother, you are not a minority. If you are a citizen of Republic of Turkey, if you can live the way you believe, you are not a minority; you are a citizen of Turkey. They do not accept this. (Denizli, 40, female)

b) Family, Women, Sexuality

Women

Talking about women and their role in the society, both women and men tend to support the mainstream and generally-accepted assumptions and judgments in the society. In this context, the most fundamental and steady assumption is that the physical differentiation of men and women is perceived to be reflected in the fundamental and steady social differentiation. That is, the social difference of men and women is understood as a natural and permanent difference. It is obvious that the comments on matters ranging from the labor life to sexual life of women are mostly based on this assumption.

Women and men essentially have differing views about whether women should work or not. For men, a woman is allowed to work only if she has a profession (e.g. doctor) or the family is in need of extra income. In addition, the working of women is perceived as "instrumental" for the society, rather than a virtuous life style or a valuable role for the women in itself. For example, some participants explain the reason why women should work as doctors through their desire to take their wives to female doctors. That is, a female doctor is welcomed to the extent it supports the distinction of men and women in the society. A reflection of this instrumental approach to working women is to support working women for their contribution to economy. According to this view, women must work since anybody who can add value to the economy must fulfill this duty. Evidently, if a woman is to work, she must not work for herself but for another social end at best.

If she has studied and has become a nurse or doctor, and if she is single, I would like her to work. Why I would like her to work? Now, as the Islamic section, when we go to a doctor, we want to see a female doctor if our wife is sick. If my wife is sick, I am looking for a female doctor, even if I can find her in a private hospital. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

I think each individual must contribute to the economy. My wife is a graduate of high school, but she cooks well. My biggest dream is to open up a beautiful restaurant for her one day, help pave the way for her and build her self-esteem. I mean, every individual must contribute to the economy, no matter if the person is young, old, female or male. If she has confidence in herself, and you believe she can handle it, I think everybody must work in any kind of job, regardless of whether she is educated or not. This country needs working individuals. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

I sent a project idea to the prime minister regarding this subject: "women shall not work, economy shall double". But it did not happen. If women do not work, I mean the unqualified women, not the qualified women such as doctors, nurses, judges, then the government shall pay them 300-500 TL every month. Today the minimum wage is 850-900 TL, and women are working for 500-600 TL. There are currently 50,000 women working in the organized industrial zone. Men are working for 900 TL, and women for 600 TL. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

There have been male participants who do not have an instrumentalist view of working women, but rather emphasizing that they must work so that they can be included in social life and practice what they have studied. But, still it has been reiterated that labor life is suitable for only educated women. A woman who does not have a profession and is married should only be allowed to work if there is a financial need. A woman working only for financial need, not for "fun", is acceptable only "for God's sake". As mentioned before, a married woman should rather work at home "for her husband" rather than working outside for others.

If a woman has studied, graduated from university and has a profession, I would like her to work since she has studied so many years, and made so much effort... Furthermore, women must also be included in social life. Therefore, I would like her to work. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

As our friends said, she can work if she wants, if she has a useful profession such as doctor. But if she asks me, I would not allow her... Even if she insists, I would not allow her to work... Sharia gives plenty of rights to women; democracy would not give so many rights to women. Sharia gives the highest amount of rights to women... There is no problem with it, there is no problem if she works. If she needs, she goes and works anyway; so many women are working. But if she does not need to work, but wants to work, I would not allow her. But if she is a doctor, I would open a private clinic if I have money. She can work for God's sake, but I will not allow if she wants to work just for fun. (İstanbul, 37, Male)

If she does not have a professional career, I would not let her work; it's unnecessary. If I'm seriously in need, then I would let her work. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

Now, what I have to say about this issue is that women work anyway. If she works outside, then the money is spent on childcare and housework. I tell her to work in my job, I mean at home, and cook and look after my children. When she works outside, I am sure she spends the money she earns for the care of children, house cleaning and her own needs. (Kayseri, 39, Male)

Some male participants have stated that they saw women are sexual objects by their very nature. This gender discrimination, which has again been naturalized although it is social, has led some men

to object to the participation of women in labor life. The perception of "femme fatale", which distracts men and keeps them away from work, arises this way and keeps women away from labor life.

> No matter how much we claim that we are Muslims or whatever, we still could not get used to certain things. I mean, when I'm doing my job, I look at a woman coming in through the window of my sexual desires. I know she is a woman and my desires are always on the front line. I almost look at all women I see in the street from that perspective. (Kayseri, 35, Male)

While assessing the comments of female participants regarding working women, we must remember that most of them are currently working. Having a different perspective from that of even the men who consider working women as something positive, women themselves characterize working as virtuous and valuable in itself. They emphasize that women must work so that they can stand on their own feet, maintain their well-being and express themselves individually. According to women, women's participation in the labor force is more of a social r necessity regardless of the economic reasons. This support for working women, which essentially arises from a desire for economic freedom, has been emphasized as imperative not only for the women to help themselves but also their children. On the other hand, it is not possible to state that women have been able to pull down the assumptions mentioned above about the differences between women and men. The female participants who support the working of women state that they prefer male bosses, and explain this by the fact that women are emotional whereas men are objective.

