

## A Critique of Political Islam: The Turkish Model Case

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### **Abstract:**

Political Islam is a term often used in connection with the movements which represent the current political powers in the name of Islam. It is an idea that politically interprets Islamic rules and reflects these rules in a political way.

When we look at the phenomenon of political Islam, we can clearly see that it has some differences between Turkey and most of other Muslim countries. For instance, as Turkey is a secular state, there were some difficulties in expressing religious concepts in politics. Apart from this, political Islam has caused a sharp polarization among conservative people and secular people in Turkey, unlike other Muslim countries.

This paper aims to show Islam's approach to politics, the place and the domain of political Islam in the world conjuncture, and the damage given to the true Islamic understanding by the political Islam as a result of experiences in the history of Turkish politics.

### **Keywords:**

Islam, Politics, Political Islam, Turkey, National Vision Movement

## 1. Introduction

This paper deals with political Islam in Turkey in a critical point of views. By doing so, I aim to show Islam's approach to politics, the place and the domain of political Islam in the world conjuncture, and the damage given to the true Islamic understanding by the political Islam as a result of experiences in the history of Turkish politics. What is meant by true Islam is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The main characteristics of true Islam are that they are in conformity with the Qur'an's correct interpretation, and in conformity with the Sunnah and teachings of the Prophet.<sup>1</sup> So, the question posed for this research is: what are the damages that political Islam in Turkey gives to true Islamic understanding?

It is known that the common feature of monotheistic religions is their unity in the monotheism. This feature is unifying positive element in the social life of individuals with different cultures and understandings. On the other hand, different approaches arising from religious interpretation can make it practically negative.

There are four basic belief schools in the history, namely Khavarij, Shia, Murcie, and Ahl-I Sunnah, which constitute the Islamic belief system. Today, the basic beliefs of all Islamic groups that have determined the way of action under the framework of Islam, whether they are aware or not, are connected to one of these belief systems. Differences in interpretation that are prominent in the Islamic world today also stem from different interpretations of Islam in terms of sectarian or procedural criteria in general. From this point of view, it has been seen that the difference of interpretation about Islam today is fed from the past. Just like this, the main source of the understanding of political Islam was influenced by Kharijism.

Political Islam is, in short, the effort of politicization of Islam, transforming it into a political movement. With this approach, political Islam is an idea that politically interprets Islamic rules and reflects these rules in a collective political way.<sup>2</sup> With respect to this issue, Serif Mardin and Zafer Tunaya provide information. Recai Coskun and Ismail Kara pursues this study and explains the events with actual and true-life examples. In this paper, I generally obtained information from these names. Moreover, I enriched my study by interviewing some politicians and journalists.

This paper consists of four parts. The first part contains the criticism of political Islam and its different interpretations. In the next part, I dwell on Islam's approach to politics. In the third part, I will explain the experiences and examples of political Islam in the world of Islam outside Turkey. In the last part, I will interpret the historical past of political Islam in Turkey and the way it has followed to the present day with historical

examples.

## 2. The Criticism of Political Islam

There is a nuance between what this concept is and how it is perceived. Political Islam is, in short, the effort of active politicization of Islam transforming it into a political movement. This is defined as "political-ideological movements" aimed at guiding Islam in social and policy areas other than personal life.<sup>3</sup>

The term "Islamism" sprang into widespread use after the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and soon became permanent fixtures of contemporary political discourse. They were coined to describe an allegedly new phenomenon: political movements headed by educated Muslim laymen who advocated the re-Islamization or Muslim-majority countries (and Muslim communities elsewhere) that had, in their eyes, ceased to be sufficiently Islamic.<sup>4</sup> According to Şerif Mardin, Islamism is an ideological current<sup>5</sup> that gained its properties in the 19th century, was shaped in India and in places far away from the center of the Ottoman State, and influenced the central state after the 1870s. Oliver Roy describes political Islam as "a phenomenon whereby the ideologization returns to the politics and the promotion of the supremacy of politics against traditional religious law."<sup>6</sup>