> We are living in such an age that women have to work. (Denizli, 40, Female)

> Women must of course work even if there is no economic need. (Denizli, 45, Female)

> I think women must work for her well-being, self-improvement, and many other reasons, not necessarily because they do not trust their husbands. (Denizli, 42, Female)

> I am a woman living alone now. I can stand on my own feet economically. If I can live without my children having any hardships and without making them dependent on anyone else, and if I am able to come and go as I please, and if the society does not disapprove of my actions, this is individualism. I must be able to live this way. (Denizli, 40, Female)

> I have worked with men in my previous job. Men are more objective. Women are emotional, but men are objective. (Denizli, 38, Female)

Naturalization of the social differences between women and men is best illustrated by discussions about emotions and being emotional. Women mention this aspect when they are talking about labor life, while men mention it when they express their objection to the involvement of women in politics. Male participants state that women are by nature emotional and therefore unable to make rational decisions. When they are reminded of a "rational" woman like Tansu Çiller, they explain her case by the fact that she is more "manly" than an ordinary man. Besides the unchangeable nature of women, another essential reason why women must not be involved in politics is suggested as religion. They argue that Islam bans women from being involved in politics.

> Women are emotional, and politics is a tough business. I mean they must be influential in decisions. It would be wrong to leave management to emotional people. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

M: There are 3.5 billion women on earth. Are all of them emotional?

Yes, they are all emotional by nature. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

I don't think Margaret Thatcher was emotional at all. (Istanbul, 28, Male)

Umar I advises us to consult our women, and to do the opposite of what our women say. Women act on their emotions, this is clear ... Islam does not let women to rule the state. Women cannot be mayors or governors. Sharia does not allow this. ... She would show mercy where she should not. Compassion towards wolf means cruelty towards sheep. They don't think the way men think. Is there any woman who thinks so? Exceptions prove the rule. (Istanbul, 37, Male)

Tansu Çiller was manlier than the men at that time. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

On the other hand, there is no consensus on the view that women must stay away from politics. Despite the predominant view, some say that women also have the right to participate in politics.

Women make up a large segment of the society. Half of Turkey consists of women, and they must also be able to get involved in politics. Women must have the same rights as men. If the rate of female deputies increases in the parliament, maybe there will be fewer quarrels. Therefore, I don't agree with the view that they cannot do this since they are emotional. Even if it were true, then, I would say men are tough-minded, and they can act impulsively and make wrong decisions. I mean, both of them must work. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

The comments of female participants about the liberation of women are perhaps the most evident indicators of the conflicting state they are in as working and religious middle class women. Some say "I want to live my life... but not too much". They obviously have a "moderate understanding of freedom". Talking about the restrictions in Islamic countries, women prefer Turkey as regards freedom. On the other hand, there are also women who say that woman was created from the rib of man, referring to Quran, and therefore she is lower than man and is dependent on him. In conclusion, rather than a definition of freedom that is "out of control", they adopt a more conservative and restricted definition of freedom. For example, a woman must be able to choose whom to marry but must refrain from coming back home at late hours.

I want to go to places, to have fun. I want to live my life. But not too much. (Denizli, 37, Female)

With regard to the administration in Islamic countries, women who do not want to veil themselves must be allowed to do so. They do not have any right. The rights given to women are very limited in many Islamic countries. I would not prefer that. Every woman must not be forced to wear chador. Let them make the choice. If a woman does not want to wear chador, do not force her to wear it. Overcoat is also a modest dress ... But when you force all women to wear chador, then their rights are restricted. (Denizli, 42, Female)

I don't care what others say. From the Islamic perspective … how was woman created? From the rib of the man. Therefore, I don't see men and women equal. Women always need the mind or body of men, in some way. Therefore, I don't see them equal. (Denizli, 40, Female)

For example, I had a forced marriage. I married my aunt's son. He is 15 years older than I am. They have beaten me into marrying him. Life continues in the same manner. It's just like a duty, like a civil servant. I have to go on. What's more, he was someone whom I was calling elder brother, my aunt's son. Elder brother!. (Denizli, 41, Female)

But, often a woman who lives out of control is considered as a free woman. That's not appropriate. For example, a woman coming home late at night, every day, and saying 'I am free, I live freely' ... I think that's not appropriate. That's not freedom. (Denizli, 40, Female)

The concept of "moderation" has crept into the views of participants regarding the subject of their daughters' boyfriends. Male participants mostly object to it very sharply and justify this by referring to customs and Islamic rules. But they say that their daughters can "date" the boys they are going to marry. The participants who approve of boyfriends emphasize that this relationship must be discreet, just like the female participants. Although female participants are more accepting than male participants about their daughters' having boyfriends, they can be equally strict in drawing the boundaries of such relationships. And when they talk about these boundaries, they note that dating must be the step before marriage. Therefore, both women and men perceive dating as a short pre-marital getting-to-know-each-other process, and find it very dangerous if the process drags and becomes a "life style".