Ismail Kara defines political Islam as "a movement including all the political, intellectual and scientific studies, researches, proposals and solutions dominated by activist, modernist and eclectic aspects in an effort to reestablish in the 19th and 20th centuries the dominance of Islam as a whole (belief, worship, morality, philosophy, politics, education ...) and to liberate Muslims and the Islamic world from Western exploitation, cruel governors, slavery and imitation and to ensure their civilization, unification and development."<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, political Islam can also be described "with all its notoriety and bad examples among the public" as a phenomenon whereby religion is used for political gains; religion, the pious and Islam are exploited; the religious values are distorted and they are used for worldly considerations; votes are garnered through religious discourse; as though the religion, the most social value, which must be considered to belong to anyone is owned by a particular group or section and nobody else has a say over it. In short, it is the estrangement of Islam from its origin and its corruption.<sup>8</sup>

The expression 'Islamist' was first used by Ziya Gökalp in the last period of the Ottoman Empire. Despite the fact that he used the Islamization and Islamism in the

article titled “Three Currents” in his book named “*Turkification-Civilization-Islamization*,” he meant to better interpret Islam, not a political Islam in the sense used today.

The definition of political Islam in today’s sense emerged late in the 1980’s and peaked in the 1990’s.<sup>9</sup> There is no denying that the 1979 Iranian Revolution triggered the political Islam movements. Islam is a religion that covers all aspects of life such as social life, politics, economics and education. Faith and its transformation into practice are inextricably linked. It would be wrong to identify the religion just with the personal lives and also it would be a flawed and objectionable approach to consider it as a part of the politics as an ideological tool. Such an approach is an imported approach that does not recognize Islam.

Tarık Zafer Tunaya regards the Islamist movement as the most influential and powerful of the political and ideological trends that dominate the thinking of the Second Constitutional Monarchy Period (1908-1920). According to him, the current of Islamism is a purely ideological and political movement. It is “ideological” because it suggests that it is a system of ideas and beliefs that will establish institutions, and invites a social movement to do so. It is “political” because it wanted to protect the Ottoman state as a whole and direct it to a direction in order to maintain its integrity. However, in order to better explain the issue, he emphasizes that the developments in Turkey have evolved with a more comprehensive "Islamic awakening" and this awakening has been shaped a few centuries ago.<sup>10</sup>

Today, there is a prominent reality about Islamic world and thought. It is the fact that Islam, as we have briefly mentioned in the introduction to our study, has differences in interpretation. The different interpretation of Islam in terms of sectarian or procedural criteria and the question of the politics of Islam have been subject to different assessments in their own context. These differences have reached such dimensions that Muslims are able to see them as opposed to each other and even out of Islam.

For example, Hayrettin Karaman who is an ardent supporter of political Islam, suggests as follows.

“I wouldn’t call those Muslims “Islamists” who try to exercise their beliefs and don’t pay much heed to religion in their family lives. Likewise, I wouldn’t call those “Islamists” who try to spread Islamic beliefs to their closest ones and to other people and strive hard to prevent Islam from any kind of corruption and invisibility in social life and sacrifice materially and spiritually to this end.”<sup>11</sup>

What is saddening is that Islamism has evolved from the principle that “individual is surrounded by the rules of Allah and he arranges every moment of life in accordance with these rules” to the understanding that “individual is free from divine and all other feudal sieges”. The individual will, of course, have the freedom in this evolution to determine his own connection with Allah. But it will solely remain an individual preference, not an attempt to impose any social construction in this context.<sup>12</sup>

The Islamists are estranged from their origins and find themselves in uncharted territories and thus, they serve the international political and economic powers and turn into a passive part of the dependency relation the capitalism is trying to maintain.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the political method always derives its power from the humans in the solution of matters. For this reason, sometimes there are great promises to realize personal interests that are invalid and false. On the contrary, the Islamic method which feeds on the holy Quran and Sunnah of Muhammad the Messenger derives its power from the mercy and grace shown by Allah to all mankind. The hadith relayed by the Aisha, wife of the Muhammad the Prophet is just a point in case: “In case of suspicions, try as much as possible to not apply the religion-related punishments. Because, it is better for the judge to make a mistake while forgiving than while applying punishment.”<sup>14</sup>

Reservations of Ramadan Al-Bouti regarding today’s political Islam are limited to these. The issues he put forward in relation to the political Islam are unfortunately experienced in all across the world. Al-Bouti states as follows.