I was reading the newspaper and heard a 9 year-old girl speaking on television, telling her father that she will invite her boyfriend home for dinner. I left the newspaper aside, and threw my slippers to the television set. This is forbidden by our customs and Islam. You have your mother, aunts, etc. The rest is forbidden. I am against the concept of boyfriend. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

Sharia allows them to see each other, as long as it is chaperoned, but inviting them home, etc. is not allowed. (İstanbul, 37, Male)

She can't bring her boyfriend home, they can meet outside. As long as we do not see it, it is acceptable; they can wander around with friends. If she is studying, she will inevitably have friends, but we must not see it. As a father, I must not see it ... There is a saying: what the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't grieve over. But she can't bring her boyfriend home. She can come with girlfriends. (İstanbul, 38, Male)

There is nobody as lax as that in this meeting. During the Ottoman times, girls used to put a pillow underneath their chador to look as if they were hunchbacks. And look what we are talking about today. (İstanbul, 40, Male)

It is possible. How can it be without a friend? But I don't mean the friendships as we see on the celebrity gossip programs in the media. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

We have talked about religion, Islam, the words of our Prophet, the verses of Quran.. They say 'when a girl and boy are alone, the third one present is the Devil'. What is the Devil? It is our enemy. (Kayseri, 39, Male)

Now, say our daughter and a boy are friends, if you put them in a room, then it is a contradiction. No, they can be friends. Can you separate them in university? They are sitting side by side. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

When you talk about a boyfriend, he is directly perceived as the potential husband. (Kayseri, 37, Male)

If we are talking about honor, if we are talking about what is forbidden by Islam, then it is forbidden for both women and men. (Kayseri, 42, Male))

There should be boyfriends. It's abnormal otherwise. (Denizli, 37, Female)

I mean, when I say it is possible, of course it must have a certain time limit.

I mean, in the sense of dating. It must have a time limit. It must not become a living style. (Denizli, 42, Female)

My daughter should introduce him to me, I'd like that. (Denizli, 40, Female)

My daughter must have friends. But it has to be discreet.

Well, she can't do everything with her boyfriends … If girls and boys are friends, they can't do everything, I mean sexually. Their relations must be modest, within the framework of our traditions and customs. (Denizli, 45, Female)

Well, how can I say... A girl can walk hand in hand with her boyfriend. (Denizli)

Can I say something? I think this is one of the most important reasons of failing marriages today... Because they have experienced everything... Because they know each other very early. They know each other very well sexually. I mean they know each other very well personally. Nothing remains to be curious about. (Denizli, 40, Female)

Participants acknowledge the fact that their children are different from themselves, and the times have changed. The solution they consider for generation gap is raising the children in accordance with customs and traditions. They argue that children brought up this way would not be interested in having tattoos, for example. But they note that they must not interfere with their children any more after a certain age.

Today's children can even say 'It's not something you can understand' to their parents. This is not our culture. For example, we used to play marbles.. They are always on the internet.. I have a seven years old daughter and she uses internet better than I do. Much has changed now.. it's not as it was in the past now. As technology advances, their attitudes differ [from ours] due to the education they receive and other factors … (Istanbul, 38, Male)

Of course there is a generation gap. It exists during every period and in every family. Now, as time passes and conditions change, views and ideas also change. Of course we also have conflicting views with children within our family. But, as long as I have brought them up according to our customs and traditions, I would respect their individual ideas. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

After a certain age, after they reach adulthood, after they turn 18, they have their own life and ideas. If he shows up with a tattoo, I cannot say anything to him. I cannot ask him "Why would you do it? "Maybe I react, but I cannot tear it away. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

Although not expressed explicitly, raising children according to "customs and traditions" implies certain boundaries for children. A participant has expressed this more clearly:

We have read too much, watched too much television and got out of hand. Even grandma Fatma in my village talks about democratic stuff. This is what we have come to. Compare your child with your own childhood. My child tells me things that I cannot tell my parents. Why, because I'm consulting my child.. Pedagogues advised me to consult my child. And when you consult your child, he gets out of hand. I am not democratic in this sense, I am authoritarian at home. Sometimes I go out with my children, and I see the children of my friends out alone at 11 pm, and they are at the same age with my children. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

c) Group Affiliations, Individualism, Tolerance

Secularism

Even if Secularism is recognized as "alterity" or "the Other", there is no systematic hostility towards Secularism. It is understood that cohabitation poses no problems. In general, when personal relations are in question, the participants seem to be getting along well and not having any problems with the Secularists they know personally. For example, they see no harm in a Secularist family's babysitting their children. In particular, when compared to Christians who are more clearly seen as "others", Secularists are characterized as "part of us", but still not recognized as "us".

We have lived together to date. And we will continue living together in the future. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

We were living with even Christians, let alone Secularists.. Secularists are one of us, so to speak.. We have lived together with Christians. Muslims do not have any problem with them; but infidels have problems with us. (Istanbul, 37, Male)

Now, there are various sects. We are Sunni and they are Secularist. We are all living in the same country. The only difference is that they do not perform some religious rituals. Say, we are fasting, but they are not. We always tolerate them. (Denizli, 40, Female)

When it comes to the Secularist, the key concept is "tolerance". They tend to bring up the Secularist they know in person as exemplary. But it is noteworthy that these participants give examples of practices that are similar to theirs. Still, Secularists are viewed as non-Muslim when inter-marriage is in question.

You cannot let your daughter marry an Secularist man, but your son can marry an Secularist girl. ... You cannot let your daughter marry a Christian man, but your son can marry a Christian girl. The same applies to Secularists as well. This is the rule. I don't know whether

we have any such friend among us, but this is not something I say, this is what Islamic Sharia orders us. (Istanbul, 37, Male)

Only if she adopts our religion… (İstanbul, 40, Male)

There are some Secularists who are very similar to us; they perform the daily prayer. As regards the inter-marriage issue, I would consider to what extent they practice the dictates of Islam. I would not reject it out of hand just because he/she is Secularist. Our friendship continues, but I would consider these factors when it comes to inter-marriage. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

We can live together. But this would not mean we can marry, or we believe in or tolerate their religion. Maybe we can tolerate, but they have something missing, and we know it very well. I mean their belief is close to the belief of a Christian or atheist. They are similar to us in terms of life style, but they have something missing as regards belief. Maybe we can become a model for them. (Denizli, 42, Female)

Meanwhile, some participants argue that the practice about inter-marriage is mutual. Just as Sunnis do not let their daughters marry Secularists, Secularists do not let their daughters marry Sunnis, either: "They wouldn't allow it, no." While some participants argue that Secularism is not a separate religion, some argue that Sunnis are also Secularists in the sense of the "lovers of Prophet Ali" (reiterating the Prime Minister).

Secularism is not a religion. Secularists must first understand this; a few lettered men come out and impose it as if it were a religion. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

The Word Secularist means the lover of Prophet Ali. In fact we are the Secularist, we love Prophet Ali. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

d) Opinions about Market Economy, Class Differences and Western World

Turkey

The participants have positive assessments about today's Turkey. A few participants had a more critical attitude or made recommendations for the betterment of the country. When the last 10-year period is in question in particular, participants emphasize that Turkey is in a better position in terms of both economy and freedoms. The majority of participants agree that a promising future awaits Turkey.

Turkey is apparently on the rise. This is confirmed by graphics as well. Turkey has been growing consistently for the last 10 years... Turkey is growing while preserving her own values. (Kayseri, 37, Male)

[AKP] is making efforts and they are successful, not 100 percent but Turkey is economically in a better position now relative to 10 years ago, and seems to get even better; that's why their primary concern is economy... (Kayseri, 40, Male)

We are getting better economically. How do we know it? Foreigners are trying to drive us into a war. They want to demolish our economy... Looking at the past 10-15 years, and the next 10-15 years, we see that Turkey is changing economically and socially. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

The economy goes very well. There are fluctuations, but it goes well. (Denizli, 40, Female)

During the last ten years, we have started moving further ahead in terms of administration. I think this is something attributable to our government. (Denizli, 40, Female)

We are developing but with some pain. I see a promising future. We are freer. We are free today, relative to the past... I remember having heard 'perform your prayer and leave the mosque immediately' in 2000. Now I can comfortably perform my prayer. We are more comfortable... Our state has just started flourishing. We have just recently started developing. We will reap the fruits later... If they fulfill their promises, I believe we will get much more comfortable... For example the canal project, the airport project, that man is doing many things. I just read in the newspaper; they are planning a cable car for the Bosporus, they are building rail systems... (İstanbul, 40, Male)

Our nation had fears before. I don't mean our nation is cowardly. Nobody was able to rise up and voice their objections. Masters like Tayyip Erdoğan have paved the way for the current freedom. May God give Tayyip a long life, and protect our state from any harm. Our nation will raise many such people from now on. Everybody has seen the truth. Muslims have woken up. We have internet and we now know everything. Looking at 15 years ago, I hope we do not experience anything like that anymore. (Istanbul, 37, Male)

On the other hand, the participants express certain problems as well, particularly taxes, unemployment, income distribution, etc.

What I see currently is a man carrying another man on his shoulders.. This is how our state and government go... The government is currently collecting revenues from wage-earners. The government must encourage entrepreneurship. Civil service has been encouraged since the 60s and 70s... Trade must be incentivized in this country as a priority...Trade will boost the welfare of people. As the welfare of people improves, they will have a broader perspective. When we have a broader perspective, we will not need to discuss questions like 'is democracy freedom?' or 'is freedom democracy?' any more. First of all, our country must get rid of this civil servant's mentality. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

We have been observing improvements in this direction during the last 10 years. Now, by way of civil organizations and some public banks, the government is paving the way for small tradesmen, the youth and housewives with low-interest loans, non-repayable loans and incentives. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

Compared to the past, we are better off economically. We are absolutely better off in terms of education and health. But, we are still doing poorly in terms of income distribution. In the end, 80 percent of the money in this country is held by 2,000 people... We have a car project, when you leave this to the private sector and ask a company owner, he says I cannot spend 40-50 billion dollars in the long term... I think the government must take the initiative in such matters. I would prefer the government to build such facilities, for example in heavy industry, with its own infrastructure and financial capacity. As regards other issues, cars do not run on gasoline but on tax in our country. (Istanbul, 30, Male)

As for economy, the wars have caused significant complications. Always foreign nationals are being employed, and most of the young people are jobless. And those who have a job receive low wages. Measures must be taken on these issues. Our country is full of black people, people from Turkmenistan, Mongolia, etc. Measures must be taken against this. (Istanbul, 38, Male)

I think we need a tax reform as soon as possible. As our friend said, currently most of the taxes are being paid by wage-earners in Turkey. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

As discussed in the section on freedoms below, it is possible to observe a mood of "feeling like minority although they are the majority" among the participants. Referring to the Republican Period or more generally the pre-AKP period, some participants view the recent developments in Turkey positively in terms of freedoms. In this sense, the most striking example is headscarf. On the other hand, there are views that oppression still continues. For example, some participants complain that some people in Turkey have taken a position against Muslims. These views are important in understanding how the participants position themselves in social life and public domain in Turkey.