“In order to reach their political aims, the Islamists, political parties and organization in question see legitimacy in such acts as creating chaos all across the world, inflicting damage on people’s lives and properties, intimidating innocent people and murdering the innocent. Then, all these factors led to such an outcome. The path to establish an Islamic society these individuals aimed to construct through political Islam has been closed and even the chasm between them and their aims widened and there are now so many barriers.”<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, this neither ensured individuals have sympathy towards Islam, nor have the Islamic aims of the Islamists been trusted. Consequently, these Islamists could not maintain their sincerity and purity regarding Islam. As a result of all these factors, what is distant to Islam was made close to Islam. For instance, it was alleged that Islam condones terrorism, incite anarchy all across the world, gives damage to people’s values and legitimizes inflicting damage on the innocent for personal benefits.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. Islam's Approach to Politics

Islam is a social life style.<sup>17</sup> According to Islam, the individuals have duties against the society in which they live in addition to the conscientious responsibilities. As a part of society, they also have to submit to the legal sanctions. This is because Islam sees the individual in a framework that encompasses all areas of life. Therefore, understanding of politics in Islam is concerned with the legal arrangement that emphasizes the establishment of justice and the abolition of persecution, and the protection of human rights and the necessity to derive power from people.

Muhammad the Prophet did not appoint anyone as a caliph, successor, to carry out religious and daily affairs on his behalf. There is no decisive provision in the Quran other than the general principles that are universal in essence. These general principles are the settlement<sup>18</sup> of the contentious issues through consultation, establishment<sup>19</sup> of justice among people, obedience<sup>20</sup> to the head of the state, return<sup>21</sup> of the possession to their true owners and piety<sup>22</sup> that is a behavior model without discriminating among people. That is to say, Muhammad the Prophet contend himself with these general principles and as specified above, he didn't appoint anyone as a caliph to represent the political power. It is clearly understood that in Islam, the understanding of politics is not a theological necessity but a spontaneous need emerging within the scope of the conditions of the society in which the individuals live.

We can even suggest that the leadership and exemplary character of Muhammad the Prophet is divine while his status as the head of the state is a human feature.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, Islam's understanding of politics is not a theory that can be valid in all periods of Islamic societies, but rather a reflection of the political experience experienced by the majority of Muslims in the past.<sup>24</sup> For this reason, the elders of the Companions who met in Medina immediately after his death chose Ebubekir as the caliph according to the circumstances of the era. After him, Ömer, Osman and Ali became the heads of the state respectively. Within the framework of the power struggles that began with the period when Osman was the head of the state, the presidency was taken up by the Umayyads and Hashemites.

Imam Juwayni and his student Imam Ghazali laid the foundations of the first political thought in Islamic understanding. According to this, the political debate is based on the absolute provisions and the case law.<sup>25</sup> Absolute provisions lead us to the founding and basic principles of politics on the axis of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. How these constitutive principles can be applied over time has been left to jurisprudence.<sup>26</sup> For instance, the obligation to select a fair and legitimate president is an absolute

provision, and how the president can be chosen is concerning the law case. That is why there is no specific form of government foreseen in Islamic political thought; the form of governance is regarded as an issue to be settled over time and consequently by case law. Relations between rulers and people in the Islamic political thought are dealt with and applied within the framework of the basic concepts determined by the domain of the absolute provisions. For this reason, after the death of Muhammad the Prophet, a different model emerged of the election of a caliph. If there were any provisions in the Quran and Hadiths stipulating a certain model, the Companions wouldn't have compromised on that and a relevant model would be in place today.<sup>27</sup>

According to Islam, Allah is the true master of power, the Creator of all the universe and mankind. But the use of power in the sense of administrative authority has been left to people. Through the prophets whom Allah has sent, He has provided the basic principles for the construction of society and development of mankind. It has been left to the case-law how and by which mechanism these basic principles will be reflected in practice. Political thought is not only viewed as an ontological imagination established between Allah and man, but perhaps as an ordinary part of a whole. The state, according to the Islamic understanding, is not an end in itself but a means to maintain the beliefs of Muslims in their righteous lives.

In light of these reasons, politics must not be at the forefront of the service to the religion. It has never been the case throughout the Islamic history. "In fact, all prophets including the first one Adam and all their followers did not base their service on the politics. Service to the religion can be carried out through faith, Quran, science, idea, morality, education and good behaviors. This can be done through encouragement to religions and reminding religious duties".<sup>28</sup> The only tools of achieving this are the definite rational, logical and scientific proofs of Islam. They are not the loathsome materials of politics. If you use force to defend justice, you will cause oppression. That's to say, justice, law and religion cannot be defended through injustice, oppression and intimidation.