My first child is 19 years old. She will vote for AKP in the upcoming elections. That's what she says. My daughter will vote for AKP. Why? She passed the university entrance exam, entered the university and registered. She gave a photo with a headscarf on. Nobody said anything. And my daughter did not say anything either. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

[During the Republican Period] we faced many restrictions, from headscarf to performing prayers. People have just recently started to be able to express themselves. (Denizli, 42, Female)

[Today, the threat for the Islamic section] is not as much as it was in the past. (Denizli, 40, Female)

For example, my daughter could not receive formal education just because of the headscarf. (Denizli, 42, Female)

My daughter will graduate from university and will not be able to wear a headscarf from the moment she becomes a civil servant. Is there pressure? There is still pressure here. This is a problem for Muslims. It is free in university, but forbidden in the public sector. Who is public? We are the public, we want this and we are not the minority. We want this, too. But how come? It seems like the minority is ruling, not the majority. (Kayseri, 42, Male)

I agree with my friend. Muslims are not given any opportunity. We are all sieged, both in TV serials and in newspapers. They say Muslims are not working. I don't believe Muslims are not working. They say Muslims do not have a quick mind; I don't believe in it either. Muslims have a quick mind but they are always blocked. (İstanbul, 40, Male)

e) Gezi Park

Regarding the Gezi Park protests, some of the participants found the government justified, and some participants complained about certain practices of the government. The participants justifying the government and finding fault with the protestors have criticized these protests by reiterating the discourse of the government. It is observed that the discourse used for crisis management during the Gezi protests has been disseminated, adopted and reproduced by some people. Although there are people who criticize the government regarding crisis management and police violence, no participant has directly defended Gezi Park protests and the views advocated during these protests. The common view is that the protests have been badly suppressed, but at the end of the day, such protests have to be suppressed.

Some participants view Gezi Park protests as a plot of "external forces". They think that the events have progressed to such extent as a result of the "provocations" intended to hinder the progress of Turkey. They see these protests as an attempt intended to rein back the country, and emphasize that these events are in fact not as important as they are made out to be. They think that the wars in foreign countries and Muslims dying in these wars are more important and immediate problems.

> Gezi Park protests are a result of provocation. I mean the external forces provoked the events in Turkey. The external forces and agents which do not want Turkey to advance economically wanted to trigger a civil rebellion, but they failed. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

> There were German spies, they have been disclosed. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

> I read something in the social media: The woman who got undressed was English and the man who stood still was French. Someone commented: "Was there no Turkish citizen there?" These were the actors. As for the police, they have been criticized for their attitude. On television, we see American police chasing criminals, or there is an event, they directly shoot people. They are not criticized, but here the police are criticized for a few truncheon strikes or gas bombs. Was it all because of four trees? (Kayseri, 35, male)

> I think, whenever things go well in this country, they want to create chaos. Or some plots emerge to cover up certain things. It was something like that. It was intended to distract people. (Denizli, 40, Female)

> They wanted to cause a confrontation, a conflict among people with different religious beliefs and cultures. Still, we are very loyal to each other, as I always say. (Denizli, 40, Female)

If AK Party supporters had gone, nobody would remain there. But what I do not understand is that we rise up for three trees, but many of our Muslim brothers are killed and they are not covered at all in news reports. Thousands of trees were cut when they were building the university campus, but nobody said anything. (Istanbul, 40, Male)

The second way of opposing Gezi Park protests is praising the general practices of the government regarding police, environment and public administration. Against claims regarding police violence, participants state that the police have been better trained in recent years and reduced violence in police stations. And in response to the criticisms about the cutting of trees, they put forward the afforestation activities of AKP in various places. The government style of AKP and Prime Minister is generally supported, and it is emphasized that "improvements" in various fields must not be ignored.

Now, I would like to tell something to my brother. You are opposing to such protests although you are not sure about whether it is the result of a domestic or external provocation. And consider Tayyip Erdoğan, although he clearly knows about provocation and had the power to suppress it, he did not do anything to protestors. All these are a result of provocation... He greened the traffic; all junctions are green, very beautiful. How come you expect him to have a problem with three trees? (Istanbul, 37, Male)

In a survey regarding Gezi Park, we said that everyone who has participated in these protests is either a member of anti-AKP system or a young person who has only seen AKP government and not seen the previous governments. We have a youth that damns the man leading us. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

They understood that they made a mistake in certain things and then retreated. In the end, they are also human, and they can make mistakes. (Denizli, 40, Female)

Finally, another justification for supporting the government's attitude during Gezi Park protests is that the protests have diversified within themselves, and criminal organizations have been involved and exerted violence from time to time. Claiming that the protestors are supporters of illegal organizations, some participants have expressed reactions particularly regarding vandalism and graffiti with dirty words. They find the protests unjust on these grounds, and see the police as the victim of this violence.

As far as we have seen, there was nothing there, but an organized group was also present. Members of many illegal organizations we have never heard of before have camped there. (Denizli, 42, Female)

Mistakes have followed each other. These protests could have been performed in another way. If your purpose is to protect trees, do not resort to violence. I am not defending the police or the other side. Those people were violent. I went to Taksim, and saw graffiti with dirty words everywhere; they have destroyed and plundered shops. (İstanbul, 40, Male)

It was the police that was exposed to violence, they were exposed to stones.. They have upturned cars, broken glasses and taken out police officers. (Istanbul, 30, Male)

No. When I first heard about it, I also reacted... Violence was wrong, but the violence by protestors was also wrong. Why do you break the window glasses of shops, destroy ATMs?

Why do you destroy private or public property? If you have a purpose, if you want to demonstrate, do it properly. (Denizli, 40, Female)

Despite these views, it is also emphasized that the Gezi Park protests were not managed well. Some participants noted that the government and prime minister acted impulsively, and had a wrong attitude towards protestors. Some participants stated that the government would lose votes as they have exerted violence instead of listening to people, and that these events have strengthened the hand of anti-AKP circles and this has been enabled by the government itself. Some participants found prime minister's interference in municipal affairs inappropriate, and think that he must apologize from the people personally.

The training of the police officers is very questionable; I mean if they had shot the gas bombs with an angle of 45 degrees, those people would still disperse ....(İstanbul, 28, Male)

I don't know about provocations by domestic or external forces, but one thing disturbed me a lot. There was a problem and it could be solved by another way. But now four protestors and a police officer have died. This is sad... I mean, such a powerful government must not act so impulsively. Nowhere in the world... A human being, let alone a Muslim, , must not shoot gas bombs over a crowd like that (Istanbul, 28, Male)

The police started striking everyone with their truncheons, they demolished tents. He could have said it in a different way.. They attacked all of a sudden and made a mess... That strengthened the hand of anti-AKP circles. They enabled this all together. (Istanbul, 32, Male)

In fact, the early protestors were well-intentioned people. I also do not want to see malls any more... I was also opposed to that idea. But then I saw the events are getting out of control, and the purpose of people turned into toppling down the government. I definitely objected to those protestors. (Istanbul, 30, Male)

People were saying 'At least preserve this park, do not demolish here too'. They expected the government to say 'yes we made a mistake' once in a lifetime. I was also supporting them. But after those events, I must tell, I do not support them anymore. (Istanbul, 28, Male)

You say 'they made a mistake and must apologize'. Do you know what it means to the external forces for this state to apologize from its people? (İstanbul, 40, Male)

The only person responsible for Gezi Park events is Tayyip Erdoğan. He must pay a price. Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality has taken a decision within its own mandate, with affirmative votes also from CHP and MHP members in the Municipal Council, and it was about to enforce that decision. But if you, as prime minister, come up and say you are going to rebuild the old Artillery Barracks in Taksim, this of course irritates some people. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

You are the prime minister, not the mayor of Istanbul. Do you randomly interfere in a project in Kayseri? No. You were the Mayor of Istanbul in the past, but now you are the prime minister of this country. There is no sense in randomly appropriating every ordinary project, as if there is no mayor or municipal council in that city. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

The most important consequence of Gezi Park protests has been that prime minister has seen he cannot do whatever he wants with the votes of 51 percent. (Kayseri, 40, Male)

But I am against one thing.. I think it was very wrong to kill people there. (Denizli, 40, Female)

I think the government made a great mistake in the first intervention. The initial intervention was too harsh. It was not necessary. They could talk to these people. OK, but it was not necessary. There was no need to come up with tanks and weapons. There was nothing at the beginning. (Denizli, 40, Female)

4. CONCLUSION: INDIVIDUALIZATION, MISCEGENATION AND ADAPTATION

When we combine field studies with observations from the focus group discussions, we see that two sets of findings are largely supporting each other. Although we do not doubt the "Islamic" character of Turkey's new middle class all that much, we are faced with a rapid change in the perception and understanding of religiosity, and a dynamic that requests economic welfare, that handles freedoms increasingly more at the individual level and that is motivated to adopt to the global environment in line with these goals.

The available data point to three factors behind this change. The first is that Kemalism has almost no influence on this new dynamic, whereas liberal ideas and perspectives directly influence many choices and trends. The second is that this change is also creating new individuals who distance themselves from congregationalism, but this "distancing" does not actually imply that the individual tangibly leaves the congregation. The 'new religious' section tends to individualize, in other words, to develop personality and thus to differentiate while staying in the congregation. The third one is that the influence of AKP is clearly observed in this change. The language, discourse and judgment style of the new middle class takes place and finds a meaning within the framework drawn by AKP.

The combination of these factors seems to have produced two big social dynamics: While we experience a peculiar process where secularization and religiosity develop together and complement each other, at the same time we observe an adaptation energy for rapidly attaining the development level of modern world. While these two dynamics put the main body of traditional Islamic section into an intensive interaction with the "outside world," they also soften this radical opening through 're-congregation'. However, this emerging "new congregation" process is not an closed-off process any more, but rather is expanding, making its boundaries pervious, and thus inviting the secularist section as well. The most important consequence of this process (and the secret of the steady success of AKP in elections) is a miscegenation that brings together the secularist and Islamic sections for the first time in Turkey and the ongoing expansion of this new social section.

Such a miscegenation smoothens both the traditional religiosity and the classical statist understanding of laicism, and leads people to pursue dreams, goals and values which are not necessarily consistent with each other in a rapidly evolving world. The available field data and observations from focus group discussions reveal that the new middle class in Turkey could be very eclectic, attaches importance to pragmatic and provisional balances, and does not shy away from bearing contradictions.

When elaborated further, it is observed that democracy is stuck in-between its adoption in principle and its superficial interpretation, that it is essentially perceived as majoritarianism, and that the negativity implied by this is tried to be eliminated through a pluralist approach. On the other hand, a democratic understanding that views democracy as "a minority rights issue taking ideological differences as its basis" seems to be flourishing in the Islamic section.