#### **4. Political Islam Experiences in Islamic Countries**

As of the second half of the 20th century, political Islam has become a reality that has taken its place on the world agenda. According to Bernard Lewis, the rise of political Islam is, in a sense, the result of seeking solutions to the problems facing today's Islamic societies.<sup>29</sup> It is therefore necessary to look at the underlying reasons for this rise.

In the period following the Second World War, many Muslim-majority countries were exposed to social and economic transformation. Particularly in the 1960s, as a result of increasing population and accelerated immigration from the rural areas to the cities, the unemployment rates among the people increased and states became unable to provide basic services. On the one hand, poverty increased while on the other hand the inequality of income distribution increased. For example, before the Iranian Revolution, more than half of the national income in Iran was in the hands of 1% of the population.<sup>30</sup> This situation almost pushed the masses to the opposition to the existing system. States were not able to remedy this situation on its own and, as a result, attempts were made to fill those gaps with the introduction of Islamic movements.

The Muslim Brotherhood, based in Egypt, considered that the reason for the difficult situation in the Arab world was because the rulers were estranged to the Islamic essence and they cooperated with Western imperialism.<sup>31</sup> If Islamic morality and culture were to be made prevalent, Muslim society would be able to get rid of corruption even if the science and technology of the West were taken. The conception that supports this movement in the context of ideas is fed by al-Afghani, Muhammad Abdurahman and Rashid Rida and it was politically strengthened through the contributions of such names as Sayyid Qutb, Hassan Al-Banna and Abdulkadir Udeh.<sup>32</sup>

The idea put forth by these names, who have the courage to go beyond the rigid rules of Islam, was that it was possible to take science and technology from the West and if true Islamic philosophical and cultural resources are restored, the society may be saved from the collapse it is facing.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the Islamic movement created an alternative leadership against the frustrations caused by the nationalist and socialist elites who were once seen as a hope for the needs and expectations of the oppressed people and the Arab psychology against the West, in particular against Israel.

From the mid-1970s, political Islam emerged as a dominant opposition movement in the defeat of Arab nationalism, in the years when the neo-liberal economic model in the countries of the region was accepted as the only remedy. In the 1980s, the political Islamists adopted more Western-style democratic methods than those who were sectarian and violent (Wahabi, Salafi) and they became an effective opposition, showing an alternative to other opposing groups who wanted to change the political system in a democratic way.<sup>34</sup>

Other than these organizations aiming to come to power through democratic principles, radical political Islamic figures such as Abul A'la Maududi, who established the Pakistani Jamaat-e Islami in 1941, and Hasan Al-Banna, who founded the Muslim

Brotherhood in Egypt in 1928 advocated the seizure of power through force if necessary.<sup>35</sup> They aimed to get the required support from the moderate Islamic communities and organizations and people. Believing that Muslim societies would improve by targeting changes to the existing repressive regimes, Sayyid Qutb showed a more radical attitude than Al-Banna and Maududi, arguing that the only way to provide an Islamic order was 'jihad'.<sup>36</sup>

HAMAS, which was established in 1987 and was initially a radical structure, is the political Islam's extension in Palestine's Gaza established a government through elections thanks to massification.<sup>37</sup>

When we look at the recent history, we can see that the Nahda Movement under the leadership of Rashid Ghannouchi in Tunisia is one of the last examples of political Islam. In Tunisia Nahda, inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood and elected to power in 2011 following the Arab Spring, has stepped back in the face of the secular opposition. But it became the biggest party in parliament following the secular Nidaa Tounes Party, which was divided despite winning the most votes in the 2014 elections.

Finally, Ghannouchi told the French *Le Monde* newspaper, "There is no room for political Islam in Tunisia after Arab Spring. Tunisia is now a country of democracy," and stated that the political and Islamic activities of the party will be separated from each other, and thus, another experience of political Islam in Tunisia has failed.<sup>38</sup>

## 5. The Historical Process of Political Islam in Turkey

It can be suggested that with the multi-party transition in Turkey, initiatives began to represent Islam within the parliament. Subsequent military coups activated this potential all over the country and even allowed the related movements to gain momentum to a large extent. In particular, with the economic investments realized as a result of the Islamic capital and the political extension of this capital, development of the political Islam and people's support for it increased. Thus, this potential feeding and rising on these resources became an important power.

The Democratic Party of Islam (İDP), which was founded in the 1950s under the leadership of Cevat Rifat Atilhan, a retired Ottoman soldier was the first party directly related to political Islam in the history of the Republic of Turkey. The fact that Said Nursi warned this structure not to do politics in the name of Islam is also very meaningful.<sup>39</sup>

Atilhan managed to affect nationalist conservative circles with his anti-Semitic and

especially anti-Israeli discourse. Among other factors İDP managed to appeal to the conservative, nationalist and Islamic segments were its assertions that the Islamic world was being politically and economically exploited by the West and the Islamic world can only achieve to stand up thanks to leadership of a strong country like Turkey and to this end, an “Islamic Union” must be established under the leadership of Turkey. Indeed, articles supporting these ideas and policies were published in such magazines as *Sebilürreşad*, *Serdengeçti* and *Büyük Cihad*. In response to the İDP managers seeking support from the religious community known as “Nurcular,” Said Nursi rebuffed them arguing “Risale-i Nur cannot be used for anything other than for religious services...” and warned about the possible consequences of doing politics in the name of religion. In fact, repression of the Islamic - conservative and nationalist groups under the pretext of the reactionary charges due to the Malatya events unfolding after the closure of the İDP and then the repression and prosecution of the Nur community was an example substantiating the arguments of Said Nursi.<sup>40</sup> Nur Movement, facilitated the first new Islamic discourse since the beginning of Turkish Republic. Nursi, 1873-1960, was a prolific writer and interpreter of the Quran, as well as expressing views on various religious subjects. In his writings, he emphasized the cultivation of the self in enhancing the spiritual wellbeing of the believer in order to attain the best of the Quranic teachings and Islamic values. His writings were popular and generated a sizable number of followers who talked about the issues he raised and discussed his ideas. Those discussions continue to our present day surviving against the odds of many years in a difficult situation. And for many, Said Nursi’s ideas and activities represented the first seeds of civil society action in modern Turkey.<sup>41</sup>

It is a fact that İDP is the first example of the Islamic partisanship, which is to be launched under the leadership of Prof. Necmettin Erbakan (who died in 2011). In order to excite the masses belonging to the nationalist segments, Atilhan's rhetoric was repeated by Erbakan. The National Order Party (MNP), which was established by Necmettin Erbakan on January 26, 1970, was closed down and then the National Salvation Party (MSP) was established on October 11, 1972 and it became the symbol of the political Islam. Thus, the foundations of the National Vision Movement, which would have an important place in the name of political Islam in Turkey, were laid.

The National Vision Idea was a movement started with the establishment of the National Order Party under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan. The National Order Party became a partner of the coalition governments four times between 1974 and 1978 and then Welfare Party (RP) was established and its popularity peaked with a steady

success in many local and general elections it joined in the 1990s and as a result, it formed governments as a major ruling partner.<sup>42</sup>

The National Vision Movement's growth and political success in the decade from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s lies in the massification of its propaganda. The RP succeeded in getting votes from almost every segment of the society in the decade mentioned as a political organization trying to transform the identity of the congregational party into a mass party without changing its rhetoric. RP was a party that could fill the political gap created by the depression that befell on the center right after the death of Özal and garnered votes thanks to the Islamic dominance in its discourse and ideology.<sup>43</sup>

Ersöznemez Yarbay, an RP lawmaker, explained in an interview the rise of the National Vision Movement as follows:

"The rise of RP can be attributed to the incoherence of other parties, their alienation from people and the filling of the gap by the RP. Increased oppression of people with Islamic sensitivity and the fact that the RP fought against this oppression contributed to the rise of RP. A gap emerged as the other parties were insensitive to this Islamic sensitivity. We filled this gap as the National Vision Movement."<sup>44</sup>

Political Islam in Turkey had a rapid rise with the February 28 period,<sup>45</sup> which was described as a post-modern coup but shortly afterward, with the decisions taken by the National Security Council the political Islamic movements were interrupted on the grounds that they were trying to destroy the constitutional order. It is obvious that the policy adopted by the representatives of the National Vision Movement, especially in the February 28 period, had a negative impact on Turkey's democratization. Necmettin Erbakan's some rhetoric and politics such as expressing his religious targets in a way denigrating a certain segment of the society when he was the prime minister, organizing an iftar (fast-breaking dinner) for the heads of the religious communities and dubbing the religious high schools as "his backyard" created tension in society. These policies caused serious damage to the democracy of Turkey, in general, to the National Vision Movement in particular.

In an interview with author, Alaattin Şahin explains this as follows.<sup>46</sup>

"Wrong rhetoric of the Welfare Party triggered February 28 process.

Politicization by the RP of the headscarf issue and religious high schools can be taken as examples of that rhetoric.

At a parliamentary group meeting, Necmettin Erbakan said,

“Welfare Party will come to power and a Just Order will be established. Will the transition period be hard or soft? Will it be bloody or bloodless?” In another group meeting he said: “Religious high schools are our backyard” This and similar rhetoric were among the reasons triggering the February 28 period.”<sup>47</sup>

We can clearly suggest that as the representative of the National Vision Movement in the aftermath of the closure of the RP, the Virtue Party tried to identify itself as a party which advocated integration with the West and liberal economy and democratic state of law in an effort to guarantee its existence which was different from the stance pursued by its predecessor.<sup>48</sup> We see from the Party Program that the FP pursued different policies from the RP. The Party Program stated that the state must be kept out of the commercial activities as much as possible and these activities must be pursued by the private sector. According to the party program, the state must undertake full public and semi-public goods and services such as security, justice, education, and health which are the essential functions of a state and the requirements for free-market economics must be ensured by the state as a supervisor and regulator to enable the development of the private sector.<sup>49</sup>

The first political rift in National Vision surfaced in 2000, and at the Virtue Party’s First Congress on May 14, 2000, the difference of views between traditionalist and reformists was very clear. Candidate of the reformists, Abdullah Gül received 521 votes and the candidate of the traditionalists Recai Kutan received 633 votes. Following the closure of the FP, the traditionalist parliamentarians supporting Recai Kutan established a party named Felicity Party. Those reformist parliamentarians who supported Abdullah Gül at the Virtue Party’s First Congress split and they joined the Justice and Development Party (AKP) first under the leadership of Abdullah Gül and then Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The AKP was established in 2001 under the leadership of the current chairman of the AKP Recep Tayyip Erdogan.<sup>50</sup>

Since then, Erdogan has become the only alternative figure of political Islam in Turkey. The first years of the government were the brightest years of Turkey in both domestic and foreign politics; however, personal and financial frailty of the individuals

and the very obvious political favoritism inflicted serious damage on both the religious values and Islam's exemplary character.<sup>51</sup> Using religion for political considerations in particular, exploitation of religion, the pious and Islam and associating religion which is the most important social value, with just a particular segment of the society or religious group caused considerable split among public. All this shows that political Islam once again failed in Turkey.

In other words, all these experiences that started and developed in the name of political Islam have not succeeded because both in economic failures and in the absence of enjoying political peace within the society. Unfortunately, Islam has been shown as the reason for this failure.

## 6. Conclusion

*Political Islam*, a form of active politics, is an idea that politically interprets Islamic precepts and rules and reflects these rules in a collective political way. Political Islamic thought, which is practically tried to be shaped by liberal and partly religious rhetoric in the framework of democratic principles, has been one of the most influential movements of Muslim societies in the 20th century.

As can be concluded from the study, personal and financial frailty of the individuals especially those in leadership position and the very obvious political favoritism inflicted serious damage on both the religious values and Islam's exemplary character. Since Islam was a holistic system of life, religious Muslims tended to look at the practices of politicians with the holistic view of Islam. Therefore, they regarded the mistakes of the politicians as defects of the system as a whole. Using religion for political considerations in particular, exploitation of religion, the pious and Islam and associating religion which is the most important social value, with just a particular segment of the society or religious group caused considerable split among public.

"As expressed by Al-Bouti, the path to establish an Islamic society these individuals aimed to construct through political Islam has been closed and even the chasm between them and their aims widened and there are now so many barriers. Therefore, this neither ensured individuals have sympathy towards Islam, nor have the Islamic aims of the Islamists been trusted. Consequently, these Islamists could not maintain their sincerity and purity regarding Islam."<sup>52</sup>

It is clear that, as Oliver Roy points out, the political Islam experience we have conveyed above in the world in general and in Turkey, in particular, has failed. Islam, which regards politics as just a means, has been at the receiving end of the damage done by the assertions that have ignored this basic approach and deemed the political and worldly considerations as an indispensable target.

## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> Mehmet Sevki Eygin, There is Islam, but is it True Islam?, *Timeturk*, Available at: <https://www.timeturk.com/muslumanlik-cok-da-gercek-islam-ne-kadar/haber-44278>, 16.08.2015, Access Date: 16.11.2017.
- <sup>2</sup> Oliver Roy, *Secularism Against Islam*, Agora Kitapligi, Istanbul, 2010, p. 40.
- <sup>3</sup> Ismail Kara, <http://t24.com.tr/haber/prof-kara-her-musliman-islamci-degildir>, 210796, 13.08.2012.
- <sup>4</sup> Oliver Roy, “Political Islam After the Arab Spring Between Jihad and Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs*, November/December, 2017 Issue, Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2017-10-16/political-islam-after-arab-spring>, Access Date: 24.11.2017.
- <sup>5</sup> Serif Mardin, *Religion and Politics in Turkey*, Iletisim Publication, Istanbul, 2011, p. 23.
- <sup>6</sup> Oliver Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
- <sup>7</sup> Ismail Kara, 1985, [http://www.yeniasya.com.tr/enstitu/siyasal-islam-ve-islamcilik\\_141536](http://www.yeniasya.com.tr/enstitu/siyasal-islam-ve-islamcilik_141536). Access date: 18.06.2017.
- <sup>8</sup> Available at: <http://blog.milliyet.com.tr/-siyasal-islam-nedir-nereye-gider-/?BlogNo=421393>. Access date: 10.07.2017.
- <sup>9</sup> M. Hakan Yavuz, “Political Islam and the WP in Turkey,” *Comparative Politics*, 1997, p. 48.
- <sup>10</sup> Tarik Zafer Tunaya, *Islamist Movement*, Simavi Publications, Istanbul, 1991, p. 184.
- <sup>11</sup> Hakan Sonmez, <https://www.siyasetcafe.com/yuzyilin-en-buyuk-din-masali-islamcilik-siyasal-islam-2437yy.htm>. Access date: 15.09.2017.
- <sup>12</sup> Recai Coskun, “Liberalization of Political Islam in Turkey: “Where are you going?”,” *Journal of Politics and Culture*, 2014, p. 48.
- <sup>13</sup> Recai Coskun, *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- <sup>14</sup> Al-Bouti, Said Ramadan, “Bediuzzaman’s Experience in Inviting to Islam Through Politics,” (Ter. Abdulaziz Hatip), *Kopru Journal*, Summer, 98, Issue 63, p. 90.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> Serif Mardin, *op.cit.*, p. 106.
- <sup>18</sup> Sûrâ, 38; Âl-i İmrân, 159. Sûrâ is the forty-second surah in the Qur'an. It literally means advise. Âl-i İmrân is the third surah in the Qur'an. It means ‘Imran Family.’
- <sup>19</sup> Nisâ, 58. Nisâ is the fourth surah in Qur'an. It literally means women. Because, it is mentioned more of women and place of woman in social and cultural life. Moreover, some provisions in Shari'ah law are based on the verses of Nisâ. Marriage in Islam, gender relations, and inheritance law are also covered in this surah.

<sup>20</sup> Nisâ, 59.<sup>21</sup> Nisâ, 58.<sup>22</sup> Hucurât, 13. Hucurât literally means rooms. The rooms where the Prophet resided with his family is mentioning. Some of the etiquette and moral rules that the believers have to obey are being discussed in this surah.<sup>23</sup> Kutlu Sonmez, "Questioning the Religious Foundations of the People of Sunnah's political Understanding," *Maqalat Sect Studies*, I/1 Spring, 2008, pp. 13-15.<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.<sup>25</sup> İmâmü'l-Haremeyn Al-Juwayni, Al-Gîyâsî, Gîyâsü'l-ümem fi'l-tiyâsî'z-zûlem, nşr. Abdülazim ed-Dib, 2. bsk., Mektebatü'l-kübra, [y.y.] 1981, p. 60; a.mlf., Al-İrshad ila kavati'i'l-edille fi usuli'l-i'tikad, nşr. Muhammed Yusuf Musa, Mektebetü'l-Hancı, Kahire 1950, pp. 410-434.<sup>26</sup> Hizir Murat Kose, "Politics," DİA, *Islam Encyclopedia*, 37 (İstanbul 2009), pp. 295-296.<sup>27</sup> Al-Bouti, Said Ramadan, *op.cit.*, p. 103.<sup>28</sup> Kose, *op.cit.*, p. 109.<sup>29</sup> Bernard Lewis, *Islam's Political Discourse*, Second Edition, Cep Kitapları, İstanbul, 1997, p. 8; Thomas J. Butko, "Revelation or Revolution: A Gramscian Approach to the Rise of Political Islam," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1, May, 2004, p. 137.<sup>30</sup> Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East*, B. Tauris London, Issue 16, 2009; See. Levent Duman, Özgür Üşenmez, "Political Islam in the World and Turkey," *Journal of Social Sciences*, Year: 3, Issue: 7, June, 2016, p. 259.<sup>31</sup> Ashraf El-Sherif, "The Muslim Brotherhood and the Future of Political Islam in Egypt," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, October, 2014, p. 3.<sup>32</sup> Emad El-Din Shahin, "Political Islam in Egypt," Center for European Policy Studies Working Document, No. 266, May, 2007, p. 11.<sup>33</sup> Dalibor Rohac, "Understanding Political Islam," *Cato Institute Economic Development Bulletin*, Center for Global Liberty & Prosperity, No. 20, June 23, 2014, p. 2.<sup>34</sup> Levent Duman, Özgür Üşenmez, "Identity Problems in Turkey: Alevis and AKP," *Alternatif* Vol. 3, 2015, p. 264.<sup>35</sup> Roel Meijer, *Towards Political Islam*, The Hague Netherlands Institute of International Relations Cligendael Diplomacy Papers, No. 22, July, 2009, p. 10.<sup>36</sup> Demet Sefika Acar, *Middle East in the Axis of Islamist Ideology and Islamist Movements*, Kirikkale University, 2015, p. 10.<sup>37</sup> Radical Islamic formations such as al-Qaeda and ISIS, which we face in our immediate geography, are armed organizations trying to reach their targets through terror and they must be regarded separately from the political Islam we are discussing in this study.<sup>38</sup> Basheer Nafi, "The Failure of Political Islam?" [www.middleeasteye.net](http://www.middleeasteye.net), 6 August, 2015. Access Date: 23.07.2017.<sup>39</sup> Said Nursi, *Emirdağ Lahikası*, Vol. 2, Yeniasya Publication, Istanbul, 1996, p. 1822.<sup>40</sup> Celil Bozkurt, "Conservative Democrat Rhetoric and Historical Background of Political Islam," *Kopru Journal*, Winter, 2014, p. 86.<sup>41</sup> Iyas Salim Abu-Hajjar, "Navigating the Soul of the Mavi Marmara: Muslim civil society in Turkey and its transnational role in Palestine," Ph. D. Thesis, Doshisha University Graduate School of Global Studies, November, 2014, p. 36.

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- <sup>42</sup> Hakan Ozdemir, “Two National Vision Parties on the eve and in the aftermath of the 28th of February: Welfare Party-Virtue Party,” *Süleyman Demirel University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Journal*, Vol. 20, Issue 2, Isparta, 2015, p. 166.
- <sup>43</sup> Ahmet Yasir Eren, “The Place and Importance of the “Views of Ummah” Movement in Turkish Democracy with the Sample of Welfare Party,” *Journal of Global Studies*, The Association of Global Studies, Doshisha University, Vol. 7, April, 2016.
- <sup>44</sup> The interview with Ersonmez Yarbay, 10.06.2016.
- <sup>45</sup> This is an anti-reactionary process which started with the decisions taken by an extraordinary gathering of the National Security Council on February 28, 1997, when Necmettin Erbakan was the prime minister. The events during this process which caused changes in political, administrative, legal and social areas in Turkey as a result of the decisions taken and the subsequent implementation of these decisions are called postmodern coup.
- <sup>46</sup> Ankara University Faculty of Political Sciences, Sifa University Board of Trustees.
- <sup>47</sup> The interview with Alaattin Sahin, Izmir, 05.04.2016.
- <sup>48</sup> M. Cagatay Okutan, “Justice and Development Party: Conservative or Democrat, Muslim Version of Christian Democracy?” *Journal of Dokuz Eylul University Social Sciences Institute*, 8 (1), Izmir, 2006, p. 317.
- <sup>49</sup> Virtue Party, “Hand in Hand for Leading Turkey” *Democracy, Human Rights and Freedoms, Peace, Justice and Development Program for a Leading Turkey*, 1998, pp. 15-16. This publication is the party program of the Virtue Party.
- <sup>50</sup> Mohammed Ayoob, “Political Islam: Image and Reality,” *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 3, Fall, 2014, p. 5.
- <sup>51</sup> Metin Heper and Sule Toktas, “Islam, Modernity, and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey: The Case of Recep Tayyip Erdogan,” *The Muslim World*, April, 2003, 93, 2, Research Library, p. 168.
- <sup>52</sup> Al-Bouti, Said Ramadan, *op. cit.*, p. 106.