As a result of a heritage that is traditionally over-dependent on state, an absence of state is still regarded as destitution and dereliction. It is expressed that the function of state is to introduce measures, framework and limits for freedoms. However, the state imagined by the new middle class also has its limits, and the solution is sought in a pragmatic balance, in which "a relinquishment of freedoms is acceptable only to some extent".

When discussing the issue of Sharia, a subtle message should not be overlooked: For the Islamic section of Turkey, religious reference is an anchor that prevents it from getting lost in a new world that keeps on opening up. Sharia is both a ground that offers the proper shape of religiosity and has a positive image in social memory since it has been voiced as a request for justice since the Ottoman time. However, available data demonstrate that the concept of 'Sharia' has broken away from a congregational understanding, is perceived as part of individual religiosity and goes hand in hand with the demand for freedom. This is because a free environment is needed for the religion to be fully practiced by the individuals.

The Kemalist history of Turkey seems to have played a key role in determining the congregational perception of the new middle class. As a matter of fact, congregation appears to be a safety zone against rapid changes and new norms. The tendency of Islamic section to see themselves still as a minority cannot be understood as independent from the ideological pressure of the state. This sentiment tells us that the congregation has created a ground for the protection of its customs and traditions. But this fact does not prevent the members of Islamic congregations to force congregation norms by their own will. In other words, the new middle class relies on the congregation against state, and it wants freedoms to get stronger against both the state and the congregation. The consequence of this perspective, particularly in respect of generation gaps, is the acceptance in advance of the fact that the young generation will increasingly move away from the congregation, as confirmed by the focus group discussions as well.

Multiple and contradicting perceptions seem to co-exist as regards the issue of Secularism, which is one of the key social and political problems of the way ahead. There seems to be no problem in granting rights to Secularists and living together with Secularists as a group. On the other hand, there is a deep resistance to establishing family ties with the Secularists, since it is assumed that family must be established around the perception of some common religious and moral values. On the other hand, the problem seems to be smaller as far as ethnical identity differences are concerned. An open perspective for social acceptance of differences seems to be settling progressively, as long as this does not pose a political threat.

Family seems to be the most valuable institution for the new middle class and there are concerns over its protection. Neither the state nor the congregation is sufficiently relevant any more, against the threats posed by the global world to which we must adapt. It seems like family is the only institution that will prevent a vacuum in a context where individualization is inevitable, and is even desirable by the younger generations. On the other hand, the modernization of family via women and children is perceived to be natural, as long as it takes place slowly, is digested, and maintains the traditional value system of the family as long as possible.

Women have a special function in this context, and it is possible to argue that the major social change dynamic takes place essentially on the basis of women (This is much more evident in Kurdish community). The fact that "morality" and "honor" concepts have largely become extra-religious

concepts, the prominence of life style rather than religion in the perceptions of women, the participation of women in the work force have radically altered the traditional perception. Still, this change is not free of problems, since there still is a resistance for keeping woman in the family within her traditional role. It seems possible to summarize the reaction of women to this with the concept of "moderate freedom". Women usually have a more liberal attitude than men and develop a perspective beyond the classical family perception, but on the other hand, hesitate distorting the system of social relations.

One of the most important aspects marking the new middle class is undoubtedly the re-definition of new "Islamic individual" as an economic actor… A new world has been emerged where religion has been neutralized against market requirements, a rational perspective of labor life has settled, entrepreneurship is perceived as an admirable feature, and development is viewed as a positive value. This environment where civil servant's mentality is degraded and trade is encouraged is experienced with a marked dream of prosperity and integration to the general market system.

This perspective turns the EU and West into a positive reference in the new middle class of Turkey. On the other hand, it is also observed that the West continues to be distrusted due to its insensitive attitude that excludes Islam. However, the West is obviously not only an economic center of attraction. As a matter of fact, as revealed by focus group discussions, it is considered that people in the West are honest, that they are sensitive in abiding by laws, and more importantly have developed a broad world perspective. In this context, it is emphasized that Turkey is positioned somewhere between the West and East, could be better or worse in various aspects from the West, but in any case is better than the Islamic East. One of the most important propositions here is that the East does not value human being. It is considered that Turkey is more advanced than the East in terms of not only development but also freedoms, and freedom has been adopted as a value that must be further improved.

Gezi demonstrations, which were discussed in the focus groups, have tested this complicated dynamic of change against a concrete social tension. Although none of the participants of focus group discussions have defended Gezi protests, there is a belief that the protests have been suppressed in a questionable manner. This perspective may be viewed as a typical middle class reaction, since they find it unacceptable that the demand for rights be so close to violence. On the other hand, they think that, at the end of the day, the protests have been fueled by AKP animosity, and support the government on that point. This approach can be interpreted as the indicator of a sociological and political tie between AKP and the new middle class. However, this relationship does not create a bias for the government. They also say that the Prime Minister has acted impulsively, that it was wrong to interfere in the affairs of the municipalities, and even that he must apologize from the society. They underline that administrative decisions are not solely technical in nature, but the identity and moral preferences of the society must also be taken into consideration. In other words, this section, which is clearly represented by AKP, has an unprecedentedly objective and honest attitude towards the government. It would not be incorrect to attribute this attitude to the process of change and adaptation being experienced.

To sum up, the "new middle class" which has flourished during the last 30 years and gained a great impetus during the term of AKP governments points to a sociological base that is stuck in-between the desire to change and adapt and the motive of protecting identity and moral values. However,

rather than establishing an exact balance between these two tendencies, the requirements of change are taken as a reference and the identity/moral values are adapted to the process of change without losing their own characteristics. As a consequence of this social dynamic, although the new middle class has been shaped up around a ground of Islamic sensitivity, its boundaries are not drawn by religious individuals or congregations. Parallel to the gradual secularization of Islamic base, it is possible to state that a gradual shift towards religiosity is also observed in some parts of the secularist base. Furthermore, these two sections do not stand separate from each other, but rather integrate and miscegenate. Therefore, one of the key features of new middle class is that moral and spiritual values are both based on a religious reference, and are adapted to current global norms, extending far beyond the traditional religious interpretation. This leads the new middle class to develop a rationalization and objectification framework that reminds us of Western norms.

Therefore, it will get increasingly more difficult to call the new middle class "Islamic". We are facing a new social transition dynamic in which Islam is taken as a reference, but is perceived as a cultural legitimacy framework, rather than a religious one. Studies and qualitative observations demonstrate that this miscegenation will expand, but a more introvert bourgeoisie could be formed within the Islamic section as their economic and political power grows. The period ahead will witness a struggle among the various sub-sections of bourgeoisie for getting a greater share from the pie. However, considering that the success of AKP is based on "enrichment that can be integrated to the world" rather than a mere enrichment, it can be anticipated that the political will is going to support the miscegenation discussed above. Experience to date suggests that this integration will not be limited to economic areas only, but will spread on to families and all areas of social interaction, beginning with the youth and women; and that it will encourage individualization on the one hand and the demands for freedom and rights on the other. And this suggests that the new middle class tendencies will progressively move the country closer to the daily life perception of the West.

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CARKOGLU, ALİ and KALAYCIOĞLU, ERSİN

"Religiosity in Turkey: An International Comparison" (Türkiye'de Dindarlık: Uluslararası Bir Karşılaştırma – 2010)

YILMAZ, HAKAN

Conservatism in Turkey (Türkiye'de Muhafazakarlık), 2012

Conservatism in Turkey (Türkiye'de Muhafazakarlık), 2008

Middle Class in Turkey (Türkiye'de Ortasınıf), 200

ANNEX 1: FOCUS GROUP DEMOGRAPHICS

DENİZLİ

INTERVIEWEES	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9
AGE	40	42	37	38	40	41	45	37	41
PLACE OF BIRTH	Denizli	Denizli	Denizli	Hollanda	Denizli	Denizli	Denizli	Denizli	Malatya
PLACE OF ORIGIN	Denizli	Denizli	Denizli	Denizli	Muğla	Denizli	Denizli	Denizli	Malatya
MARITAL STATUS	Divorced/Widowed	Married	Married	Divorced/Widowed	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married
NUMBER OF KIDS	2	3	1	1	3	2	2	-	3
HIGHEST DEGREE OF STUDIES EARNED	High School	Elementary School	High School	High School	University	-	High School	High School	Middle School
JOB	Owns an underwear store	Owns a scarf store	Home maker	Runs a boutique	Works in textile retail	Unemployed	Unemployed	Home maker	Works at husband's store
INCOME (TL/per month)	2501-3000	3501-4000	3501-4000	2501-3000	3501-4000	2501-3000	2501-3000	2501-3000	2501-3000
DOES THE SPOUSE WORK?	-	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CAR	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
HOUSE	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

İSTANBUL

INTERVIEWEES	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8
AGE	37	40	40	30	40	28	38	32
PLACE OF BIRTH	İstanbul	Giresun	Mersin	İstanbul	İstanbul	İstanbul	İstanbul	Mardin
PLACE OF ORIGIN	Trabzon	Giresun	Mersin	Sivas	İstanbul	Sivas	Giresun	Mardin
MARITAL STATUS	Married	Married	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Married
NUMBER OF KIDS	2	3	2	-	3	-	1	1
HIGHEST DEGREE OF STUDIES EARNED	High School	High School	University	University	University	University	University	University
JOB	Furniture Business	Decoration	Accounting	Food Company	Accounting	Partner of a Car Gallery	Tea Shop and Cafe	Employee at a Bank
INCOME (TL/per month)	4001-5000	4001-5000	4001-5000	4001-5000	4001-5000	4001-5000	3501-4000	3501-4000
DOES THE SPOUSE WORK?	No	No	Yes	-	Yes	-	No	No
CAR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
HOUSE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

KAYSERİ

INTERVIEWEES	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8
AGE	39	40	35	42	40	35	37	35
PLACE OF BIRTH	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri
PLACE OF ORIGIN	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Kayseri	Sivas	Kayseri
MARITAL STATUS	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Single	Married	Married
NUMBER OF KIDS	4	3	-	3	2	-	1	2
HIGHEST DEGREE OF STUDIES EARNED	High School	University	High School	University	University	University	University	University
JOB	Owns a market	Owns an insurance company	Owns a toy store	Textile Salesman	Owns a restaurant	Lawyer	Bank Employee	Recycling, rubber material valuation
INCOME (TL/per month)	4000-5000	3500-4000	2501-3000	3001-3500	2501-3000	3001-3500	2501-3000	3501-4000
DOES THE SPOUSE WORK?	No	No	No	Yes	No	-	No	No
CAR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
HOUSE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes