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5. Theory, Case and Analysis

5.1.Theory and Case

The theoretical framework of Gramsci and Mardin is crucial while analyzing the sub-dimensions of the February 28 and April 27 Processes. Therefore in the following section, it is necessary to establish a link between theoretical perspectives and the factual history of the February 28 and April 27 Processes.

The center-periphery model of Mardin presents a sufficient foundation for understanding the major characteristics of the secularism discussion in Turkey, and more specifically during the intervention periods. According to the aforementioned theoretical framework by Mardin, two intervention processes can be considered as one of the recent cases, in which the underlying conflict of the center and the periphery was active. After drawing a general perspective with the help of Mardin's theory, Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemony offers various explanations to how civil society and the media acted during this process.

While explaining the February 28 and April 27 Processes with the help of Mardin's and Gramsci's models, it is necessary to begin with a clarification of the relationship between Mardin's center and Gramsci's hegemonic center. Concerning this case, the phenomenon addressed by Mardin's center and Gramsci's historic hegemonic center is the same: The Kemalist establishment that was the major force against the conservative politics. Using Mardin's concept, the Kemalist establishment represents the center of society as it dominated the main cultural, economic, social and political institutions. In addition the intervention of the military with the help of civil society during those two processes can also be regarded within this framework. On the other hand, the Gramscian analysis of hegemony supplements understanding as to how and why such an intervention occurred. As essentially a conflict between the hegemonic center and the subaltern periphery, the first task to understand this conflict is to define the conflicting sides.

The "historic hegemonic center" refers to the part of society which is also named as the "Kemalist establishment" in the previous sections of the text. Kemalism in this formation does not only stand for an ideology but also for the material alliance adhering to this ideology in spite of the ideological disintegration of some components of the alliance. Although this may sound a bit paradoxical the hegemonic situation unites the historic hegemonic center in

spite of the ideological disintegration. As Yavuz mentioned “The *raison d’être* of the Kemalist establishment is to keep the Islamic ‘other’ at bay, and this struggle is what unifies the military-bureaucratic establishment.”²²⁷ The “other” was the rising reactionary danger in the February 28 and April 27 processes, the utilization of the discourse of communist threats against leftists and, more recently, the utilization of a separatism discourse against Kurdish political activism. More specifically, the military and the civilian bureaucracy, the center-based capital including media corporations, the universities and Kemalist civil society formed the historic hegemonic center against the conservative subaltern periphery during the February 28 and April 27 Processes.

From the components of the historic hegemonic center, the ideological position of the center capital was deeply different from the others. The center capital embodied in TÜSİAD had occupied a more liberal and democratic position before the February 28 Process. For example, TÜSİAD prepared many policy papers, which were very critical of the bureaucracy, for the democratization of Turkey. Moreover, they were also critical of other business associations and trade unions for their support of the current political system in Turkey. However, when the hegemonic exclusive domain of the center was threatened by the subaltern periphery, this association took its place within the historic hegemonic center together with its partners, including the bureaucracy, other business associations and trade unions which it had criticized in the past. A similar change was also observable in TÜSİAD’s stance during the April 27 Process.

As aforementioned, the integrative capacity of the historic hegemonic center is one of the major prerequisites for hegemony. During the February 28 Process and partly during the April 27 Process, it is possible to observe the functioning of the integrative capacity of the historic hegemonic center. The primary executor of integration during the February 28 Process was the center's media. The role of the media as a part of the historic hegemonic center is best explained by the intellectual and moral leadership concept of Gramsci. On the other hand during the April 27 Process, some media institutions covered in the study and many others that are not covered were not so eager to participate in the Process even though it was still possible to talk about media as a part of the historic hegemonic center. The footprints of change in the media’s position during these two processes can be traced to the change in their capital structures. However, for now it is more appropriate to postpone the analysis of media ownership to the preceding sections as to not distract from the analysis of the nature of the relationship between the media and the historic alliance.

²²⁷ Yavuz, H. *Cleansing Islam From the Public Sphere*, p.25.

The media functioned as the intellectual and moral leadership by manipulating the perception of the conservative threat against the center's hegemony as the rising danger of reaction. The creation of popular consent among the urban middle classes only became possible by media manipulation. It was risky to target conservative values, ideas and politics openly because such a strategy had the probability of bringing about mistrust from religious people. Therefore, the media firstly manipulated the distinctions of good and bad Muslims, which had been a typical topic of Kemalist discourse since the 1920's, and transferred all the negative characteristics of bad Muslims to conservatives. The inception of terminology was one of the critical functions of the media's intellectual and moral leadership. When the subaltern classes adopted the language of the leading classes, they start to interpret the world in the way leading classes do as a result of that adoption. Considering its historical and ideological roots the Turkish media was well suited to the task of producing the language of the leading class. Since the first generation of journalists in Turkey, a positivist and didactic attitude has been a leading characteristic of Turkish media.²²⁸ A discourse on good and bad Muslims is a language generated by the Turkish hegemonic elites, especially the journalists and politicians. As a result, once the good and bad Muslim talk was adopted and internalized by the subaltern periphery as a hegemonic language, the subaltern periphery has been unable to follow its own interests. One such example can be found with the trade unions cooperating with TÜSİAD against the conservative peripheral segments of the society, with which they surely have more common interests, values and life styles.

In addition to intellectual and moral leadership, economic and corporate sacrifices also served as tools that contributed to the maintenance of the hegemonic bloc.²²⁹ The leading class in the Gramscian²³⁰ sense, or the center in Mardin's conceptualization, should make some sacrifices, and reorganize economical activities in order to fulfill the interests of its elements, and in this case namely the media. Concerning the February 28 Process, we can see that after the establishment of the new coalition government, or more specifically the government that succeeded the RP-DYP coalition Government, the Turkish media industry was amply rewarded with privatizations in the energy and concessions in the banking sector in which the Turkish media industry had already started to invest.²³¹ By 1998, the five largest media

²²⁸ For a detailed account of early journalist in Turkey see: Kocabaşoğlu, U. (2010). *"Hürriyet"i Beklerken: İkinci Meşrutiyet Basını*. İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.

²²⁹ Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci, p.183.

²³⁰ The basis of Gramscian distinction of class is more diverse than the classical Marxist conceptualization of class. Marx defines class in economical terms whereas Gramsci offers a combination of economic, social and cultural elements. According to the Gramscian conceptualization, even labor union leaders can be a supporter of the hegemony of the leading class by contributing to the continuation of it.

²³¹ Adaklı, G. (2001). "Yayınçılık Alanında Mülkiyet ve Kontrol," in *Medya Politikaları*, Beybin Kayanlıoğlu, Sevilay Celenk, Gülseren Adaklı (eds.), 145-203. Ankara: İmge, p.185-7, 190-7.

conglomerates- the Doğan Group of Aydın Doğan, the Medya Group of Dinç Bilgin, the Rumeli Group of Cem Uzan, the İhlas Group of Enver Ören and the Avrupa Group of Erol Aksoy- held 80% of the market in Turkey.²³² In addition to the cartelization of the media sector, these conglomerates also invested in non-media sectors such as insurance, banking, marketing, and energy. For example, the Doğan Group, the largest conglomerate, owned Dışbank, POAŞ (Petrol Office Joint Stock Co.), Ray Insurance and Doğan Energy. The second largest Medya Group owned İnterbank, Etibank, Çukurova Steel Industry, and Halk Insurance.²³³ However, without an ideological position as a part of the historic hegemonic center, such economic endeavors would not be enough to gain strong media support for the process.

As a result of the media's manipulation of good and bad Muslims, the consent of the urban middle classes to the Processes was secured. The consent and support of the above-mentioned classes to the Processes constituted the civil society dimension of the interventions. Moreover, there was an existing branch of civil society such as the Kemalist NGOs for which a consent creation process was unnecessary, as historically they had identified the Kemalist hegemony as the number one issue on their agenda. However, these organizations lacked popular support. During these Processes, either popular support was channeled to these organizations, or these organizations diverted attention and popular support, as in the cases of the Susurluk demonstrations and Republican Rallies.

The motivation behind university support for these Processes were more or less similar to the motivation of the bureaucracy, as they occupied a central position in the ideological formulation of the hegemony of the center. In other words, the creation of consent, which was needed in securing the support of civil society, was not necessary for universities, as they were closer to the ideological center of the historic hegemonic center. Academicians, as a part of traditional intellectuals, were historically very committed to Kemalism. Although they can adopt different ideological positions as leftists or liberals, their position in the center-periphery conflict has been always pro-center. Turkish academia is still under the influence of the positivist and elitist tradition of the Young Turks, especially in the spheres related to religion and populace.²³⁴

²³² Medya Dökümantasyon Birimi (1998). *Mediascape Türkiye 98*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi & Konrad Adenauer Vakfı, 54.

²³³ Adaklı, G. *Yayınclık Alanında Mülkiyet*, p.164-165.

²³⁴ For a more detailed analysis of historical accounts of the Turkish intellectuals' interpretation of Islam see; Demir, A. İ. (2004). *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Aydınlarının İslam'a Bakışı*. İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat.

Generally the efforts of the Kemalist establishment and especially the military, to include civil society in the Processes were not for democratic purposes. Rather it was for the halting of any kind of democratic evolution which would lead to a decline in the military's role in Turkish politics. This paradox in the mobilization of civil society demonstrates the suitability of Gramsci's model in the explanation of the February 28 and April 27 Processes. For example, the protests about the Susurluk incident were valuable in terms of democratization of Turkey and the growing role of civil society in Turkish politics. However, the anti-democratic ends derived from the protest were at odds with the initial aim of the Susurluk protest, namely open, cleaner politics and society. The following lines of Cizre and Çınar²³⁵ offer accurate concluding remarks on the discussion of civil society during the process;

“In trying to undermine the RP's popular appeal and create an order characterized by social discipline centralized authority, and hierarchical integration. The military has been very successful in establishing a new relationship with targeted groups in society. It has appealed directly to the organized groups of the modernized urban-secular sectors—the business world, media, academia, public prosecutors, judges, leaders of civil societal associations—and even held briefing meetings with them to warn of the extent and magnitude of the Islamic threat. The rising salience of civil society for the general staff, however, has not arisen from the search for a free public space, rule of law, limited state power, democratic consensus and compromise over power sharing. On the contrary, there is a widespread belief among the secular-urbanites that the intensity of the Islamic threat may require the suspension of democratic freedoms and limitation of representative principles and institutions. To this end, these sectors have given the TAF [Turkish Armed Forces] a strong hand in crushing what they see as a threat to the regime's existence”

Kemalist NGOs were also at the scene during the April 27 Process in an attempt to hijack the Republican Rallies and presidential elections discussion, with the purpose of creating an opportunity for the military's intervention in civilian politics.

Not the existence of the subaltern periphery, but rather its efforts to remove its own subaltern characteristics and to move towards the center of the society was a problem that could not be tolerated by the historic hegemonic center. A move towards the center also meant an attempt to form a hegemonic position, and therefore not only the ideology of the RP and AKP, but

²³⁵ Cizre, Ü. & Menderes, Ç. Turkey 2002, p. 232.

also the societal and political bases of their political success were unacceptable for the Kemalist establishment. By stating the societal and political bases of their political success, this refers to the political opportunity structure and resource mobilization of the RP and AKP, which are mentioned in the previous chapters of the text.

The real line of confrontation in the processes was not the ideology of conservatives or their discourse. It does not seem plausible to claim that the Processes were totally against the Islamic ideology of the RP and AKP because they were in search of ways to reconcile with the Kemalist establishment when the Processes started. Therefore, this fact offers crucial support for the claim of the intentions of the historic hegemonic center, and especially of the military, during the Processes; it was never about the danger of rising reaction but rather the danger of losing its hegemonic position. Therefore, discourse was the basic tool for manipulating the danger of losing the hegemonic position and turning it into the danger of rising reaction. Critical discourse analysis is the tool to show how this manipulation worked.

5.2. Critical Discourse Analysis

As the role of the media in the processes is one of the main focuses of my study, my research naturally centered on the Turkish media. Of the different forms of media, the written press is the most convenient to study. Therefore, daily newspapers published during the processes will be the main materials for analysis. However, considering the huge number of dailies published during the period under review, I needed to set a limit to make the study feasible. As I focused on the ideological positions of the Turkish media as members of the historic hegemonic center, the media ownership structure and other economic activities of the media owners, I limited my research according to media ownership structures and ideological positions. Therefore, *Milliyet* of Doğan Group as vanguard of the Turkish media capital, *Cumhuriyet* as core Kemalist media, *Sabah* for the sake of following the effects of change in the media ownership, and finally *Akşam* for Çukurova Group's search of a place among media conglomerates are the four most applicable samples. In this sampling each newspaper corresponds to a different position. *Milliyet* was considered the most statist among the papers of the Doğan Group and *Cumhuriyet* has a unique position and importance, as it is the core and trademark of Kemalist media in Turkey. On the other hand, *Sabah* was a good sample with its urban middle class reader profile and liberal stance; and *Akşam* targeted urban lower classes with its more populist tone.

Firstly, *Milliyet* represents the modern industrial bourgeoisie. With its investments in fields from banking to the automobile industry, Doğan Group stands at the center of capitalist relations in Turkey and has become one of the three largest and financially strongest group of firms in Turkey.²³⁶ Besides *Milliyet*'s economic position as a part of the Doğan Group, its societal relations are also crucial considering the urban classes and newspaper readership in Turkey. Doğan Group has several newspapers in Turkey and each of them addresses a different part of the society. For example, nowadays *Radikal* has a more intellectual and leftist editorial policy and readership whereas *Posta* has a more jingoist and populist line. Like *Radikal* and *Posta*, *Milliyet* has a specific policy and readership. *Milliyet*'s readership was the urban middle classes and the daily specifically addressed them. As the urban middle class formed the backbone of the center during the mobilization during the Processes, *Milliyet* also had an ideological importance as well as an economic one.

Secondly, *Cumhuriyet* has a more statist and elitist discourse. Ideologically it follows the positivist state ideology and its readership consists mostly of elitist Kemalists. It can also be said that *Cumhuriyet* still follows the elitist and didactic tendencies of the first representatives of the Turkish Press in the nineteenth century, as Heper and Demirel state: “[...] the elite journalists of the time (as well as those of later periods) took on the role of didactic intermediaries between an idealized West and a backward society.”²³⁷ Thus, both the readership profile and ideological position of *Cumhuriyet* correspond to the historic hegemonic center.

Sabah with its more liberal attitude targets urban middle classes and white-collar workers. The analysis of the newspaper was expected to offer ideas about the position and manipulation of young, educated, urban dwellers. On the other hand, the capital structure of the newspaper is also useful for analyses. During the February 28 Process, Dinç Bilgin owned *Sabah*. During the April 27 Process, Park Group of Turgay Ciner owned the newspaper and it was in need of political support for its ongoing court cases. In the middle of the Process, as a result of the cases, the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency confiscated *Sabah* as part of the group's bankruptcy.

Finally, *Akşam* was expected to give insight into the mobilization of the urban poor, artisans and craftsmen. The newspaper which was owned by Erol Aksoy in February 28 Process, was sold to the Çukurova Group after the Process. Furthermore, the quest of the Çukurova Group,

²³⁶ For more information about the Doğan Group and its economic activities see; <http://www.doganholding.com.tr/index.asp>

²³⁷ Heper, M. & Demirel T. The Press and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey, p. 109.

which is the conglomerate that owns *Akşam*, for finding a place among the media conglomerates of Turkey, also offers insight into the formation of traditional and new hegemonic alliances.

After elaborating on the criteria of inclusion, mentioning the criteria of exclusion is also required for accuracy of the sampling. The Turkish newspapers representing the conservative media, as well as other parts of the center media and the radical leftist media were excluded. Beginning with the conservative media, their position in the Processes was irrelevant as they were against the historic hegemonic center by their nature. However, there can be some discursive differences in challenging the Processes according to their different origins, but these discursive differences by definition are not included within scope of this study. Secondly, other parts of the center media at that time such as the Rumeli Group, were also excluded as the Doğan Group, Medya Group and Çukurova were the largest media conglomerates in Turkey and their analyses gave idea about the general nature of media ownership structures in Turkey. Finally, the radical leftist media was excluded, as their readership was far away from the historic hegemonic center, and therefore irrelevant concerning the effect of this kind of media on the historic hegemonic center.

Considering the preparation period before the process and the incidents after the fall of the coalition government, this particular study covers a two-year period for the analysis of February 28 Process. As Prime Minister Erbakan's term of office started on June 28, 1996, and ended on June 17, 1997, the period covering 1996 and 1997 will be exhaustively analyzed in terms of the preparation period and the consequences of the process. At first sight, the coverage of periods from the beginning of 1996 to the beginning of Prime Minister Erbakan's office in June 1996, and from the end of prime minister's term of office in June 1997 to the end of the year is inappropriate. However, considering the fact that the preparation stage of the February 28 Process started even earlier than the beginning of 1996, as the RP's first conspicuous rise was at the local elections of 1994 and the stage in which the results came to fruition started after the prime minister's resignation in June, the coverage of these periods becomes more apparent. In regards to the April 27 Process, a shorter period of analyses was sufficient as the April 27 Process was more compact in terms of preparation and results. The discussions about the presidential election, which were held in April, did not start earlier than the beginning of 2007. Therefore, contrary to the February 28 Process, tracing the analysis to earlier dates was not needed for the April 27 Process. On the other hand, the general elections on 22 July constituted a certain final point for the April 27 Process, and with the inclusion of a margin of safety, the end of 2007 was taken as the final date of these analyses.

Different interpretations of critical discourse analysis vary between the macro-sociological society and power perspective of Michel Foucault and the micro-sociological actor perspective of Ron Scollon.²³⁸ Furthermore, Siegfried Jäger's approach can be named as the most structuralist approach as it is close to the Foucauldian perspective, and Teun van Dijk's approach as the "social cognitive approach."²³⁹ Among the many different accounts Fairclough's attention to text as well as discourse, his methodological inquiries and the scope of the society-power relations, seem to make his model the most convenient. Fairclough offers a three dimensional model for critical discourse analysis as his attention focuses on text, discursive practice and social practice.²⁴⁰ As Titscher states, critical discourse analysis for Fairclough is "the analysis of relationships between concrete language use and the wider social cultural structures. [...] He attributes three dimensions to every discursive event. It is simultaneously a text, discursive practice – which also includes the production and interpretation of texts- and social practice."²⁴¹ According to Fairclough every social practice is a construction of social identity; a construction made through the different representations of the social world.²⁴² The discursive practice is one of the mediums through which different social practices become possible. In the relation to text, discourse and social practice, Fairclough underlines the concept of production as, "a social practice as a practice of production brings together different elements of life into a specific local relationship – types of activity, spatial and temporal locations, material resources, persons with particular experiences, knowledge and wants, semiotic resources including language."²⁴³

Content analysis and coverage of the newspapers will be the first step of critical discourse analysis. In this first step, newspapers' textual activities in relation to basic incidents in the February 28 and April 27 processes will be analyzed. The February 28 Process is rich, in terms of incidents such as the establishment of the Refahiyol government, the Susurluk incident, the Fadime Şahin incident and military briefings, for observing textual practices. The newspapers' coverage of the TSK's memorandum will be the major object of analysis with regard to textual practices in the April 27 Process.

²³⁸ Meyer, M. (2001). "Between Theory, Method, and Politics: Positioning of the Approaches to CDA," in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, Ruth Wodak & Michael Meyer (eds.), 14-31. London: Sage Publications, p.17.

²³⁹ Meyer, M. (2001). *Between Theory, Method and Politics*, p.18.

²⁴⁰ Fairclough, N. (2000). "Discourse, Social Theory, and Social Research: The Discourse of Welfare Reform," *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 4(2), p.167-9.

²⁴¹ cited in Richardson, J. E. (2007). *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach From Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.37.

²⁴² Fairclough, N. *Discourse, Social Theory, and Social Research*, p.167-8.

²⁴³ Fairclough, N. *Discourse, Social Theory, and Social Research*, p.168.

After content analysis, discursive practices will be second part of discourse analysis. More specifically how the good and bad Muslims were presented to the reader and what kind of characteristics defined these two categories. Furthermore, in this type of discourse analysis of newspapers, what is not written is as important as what is written. Actually, the very aim of defining the true version of Islam in this case is to label, define, and then repress a false or bad version of Islam. Therefore, figuring out the false and bad version of Islam and answering the question of why they are considered false and bad will be the concluding remarks of this part of the analysis. Moreover, two other major discursive practices, i.e. Moderate and Creeping Islamization and the Sudden Islamic Revolution, of the period, will be also analyzed in the same way.

Finally, considering the social practices section of the critical discourse analysis offered by Fairclough, aforementioned theoretical analysis will be at work at this stage. The results derived from textual and discursive practices will be located in the hegemonic analysis of the two intervention processes, with a special focus on the activities of other members of the historic hegemonic bloc. In conclusion, a link will be developed demonstrating the various dimensions of hegemonic relations in Turkey and textual analysis of the media in the February 28 Process is a good starting point for developing this link.

5.2.1. The February 28 Process

5.2.1.1. Textual Analysis

After the national elections, the media campaign against the RP and DYP started although they were not in power yet. At this stage of the campaign, the *Cumhuriyet* seemed more enthusiastic than others, as the general atmosphere found in the *Cumhuriyet*'s pages were very negative about the results of the elections. In essence, the *Cumhuriyet* columnists were belittling various kinds of government projects, as Mustafa Balbay wrote "the Hodja's [meaning Erbakan]²⁴⁴ tours are futile, Çiller's tours are a fashion show."²⁴⁵ Any effort of the coalitions, either by the RP or DYP was shown as ineffective and unproductive. The tone of the campaign hardened when the RP and ANAP got closer to establishing a coalition government. According to the *Cumhuriyet*, the majority of the ANAP parliamentarians were uneasy about the idea of a government composed of the ANAP and RP. A parliamentarian was complaining about the fact that, if his party sets up a government with the RP, he could

²⁴⁴ Throughout the text, explanations in square brackets belong to the writer.

²⁴⁵ Mustafa Balbay, *Cumhuriyet*, 01.02.1996, p.19. Balbay uses rhyme here as the Turkish word for futile is *nafile* and the Turkish for fashion show is *defile*.

not look at his neighbors, daughter and wife in their eyes because of his shame.²⁴⁶ The *Cumhuriyet* also reported from a Sufi sheik settled in northern Cyprus that the fez and turban will be legal again with the help of the coalition of the RP and ANAP.²⁴⁷ According to the *Cumhuriyet*, the efforts of the RP and ANAP were due to the fact that both parties had ties with the Nakshibendi order.²⁴⁸ Oral Çalışlar of the *Cumhuriyet* claimed that:

*“Another dimension of the cooperation between the two parties is the Nakshibendi order. There are many Nakshibendi parliamentarians in both parties. First of all Necmettin Erbakan, the founders of the RP and prominent members are Nakshibendis. Whereas in the ANAP, a Nakshibendi group of parliamentarians led by Korkut Özal are trying to act as a bridge in the formation of a coalition.”*²⁴⁹

Sabah was also uneasy about a coalition government between the ANAP and RP and addressed Mesut Yılmaz from its headline;

*“Do not sell out the Republic for the sake of your job: Yılmaz, who has forgotten the promises he made to the public before the elections, has started to make efforts to bring to power the Refah Party, whom he had indicated to be “the big danger”. Yılmaz started bargaining with Erbakan yesterday in order to form a coalition.”*²⁵⁰

The coalition efforts between the RP and ANAP turned out to be unproductive in spite of the claimed Nakshibendi ties and a coalition government was set up between the ANAP and DYP. After a short time, the coalition of the ANAP and DYP was dissolved and a new one was established between the RP and DYP. According to *Sabah*, the majority of the DYP members were against the coalition:

“It is noted that if the impression that Çiller will form a coalition with Refah after the meeting of Çiller with Erbakan gets stronger, a large group of DYP parliamentarians, who are sensitive regarding the subject of secularism, are getting ready to object to this through a declaration. In addition, women who

²⁴⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 06.01.1996, p.4.

²⁴⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 07.01.1996, p.1.

²⁴⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 06.01.1996, p.5.

²⁴⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, Oral Çalışlar, 17.02.1996, p.12.

²⁵⁰ *Sabah*, 15.02.1996, p.1.

support the DYP have already started to send faxes to the headquarters in large numbers as well.”²⁵¹

Once a coalition had been established between the RP and DYP, the *Cumhuriyet* again claimed Sufi order ties. It claimed that the government secured the vote of confidence “with the help of Sufi order ties and deputy transfers.”²⁵² Furthermore the *Cumhuriyet* was not alone in claiming that Sufi-order ties were effective in the formation of the government, as *Sabah* claimed that Sufi Sheikhs, who described the Refahyol Government as the greatest holy alliance of the Republic, came into action to establish the government.”²⁵³

Newspapers intensified their opposition to the Refahyol coalition government after the Susurluk incident. As mentioned before, the societal mobilization secured by the Susurluk protests were channeled against the government through the newspapers. For example, the *Milliyet* organized a campaign named “Decent and Enlightened Society.”²⁵⁴ The *Cumhuriyet* also adopted the same formula.²⁵⁵ The *Milliyet* reported the Minister of Justice Şevket Kazan’s criticisms about the Susurluk protests as “The Minister is like a Sheikh al-Islam.”²⁵⁶ Furthermore, Hikmet Çetinkaya of the *Cumhuriyet* claimed that the Sufi order ties were also active in Susurluk as two major figures of the intra-state relations, “Abdullah Çatlı and Haluk Kırıcı were also protected by a Sheikh.”²⁵⁷

The sensitivity about Susurluk was utilized in various ways against the RP and DYP. Derya Sazak of *Milliyet* did this by linking the Susurluk and Fadime Şahin incident as, “both Fadime Şahin and the truck driver in Susurluk”²⁵⁸, Hakan Gökçe, were people coming from the suburbs, and both saw the Refah as a source of hope and both were deceived.”²⁵⁹ *Milliyet* also reported that Fadime Şahin’s father and brothers were angry at the RP as they had voted for the RP in the elections but the RP claimed that the incident around Fadime Şahin, Müslüm Gündüz and Ali Kalkancı was a media fabrication.²⁶⁰ The general theme in both examples is “being deceived by the RP,” although the cases had nothing to do with the RP. Although Güngör Mengi of *Sabah* did not directly refer to the RP while commenting on the Fadime Şahin incident, being deceived by bad Muslims was also a common theme in his column;

²⁵¹ *Sabah*, 13.06.1996, p.1.

²⁵² *Cumhuriyet*, 09.07.1996, p.1.

²⁵³ *Sabah*, 31.05.1997, p.1.

²⁵⁴ *Milliyet*, 12.11.1996, p.14.

²⁵⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 06.01.1997, p.17.

²⁵⁶ *Milliyet*, 15.02.1997, p.1.

²⁵⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, Hikmet Çetinkaya, 11.01.1997, p.5.

²⁵⁸ The driver of the truck that was involved in the car accident in Susurluk.

²⁵⁹ *Milliyet*, Derya Sazak, 06.01.1997, p.14.

²⁶⁰ *Milliyet*, 05.01.1997, p.14.

“Fadime Şahin, who was as young as his granddaughter, was not a bait thrown in front of him in order to bring shame on Müslüm Gündüz. Fadime was his victim. In reality, a new example of the truck incident in Susurluk was experienced there on a small scale. While the police and journalists expected to find an old man in black clothes, they caught a naked man and a naked woman in bed. This aspect of the incident was unlucky for them but this is luck for the masses that are the target of those who exploit the religion. If this had not happened, Fadime Şahin would not have been talked about, the masks of these peddlers who exploit the beautiful religion of Islam by stirring up misgivings in the public would not have been dropped and who knows how many young people would have been deprived of the chance to be warned against this ugly trap.”²⁶¹

Besides the Susurluk and Fadime Şahin incidents, there were also other incidents which were utilized against the RP and the government. For example, a circular issued by the General Command of the Gendarmerie about prayer rooms in the institution and reactions to the circular were represented as the rising reactionary danger. In the circular, the command issued some new regulations about the physical conditions of the prayer rooms and banned the civil staff from using the prayer rooms. As a reaction to the circular, some RP deputies issued parliamentary inquiries to the Minister of National Defense.²⁶² As a result, the TSK were uneasy about the criticisms of the circular and issued a press statement about the incident. The *Cumhuriyet* and *Milliyet*'s reactions to the press statement were as follows: the *Cumhuriyet* used the headline, “Army raised its voice against the religion-mongers,”²⁶³ and the *Milliyet* went with “Hard rebuke from the Army.”²⁶⁴ *Sabah* preferred to display the inquiry as revenge; “Revenge Motion from Refah.”²⁶⁵ *Akşam* was more moderate about the circular incident and presented it as a “dangerous struggle”:

“The other day the military responded with a harsh statement to the motion debate that started between the military and Refah. Yesterday, the Ministry of Defense, which had been silent regarding attacks to the military, was accused. A military official who is close to the Office of the Chief of General Staff said that the army had been targeted for attrition for months and complained that the politicians, and especially the ministry of defense had been silent for a long

²⁶¹ Sabah, Güngör Mengi, 06.01.1997, p.3.

²⁶² Milliyet, 26.03.1996, p.15.

²⁶³ Cumhuriyet, 27.03.1996, p.1.

²⁶⁴ Milliyet, 28.03.1996, p.1.

²⁶⁵ Sabah, 29.03.1996, p.1.

*time. The military official said that those pro-PKK forces who want to establish a Kurdish-Islamic state want to wear down the army”*²⁶⁶

The following lines of Hikmet Çetinkaya included grand narratives in the discussions of the circular;

*“People who today blame the army of being enemies of religion as a result of its prayer room circular, are the people who slaughtered Kubilay like a sheep.”*²⁶⁷

The *Cumhuriyet*’s and *Milliyet*’s interpretation of military briefings on the rising reactionary danger also gives clues about the centrality of their position during the Process. Although there are many other examples, one particular headline of a news report of *Cumhuriyet* is very revealing; “Briefings activated the opposition.”²⁶⁸ It seems that the *Cumhuriyet*’s claim about the effect of the briefings on the opposition was confirmed by the *Milliyet*’s headline; “The Last Warning from the Army.”²⁶⁹ *Sabah* claimed that judges and labor unions asked for a special briefing from the military about the rising reactionary danger,²⁷⁰ whereas *Akşam* preferred a more neutral wording and just reported the briefings without any comment.²⁷¹

Many other examples of the themes presented here and other themes which are not presented here were covered by the newspapers during this period. Furthermore, discursive practices always assisted these textual practices.

5.2.1.2. Discursive Practices

The discursive practices of newspapers can be grouped into three basic hegemonic discourses; (1) Good vs. Bad Muslims, (2) Moderate and Creeping Islamization and finally a (3) sudden Islamic revolution.

5.2.1.2.1. Good Muslims vs. Bad Muslims

Good and Bad Muslim concepts were important tools for the legitimization of the “cleansing of Islam” campaign, as they helped in the creation of an imagined Muslim identity, which

²⁶⁶ Akşam, 28.03.1996, p.5.

²⁶⁷ Cumhuriyet, Hikmet Çetinkaya, 21.06.1996, p.7.

²⁶⁸ Cumhuriyet, 13.06.1997, p.1.

²⁶⁹ Milliyet, 12.06.1997, p.1.

²⁷⁰ Sabah, 12.06.1997, p.24.

²⁷¹ Akşam, 11.06.1997, p.9.

was favored over all other expressions of Muslim identity. The imagined Muslim category is defined in relation to its “other”. On the one hand, there are truehearted and pure Muslims and on the other hand, there are the exploiters of religion, namely the reactionary and fundamentalist Islamists. There are reciprocally defined characteristics for these two artificial categories of Muslims. Pure Muslims are honest, clean, knowledgeable and humble whereas bad Muslims are dishonest, dirty, ignorant and show-offs. While good Muslims are engaged in personal supplication to God in their private spheres, bad Muslims’ religiosity exceeds the limits of the personal sphere and expands into the public sphere, and as a result creates the rising reactionary danger in the form of either an Islamic revolution or gradual Islamization.

According to the Kemalist positivist understanding, religion should not exceed its secularist limits. Once it exceeded its limits, the basic principles of a secular society were under threat and those who somehow contributed are bad Muslims like the conservative political actors of the February 28 Process;

“Yes, exactly 73 years later Turkey has pains in the face of a big mistake. Moreover, these pains are created not by the “religious” people but those proponents of religion²⁷² who perceive civilization, the world culture as “infidelity”.

Yes, “proponents of religion...” the “proponents of religion” who present themselves as “religious” and use religion as a tool for politics...”²⁷³

Of course the ones who are making a big mistake after 73 years and who present themselves as pious people although not being so, were none other than the RP party members. The February 28 Process was not a fault of the military but rather a necessity that the military, executed reluctantly in order to fix the conservative actors’ fault. The same logic was also prevalent in the perception of the General Command of Gendarmerie’s circular about the prayer rooms. The report of the *Milliyet* from military sources reflected this logic;

“By mentioning that the practicing Muslims who were discharged were not people who are engaged in their daily praying, fasting, and supplication to God, Military sources stated that these kind of staff members were discharged because they engaged in organized activities.”²⁷⁴

²⁷² The original word is “*dinbaz*”, which is a manufactured word by the author with a connotation of clowning, acting while using religion.

²⁷³ Sabah, Fatih Çekirge, 19.03.1997, p.13.

²⁷⁴ Milliyet, 25.09.1996, p.17.

In this statement, the words “organized activities” must be read as public visibility. Therefore, the “people who are engaged in their daily praying, fasting and supplication to God,” stood for the public silence of religiosity whereas people “engaged in organized activities” were fired from military ranks as they gained public visibility for their religiosity. The participation in organized activities was represented as the only determinant of being a religionist. Furthermore, “being engaged in daily praying, fasting and supplication to God” was supposed to be an exclusive and exhaustive category which meant that if a person was “engaged in his\her daily praying, fasting and supplication to God”, then he or she should not be engaged in any kind of societal activities. If he\she did, his\her prayers and religiosity could not be genuine.

“Everybody can go and pray in silence when it is the time. The only condition for this is not to delay public service.”²⁷⁵

Bülent Serim wrote these lines as a response to the discussions about the military’s circular about prayer rooms. Serim also claimed that public service was a material and worldly thing that should be clearly separated from prayers that were considered to be spiritual. The discussion on the military’s circular was crucial in displaying the typical element of a positivist understanding of religion; the restriction of its domain to individual conscience:

“Islam has experienced its most respectful, most honorable and most authentic following under the Republican Turkey. The place of Islam became the free conscience of free people. The insurance that assured this for the past 70 years has been secularism.”²⁷⁶

The title of above quoted piece was, “The Sun Will Rise.” The title itself was an obvious reflection of a positivist understanding, with its image of the rise of light over darkness. However, there were some other cases in which the dark rose over light:

“Quran on the computer: fundamentalist aggression towards secularism”²⁷⁷

The report was about software which contained the text of the Quran, its Turkish translation and its recitation. Digital technology and the Quran were regarded as inconsistent, as one belonged to the material sphere and the other to the spiritual sphere and therefore the Quranic

²⁷⁵ Cumhuriyet, Bülent Serim, 15.04.1996, p.6.

²⁷⁶ Sabah, Güngör Mengi, 19.05.1997, p.3.

²⁷⁷ Cumhuriyet, 15.04.1996, p.6.

software was regarded as aggression towards secularism. Anything which was material cannot be reconciled with anything from the spiritual sphere, and, according to the hegemonic Kemalist interpretation, genuine Islam was limited to the spiritual sphere:

“Temples are the places of religion. Conscience, which is the almighty makam [adobe], is the place of religion.”²⁷⁸

“In the secular republic, the slogan “Islam, The True Way” can only be written in one place. It is the people’s conscience. It is the people’s hearts. It is people’s spiritual worlds.”²⁷⁹

According to same logic not the headscarf itself, but the person who wears it and the place where it is worn constituted a problem. According to this positivist ideology, every place has an appropriate dress code:



“Tansu Çiller picture caption: Tansu Çiller wore a headscarf when Quran was being recited. Berna Yılmaz picture caption: Of course Berna Yılmaz also covers her hair in funerals.”²⁸⁰

Picture 1

There was no problem with the headscarf of Berna Yılmaz, who “of course” wore a headscarf during funerals, or even Tansu Çiller’s headscarf unless they wore them in the Grand National Assembly like the supporters of the RP. Every style of clothing had a specific place and the public sphere was not suitable for headscarves. Religion should be limited to a person’s conscience, and headscarves within the private sphere.

²⁷⁸ Cumhuriyet, M. İskender Özturanlı, 08.04.1996, p.2.

²⁷⁹ Cumhuriyet, Aytekin Ertuğrul, 29.07.1996, p.2.

²⁸⁰ Sabah, Can Ataklı, 04.11.1996, p.6.

The Positivist understanding of religion was also widespread in *Akşam*'s coverage, as it was idealized as the best way of being a good and genuine Muslim;

*"It is imperative that the officials at the top of our army are both Muslim and Atatürkist. We thank God that until now such commanders have served at the top levels of our army and they continue to do so. From our chairman of the General Staff General Karadayı to all the ranks of command need to possess such a qualities that we can look into our future with trust. The second element is the justice organization. Those who are at the head of justice also inhale the breath of Atatürk. The honorable head of the Supreme Court Yekta Güngör Özden is a real Atatürkist and the spokesman of the real Muslims."*²⁸¹

What is interesting in the above piece is that, although a Muslim image was idealized, its characteristics were not mentioned. Therefore the reader does not know on what grounds Karadayı and Özden were idealized as real Muslims. The only clues, which may give an idea about the characteristics of these people, were their official duties. Furthermore, the religiosity of these people did not include any public visibility. Therefore conformity to the state order and public visibility constituted the criteria of being a real and good Muslim.

Contrary to the state official's case, when a religious functionary was presented as a real and good Muslim, the proposal had to be supported with various pieces of evidence;

*"May he not deprive us of his intercession... Our Prophet was asked, "What is religion?" He replied "it is good morals." When he was asked to explain jihad, which is indicated to be war with the enemy, our beautiful prophet said "real jihad is struggle with your own self" and thereby emphasized that the most important worship is purification from bad feelings, thoughts and wrong deeds. Our prophet was a modern person who was polite, serious-minded, but who could make jokes when necessary, who dressed clean, who was careful about cleanliness, who even brushed his teeth. [...] It is a pity that today, some groups that claim that they follow him in the best way turn Islam into a cause of division [discrimination, dividing people]. We need new religious official types who see religion as good morals and offering services to people. In this regard, a name that is becoming more prominent is the honourable Fethullah Gülen."*²⁸²

²⁸¹ *Akşam*, Cenk Koray, 05.04.1996, p.4.

²⁸² *Akşam*, Rıza Zelyut, 02.04.1997, p.10.

“Fethullah Hodja sees religion mostly as a divine path that looks inside human beings. Fethullah Hodja emphasizes religion together with being equipped with the information of the era we live in and enlightenment. [...] Fethullah Hodja also indicates that in history religion had not been turned into show as much as today and he calls Muslims to avoid ostentatiousness.”²⁸³

Fethullah Gülen is the leader of a Turkey-based transnational religious community. Gülen and his movement tried to create a moderate and liberal Islamic image.²⁸⁴ The reason why Fethullah Gülen represented as a real good Muslim was a number of characteristics that were all some way related with each other: good manners, purification from bad ideas and feelings, personal hygiene, being dignified, serving to people. According to these characteristics, religion was confined to good manners and personal characteristics. Fethullah Gülen was the representative of the good interpretation of Islam against those who constitute the other side: show-off bad Muslims. It was again the issue of public visibility that matters in the discourse on good and bad Muslims. It should be kept in mind that any kind of rituals, public prayers or dressing codes was not accepted as a part of being a good Muslim.

Once all the rules and societal aspects of religion were put aside, then the Islamic identity was no more a problem for the prevailing hegemonic system as you would have reduced religion to a matter of conscience:

“The genuine religious functionary knows that the focus of it [religion] is the heart, and he leaves it there as a spiritual need. With this characteristic, religion is an abstract framework formed to take away the pains of death, etc.”²⁸⁵

The abandoning of the formal practices of religion has a key distinctiveness in the good and bad Muslim categorization and also in one's honesty;

“One day I said in the classroom: “The essence of religion is to do good and avoid evil. We were in a session of the course named “Political Ideas and Regimes”. I looked at the two headscarf wearing students in the classroom. They were whispering among themselves. It seemed that they disagreed with my comment, because if they agreed with my comment, it would not be necessary to

²⁸³ Akşam, Rıza Zelyut, 19.04.1997, p.10.

²⁸⁴ For more information about Gülen and his movement see: Yavuz, H. M. (1999). “Towards an Islamic Liberalism?: The Nurcu Movement and Fethullah Gülen,” The Middle East Journal, 53(4), p. 584-605.

²⁸⁵ Cumhuriyet, Serhat Kestel, 23.09.1996, p.2.

*follow some formal rules. At least, the necessity would decrease. In that case, following formal rules would not determine the genuineness of a religious individual. Goodness and honesty would.”*²⁸⁶

The writings of Hüseyin Batuhan are very interesting in terms of presenting the hegemonic discourse on religion as a matter of good manners;

*“We use the concept of religious for people who pay attention to religious beliefs and practices in their daily lives. In this sense religious is the person who tries to purify him/herself in terms of ethics, to glorify his humanity and in addition to those who try to properly fulfill religious responsibilities such as praying and fasting”*²⁸⁷

For the sake of the hegemonic discourse, Batuhan acted like a theologian and built a hierarchy between religious responsibilities, something, which actually could not even be done by a theologian. For him the ethical aspect of religion was more important than religious beliefs and practices. Besides living religion in one’s own conscience, one also needed to wear swimming suits in order to be genuine Muslims:

*“The Anatolian Muslims have practiced Islam in a reformist way for centuries. Instead of following the dogmatic rules of religion, they have understood Islam as a relationship between the human beings and God, and have regarded the issue as an issue of conscience. For this reason, instead of prioritizing the formal practices such as daily praying, fasting and the pilgrimage, they have paid attention to the principles such as honesty, protecting the poor and not oppressing other people. In the evening time, they would drink alcohol; instead of following the exact rules of covering themselves they would wear their swimming suits and go to the beach. From time to time, they would perform the daily prayers and fasting; there were even some of them who never performed these [prayers, fasting] in their entire lives.”*²⁸⁸

An important detail about *Akşam*’s discourse on the good and bad Muslims is that in conformity with the hegemonic position of Kemalism over some Alevi groups, Alevism was directly put forward as an example of being a good Muslim against bad Muslims. Columnist

²⁸⁶ Cumhuriyet, Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, 24.09.1997, p.3.

²⁸⁷ Cumhuriyet, Hüseyin Batuhan, 30.09.1997, p.2.

²⁸⁸ Cumhuriyet, Oral Çalışlar, 24.08.1997, p.4.

Rıza Zelyut, who is an Alevi, was the leading figure in promoting Alevism as a way of being a good Muslim:

*“So what are the other conditions to be an Alevi? Firstly, one must have a genuine belief. [...] This belief must not be used for material interest or political power. It is imperative that worship is not turned into show. In order to be an Alevi, one must never transgress with regards to the rights of others. [...] You can never turn religion and worship into a show. [...] Dear Erbakan, dear Refah party supporters, it is not easy to be an Alevi.”*²⁸⁹

The dress code has key distinctiveness in the good and bad Muslim discourse. One of the spheres in which Islam should not intervene, so that people could be modern Muslims rather than reactionaries, fundamentalists, or political Islamists, was dress code;

*“I am talking about the women who are dressed in black chadors that leave open only a few centimeter squares of their faces. [...] Is it possible not to realize that these men and women are militants who want to show-off [about being religious] rather than “good Muslims” who are respected.”*²⁹⁰

The amount of attention paid to physical appearance in the formation of the hegemonic discourse on religion was due to the fact that the public visibility of religion had a core importance for hegemonic interpretation. Therefore generally acts, like wearing a headscarf or being a Sufi order member, could be enough for someone to be regarded as a religionist whereas for others it may not be:

*“At first sight, it is assumed that women in black chador, who are organized under the name of “Thursday Mothers”²⁹¹, have a religionist identity. [...] Despite wearing black chadors, Reyhan and Nuran sharply criticize many religionist foundations and agents. Arguing that neither the Welfare Party nor the Shariah supporting media have any relation to “true Islamism”, the two girls got furious while discussing this.”*²⁹²

²⁸⁹ Akşam, Rıza Zelyut, 29.05.1996, p.8.

²⁹⁰ Milliyet, Metin Toker, 12.09.1996, p.17.

²⁹¹ The Thursday Mothers, as they first organized in Argentina, was a group of mother gathered in Plaza De Mayo in Boines Aires for protesting the disappearing of around 30.000 people under the junta rule in Argentina in 1977. The Turkish Thursday Mothers was a small-scale organization and it is difficult to come across more information about them except the news report quoted.

²⁹² Cumhuriyet, 14.01.1997, p.4.

Women who at first sight seemed to be religionists turned out not to be when they criticized the conservative institutions. These women in chador were saved from being religionists due to the fact that they were opposing the RP and Sufi orders.

*“Florence Breuililac is a 27 year old French woman. Her life has changed after a trip from Kapadokya to Konya. She started living in Turkey and she started to receive education in Sufism after dropping her studies in painting. Nowadays, she is attending dhikr [invocation] and sema sessions in Numan Dergahı [a Sufi lodge] twice a week.”*²⁹³

The tone of the news about Florence Breuililac’s religionist activities was very positive. Many religionists’ activities may not be that bad when they are performed by foreigners, by those who are “guests” and have no influence in Turkey. Therefore it is very clear that the discourse on good and bad Muslims was primarily about the hegemonic power discussions of Turkey.

Once religion was reduced to a divine way towards inner world, then prayers and rituals were problematized and there cannot be any better tool than the RP parliamentarians’ Hajj journey for problematizing the prayers:

*“Have you seen the pictures of our parliamentarians at the airport? It seems that they stripped to a state of being half naked in front of respectable passengers and these grown men posed naked. They are going on pilgrimage, so it is said that they are wearing their ihrams.”*²⁹⁴ *They are not aware of what kind of bad manners they are displaying by stripping naked in front of people, but at least if they looked at the ordinary pilgrim candidates around them, they would see that this journey can be done wearing a light jacket and a pair of pants. Also, as if their family is one of barbers, they have scissors in their hands and they are cutting each other’s hair. What is it for? Because they are having a pilgrim shave. Is such a job done at the airport in front of the journalists? You’ll say, “it would not be a show otherwise...” You are right.”*²⁹⁵

²⁹³ Milliyet, 28.11.1996, p.1.

²⁹⁴ A situation and set of restrictions –such as one’s having hair cut, shaving, using perfumes, and arguing with others even one is right, that Muslims pilgrims should follow during their Hajj. The word is also used for specific type of clothing that covers the body with the help of two piece of white fabric, one for the lower and the other for the upper body. Man should cover their body in that way during their Hajj.

²⁹⁵ Akşam, Tayyar Şafak, 15.04.1997, p.9.

At first sight it seemed that what the author criticized was not the Hajj itself but the way parliamentarian pilgrims behaved during their Hajj journey. However, what the author missed was the fact that the place where pilgrims should wear their *ihram* depends on whether their plane goes to Mecca or Medina. Parliamentarians whose planes arrived at Mecca should wear their *ihram* at their point of departure, whereas other pilgrims whose plane arrived in Medina could dress in their *ihram* in Medina. Not knowing this fact, the author supported his criticism about parliamentarians with the better examples; ordinary pilgrims around them. On the other hand, the author's lack of knowledge was not all that important for the reproduction of the discourse. What the author sees as a bad Muslim show-off act was not the place where *ihram* was worn but who wore it; pilgrim parliamentarians. Again another report from *Sabah*, blames pilgrim parliamentarians for being show-offs because they fulfilled the ordinary necessities of Hajj;

*"The pilgrimage trip of the parliamentarians, who went to Mecca with a discount tariff, who stayed in special tents with air condition, passed mostly as a "show". 6 ministers, 54 parliamentarians and the deputy speaker of the parliament immediately visited the Ka'ba for the "umrah" tawaf. Then they went to the guesthouse assigned by the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the show of cutting hair started. The ministers and parliamentarians took the scissors in their hands and cut each other's hair and so they left the state of ihram. [...] The parliamentarians settled in the tents near Mina, which are equipped with air conditions, on the eve of the Eid al-Adha.. In tents, there was the dhikr [invocation] show of the RP parliamentarians."*²⁹⁶

The acts that were presented as showing off in the report were ordinary necessities of the Hajj. The reason why ordinary necessities of Hajj prayer were presented as showing off was the identity of the pilgrims: parliamentarians. According to the positivist understanding of religion, being religious as much as going to pilgrimage while at the same time being worldly by working in politics is a contradiction.

According to Rıza Zelyut one should visit the Ka'ba of the heart instead of visiting the Ka'ba in Mecca. In his column titled "Journey to the Ka'ba of the Heart" he said:

"Those who know that the religion of Islam is based on good morals, clean thoughts and useful work, are unanimous that the real Islamic behavior is not

²⁹⁶ Sabah, 20.04.1997, p.3.

hurting people. [...] All those who are sane enough know that going on the hajj while upsetting people, transgressing the rights of others, even embezzling state funds is nothing other than fooling oneself. Undoubtedly, those who turn going to Hajj into a show and fool the people cannot fool Allah..."²⁹⁷

As mentioned before, the discourse of good and bad Muslims was a multilayered one and many components of the discourse could be presented in the same breath, as in the aforementioned examples. While criticizing the visibility of prayers and rituals of the bad Muslims, the author reproduced their dishonest image. In the end the message was clear: people who went to pilgrimage as a show-off act were those who appropriated others' rights and the property of the state.

Honesty was one of the frequently referred characteristics that belonged to a good Muslim. According to the discourse, bad Muslims' religiosity was not genuine but a tool to cover their dishonesty. Therefore any religious act of bad Muslims should be tested by honesty and parliamentarians' Hajj visit was a good opportunity for this:

*"Yesterday 5 ministers and 53 parliamentarians, the majority of whom are from Refah, went to Hajj on a special plane, together with their spouses. Directorate of Religious Affairs also rented a hotel in Mecca for the parliamentarians for whom it arranged a special discount."*²⁹⁸

At first sight the only discursive element in the report was the stress on the special organization of the pilgrimage and the special discount for parliamentarians. However, the discursive practice was intensified with the other report that was published next to the quote above:

"Directorate of Religious Affairs: halal income is necessary. Hasan Şakir Sancaktar, who is a member of the Higher Board of Religious Affairs of the Directorate of Religious Affairs explained the conditions of going on the Hajj to Sabah in this way: [...] of course in order to go to Hajj, income must be halal, the rights of the state and nation must not have been transgressed, one must put up with the pains that all the pilgrims suffer in general and one must perform this worship with patience."

²⁹⁷ Akşam, Rıza Zelyut, 15.04.1997, p.10.

²⁹⁸ Sabah, 12.04.1997, p.29.

The message was so clear; they might go to pilgrimage but they did not meet the requirements of honesty. When it came to honesty, the category associated with following the formal rules and being honest at the same time was presented as an impossible category. If one followed the formal rules, then one could not be a genuine Muslim as he\she lacked honesty. Being a practicing Muslim was the chief reason for questioning of one's honesty:

*“According to our religion, parliamentarians who go on pilgrimage will be cleaned from their sins just as newborns and will have to be very careful about their way of life. The prohibitions listed below will be the rule for parliamentarians who go on the pilgrimage: ‘He must not lie, he must not deceive people, he must not receive benefits through unfair means, he must not be engaged in trading influence, he must be tolerant, he must not gamble, he must not drink alcoholic drinks...’
When they come back, we shall see...”²⁹⁹*

These lines imply that all the parliamentarians who went on the pilgrimage have the listed bad habits. Furthermore, the writer seemed unconvinced that parliamentarians would quit these bad habits when they returned from pilgrimage. However, the listed habits were potential forms of corruption for the other parliamentarians who did not go on the pilgrimage as well, and this was not something restricted to the pilgrims. Yet, they were not following the formal rules of religion, so they were not questioned. RP parliamentarians were more vulnerable to being questioned as to their honesty. The message was so clear; they might go to pilgrimage but they did not meet the requirements of honesty. Therefore their Hajj was not a genuine religious act but one aimed at the exploitation of people's religious feelings, just like their role in the annual sacrifice:

“Approximately 2.5 million animals are sacrificed in Eid Al-Adha. The monetary value of the sacrificed animal skins exceeds 3 trillions. Those who exploit the religion are stirring up a fight over “collecting skins” and thereby exploiting the beliefs of the plain Muslims.”³⁰⁰

Besides the claims of exploitation of religious feelings for economic interest, more concrete corruption claims were also linked to the RP:

²⁹⁹ Milliyet, Hikmet Bila, 14.04.1997, p.2.

³⁰⁰ Sabah, Can Ataklı, 29.01.1997, p.6.



Picture 2

“He was very close to Erbakan: Erol Yazar, who is the head of the “Association of Independent Businessmen” of which those businessmen who are close to Refah are members, is accused of collective smuggling. It is indicated that the machines that Yazar, who is known to be close to Erbakan, imported from abroad as new yet are in fact used.”³⁰¹

The claim that Yazar and Erbakan were close was also supported by the photo posted with the report. The aim of the report was to make the reader associate Yazar and Erbakan, and therefore reproduce the discourse about dishonesty of conservative politicians.

When the subject is changed from the Hajj to the Ramadan, the same questioning and test were still on the table for practicing Muslims:

“All right, but what kind of a Ramadan is this? What kind of an iftar³⁰² table? What kind of a sahoor?³⁰³ [...] Is fasting for purifying the Muslim soul from wrongdoing and depravity, or not? Those who are performing Islamism on TV have contaminated Islam in the political mud.”³⁰⁴

³⁰¹ Sabah, 29.04.1996, p.1.

³⁰² The meal with which Muslims break their fasting.

³⁰³ In Ramadan Muslims eat sahoor meal in the early morning before starting to fast.

³⁰⁴ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 20.02.1996, p.2.

Discourse on the dishonesty of bad Muslims was not always reproduced with reference to formal religious acts such as Hajj, fasting, or explicit claims of corruption. In other cases, creating an unfavorable image about the source of a conservative actor's wealth by exaggerating the amount of their wealth was also a method:

“The charity dinner organized by the Ankara Women’s Branch of the Welfare Party for Southeast Turkey witnessed an interesting auction. In the auction, which was introduced as, “Auction in the Refah’s Way,” deutschmarks, bracelets, bangles and rings from women and millions from men rained down; every rise in price was accepted as a donation.”³⁰⁵

In this example the discourse was reproduced by ignoring the charitable intention of the auction, and instead of the intention, the amount of money and goods offered was emphasized. By adding the message that not only Turkish liras but also deutschmarks, and not only millions in money but also bracelets, bangles and rings were offered, the exaggeration effect was perpetuated.

Another important discursive practice of the February 28 Process was the Fadime Şahin incident. Müslüm Gündüz, a claimed sheikh who exploited Fadime, was a useful figure and image to associate with the bad Muslim category, and therefore supported the discourse. Another negative characteristic attributed to bad Muslims was being libidinous:

“The majority of those [Sheikhs] are sex maniacs. There are some who built harems by being slaves of their out-of-control sexual desire. Sexual desire is the basic instinct for those people. There is no moral code which is not violated and no true religious order not manipulated for this purpose.”³⁰⁶

According to this discourse, once religious organizing became possible, people who organized by religious means, that is, the conservatives, religionists, followers of Shariah, or Islamists in hegemonic terms- started the exploitation of religious feelings and in most cases, this was sexual exploitation. Doğan Heper from the *Milliyet*³⁰⁷ also preserved the same discourse. However, it is not necessary to conduct an analysis of his writings as he directly

³⁰⁵ Milliyet, 16.05.1997, p.2.

³⁰⁶ Milliyet, Metin Toker, 06.01.1997, p.15.

³⁰⁷ Milliyet, 14.01.1997, p.14.

puts the “sex-smelling” Sufi orders on one side and the “pure”, “clean”, “genuine” Muslims on the other.

Modern women would also become sex objects of libidinous and womanizing bad Muslims as in the case of Fadime Şahin in relation to Müslüm Gündüz:



Picture 3³⁰⁸

The picture was pertaining to a commission meeting in the parliament. In the meeting, a RP deputy petitioned about the scarcity of running water in his polling district and said that because of the scarcity even the sexual life of the residents were negatively affected. In the cartoon we see a bad Muslim man with his beard and cap sleeping next to a woman whose head is not covered. The bad Muslim image of the man was stressed while there was no reference or implication for the woman. It was a bad Muslim, libidinous and womanizing, who seduced a modern woman.

A bad Muslim woman was not only a sex object, but also cast in a passive role in every aspect of life, even with her freedom to participate in headscarf rallies:

³⁰⁸ Sabah, 02.04.1996, p.11.

“At the Language, History and Geography Faculty, male students protested the requirement of pictures without headscarves from female students. About 100 students unfurled a green flag and demanded Shariah. [...] The students, who gathered in front of the university, demanded that the ban on headscarves be lifted. During the headscarf rally with a green flag, it was noted that male students were in the majority.”³⁰⁹

In the headscarf discussion, one of the leading arguments of Kemalists is that women do not cover their head out of their free will but that their fathers, husbands or elder brothers make them cover their heads. The report made reference to this argument and mentioned the passive position of women in Turkish society.

As is to be expected in the context of the hegemonic discourse, negative actions, thoughts and attitudes toward women were not depicted as the norms of Islam but as the faults of bad Muslims:

It is said that preacher Mehmet Akyüz from Of county of Trabzon province gave a speech during the opening of the Culture and Cooperation Foundation in the county of Of. [...] I would like to say to you that we should not forget that there are also enlightened religious officials by sharing this with you. The speech was like this: “[...] Our Quran would never tolerate such a degree of unfairness as putting women under pressure for the sake of the people who see women on the streets and cannot control themselves. One must say that democracy should not be the freedom to develop ignorance. This would betray the purpose of democracy as well.”³¹⁰

“There are those who push the truly superior aspects of Islam to one side and who create thousands of wrongs in line with their own wishes and recent examples have shown that. Respect, love and tolerance, which are the central values of Islamic morals, reach their peak in the attitudes and behavior to be shown to women.”³¹¹

But for those, who did not understand the “real superiority of Islam,” for the Shariah followers in other words, the position of women was far from, “respect, love and tolerance:”

³⁰⁹ Sabah, 05.10.1996, 25.

³¹⁰ Sabah, Can Ataklı, 17.10.1996, 06.

³¹¹ Sabah, Yılmaz Karakoyunlu, 18.01.1997, p.19.

“Mentioning that women are only for sex for the followers of Shariah, author Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı said that “A woman for these people is a machine for having children and a servant. A woman is both an instrument of joy, a servant and also an inferior being [...] As soon as women and men get together, they remember the bed.”³¹²

Historical connections were also presented to consolidate the hegemonic discourse about the religionists and sex. For example, İlhan Selçuk cited excerpts from Erzurumlu İsmail Hakkı’s writings on the ways of increasing joy during sexual intercourse and concluded there was not much change from Erzurumlu İsmail Hakkı to Müslüm Gündüz, as Erzurumlu İsmail Hakkı was also known as a Sufi.³¹³

The gender related issues constituted a large part of the discourse concerning good and bad Muslims. The basic claim of the discourse was the following: “The gender relations of bad Muslims are deviant.” Deviance may be libidinousness or a general maltreatment and unapproved perception on women:

“When the swimsuit crisis erupted, I remembered a “Shariah supporting advertisement” that I had seen recently. These Refah people are interesting, they shout Shariah every day and then they deem all kinds of populism acceptable under the category of “we are adapting to the contemporary era”. We did not know, but it seems that the Refah supporting women have been swimming in the sea, but with special swimsuits. The swimsuits that are in fashion this year have been put on sale. It is called “haşema”. “What does it mean?” you ask. If you unravel each syllable, then it appears. “Hakiki Şeriat Mayosu” (i.e. Real Shariah Swimsuit). The swimsuit is covered from the neck to the ankles. They wear a cap on the head. I asked: “So when they go into the sea, doesn’t this swimsuit stick to the body and display a sexy picture?” I was told that this does not happen. It turns out that this is the most special feature of these swimsuits.”³¹⁴

“Enjoying the sea with chador: In March, the wives of the Refah parliamentarians who came to the camp in Antalya Belek strolled on the

³¹² Cumhuriyet, 02.11.1996, p.2.

³¹³ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 29.03.1997, p.2.

³¹⁴ Sabah, Can Ataklı, 03.03.1996, 06.

beaches with chadors. The interesting life in the camp, which had been postponed due to the accident that Aydın Menderes had, attracted the attention of the people in the vicinity to a great extent.”³¹⁵

A woman’s image is both an indicator and a carrier of Kemalist modernization and therefore it constitutes one of its taboos. RP-member women in their special swimming suits were regarded as an attack on this taboo because these women accepted neither Kemalist modernization nor tradition. By swimming they rejected the traditional societal codes on the one hand and by wearing their own special swimming suits they rejected the Kemalist modernization on the other. They practiced their own modernization and also their own religiosity. Their own modernization contradicted Kemalist modernization, and their own religiosity with the Kemalists’ good Islam as well. As a result they were labeled as Shariah followers, i.e. bad Muslims. Another function was to alienate the conservative actors from the reader; the bad Muslims from the good Muslims. Their special swimming dresses were presented as new, surprising, shocking news from a fantastic alien planet as if the reader did not have any conservative relative, friend, colleague or neighbor around. The RP-member swimming women and their new image were so surprising that this, “interesting experience attracted huge attention from the people in the vicinity.”

Besides being libidinous, violence was another characteristic associated with the bad Muslims according to the hegemonic discourse. During the February 28 Process, the claim that conservatives arming with pump rifles was an urban legend produced by the MGK and of course reproduced by the hegemonic media:

“The Festival of Municipalities”, which was organized on the occasion of the third anniversary of the RP taking power in the municipalities, was experienced exactly like a carnival. In the fair, in which each municipality advertised for itself, turbans, fez, pump rifles and headscarves appeared. [...] The Düzce Municipality booth, where there were pump rifles and handguns, attracted the greatest attention. It was also noted that there were pump rifles and user manuals for these at the booth. [...] At the fair, men with turbans were assigned the job of meeting the visitors and the Üsküdar Municipality distributed paper fezzes.”³¹⁶

³¹⁵ Sabah, 09.04.1996, 17.

³¹⁶ Sabah, 28.03.1997, p.13.

“An action was added in parliament to the provocations of the Refah spokesmen. The proposal to require a license for pump rifles was rejected in the commission. It had been found by the intelligence organizations of the state that pump rifles have reached a number that is threatening for security and the MGK had taken a precautionary decision regarding this. Even the most ignorant people who watch violence films on TV have learned what pump rifles are useful for. A pump rifle is not a hunting weapon. Who can say that a pump rifle fair that is established at the religious publications fair is for the purpose of encouraging religious people to start hunting?”³¹⁷

The reports about “the arming of the reactionaries” were not always explicit like the ones quoted above. However, in the comprehensiveness of the hegemonic discourse of the February 28 Process, it was not difficult to fill in the blanks once any reference to pump rifles had been made;

“Confusing advertisement: Yesterday the Islamist daily Akit published a ‘meaningful’ advertisement for its readers. An advertisement published in the paper gives its readers a piece of good news; ‘It is the right time to buy a weapon...because the hunt is starting’.”³¹⁸

It was not so difficult to guess what was there in the omitted parts of advertisement published in the daily *Akit*. However, by taking away the advertisement out of its context the *Milliyet* tried to plant doubts about the supposedly violent agenda of the RP.

The reproduction of discourse on violence was not limited to pump rifles. On the contrary, hegemonic media exploited any occasion that was somehow suitable for the propagation of the discourse. The following news report was about an attack against President Süleyman Demirel. At the end of the story, it became clear that the aggressor was a mentally unbalanced person and this was not his first crime. However, this was not an obstacle to reproducing the discourse of violence:

“It was reported that Ibrahim Gümrukçüoğlu, who attempted to assassinate President Demirel, is from a “sufi order” and that “dhikr” gatherings are held

³¹⁷ Sabah, Güngör Mengi, 22.03.1997, p.3.

³¹⁸ Milliyet, 07.08.1997, p.15.

at his home. A jalabiya, turban and a flag with a crescent and Arabic writings on it were found in the basement of his home.”³¹⁹

In order to empower the attack story and strengthen the image of violent bad Muslims, it was necessary to find more elements that could be associated with violence. In the absence of guns, bullets and blood; a jalabiya, turban and flag with crescent and Arabic writing, all of which were found in his basement, filled the gap.

Regardless of the condition of the person who made the claims, any indication of violence and crime about bad Muslims could find its place in *Akşam*’s coverage:

“The man who escaped from Refah: Akşam reporters have found the Beykoz Municipality Accounting director Suat Doğan, who is reported to have confiscated the funds of Beykoz Municipality and absconded. Suat Doğan said that he would surrender to the police and disclose all of the documents he had in his possession if his safety was ensured. He said: “The day after I disclose the documents the Refah administration at the Beykoz Municipality would be dismissed from their jobs. The RP-Mafia relations would be revealed in every detail. It would become obvious who hired people to get Yusuf Ekşi of the DSP shot.””³²⁰

The man speaking in the report was a suspect of embezzlement and wanted by the police. However, because the incident took place in a RP-run municipality, the suspect was depicted as a victim escaping from the RP members.

The excerpts quoted below are another example of the fact that the scarcity of guns and bombs did not prevent the use of this discourse:

“Refah party leader Erbakan was welcomed with a military ceremony in Konya, where he was conducting his first trip as prime minister. Erbakan used the Prime Ministry’s ATA aircraft for the first time. Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan made his first domestic trip after receiving a vote of confidence in Konya, which is known as the fortress of his party. Contrary to expectations,

³¹⁹ Akşam, 20.05.1996, 06.

³²⁰ Akşam, 21.01.1996, 12.

Erbakan was met in a more low-profile manner in Konya compared to the trips he made when he was the leader of the opposition.”³²¹

The title of the report quoted above was “Erbakan Displayed Power in Konya” and, together with implicit references such as Konya being the “fortress” of the party, it included military tones that drew associations with violence. Violence was an important theme of good vs. bad Muslims discourse. According to this theme, violent bad Muslims will not refrain from using violence in order to introduce Shariah, but until that time they will be moderate and deceitful to secure the necessary conditions for its establishment.

5.2.1.2.2. Moderate and Creeping Islamization

During the February 28 Process, the Turkish political domain witnessed the intensive use of a certain term in political discussions: *takiyye*. The Arabic origin of the word and the fact that it is especially important in Shi’i Islam made the concept very effective in the reproduction of the hegemonic discourse regarding conservatives. The usage of the *takiyye* discourse and the social practices at which the use of the discourse in February 28 Process was aimed was bidirectional. The first usage was a more traditional one: the conservatives hid their real aim of establishing a Shariah state and instead worked toward the gradual Islamization of society, which in the end meant the same thing as a Shariah state. This type of *takiyye* is essentially dissimulation. On the other hand, the second usage of the discourse aimed at the conservative masses and tried to put distance between the conservative masses and conservative politicians. With many reports and comments about the rich and luxurious lifestyles of conservative politicians, the discourse aimed at transmitting a message to the conservative masses: “Look! They are not like you. They only seem similar to you. They exploit your religious feelings for their economic and political interests.” This second usage of *takiyye* essentially means hypocrisy. Ultimately, the common points of both dissimulation and hypocrisy were the misleading presentation of oneself and the deception of people for one’s own advantage. In dissimulation it was the secular republic and its supporters who were deceived: Dissimulating bad Muslims hid their real goal of an Iran-style state and presented themselves as moderate Muslims. However, they continued with the gradual Islamization of Turkey. In hypocrisy it was the genuine Muslims who were being deceived: Hypocritical bad Muslims hid their real goals of growing richer or abusing women and presented themselves as innocent Muslims.

According to the discourse, there is nothing these dissimulators would not do for their interests. They could even deny their religion:

³²¹ Sabah, 13.07.1996, 13.

*“The Hodja is a complete Machiavellian!
He will almost renounce religion and faith for the sake of being in power. He
sees all means as acceptable in order to be in the position of the prime minister.
It can even be said that he is a master of takiyye.”³²²*

Of course, the dissimulative image went hand in hand with an image of unreliability:

*“There were two paths that Erbakan, who is really like a pair of pliers,
believed in and would never give up walking with determination: one is the
“national outlook” and the other is “power.” While walking on these two
paths, it is thought that the September 12, 1980 coup delayed him from
reaching his target for seven years. Yet he has managed to turn every event
that seemed to be against him in his favor: military interventions had a positive
impact on him and his path to power was shortened a little more.”³²³*

A person who could make use of any condition to achieve his goal of power could also make use of religion and this was the expected attitude of a bad Muslim.

A well-known bogeyman of Turkish secularism, i.e. Iran, was also used in the context of *takiyye*. Iranian secularists were also not aware of religious reaction until it was too late, thanks to the dissimulation of Iranian religionists:

*“General İsmail Hakkı Karadayı emphasized his sensitivity with regard to the
subject of secularism at the reception he gave on the occasion of the August
30 Victory Day and he narrated an anecdote related to the Iranian
commanders who fled Iran after Khomeini overthrew the shah’s regime. His
memory is like this: [...] “One night we had the opportunity to chat with one
of the force commanders [of the Shah’s regime]. We were together at dinner.
Of course they have left their country, their armies have been dispersed, they
are in a bad state psychologically. They told me such things that I could not
help asking: “So were you not aware that such a reactionary development
was taking place?” The Iranian commander replied: “Dear general, if you
look at a flower constantly, you cannot see that that flower is growing. For*

³²² Sabah, Hasan Cemal, 21.06.1996, p.19.

³²³ Akşam, 01.07.1996, p.9.

example, you cannot even realize how a rose is opening. This is what happened to us.”³²⁴

The message was clear: under RP rule, Turkey also faced the danger that Iran had faced before the revolution and, therefore, in order to avoid becoming like Iran, the army must take measures. The fact that the same story was also told in same words in the April 27 Process is helpful for understanding the fear-mongering function of the hegemonic discourse.

Of course, conservatives needed an army to establish a theocratic state like Iran. With talk of pump rifles, the historic hegemonic center armed the Islamist “army” and the excerpt quoted below gathered the army itself:



*“This is what Refah wants, students as loyal as soldiers.”*³²⁵

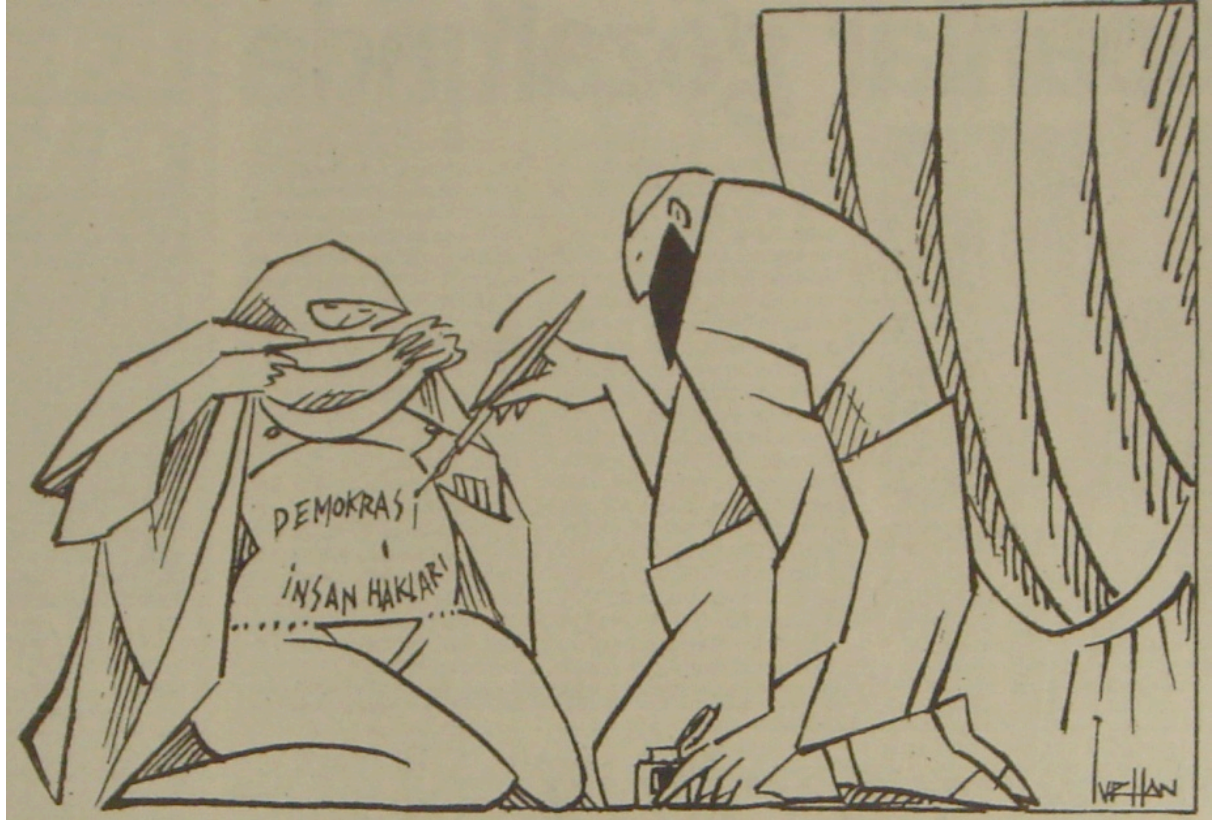
Picture 4

The subject of the column from which the photo was taken was the debate over imam-hatip high schools which had started after the February 28 MGK meeting. The message the writer wanted to convey was as follows: İmam-hatip high schools were not only high schools, but also army barracks where a reactionary army was gradually being trained.

³²⁴ Sabah, 01.09.1996, p.1.

³²⁵ Sabah, Can Ataklı, 26.03.1997, p.6.

During the February 28 Process, the conservative actors frequently referred to universal concepts such as democracy and human rights to defend themselves. The adaptation of this new language was also seen as an instance of dissimulation. Besides stoking the general discourse about sexual abuse, the cartoon below³²⁶ also insulted the conservative discourse about universal concepts:



(Democracy, Human Rights)

Picture 5

In the cartoon, the adaptation of the concepts of democracy and human rights was equated with the hegemonic discourse of *üfürükçülük*, healing with breath.³²⁷ According to this discourse, religionists deceived genuine Muslims and engaged in sexual abuse under the pretext of *üfürükçülük*. The discourse about deception was also linked to the issues of democracy and human rights. In the cartoon the young lady, deceived by a reactionary bad Muslim, corresponds to the Turkish Republic and the message was the same: dissimulating bad Muslims deceiving the Turkish Republic through the use of the concepts of democracy

³²⁶ Cumhuriyet, Turhan Selçuk, 09.01.1997, p.12.

³²⁷ Especially according to Sufi interpretation of Islam, verses of the Quran, in addition to medical practices, are a source of physical healing for Muslims. It is a widespread practice for people to ask religious figures who are regarded as good, practicing Muslims to recite Quran verses for their cure. According to the tradition, after the recitation of the Quran the person who recited the verses finishes the session by calling "Hu," a name of Allah that literally means "He" in Arabic, and blowing their final breath toward the one seeking to be cured.

and human rights were just like hypocritical bad Muslims deceiving innocent Muslims for their sexual ends.

The discourse on women had a fear mongering character in some cases. It was generated and circulated as a message that the existence of these “interesting and strange” women was not only a source of attraction, but also a danger for others because they try to gradually transform the rest of society to fit their own norms:

“Ayfer Yılmaz, who used to wear skirts above the knee when she was the undersecretary of treasury and when she was a minister in the DYP-ANAP coalition, immediately changed her style when her party entered into a coalition with Refah. [...] Minister of state Yılmaz kept the hemline of the skirt of the light green suit she recently had made long, down to the ankles.”³²⁸



Cartoon Tag: Mesuth [Mesut Yılmaz] wants to join the government, but...

Mesut Yılmaz: What can we do, Berna. I told you that you would have to deal with it for a while.

Picture 6³²⁹

The message was clear: Anyone involved with these “strange” and “interesting” bad Muslims would be gradually transformed like Minister Ayfer Yılmaz, who started to wear a long, green skirt or Mesut Yılmaz’s wife, who would start to wear the chador if her husband formed a coalition government with the RP.

³²⁸ Sabah, 13.07.1996, p.1.

³²⁹ Sabah, 17.02.1996, p1

However, it was not only Ayfer Yılmaz who started gradually changing her lifestyle. Even the Grand National Assembly was being changed:

*“After the Refahyol government received its vote of confidence, 40 women who wore turbans and chadors came to the Parliament yesterday. The women came to the Dikmen gate together, took visitor cards and entered the general assembly hall. [...] Women who wore turbans sat together at the parliament lodge and watched the discussion on the parliamentary research motion given by the RP on the obligatory savings deduction. The guests listened to Ertan Yülek of the RP.”*³³⁰

*“After the Refah party came to power, the human scenes at the parliament changed rapidly. After the coming of women who wore turbans and black chadors to the Turkish Grand National Assembly last week, the Parliament was also the scene of interesting scenes yesterday. However, this time the guests were not only natives. Foreign guests also came with their distinctive clothing. Among those who came to the parliament were Mecca Aziziya Mosque imam Sheikh Nimetullah Hodja and Osman Özdemir from among the Erzurum Naqshibandi sheikhs. Nimetullah Hodja and the Naqshibandi sheikh attracted attention to themselves with their interesting clothes.”*³³¹

While the discourse of delusion targeted a wider audience, the aim of the hypocrisy discourse was the conservative masses. The hegemonic media tried to put distance between the conservative masses and conservative politicians. To this end, the “luxurious” and “wealthy” lifestyle of the conservative politicians was displayed in an exaggerated manner. Not only political figures, but also their families became a target of the discourse of hypocrisy. The image of great wealth was used to raise questions about the sincerity of conservative politicians:

“Nermin Erbakan, who is the first turban wearing first lady, uses a 300S Mercedes, which she owns. The car, which is worth 3.5 billion liras, was given by Necmettin Erbakan to his wife. Nermin Erbakan accessorizes her clothes

³³⁰ Sabah, 10.07.1996, p.21.

³³¹ Sabah, 17.07.1996, p.31.

with modern boots and shoes and she wears diamond rings and diamond bracelets.”³³²

The report was more about Nermin Erbakan’s car and jewellery than about the fact that she had become the first lady. The report about Erbakan’s daughter Elif’s school is similar:

*“The Directorate of Student Affairs at Bilkent University said that the registration of Elif (who was a student at the department of interior architecture and decoration) was deleted because she had been dismissed. [...] Her friends said that Elif is an introvert, that the biggest problem for her had been the drawing classes and that she had skipped the drawing classes because the students were required to draw pictures using live models. Her friends said that a green Mercedes brought her to the school.”*³³³

Her reluctance with regard to using naked models, the color and the model of her car were the basic elements in the report rather than the current situation of her studies. But the Erbakan family’s ordeal with Mercedes cars was not finished with Elif:

*“The night blue Mercedes coupe driven by Prime Minister Erbakan’s son Fatih Erbakan is the hot item of the day in the capital. [...] There are three possibilities behind the Mercedes: 1. Fatih Erbakan bought it by saving his pocket money. 2. His father gave it to him. 3. The car belongs to the RP.”*³³⁴

The analysis of the possible ways in which Fatih Erbakan acquired the night blue Mercedes coupe offers insights into the efforts aimed at producing doubts about the RP. To start with, it was very difficult for a university student to buy a Mercedes by saving his pocket money. The stress on “saving pocket money” implied the impossibility of this option. The second option was that Necmettin Erbakan had given him the car. The text implies that, under normal conditions, there would be nothing interesting in the issue to merit being “the hot item of the day in the capital” if the car had been a gift from Necmettin Erbakan. Therefore, the only real possibility was the third option, which meant that the RP bought the car for Fatih Erbakan with money donated from its supporters, people whose way of life drastically differed from that of the Erbakan family and who were deceived by the religious image of the Erbakans.

³³² Sabah, 01.07.1996, p.10.

³³³ Sabah, 06.07.1996, p.27.

³³⁴ Milliyet, 16.02.1997, p.1.

The following lines from *Akşam* clearly indicated the intended effect of the hypocrisy discourse on the conservative masses. Furthermore, by making references to Erbakan's *iftar* dinner in the prime minister's residence, a hot item of discussions on religious reaction in the February 28 Process, the column's capacity of reproducing this discourse doubled. Mercedes cars once again made an appearance:

*"Remember the latest iftar meal issue... what were left in people's minds most strongly were the Mercedes cars of the honourable effendi. Driving around in these Mercedes cars in front of the eyes of this poor nation and then talking of religion and faith has no place in the eyes of Allah."*³³⁵

Driving such cars in front of poor people was not the only evidence of hypocrisy and the deception of poor, genuine, good Muslims:

*"A wedding without a bride: The wedding of Merve Baş, who is the niece of Mustafa Baş from the RP, brought together RP members at the Hidiv Palace. Bride Merve Baş did not allow her pictures to be taken despite the fact that her family gave permission. [...] The guests sat in gender-segregated fashion and they were offered an extravagant banquet in open buffet style. A firework display was also made. [...] It was found out that 3 billion [lira] were spent for the wedding, where 2,000 guests attended and contractor Mehmet Emin Erkan gave his son a Mercedes of the latest model."*³³⁶

People that spend 3 billion lira for a wedding are still regarded as supporters of an Islamic revolution. This is the power of discourse: these bad Muslims who are so articulated to the capitalist system and consumption society are feared to be planning an Islamic revolution as in Iran, Algeria, or Afghanistan.

5.2.1.2.3. The Islamic Revolution

Next to the danger of a slow and surreptitious takeover, the danger of a "reactionary armed uprising" was one of the chief motifs of the discursive practices of the February 28 Process. Claiming that a slow and surreptitious takeover is underway and that, at the same time, a sudden armed uprising is imminent is nonsense, of course, but it is not an obstacle to generating discourse. The reactionary armed uprising discourse was reproduced with reference to both international and domestic events. Among the international cases there

³³⁵ *Akşam*, Behiç Kılıç, 19.01.1997, p.10.

³³⁶ *Akşam*, 29.09.1996, p.4.

existed Iran, Afghanistan and Algeria, whereas incidents like Sivas and Menemen were the domestic ones.

In the reproduction of this discourse, references to the actual discussions of the time were frequently used:



Newspaper: Religious fundamentalists slaughtered seven more women in Algeria.

Man: Oh!!! How backward these men are! Haven't they heard about pump rifles?

Picture 7³³⁷

The claims about pump rifles, which were a discursive theme and media fabrication, were used in order to establish a similarity between Turkey and Algeria.

³³⁷ Cumhuriyet, 25.03.1997, p.5.

With talk of violence and the danger of Islamic revolution, the reproduction of the discourse became stronger. The first task for newspapers was to fabricate evidence *ex nihilo* because one of the major characteristics of the MG was their non-violent attitude. For example, four MG parties were banned until now, but in none of these cases did the court claim any kind of violent agenda for the parties, although all were banned because of “being a focus of reactionary acts.” However, with the help of this grand narrative and media fabrications, attempts were made to create an association with violence in the minds of the people. False claims about the arming of the RP can be shown as an example of these media fabrications:

“Prime Minister Erbakan today depends on his militia forces. That is why Oğuzhan Asiltürk [one of the leading figures of the RP] is always saying ‘Our armed force is our faith’ and he goes on threatening eighty percent of the society. [...] If you have the guts, take to the streets and shout: ‘Shariah will be introduced, the Seculars will die miserably’. Come to the streets and we shall show you. You cowards!”³³⁸

It is possible to observe here the manipulation of a conservative *cliché* to reproduce the discourse about the violent tendencies of the RP. It is very clear that Asiltürk uttered the slogan “Our armed force is our faith” to deny claims about the arming of the RP. However, Hikmet Çetinkaya reversed this and presented Asiltürk’s words as threatening the people who did not vote for the RP.

After the fabrication of evidence of violent intentions on the part of conservatives, a second and harder task awaited the newspapers: denying the claims of success of an armed reactionary uprising and assuring people that the TSK was capable of defeating such a potential threat:

“People who say ‘Civil war starts when a military intervention takes place’ are whistling in the dark... because of fear. Will they resist the army by using pump rifles? The absence of any difference between the weapons that the people have and those of the army is something for which there is no example even in the decline period of the Ottomans.”³³⁹

³³⁸ Cumhuriyet, Hikmet Çetinkaya, 12.02.1997, p.5.

³³⁹ Cumhuriyet, Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, 13.04.1997, p.3.

Thanks to these lines from Kışlalı, *Cumhuriyet* readers were assured that they would be safe from an Algerian-style civil war with the help of the beloved TSK. That meant that Turkey would not be Algeria, but that it still might become Afghanistan:

“ [quoting from a conversation with an Afghan taxi driver in USA] the cab driver turned out to be a namesake. He is an Afghan immigrant. He became very warm to us when he found out that we were Turks. He is a big guy with a black beard. Tarık Şara teased him about his beard: ‘The Taliban who came to power in Afghanistan made it mandatory to grow beards. Hey look, you don’t need to be afraid!’ The Afghan driver laughed: ‘Look at yourself! In less than a month, Sheikh Necmettin Erbakan is going to make you grow a beard, too.’”³⁴⁰

When it came to the case of Iran, the status of women was the subject referred to most often in order to associate it with Turkey. Columnists always underlined the subordinate position of women in Iran and warned readers about the danger of becoming like Iran. Cüneyt Arcayürek gave a good example of this method when he was commenting on Iranian President Rafsanjani’s visit to Turkey. He made a comparison between Iranian first lady Faize Rafsanjani and Turkish first lady Nazmiye Demirel and asked whether Turkish women wanted to be like Mrs. Rafsanjani or Mrs. Demirel. The answer was easy: Turkish women should be aware of the danger of the Iranization of Turkey under RP rule, if they did not want to be covered like Mrs. Rafsanjani.³⁴¹

Tansu Çiller’s gender constituted a valuable opportunity for the media in terms of “Iran and women talk.” For example, while commenting on the coalition government between RP and DYP it was stated that:

“Coercion is now useless. There could not have been an agreement between the DYP, which has the West as its objective, and the RP, which is focused on the East. They said, ‘It happened,’ but it is seen that it could not happen. This was a mut’a marriage, both sides obtained an important part of what they wanted. Tansu Çiller, who escaped the High Court³⁴², obtained what she dreamt of and so she was able to sleep again.”³⁴³

³⁴⁰ Sabah, Hasan Cemal, 03.01.1996, p.27.

³⁴¹ Cumhuriyet, Cüneyt Arcayürek, 22.12.1996, p.19.

³⁴² According to the Turkish constitution, members of the government are to be judged by the Constitutional Court under the name of the High Council.

³⁴³ Sabah, Güngör Mengi, 07.03.1997, p.3.

In this report, the narrative reproduced the womanizing characteristic of bad Muslims. The nature of the partnership between the DYP and the RP was mentioned together with *muta* marriage, which is a kind of a fixed-term marriage strictly forbidden in Sunnism, but permissible in most Shi'i schools and practiced particularly in religious circles in Iran mainly in order to fulfill sexual desires. Although the report did not directly associate the Turkish case with Iran and did not contain any elements of armed uprising, it was a good example of how such discourse functions. It established the relationship in an indirect way through the element of *muta* marriage, which was also widespread in Iran before the revolution but became a focus of interest in Turkey after the revolution as an element of the "Iranization of Turkey" discourse.

Akşam also did its share in reproducing the discourse on armed Islamic uprising. However, being more moderate, *Akşam* used an implicit style:

"At the show of the RP supporters who prayed a janaza prayer³⁴⁴ for the Palestinians who died in Jerusalem, a group unfurled a green flag and shouted the slogan 'long live Shariah.' The demonstrators also burned the Israeli flag at the Kocatepe Mosque in Ankara. The group did not let Ahmet Tunç, a member of the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Council from the RP, speak and shouted, 'This arena does not belong to the RP, but to Muslims.' Then the group shouted the slogan 'long live Shariah' and started to march toward the Israeli embassy. The police tried to stop the group by spraying water with paint."

"Friday prayer through coercion with weapons: Taliban in Afghanistan forced 3 thousand people into a mosque and forced them to pray the Friday prayer at gunpoint. Those who objected to the order were threatened with death. Extremist religionist Taliban forces, which seized power in Afghanistan, forced the people of Kabul to pray the Friday prayer at gunpoint."³⁴⁵

Both reports found their place on the first page of *Akşam* next to each other. In the first one the standard elements of a bad Muslim rally, i.e. the green flag and call for Shariah, were generously offered. The report claimed that the rallying call for Shariah was organized by the RP-members, but somehow these RP organizers did not let another RP member speak and shouted, "This arena does not belong to the RP, but to Muslims." Despite the existence of

³⁴⁴ A kind of Muslim prayer performed after one's death.

³⁴⁵ *Akşam*, 05.10.1996, p.1.

contradicting elements, the report was still an effective tool to combine the violence of bad Muslims with the Islamic revolution grand narrative thanks to the second report placed next it: Coercion and prayer were central elements in both reports.

During the February 28 Process, any demonstrations or rallies organized by conservative groups in order to seek their rights were presented as a type of Sivas Incident. On July 2, 1993, after an event organized by the Pir Sultan Abdal Association, an Alevi-based NGO, the Madımak Hotel in Sivas, which was hosting participants from the conference, was set on fire and 33 people died. The people who set the hotel on fire claimed that Aziz Nesin, one of the participants, had insulted Islam.

“Militants with turbans [headscarf], jalabas, black chadors and beards marched at Üsküdar Anadolu Imam Hatip saying that religion has been insulted. This is an incident like Sivas.”³⁴⁶

With supplementary elements like turbans and beards, the protest of conservative people against eight-year mandatory education, was presented as a Sivas-like incident.

The discourse on armed Islamic uprising was so effective that in some cases even telling the story without naming it was also enough:

“[...] About 100 reactionaries who revolted after 8 people who insulted Atatürk were detained, attacked the police directorate building and rescued their friends. [...] According to the report prepared by the delegation sent to Sorgun by the CHP, the incident developed like this: When the police directorate of the county detained 8 people upon the order of the prosecutor, students from the AKABE student dorm and members of the Association for the Protection of Poor Youth gathered 100 people by saying: ‘The prosecutor is gathering people from the mosques. Muslims have been detained’ They set off for the police directorate of the county. The crowd shouted slogans against the prosecutor and ‘Allahu Akbar’ and they were stopped by the county governor near the police directorate. Pro-reaction demonstrators said that they would not give up the action unless their friends were released. As a result of bargaining, 8 people were delivered to the mayor of Sorgun from the RP with ‘bail’ and the crowd dispersed.”³⁴⁷

³⁴⁶ Cumhuriyet, Hikmet Çetinkaya, 12.10.1996, p.5.

³⁴⁷ Sabah, 10.04.1996, p.33.

The above-mentioned report was a very good example of the extent to which a grand narrative can become effective. In this example there was no direct reference to the Sivas Incident of 1930, but the plot was the same: Some bad Muslims, i.e. AKABE Association members, gathered people claiming that Muslims had been arrested. A final detail that associated AKABE Association members with RP members was the complementary element of the discourse. The incident was associated with Sivas and the RP members are associated with the bad Muslims in Sivas who set the hotel on fire. Of course, like very discursive practice, this one too has a social aim.

5.2.1.3. Social Practices

As mentioned before, according to Fairclough, every discursive practice aims at a social practice and it is a prerequisite of a social practice. During the February 28 Process, the aim of the social practice was to silence all conservative claims and cleanse Islam from the public sphere because conservative actors, the periphery/subaltern groups, were regarded as threats to the hegemonic position of the historic hegemonic center. Therefore, the allies of the historical center campaigned in order to push the conservative actors away from the center of the society. In this section, the role of the historic hegemonic center in this campaign will be presented.

Together with civil society, the media played a key role in the campaign against the conservative actors during the process. The existence of the historic ties between the media and civil society as the members of the historic hegemonic center can be understood through the activities of the historic hegemonic center just after the elections. After the elections, as a member of the historic hegemonic center, and owner of the largest business conglomerate, Rahmi Koç called on other center-right and left parties for unification against the RP:

“Rahmi Koç, who is the head of the administrative council of Koç Holding, indicated that Turkey had a tradition of being ruled by two big parties and said: ‘The right should unite on the right and the left should unite on the left of center. [...] If the parties want to survive, they must definitely unite, otherwise one of them will be eliminated.’ [...] Koç said the following on the Refah-army discussion “Our army is the most institutionalized, organized force in Turkey. If they said something, they must have felt the need to say something.”³⁴⁸

³⁴⁸ Akşam, 14.02.1996, p.6.

The unification of the center parties against the danger of the RP was a common theme during the process. Similar to Rahmi Koç calling for unification just after the election, this time *Akşam* itself called for center-right unification after the February 28 crisis:

“The Turkish people want an end to the fight within the center right as soon as possible in order to solve problems rapidly and to ensure political stability. The secret of success: Citizens indicated that the crisis in Turkey was quickly moving toward a dangerous point and that they miss the days when the center right made Turkey experience breakthroughs by coming to power on its own during the Menderes, Demirel and Özal periods. Longing for the golden age: Most of the society believes that the center right can only return to its golden days with the coming together of Çiller and Yılmaz. People are saying that “Turkey can only move forward like this when entering the 2000s.”³⁴⁹

Akşam’s discourse during the process was more moderate than other media groups analyzed in this study. It always tried to follow a balanced policy between the historic hegemonic center and subalterns and sought the government’s support against the other major media conglomerates, namely the Doğan and Medya Groups. However, the timing of the above-quoted report shows that, as a result of the closure case against the RP, *Akşam* lost its hope of support from the RP against its opponents and therefore invested in the prospects of a post-RP process.

As major elements of the historic hegemonic center, trade unions and associations were also part of the discussions during the process. The discussion on the trade unions and associations started after the general elections because the trade unions’ and associations’ elections also took place in the same period. Newspapers claimed that the RP assisted its supporters in taking control of trade unions and associations:

“MÜSİAD has designs on the trade associations: The Association of Independent Industrialists and Businessman (MÜSİAD) interfered with the chamber elections after the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce elections. MÜSİAD, which acted to capture the Chambers of Mechanical Engineers and Chambers of Architects, started to organize gatherings on behalf of the ‘Group of Call for Solidarity’ [...] Mustafa Aral, who defined his group as democratic,

³⁴⁹ *Akşam*, 27.05.1997, p.1.

*secular and patriotic, called attention to the attempts of the anti-secular RP to be organized in the ranks of the chambers.”*³⁵⁰

*“The Mosque Debate in the Chamber Elections: MÜSİAD uses demagogy in order to capture chambers that seemed to be an obstacle to its expectations.”*³⁵¹

*“Democrats won the chamber elections: RP proponents, who were supported by Tayyip Erdoğan and MÜSİAD, lost”*³⁵²

*“The ‘chambers war’ of Refah is not ending: The Refah Party, which obtained the highest votes in the early general elections, is making efforts to bring those who are close to its image into the administration. [...] Refah supporters, who have lost the elections of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Industry, Chamber of Mechanical Engineers and Topographical Engineers, have now mobilized for the Chamber of Civil Engineers.”*³⁵³

It is possible to observe the effectiveness of the discourse of good and bad Muslims in the campaign against peripheral subaltern elements. The reference to MÜSİAD’s “demagogy” about mosque building and the “democratic, secular and patriotic” character of the opposing groups located the chamber elections within the overall picture of good and bad Muslims. The message was clear: MÜSİAD, the subaltern class, the periphery, the bad Muslims, were again using religion, demagogy about mosque building, against democratic, secular and patriotic members of the chamber and were thereby against the historic hegemonic center and good Muslims.

Not only newspapers’ discourse about the elections, but also the chambers’ activities with other parts of civil society solidified their position as members of the allied center, as seen in the example of the Chamber of Physicians’ actions just two weeks after the MGK meeting of February 28. Furthermore, a close look at the activities of chambers during the process gives insights about their importance and why conservative actors’ quest for a role in the chambers resulted in intense opposition from the central elements:

“Doctors’ Response to Reaction: Doctors who gathered for the Medicine Day celebrations in front of the Taksim Republic Statue expressed their demand for

³⁵⁰ Cumhuriyet, 12.01.1996, p.7.

³⁵¹ Cumhuriyet, 13.01.1997, p.3.

³⁵² Cumhuriyet, 15.01.1996, p.6.

³⁵³ Akşam, 26.01.1996, p.12.

*a “secular state”: Celebrations were held around the country to observe Medicine Day. Visiting Anıtkabir, Deans of the Faculty of Medicine explained that they will not compromise with regard to the principles of secularism, democracy, and the rule of law.”*³⁵⁴

Under normal circumstances, it would be good for a democratic civil society to hear the diverse ideas of different segments of society about on-going political discussions in the country. However, the problem in the Turkish case, which makes the statements hegemonic rather than democratic, was that the explanations of the different segments of society were not diverse in any sense. The content of the civil society organizations’ explanations seemed to be cast in the same mould:

*“Basic Principles Trodden Under Foot: Pharmacists want intellectuals to claim republican gains: Chairman of the Istanbul Chamber of Pharmacists Mustafa Türeñç said that the basic principles of the republic are being trodden upon and the existence of their professional problems are ignored in addition to the problems that emanate from the regime crisis in Turkey.”*³⁵⁵

*“The pro-Shariah party shall be closed: Full Support to Savaş [the chief prosecutor who filed the case to ban the RP] from the general assembly of the Turkish Bar Associations: Turkish Bar Associations Chairman Eralp Özgen said that the demand for the continuation of the existence of political parties that did not accept the principle of democracy, that aimed at changing the unchangeable articles of the constitution, which are concerned with the basic characteristics of the state and that even consider shedding blood for this sake is open to questioning.”*³⁵⁶

The chambers were mobilized and, as a result, they, along with Eralp Özgen, started to become aggressive. He participated in reproducing the hegemonic discourse against the RP by referring to the “blood shedding aims” of the RP. Furthermore, the professional identity of the speaker made the case tragic, as it seemed that ideological concerns came before professional ethics.

³⁵⁴ Cumhuriyet, 15.03.1997, p.7.

³⁵⁵ Cumhuriyet, 15.05.1997, p.7.

³⁵⁶ Cumhuriyet, 25.05.1997, p.5.

The bargains between the government and the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions were another example of ideological concerns being prioritized above professional ethics. There were also other labor unions bargaining with the government for a labor agreement. HAK-İŞ was one of those who made a deal. As a result, the chairperson of TÜRK-İŞ accused HAK-İŞ of compromising.³⁵⁷ Furthermore, the TÜRK-İŞ chairperson claimed that HAK-İŞ signed the agreement as a result of its ideological position. However, the signing of the same agreement under the same terms by seven labor unions which were affiliated with TÜRK-İŞ³⁵⁸ and later by almost all of the other trade unions³⁵⁹, and the subsequent deposing of the chairpersons of the labor unions who had agreed with the government in collective bargaining by the TÜRK-İŞ administration³⁶⁰ demonstrated that it was TÜRK-İŞ that was acting ideologically by not coming to terms with the government over collective bargaining.

Not only chambers and trade unions, but also official institutions took their place in the historic hegemonic center against conservatives:

“During the ceremony that was organized at the High Court of Appeals on the occasion of the start of the judicial year and in which President Demirel and Prime Minister Erbakan also participated, the harsh speeches of High Court of Appeals Chairman Müfit Utku and chairman of the bar associations Eralp Özgen caused tension. Utku said in his speech that ‘the point we reach when we put reason at the foundation of the state is secularism, and the point we reach when we put religion at that foundation is Shariah.’ Utku’s words were applauded by the audience, and it was seen that Erbakan and the ministers from the RP became annoyed and did not applaud the chairman.”³⁶¹

It is important to note that the judges raised these criticisms two months after the establishment of the coalition government between the RP and the DYP in a time period when neither controversial incidents like the Fadime Şahin or Sincan cases, nor the MGK meeting, had occurred yet. Therefore, it can be said that, like other elements of the historic hegemonic center, the judges did not act against the rising danger of reaction, but rather directly produced this rising danger in the discursive realm.

³⁵⁷ Cumhuriyet, 13.04.1997, p.3.

³⁵⁸ Cumhuriyet, 15.04.1997, p.3.

³⁵⁹ Cumhuriyet, 14.04.1997, p.3.

³⁶⁰ Cumhuriyet, 17.05.1997, p.12.

³⁶¹ Akşam, 07.09.1996, p.1.

The historic hegemonic center against the coalition government was so extensive that in addition to official institutions, it also included football clubs, which were normally known as apolitical. Commenting on Tansu Çiller having been greeted with boos and jeers by football fans, Ahmet Taner Kışlalı of *Cumhuriyet* congratulated these fans and invited other fan groups both to jeer the government and support the ADD.³⁶²

These remarks of Ahmet Taner Kışlalı very well reflected Kemalist civil society and its tasks in the Gramscian sense:

“[...] are we at the point of ‘either coup d’état or counter-revolution’ ?

No!

Because the unarmed forces have not said their final word. There is hope in the process that brought together those who gave up hope – from DİSK to TÜRK-İŞ, from the ADD to the tradespeople and trade unions, from the ÇYDDs to the women’s organizations and professional chambers. And in the parliamentarians who are affected by the process and say no to the dictatorship of the chairpersons. Now a Kemalist ‘call’ is being signed as the common view of the ‘unarmed forces’ ... forces that unite around the right things... people who grow strengthened as they share the right things... The darkness of the country will shrink as this light gets bigger.”³⁶³

The ideological position of the historic hegemonic center also corresponded to the classic center-periphery fault line of Turkish politics. It is possible to observe the urban middle and upper-class projections in the campaign. Moreover, the geographic distinction was also influential. The campaign was supported by the well-educated urban middle and upper classes, although the support was presented as if it was nationwide. For example, *Cumhuriyet* reported the protests after Susurluk under the headline “The People Enjoyed This Rally Very Much.”³⁶⁴ However, the text was about demonstrations in Ankara, İzmir and İstanbul. The sub-headings in the text were “Enthusiasm on Mumcu’s Street,”³⁶⁵ “Protest with Candles in İzmir”, “Torches in İstanbul.” All the stories of the rallies were from the three largest cities in Turkey. *Cumhuriyet*’s attitude of accepting İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir’s support as being sufficient to conclude that “the people” enjoyed the rally also offers insights about the historic hegemonic center’s perception of “the people.” The other example of the support of “the people” for the rally was:

³⁶² Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, *Cumhuriyet*, 11.03.1996, p.3.

³⁶³ Ahmet Taner Kışlalı, *Cumhuriyet*, 05.02.1997, 03.

³⁶⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 09.02.1997, 07.

³⁶⁵ The street in Ankara on which Uğur Mumcu’s house was located.

“154 civil society organizations, including labor and business confederations, chambers, many associations and labor unions, made a simultaneous declaration in Ankara, İstanbul and İzmir.”³⁶⁶

“320 academicians from METU [Middle East Technical University, based in Ankara], Ankara, Hacettepe [based in Ankara], İstanbul, Boğaziçi [based in Ankara], Ege [based in İzmir] and 9 Eylül [based in İzmir] Universities declared that Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan’s attitude has been flouting science and scientists as a result of his explanations.”³⁶⁷

The discussions around eight-year mandatory education provide a fruitful path to trace the historic hegemonic center. Just after the MGK memorandum, some deputies from different parties brought a bill for eight-year mandatory education.³⁶⁸ While the discussions surrounding the issue of mandatory education were continuing, *Milliyet* organized a fund drive. Deniz Baykal supported *Milliyet*’s campaign, the logo of which was a candle and whose motto was as follows: “A Light for Enlightened Future.”³⁶⁹ Various trade unions and associations supported *Milliyet*’s campaign both politically and financially.³⁷⁰ The plotline of the campaign made it more of a hegemonic than a democratic civil society organization. The military dictated the necessity of eight years of mandatory education. After that a group of parliamentarians introduced a bill, then a newspaper organized a fund drive and an opposition party and various non-governmental organizations, which supported the military’s intervention for the overthrow of the government, supported the campaign.

The motives of the historic center were economic as well as ideological. The case of green capital was an informative one for understanding the economic motivations of the historic hegemonic center. Two weeks before the February 28 MGK meeting, *Milliyet* reported that the conservative bourgeoisie were not limited to a few peripheral merchants, but rather that they had started to own large conglomerates.³⁷¹ In the period when conservative capital constituted one of the hottest items of the rising reactionary danger debate, many news reports related to investigations against Islamic capital found space in newspapers like this one in *Cumhuriyet*:

³⁶⁶ Cumhuriyet, 30.03.1997, p.1.

³⁶⁷ Cumhuriyet, 25.05.1997, p.5.

³⁶⁸ Milliyet, 07.02.1997, p.17.

³⁶⁹ Milliyet, 09.08.1997, p.1.

³⁷⁰ Milliyet, 13.08.1997, p.1.

³⁷¹ Milliyet, 11.02.1997, p.1.

*“Whilst the chief prosecutor of the High Court of Appeals filed the case with the Constitutional Court, it has been said that the cash flow and resources of conglomerates and private finance institutions that work with Islamic capital and are known to be connected to the RP are under investigation.”*³⁷²

It seemed that these investigations reached a conclusion when *Milliyet* reported that the TSK had created a green capital list and ordered its units to boycott the listed companies and further called on other people and institutions that were sensitive about secularism to boycott them.³⁷³

The words of Yalçın Doğan from *Milliyet* reflect the center-periphery character of the February 28 Process and the recent expression of the center-periphery cleavage through the public space and ways of life. Doğan’s remarks made a further conclusion unnecessary for this issue:

*“Refah is Everywhere: We may be up against the ‘most widespread, most calculated, and most resourceful organization which reaches all segments of the society!’ The ‘fabulous body’, which composes the political existence of the Welfare Party, gradually strikes its roots on a daily basis. The organization, which spreads from sports to the health sector, from the business world to the media, is now right in front of our eyes. Using the advantages of being in power, the RP is rapidly developing in every sphere and in every corner of Turkey.”*³⁷⁴

The reason the writer of the above lines felt so threatened and targeted, and tried to make his readers feel the same way, was not the rising Islamic influence of the RP or any kind of turning away from republican ideals. Rather, it was the RP’s coming to terms with republican ideals and trying to take its space within the play. Using the same logic, the RP would not have been so threatening for the historic center if it had preserved its radical tone also in the government. A RP that isolated itself in its ideological ghetto, did not try to reach wider segments of the society and preferred to talk and act only for its traditional societal base would not be so problematic for the historic hegemonic center, because naturally it would not be an alternative national popular party. Therefore, the story of the RP was the story of “center-alization” of the periphery in Turkey. It was the story of the periphery that started to

³⁷² Cumhuriyet, 23.05.1997, p.5.

³⁷³ Milliyet, 06.06.1997, p.1.

³⁷⁴ Milliyet, Yalçın Doğan, 30.07.1997, p.16.

be seen in the center. The February 28 Process was one of blocking the “center-alization” of the periphery. With the same logic, also AKP was regarded as a threat to the secular character of the republic and the April 27 Process was aimed at stopping the AKP from creating its own conservative national popular.

5.2.2. April 27 Process

5.2.2.1. Textual Analysis

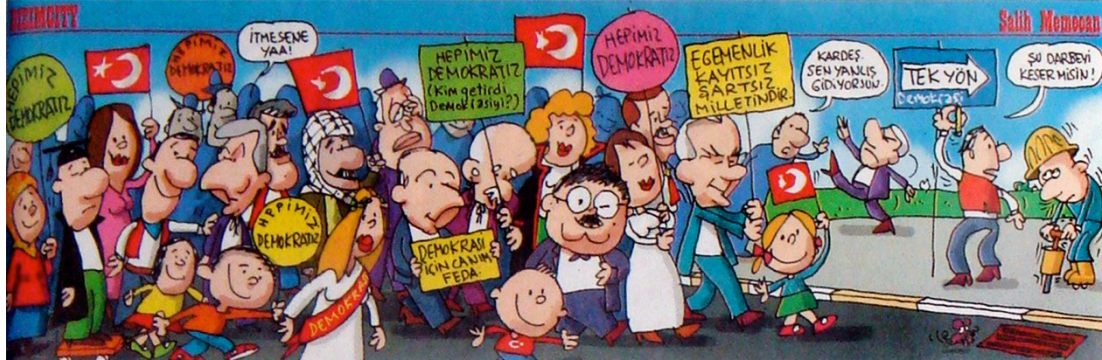
The Turkish Armed Forces issued the e-memorandum at midnight on April 27. Newspapers did not have much time to develop a strategy for presenting the memorandum in their April 28 issues. In the limited time period between midnight on April 27 and the early morning of April 28, when newspapers have should begun to be printed, newspaper editors and owners did not have the time to change their developing strategy by negotiating with actors such as the government, the TSK, the bureaucracy and non-governmental organizations on how to present the TSK’s clear threat of a coup. Therefore, it is clear that the urgent reaction of the newspapers and, therefore, the newspaper owners, only depended on their general hegemonic positions, which were, of course, directly related to their economic and ideological positions. Although it does not make much difference for the analysis of *Cumhuriyet*’s stance, this urgency makes great sense in the analysis of the textual practices of the newspapers that had a more moderate and middle-way stance in the whole process.

To start with *Sabah*, this newspaper tried to formulate a policy of balancing between the government and the TSK. The TSK’s e-memorandum could only find a place in the middle pages of the newspaper.³⁷⁵ The news report titled “Midnight Notice from General Staff” did not include any commentary about the incident. The editors of *Sabah* found it sufficient to cite the text of the e-memorandum. By choosing the word “notice” instead of “memorandum,” it also avoided any connotations of a military intervention in the text of the report. The tendency of *Sabah* was to report the TSK’s e-memorandum as if it were an ordinary and natural part of the presidential election process.

In the next day’s issue, April 29, although it refrained from opposing the TSK’s memorandum, *Sabah* seemed more committed to supporting the government. The headline of the April 29 issue was “No to the Coup: The midnight notice of the Command of the General Staff caused

³⁷⁵ *Sabah*, 28.04.2007, p.29.

a big discussion. Even the opposition, which criticizes the government, united on the point that the only solution is democracy.”³⁷⁶ A cartoon from Salih Memecan also indicated the breadth of the anti-intervention front as reflected by *Sabah*:



Picture 8³⁷⁷

In Salih Memecan’s cartoon the image of a single man marching military-style in the wrong direction and being warned by somebody else, made *Sabah*’s stance clear. The second major item that found its place on *Sabah*’s front page was government spokesperson Cemil Çicek’s counter memorandum to the TSK. Although in the report it also presented Çicek’s words that directly targeted the armed forces, in the leading section of the report *Sabah* avoided confrontation with the military and preferred a quotation from Çicek that seemed to represent a general call to all parties: “Let us foil such efforts: Çicek made a call to foil attempts to bring about a confrontation between the government and the command of the General Staff.” In this text *Sabah* did not directly criticize the Armed Forces, but merely presented timid support for the government, as if supporting democracy.

Akşam also preferred to place the e-memorandum in its inner pages, rather than in the headlines.³⁷⁸ The *Akşam* report was titled “Harsh ‘Secularism’ Warning from the Army” and it focused on the military’s threat of direct intervention:

“The Command of the General Staff indicated that the recent discussion of secularism was being watched with anxiety and said that ‘one must not forget the Turkish Armed Forces is a party to these discussions and that it is the absolute defender of secularism.’ They will put forward their attitude clearly when it becomes necessary.”

³⁷⁶ *Sabah*, 29.04.2007, p.1.

³⁷⁷ *Sabah*, 29.04.2007, p.1.

³⁷⁸ *Akşam*, 28.04.2007, p.11.

Akşam also highlighted the e-memorandum's references to the TSK's expectation of a president who was "really, not fake," "*sözde değil özde*", in full conformity with the basic principles of the Republic and the military's "stable determination" in protecting the principle of secularism. *Akşam* also focused on the consensus on the e-memorandum among the high ranks of the TSK:

"It was done with the approval of all of them: It was found out that the statement that was issued late last night by the Command of the General Staff was done with the approval of all of the force commanders. The force commanders, who met two days ago upon the call of Chief of General Staff Yaşar Büyükanıt, addressed the discussions that were taking place in the process of the presidential elections. The commanders agreed on making a statement, but they waited for the completion of the first round of the presidential elections."

Although *Akşam* did not blame the government directly, it supported the e-memorandum. However, *Akşam*'s support changed the next day. On 29 April, *Akşam* adopted a more balanced policy between the government and military and made a call to both parties from its front page with the following headline: "Do Not Ruin This Country: A Call for Common Sense from *Akşam*."³⁷⁹ *Akşam*'s editor-in-chief, Serdar Turgut, explained the reasons for the newspaper's call in an editorial published on the front page:

"Both the parties to the discussion and the opposition parties are afraid that an economic fluctuation will result on Monday (tomorrow) if a compromise is not reached. In fact, this is the most important problem of the Turkish people. People who have not forgotten the pains of the last crisis expect the state to prevent a new crisis. When speaking of the events, many politicians reminded people of those who suddenly became unemployed, the work places that were closed, the sadness that was suffered in the last crisis. The government and the military must not forget this."

Without making any reference to the arguments of the government or the military, in the second day's coverage *Akşam* warned both the government and military not against the danger of reaction or the danger of military intervention, but against the threat of an economic crisis. It did not seem interested in the first lady's headscarf or the democratization of Turkey,

³⁷⁹ *Akşam*, 29.04.2007, 01.

but in a potential fall in the markets on Monday. Furthermore, the government's counter-memorandum also found its place on the cover page of *Akşam*'s April 29 edition. Quoting spokesperson Cemil Çiçek, *Akşam* highlighted the government's warning to the military as follows:

"Implying that you are under our orders: The harsh secularist practice of the Command of the General Staff wreaked havoc on the agenda. Erdoğan, Gül and 10 ministers held an urgent meeting. Minister of Justice Çiçek warned General Büyükanıt in front of the cameras: "You are subordinate to the Prime Minister."

When citing Çiçek's explanation, *Akşam* again emphasized a potential economic crisis and claimed that Çiçek gave the military the following message: "If negative developments emerge in the economy, you are responsible."

Milliyet used the headline "Harsh statement from the Command of the General Staff" when reporting the e-memorandum on its front page on April 28. *Milliyet*'s first page coverage was devoted to the key parts of the e-memorandum. There was also another report on the inner pages, but it was neutral and did not include any commentary.³⁸⁰ On the other hand, *Milliyet*'s coverage on April 29 was rich in terms of comments that gave clues about *Milliyet*'s stance. Parallel to the first day's headline, *Milliyet*'s chose "Harsh response from the government" for the second day's report on the first page. What was illuminating in *Milliyet*'s coverage for the second day was the editorial that was published anonymously on the front page:

*"When holding an election for such a sensitive office, which should embrace everybody, seeking a compromise as wide as possible was required by common sense. Taking such care would be the most effective behavior to prevent the country from entering the territorial waters of tension. It is obvious that the party in power has failed to manage this process well. The AKP, which won 2/3 of the seats in the parliament with only 34% of the votes of those who voted in the election, has managed the presidential election as it liked with the understanding that "the majority has the power over all things" and it refrained from dialogue with the main opposition party. In this process, the fact that "being religious" could be defined as a criterion for the competence of the president has been a sad situation for a secular country."*³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ *Milliyet*, 28.04.2007, p.24.

³⁸¹ *Milliyet*, 29.04.2007, p1.

It is clear that *Milliyet* saw the government's approach as more problematic than the e-memorandum, which it continued to support.

Cumhuriyet reported the e-memorandum in a headline on its front page on April 28 as follows: "Statement from the Military: Command of the General Staff: the Turkish Armed Forces is a party to and defender of secularism. It will put forward its attitude clearly when necessary."³⁸² *Cumhuriyet* was the only newspaper that reported the TSK's threat of military intervention as a highlight on its front page. Other key points of the e-memorandum, according to *Cumhuriyet*, were as follows: "Nobody Should Doubt," "It is Serious That Precautions Were Not Taken," and "We Shall Fulfill Our Duty." Such a formulation and presentation of the key points of the e-memorandum highlighted the TSK's threat of direct military intervention.

What made *Cumhuriyet*'s stance peculiar among the other newspapers was its (non)presentation of the government's response to the e-memorandum. While other newspapers preferred to highlight the government's response, *Cumhuriyet* reported it as an unimportant detail. The highlight of *Cumhuriyet*'s 29 April edition was "Ankara is Tense: The Statement of the Command of the General Staff Has Put the Government in Trouble, the Opposition Has Demanded Elections."³⁸³ The government's response could only find its place as follows:

"The statement of the Command of the General Staff caused hectic hours in Ankara. Prime Minister Erdoğan assessed the situation after meeting with Abdullah Gül and other ministers. Cemil Çiçek, who explained the opinions of the government, asserted that the warnings were aimed at influencing the decision making process of the Supreme Court and said that 'the Command of the General Staff is subordinate to the Prime Minister.' TBMM Speaker Arınç pointed out: 'The Turkish Armed Forces are expressing their sensitivity regarding secularism. This is very natural.'"

Cumhuriyet was reluctant in reporting the government's response to the TSK, but it was not nearly so hesitant in its discursive practices.

5.2.2.2. Discursive Practices

³⁸² *Cumhuriyet*, 28.04.2007, p.1.

³⁸³ *Cumhuriyet*, 29.04.2007, p.1.

Just as in the case of the February 28 process, there were also three grand narratives that were used for the mobilization of urban middle classes against the ruling AKP during this process: (1) Good vs. Bad Muslims, (2) Moderate and Creeping Islamization and, finally, (3) sudden Islamic revolution.

5.2.2.2.1 Good vs. Bad Muslims

Republican Rallies took pride of place in the reproduction of the discursive distinction between good and bad Muslims, sincere and show-off Muslims, Anatolian and Arab Muslims in the April 27 Process:

“The participants responded to the words of Prime Minister Erdoğan, who had referred to ‘Infidel Izmir,’ with placards such as ‘Infidel Izmir will put the false Muslims in their place.’”



Picture 9³⁸⁴

A clear distinction between good and bad Muslims can be seen in the report and in the accompanying image. As an example of good Muslims, the old lady with her traditional headscarf and the Turkish flag she held stood against the false Muslim referred to in the text. Furthermore, the resemblance between the old woman with her traditional headscarf and the

³⁸⁴ Sabah, 14.05.2007, 24.

Turkish flag she held and Mustafa Kemal’s mother, Zübeyde Hanım, whose image that can be seen on the left-hand side of the same photo, is also noteworthy as a discursive practice.

“It attracted attention that among the participants in the rally in Manisa were women who wore turbans, as in Ankara and Istanbul, with Atatürk posters in their hands.”



Picture 10³⁸⁵

The woman above with her black headscarf entirely overlaps with the image of a woman that could easily have been shown in *Akşam*, or any other newspaper covered in the study, as the image of a woman that was attending a “Shariah-supporting, reactionary” rally. Had she been at such a rally, her clothing would be defined as a black chador. But, because she attended a Republican Rally, she did not threaten the secular character of the Republic.

The chief motif in the background of the Republican Rallies was reduced to the issue of the covering of women’s bodies and this issue was politicized through the libidinousness of bad Muslims. The two excerpts below from the same column were good examples of this politicization and its connection with bad Muslims:

“A young girl from among one of my university students said this about the Çağlayan rally: ‘It was a packed crowd. There were no incidents of harassment for hours. I did not even feel a single symptom. On the contrary ...

³⁸⁵ *Akşam*, 06.05.2007, 15.

the young men around us almost protected us, a group of young girls. [...] Remember the Taksim Square scandal four months ago. What kinds of things those lumpen bums did to the young women in that crowd. Both the people in Taksim and those in Çağlayan are the people of this land but ... the consciousness and culture of the gatherings are very different. For those who cannot find a name for the flood of people in Çağlayan, this is called: 'The Notice of the Unarmed Forces.' [...] In the rally square, CNN Turk reporters were walking among the people and asking for their opinions. One of them had covered her head as Turkish women have done for centuries. That is, she had tied a knot under her chin. The reporter asked: 'Slogans such as 'Çankaya is closed to the turban' are being shouted. You cover your head, too, but you are at the rally. Why?' The covered woman replied: 'I wear a headscarf, but it is not political or anything.'''³⁸⁶

As someone turns into a bad Muslim once engaged in politics, the headscarf also becomes the sign of a bad Muslim when it is worn at Çankaya, in the presidential residence of the Republic. On the other hand, it is the traditional and innocent cloth of Turkish women when it is worn at Republican rallies. Not surprisingly, when good Muslims wore good headscarves at Republican rallies, it was impossible to come across any sexual harassment.

The distinction between the sincere Muslims and those who exploit such people was the chief motif in the analyses and comments on the AKP and presidential election process, as in this piece³⁸⁷ from Orhan Erinc:

"Since it is known that nobody would object to those citizens who can be defined as 'dininde diyanetinde',³⁸⁸ the effort to have "sıkmabaş" [a derogatory term for a type of head covering that does not show any part of the hair or neck] perceived in the same way was intensified in order to take advantage of this."

The term “*dininde diyanetinde*” had a key role in the effectiveness of this discourse. As mentioned in the piece, nobody objects to those who are “*dininde diyanetinde*.” A person defined as “*dininde diyanetinde*” is someone religious who strictly follows religious instructions. What makes a “*dininde diyanetinde*” individual different from a reactionary is the domain in which religion becomes effective. For a “*dininde diyanetinde*” individual,

³⁸⁶ Milliyet, Güneri Cıvaoğlu, 01.05.2007, p.19.

³⁸⁷ Cumhuriyet, Orhan Erinc, 07.05.2007, p.7.

³⁸⁸ A term used for defining the Kemalist ideal type of a religious individual who only concentrates on his/her religious life and is not interested in any kind of worldly issue.

religion is a matter of personal belief, conscience and personal ethics, while, for a reactionary, it also includes the social, political and economic domains. Therefore, those who did not limit their actions to the boundaries of “*din-diyanet*” or those who were also interested in political activity, e.g. candidacy for presidential elections, were met with criticism and disapproval.

Seemingly unrelated reports or comments that did not directly refer to the presidential election, but implicitly connected to conservative politics in other ways, were also used as supporting pillars of the good and bad Muslim discourse. Religion, i.e. good religion, was the one that was reformed or modernized:

*“Atatürk was not content with this [Turkish translation of the Quran] either. He had artists named Fahire Fersan and Refik Fersan read these chapters for gramophone records and had them distributed across the country. Those who have a mullah’s mind have a lot to learn from Atatürk with regard to ‘religion’ and ‘secularism.’ If this attempt by Atatürk had been completed, if the process of becoming contemporary through enlightenment had continued, maybe we would not have been still discussing secularism.”*³⁸⁹

According to this discourse there was always something, some modern components, absent in religion and this absence should have been filled by Atatürk’s attempts at creating a Turkish Islam. Furthermore, the usage of *mullah*, i.e. the religious functionary in Shiite Islam, functions as a reference to the theme of the Iranization of Turkey. Although bad Muslims and those who were exploited by bad Muslims frustrated the plans of Atatürk, there is still some chance for this, such as a technological articulation of religion:

*“Imam Özdemir, who made the Kemalpaşa Mosque in Izmir leap forward by an era, doubled the number of people in his congregation. The imam, who puts a laptop on the rahle [a small table for holding the Quran], preaches digitally using a wireless microphone.”*³⁹⁰

The missing part of the religion, in terms of being modern, was filled by the use of a remote microphone and a laptop. The major reason for the “leaping forward by an era” of the mosque was the replacement of the Quran, which is normally put on the *rahle*, with the laptop. *Cumhuriyet* would regard this replacement as a threat to secularism because positivist

³⁸⁹ Milliyet, Güneri Civaoglu, 06/02/2007, p.17.

³⁹⁰ Milliyet, 31/03/2007, p.20.

ideology is more hardcore in *Cumhuriyet*'s discourse, as in a 1996 news report titled, "*Quran on the computer: fundamentalist aggression toward secularism.*"³⁹¹

In other cases, the absence of modernity in the religion was filled not by a modern addition, but by the exclusion of some traditional element, as in the case of supposed Mevlevis:

"Again striking questions came from young people in the program in which Rumi was discussed in all aspects. Why was the head of Esin Hanım, the granddaughter of Rumi and someone close to religion, uncovered? Is the Mevleviyet a sufi order? [...] How did Atatürk see the Mevlevis? Here are some headings for you from this different program:

- The Mevlevis were among the greatest supporters of the War of Liberation. They were awarded with the Medal of Independence with a green ribbon. Abdülhalim Çelebi was a deputy of Mustafa Kemal in the first parliament.*
- Covering is a matter of personal preference. Judging people based on their clothes is the biggest of mistakes.*
- One should not see the Mevleviyet as a sufi order. This is a path, a way of life, a custom, a culture."*³⁹²

Where there was no modern inclusion and no abandonment of a traditional element, the good and sincere Muslim could only exist as a nostalgic case:

*"We are in the month of Ramadan. We have innumerable iftar [Ramadan dinner] invitations in front of us. The religious information that I received in my childhood taught me that iftar was observed with the family or that it was provided to the poor. However, now the iftars of today are offered as a political show."*³⁹³

Only the traditional Anatolian village was the location of the pure, sincere Muslim. Religiosity that was expressed within the limits of the pastoral life of Anatolian tradition was sanctified, whereas the same religious expressions in urban life were disapproved of. Any kind of religious expression that was brought to the city was not reconcilable with the positivist understanding of religion, because religion was regarded as something that was only suitable to the primitiveness of the pastoral life.

³⁹¹ See note 277.

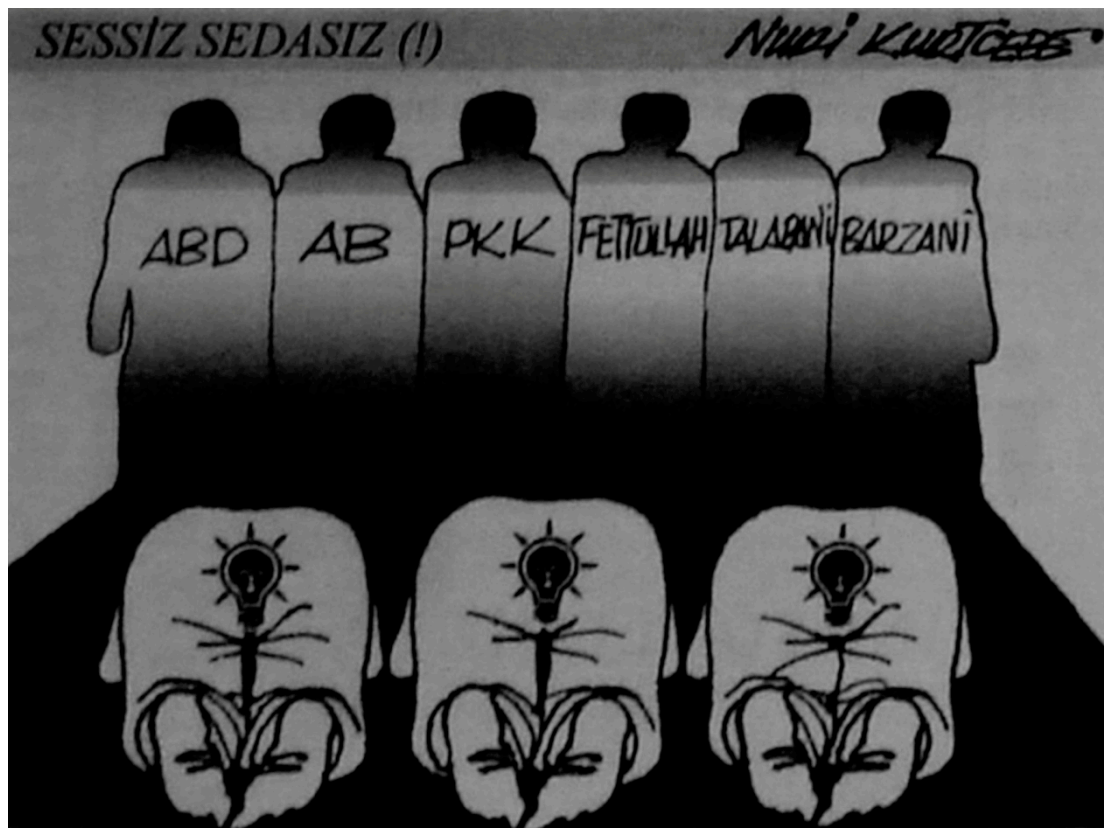
³⁹² *Milliyet*, Abbas Güçlü, 09.02.2007, p.19.

³⁹³ *Milliyet*, Can Ataklı, 08.02.2007, p.16.

Although the conservative political actors were not a part of the imagined category of “Anatolian religion,” the masses who were good Muslims were a part of it and, of course, it was only because of being deceived by the bad Muslims that those good Anatolian Muslims voted for the AKP:

“While rightfully reacting to the people who politicize Islam and politicize the headscarf, some people started to move this away from the axis of the AKP and began to insult Islam and the headscarf. This attitude offends the sincere Muslims and those citizens who wear the headscarf because of their beliefs. This attitude may push those people, who do not like the AKP, toward the AKP and make them fall out with the country.”³⁹⁴

In conformity with the discourse of the politicization of Islam, any expression of Islam that went beyond the limits of personal life was disapproved of and regarded as an act of bad Muslims. The AKP, i.e. bad Muslims, deformed the elements that characterized traditional Anatolian Islam and put foreign factors both from the East and the West in their place:



³⁹⁴ Milliyet, Melih Aşık, 01.05.2007, p.12.

Picture 11³⁹⁵

The first message of this image was related to the religiosity of the AKP, which was entirely different from the religiosity of the Anatolian people, the sincere Muslims. They did not worship God as the traditional, sincere Muslims of Anatolia. They worshipped the USA, the EU and the PKK and exploited the religious feelings of genuine Muslims.

Besides the general distinction between the good and bad Muslim, there were other themes and characteristics that were used to support the image of the bad Muslim. What is important for these sub-themes is that the categories of good and bad Muslims were generated as holistic categories at the discursive level. Therefore, any act that corresponded to one of the sub-themes automatically implied that the perpetrator belonged to the category as a whole.

Women were at the forefront among these sub-themes. The discourse about the bad treatment of women by bad Muslims, the womanizing character of bad Muslims, and the subordinate position of women against bad Muslim men were the frequently used elements for the women theme. Like the general category of good and bad Muslims, the women sub-theme was also generated both by specific references to the presidential election process and by the more general references to conservative politics and actors. In accordance with the historical perception that the Republic was represented by a young lady, whereas the bad Muslims were deceivers of the young lady,³⁹⁶ any reference to sexuality in the frame of the presidential elections gains a discursive dimension, as in the front-page cartoon shown below:

³⁹⁵ Cumhuriyet, 05.07.2007, p.17.

³⁹⁶ For an analysis of the usage of a female personification of the Republic, see; Kara, İ. Cumhuriyet Türkiye'si'nde Bir Mesele Olarak İslam, p. 26.

enlightenment long before the West. The Selçuk state created Anatolian Islam.”³⁹⁸

Staying within the limits of the text, it is very easy to see how enlightenment was understood and what were considered as its inevitable components or indicators. According to the text, because of the participation of women in politics, alcohol consumption and the usage of the human image in the decoration of mosques, the Selçuks experienced enlightenment earlier than the West. Also, the enlightenment that the Selçuks experienced made their interpretation of religion legitimate and this legitimate version of Islam is called “Anatolian Islam”. At this point, the concentration of Kemalist romanticism and fantasy on Anatolia should be noted.

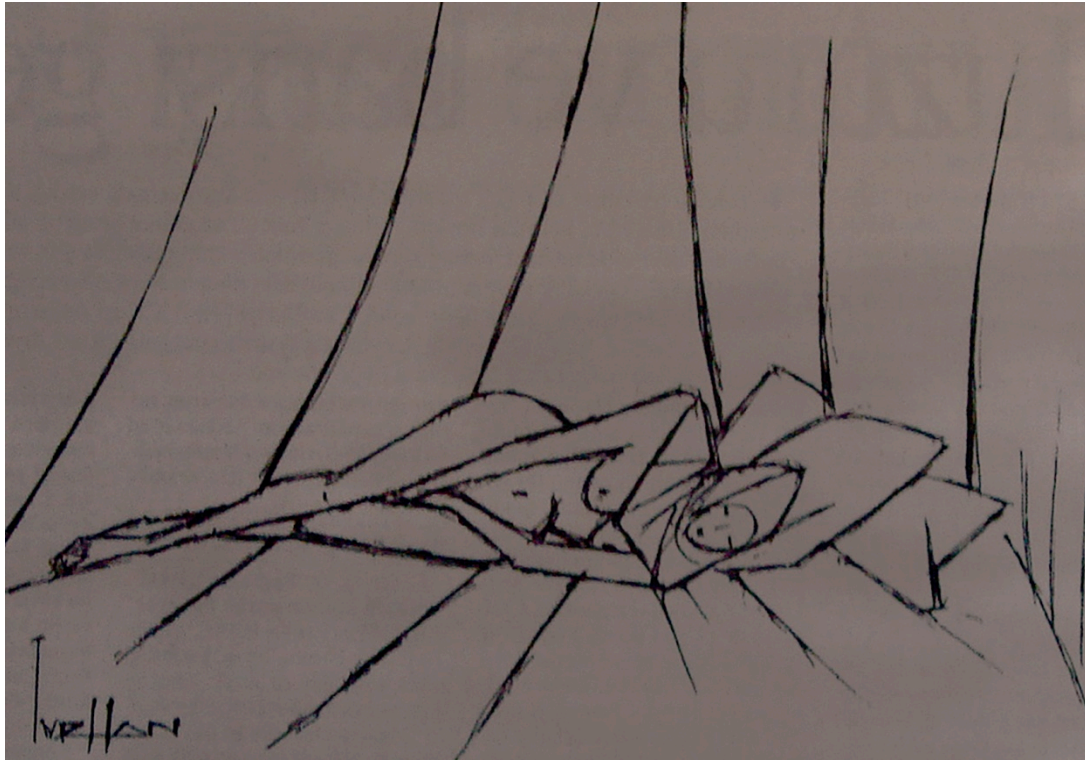
Although tales of sexual abuse were not as widespread as in the February 28 Process, it was also possible to come across the libidinous character of bad Muslims:

*“A married imam deceived three young girls by sending the message ‘I am seeking serious girls who are considering marriage’ on TV in subtitles”*³⁹⁹

At first sight the news seemed to be the report of a criminal act. However, upon closer investigation, the report was referring to the deception of Fadime Şahin by Müslüm Gündüz during the February 28 Process. According to the discourse, a bad Muslim could not see anything else but a sex object whenever he looked at a woman, even if she wore a headscarf:

³⁹⁸Milliyet, Melih Aşık, 03.06.2007, p.19.

³⁹⁹Sabah, 17.01.2007, p.1.



Picture 13⁴⁰⁰

While normally accused of being a bad Muslim and part of the rising reactionary danger, a woman who wears the headscarf can at the same become the victim of male bad Muslims. According to this, women do not wear a headscarf of their free will, but are forced by their fathers and brothers to do so. This overlaps with the deception of good Muslims – women who wear the headscarf but do not actually want to do so - by bad Muslims; in this case, their fathers and brothers:

“Those women in sıkımbaş⁴⁰¹ were married off by their fathers when they were 15 and had to drop out of high school, could not go to Nevizade Street,⁴⁰² the cinema, the theatre, listen to jazz with their girlfriends all their lives. They were not seen with a glass of wine in their hands even once, they did not swim in the sea with a swimsuit.”⁴⁰³

Amongst these sub-themes, the issue of dishonesty has a key role. According to this sub-theme, dishonesty was a *sine qua non* of the bad Muslim identity, whereas honesty was a key characteristic of good Muslims and, therefore, any bad Muslim who ran for the presidential election should prove his/her honesty:

⁴⁰⁰ Cumhuriyet, 14.07.2007, p.3.

⁴⁰¹ A derogatory term for the headscarf.

⁴⁰² One of the popular scenes of Istanbul's night life.

⁴⁰³ Cumhuriyet, Hikmet Çetinkaya, 21.08.2007, p.4.

“Recep Tayyip Erdoğan [...] is determined to become a candidate for the presidency. This is his preference... and his right as a citizen. But he has to convince the nation before becoming a candidate that he has nothing to do with these ‘sufi order’ rumors. With his actions and discourse... This cannot be done by having billboards prepared “from the state coffers” and by saying ‘may I be sacrificed for its crescent and the star.’”⁴⁰⁴

The connection with Sufi orders was again used as an identity marker that fit into the bad Muslim category. This time Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s potential candidacy for the presidential office was opposed due to presumed ties to the Sufi community. Furthermore, the claim that the prime minister used state resources for his personal campaign adds the element of dishonesty to the discourse. The stress on Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s need to prove, both with his words and acts, that he was not linked with Sufi orders is a good indicator of the period’s frequently used discourse of fake and real secularists.

The themes of Sufi orders and the deception of good Muslims for economic and political ends recurred frequently in the process, as seen above. By definition the bad and disapproved version of Islam was not authentic; it was not a belief derived from the original core of Islam, but manufactured by conservative politics in order to exploit the religious feelings of sincere Muslims for political ends:

“In the Prophet Muhammad’s period there were no Sufi orders or religious communities...

such skills were invented later on...

The money that is off the books that appeared after the multi party period in Turkey is not accounted for...

Because both Sufi orders and religious communities are economic interest organizations at the end of the day...

So, when we say democracy and elections, what happens in the end?...

Will the members of sufi orders or religious communities vote with their free will and according to their political-economic positions and ideas?...

Or will the members vote according to the will of their sheikhs?...”⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁴ Sabah, Hincal Uluç, 07.02.2007, p.19.

⁴⁰⁵ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 02.06.2007, p.2.

By stressing the multi-party shift in Turkish politics as a turning point in the exploitation of religion for political and economic gains, the writer again referred to another representation of religiosity which exceeded the limits of being “*dininde diyanetinde.*” With the normalization that took place during the multi-party shift in Turkish politics, religion became the object of political bargaining and negotiation processes, which was regarded as an absolute deviation from the positivist understanding of religion. Furthermore, the same trend of being the object of political bargaining and negotiation was not only regarded as a deviation from the authentic Islam, but also as a deviation from the authentic Turkish Islam, Anatolian Islam:

*“The AKP is the name of a political movement which attempts to inject some imported and invented religious behaviors that do not exist in the Anatolian Islam tradition, saying “this is who we are!” to some Western people and institutions that are ignorant of Turkey and with the slum-dwellers that leave the villages but cannot become urbanized either by wrapping it up with political ambition and with the political and bureaucratic support of a greedy bourgeoisie.”*⁴⁰⁶

Once bad Muslims are concerned, any usage of money must contain a hidden catch. In the example quoted below, the problem was not the way bad Muslims, the NGO that was linked with a Sufi order, gain money, but the way they used it. Normally funding needy students is an approved act, but when bad Muslims do it is not and it also makes the funding Muslim community bad Muslims, members of Sufi orders:

*“Mesudiye mayor Ahmet Baki Yılmaz said that Mesvak was connected with the Sufi order that is also known as “Süleymancı”⁴⁰⁷ and that they [the municipality circles] were disturbed by the small courses that this organization had opened in recent years. He said that in relation to these courses, deeper Sufi order links were provided to the students under the guise of scholarships.”*⁴⁰⁸

The dishonesty was also associated with the conservative politicians with the help of the claim that they were hiding their real aims and their real outlook:

“Some words are striking, they irk you...”

⁴⁰⁶ Cumhuriyet, Erendüz Atasü, 17.05.2007, 2.

⁴⁰⁷ A Turkish religious community that mostly concentrated its efforts on religious education.

⁴⁰⁸ Sabah, 15.02.2007, 16.

For example, two words:

Fraud ...

Deceptiveness...

Both are the same thing!...

Yet in today's Turkey, the religious people who claim to be Muslims are engaged in deception by exploiting sacred values... ”⁴⁰⁹

It is very clear that conservative politicians were not regarded as Muslims, but as people who pretend to be Muslims in order to use the advantage of being a Muslim, to gain political support due to the high value attached to being a Muslim. Furthermore, the ultimate aim of this was personal interest, which is contrary to Islam:

“The rule of the AKP has turned into theft, bribery, exploitation, deception, corruption, opportunism, and dirty tricks of embezzlement that has not been seen before...

son-in-laws..

nephews..

sons...

[the rule of the AKP turned into the rule of] people of takiyye, in the mobilization of kin and relatives!...

Is it these people who are Muslims?...

These are people who use sacred Islam to rob the country, to sell it to foreigners and for embezzlement from state resources...

These people are the enemies of Islam...

These are tricksters who use being a Muslim for their dirty politics... ”⁴¹⁰

Besides the claim of dishonesty attributed to bad Muslims, any kind of wealth or money-related issue was also designated as a negative characteristic for the bad Muslims. Anybody can have a lot of money and spend it in any way, but not a Muslim, because Islam and wealth cannot be reconciled, as one belongs to the sphere of conscience and the other to the world:

“Those who want to live close to the leader of the İsmailağa community⁴¹¹ or the mosque in Istanbul Çarsamba are paying TL 100-135 more in rent. The houses that are on sale cost TL 20,000 more.[...] A house of 240 square meters,

⁴⁰⁹ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 09.06.2007, p.2.

⁴¹⁰ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 06.04.2007, p.2.

⁴¹¹ One of the largest Nakshibendi groups in Istanbul.

which belongs to Fatih Talu, who is one of the teachers of the community, is on sale for TL 500,000 without any bargaining.”⁴¹²

One of the basic rules of the market was at work, but it was presented as something extraordinary and unexpected. The extraordinary and unexpected character of the case was due to the work of market rules for a Muslim community. According to the positivist Kemalist understanding, market rules were not expected to work in a Muslim community because the former was mundane, whereas the latter was other-worldly. The religious community mentioned in the report, which is one of the most widespread Naksibendi groups in Turkey, was a good tool for distinguishing bad Muslims.

Violence was another sub-theme that was utilized during the process as a negative characteristic of bad Muslims. Two cases that were given as examples of rising reactionary danger in the military's e-memorandum were derived from newspapers and were examples of the violence discourse:

“The children who appeared on the stage with uniforms and headscarves in the Holy Birth⁴¹³ Conference sang devotional songs. Men and women in the audience were segregated in the hall.”⁴¹⁴

In the report being referred to, an effective element of discourse is used: the uniform. The uniform evokes a linkage with the army that will be used for the declaration of Shariah. The typical usage of the uniform as a discursive element was to point out its appearance on the bodyguards of the conservative politicians, as presented in the previous chapters. Also, the existence of children as part of the discourse made it more effective, because it addressed the discourse of creeping Islamization. By working on children, bad Muslims slowly steal the enlightened future of the Republic:

“It was disclosed that children were brainwashed every morning in the al-Qaida home named ‘Adayış Child Club’ in Konya. The children, who are between the ages of four and seven, are made to swear an oath saying, ‘I will become a martyr for jihad’ [...] The ‘oath’ that is recited at the kindergarten named ADAYIŞ is like the philosophy of the al-Qaida organization. Each morning, the children are forced to swear an oath saying ‘keeping my promises,

⁴¹² Milliyet, 28.05.2007, 01.

⁴¹³ Celebrations of the Prophet Muhammed's birthday.

⁴¹⁴ Milliyet, 24.04.2007, 23.

sacrificing my existence for the cause, for the sake of Allah' instead of saying, 'I am a Turk, I am truthful.'''⁴¹⁵

The Quran Course Oath is an example of the cult theme in newspaper reports on religious reaction. In this example, the location of the oath, Konya, which is known as a conservative city, and the international group al-Qaida were two supporting and refreshing factors that updated the cult theme for 2007, just a few months before the presidential elections.

The usage of the violence sub-theme in the April 27 Process was not limited to being one of the inspirational sources of the e-memorandum. In 2006 and 2007 Turkey witnessed a series of ultra-nationalist murders. First, on 5 February, 2006, the catholic priest of the Santa Maria Church in Trabzon was murdered. After that, a Turkish national Armenian journalist, Hrant Dink, who was on trial accused of insulting Turkish identity, was murdered on 19 January, 2007. The most violent of these ultra-nationalist murders was the Zirve Publishing House massacre in Malatya, in which two German and one Turkish catholic missionaries were murdered. All of these murders were the results of a stream of ultra-nationalist sentiment that escalated in opposition to the ruling AKP. However newspapers were also very effective in establishing a rising danger of reaction on the basis of the murders of Hrant Dink and missionaries in Malatya just before the presidential election.⁴¹⁶

"Hizballah-Style Execution: In Malatya a group that raided a publisher that distributes Bibles tied the hands of three people, one of whom was a German, behind their backs on a chair and cut their throats. The manner of the execution brought Hizballah to mind, but there are still doubts as to the circumstances behind the incident."'⁴¹⁷

"The brutality in Malatya drew attention to the latest meeting of the National Security Council. The latest NSC statement had emphasized that 'the activities of the terror organization of Hizballah and the measures taken against it were reviewed.'''⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Akşam, 17.03.2007, p.1.

⁴¹⁶ Etyen Mahcupyan, a Turkish national Armenian journalist, was one of those who pointed out the manipulation of the ultra-nationalist murders against the ruling AKP: Mahcupyan, E. "Hrant's Parasites," Today's Zaman, February 2, 2012, accessed March 26, 2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-270333-hrants-parasites.html>

⁴¹⁷ Akşam, 19.04.2007, p.1.

⁴¹⁸ Akşam, 19.04.2007, p.14.

Although the examples cited above made reference to the violence of bad Muslims, they did not link the murders to the presidential elections. However, in other cases the presidential election and other political elements were clearly present:

“Turkey is ruled by the government of a prime minster who says ‘secularism and being a Muslim do not belong together, you can either be secularist or a Muslim’ and ‘Hitler was secular too.’ In the ruling period of this government, religion is constantly a material of trade and an excuse to boast. The speaker of the parliament is bragging, saying, ‘We will elect a religious president.’ He is dividing the society into religious and non-religious people...

As you push secularism to the side, of course you remove religious toleration as well... Of course religious toleration gets replaced by religious fanaticism, especially in less developed minds. These pawns are then easily manipulated. The murders of Priest Santoro and Hrant Dink and the Malatya murders are a result of this climate and environment.”⁴¹⁹

“Former chairman of the Imam-Hatip Graduates and Members Association Ibrahim Solmaz said the following:

‘There are drugs and prostitution in all schools except the imam-hatip schools!’

This education system is producing a mass that can elect someone who thinks everybody other than himself is a prostitute and a junkie. Then people get ‘agitated,’ as you know, then people get burned and lynched, as you know.”⁴²⁰

Grand narratives regarding bad Muslims were used as constructive elements in the above-mentioned excerpts in which political elements were explicitly used. In the first excerpt, religion’s treatment as a matter of pride was perceived as a deviation from secularism and presented as the reason for the murders of Priest Santoro and Hrant Dink and the Malatya Incident. Less developed minds were the key element in the causal relationship. Religion is perceived as something that belongs to less developed minds. However, once it was made a matter of pride, it exceeded the limits of less developed minds and as a result it became the reason for the above-mentioned murders. In the second excerpt, the word “agitation,” “*galeyan*,” was the constructive element which established the link with the grand narratives. The stress on burning people was a reference to the Sivas Incident.

⁴¹⁹ Milliyet, Melih Aşık, 20.04.2007, p.17.

⁴²⁰ Milliyet, Ece Temelkuran, 06.06.2007, p.15.

“When the Sufi order-supported feudal culture takes over Turkey:

- there are no values, no rule left in the society.

- people want to solve problems through violence, even murder. [...]

Who are those who condition the voters by intertwining urban looting and religious education and those who surrender Turkey to the feudal slum culture which is supported by the assistance of the Sufi orders?

Those who sacrifice the intellectuals to the hit men?”⁴²¹

The writer claimed that conservative political actors acquired their position with the help of the Sufi orders and that the reason the Sufi orders were so successful in building this kind of influence over the electorate was the poverty of the sincere Muslims and their lack of education. Once a relationship between the Sufi orders and conservative political actors was constructed, the establishment of a relationship between the Sufi orders and violence was the easy part, as has already been addressed in the beginning of this section. In the end, the whole set of relationships was connected to “the murder of the intellectuals.” The theme of “the murder of the intellectuals” was updated with the murder of Hrant Dink:

“A note was recorded in his personal records that the head of the intelligence department, Ramazan Akyürek, who became the focus of the instigator-informant debates after the Hrant Dink murder, was a ‘supporter of Fethullah Gülen’ when he was the deputy director of İstanbul’s security.”⁴²²

“I don’t know if eyes will open after the murder of Hrant Dink.

Will the murderers be found?

If they are found, what will happen?

The murderers who bombed Cumhuriyet were caught after they raided the Council of State and committed murder. What happened?... Nothing... The catching of the hit men did not solve anything. Where is the solution?... In this question: Are you aware of the danger?”⁴²³

“[writing about the Hrant Dink murder investigation] However there are claims that the teams conducting the investigation have faced obstruction ... and even

⁴²¹ Cumhuriyet, Emre Kongar, 05.02.2007, p.3.

⁴²² Cumhuriyet, 01.02.2007, p.5.

⁴²³ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 21/01/2007, p.2. “Are You Aware of the Danger?” was the slogan of Cumhuriyet’s widely circulated campaign both through newspapers and television channels with the claim that the Republic was in danger under AKP’s rule

that they could not get the necessary support. The role of Sufi orders organizing in the security institutions is also implied!”⁴²⁴

According to above quoted lines, Sufi orders and conservative actors were associated with violence in general and the Dink murder in particular.

The violence sub-theme as a characteristic was also generated without any reference to actual discussions of the presidential election process. Although they did not contain any references to the political discussions of the period, they reproduced the theme with supporting elements:

“[...] Because of a ‘foster mother’ scandal in one of the largest child care centers in Istanbul, the ‘religion teacher’ who was the group official was dismissed. The job contracts of three ‘foster mothers’ were cancelled.”⁴²⁵

The report was titled, “the guilty one is the religion teacher”. The report was about maltreatment in a childcare center. At the end of the investigation three foster mothers who were found to have engaged in maltreatment and a supervisor who was a religion teacher were dismissed. However, in the title and body of the report the religion teacher was presented as the perpetrator of the maltreatment, with a special focus on his or her area of expertise: religion.

The linkage with a Sufi order was a functional tool that was also activated for the sub-theme of violence:

“Gülden, who is the wife of municipality employee Hasan Akkaya, said, ‘My husband was in a Sufi order for 13 years. Recently he wanted to leave, but they did not let him. Every day he was asking for his past wrongdoings and mistakes to be forgiven when leaving the house [as one would do in the Islamic tradition when one thinks that death might be imminent]. The Sufi order gave the punishment of abstaining from eating. He did not eat for 20 days.”⁴²⁶

With the claim that leaving was not possible, Sufi community membership was presented as a one-way path. With the help of this one-way path, Sufi community membership was equated with the mafia, which it is also not possible to leave. On the other hand, people were

⁴²⁴ Cumhuriyet, 06/02/2007, p.1.

⁴²⁵ Milliyet, 07/02/2007, p.4.

⁴²⁶ Sabah, 13.01. 2007, p.20.

estranged from the Sufi communities, which were presented as so powerful as to be able to force an individual to not eat for 20 days.

As a result of rising nationalism during the April 27 Period, another good-bad discourse was generated which was not on the scene during the February 28 Process. In accordance with the “fake and real seculars,” “*sözde ve özde laikler*,” which was used by Chief of General Staff Büyükanıt in his explanations about the real and fake secularists, a similar real/fake discourse was generated for everything:

“Büyükanıt said, ‘I hope that a person who is attached to the basic values of the republic, who is really attached to the ideal of a secular, democratic and social state of law, but attached to this in the real sense, not just in words, and who reflects this in his behavior, will be elected as president’”⁴²⁷

“What our fake intellectuals, fake professors and fake scientists do not know or do not want to know is that the number of real Atatürkist people who will put them in their place and who will confront those who make efforts to turn our country into a ‘outdated’ and ‘backward’ state by separating our country from his principles and revolutions is not insignificant at all!”⁴²⁸

The lion’s share in the real/fake discourse was held by nationalism. Traditionally, nationalism has been the ideology of the right. As such, left wing actors, which *Cumhuriyet* considered itself to be, used to distance themselves from nationalism. However, from the April 27 Process onward, nationalism has become one of the major elements of the Kemalist discourse. At that point, the Kemalist circles needed to differentiate themselves from the traditional religiously conservative nationalist line, *milliyetçilik* in Turkish, and, therefore, they preferred using the term *ulusalcılık*. Literally, both terms have the same meaning, but in the political arena *ulusalcılık* corresponded to a more secular, anti-EU and anti-USA form of nationalism.⁴²⁹ Due to the emergence of *ulusalcılık* as a distinct and influential political discourse, the composition of traditional nationalism, *milliyetçilik*, as it was perceived by the Kemalist circles has changed. Reactionary elements which are associated with the bad Muslims were also attributed to the bad nationalists:

⁴²⁷ Cumhuriyet, 13.04.2007, p.1.

⁴²⁸ Cumhuriyet, Hüner Tuncer, 02.01.2007, p.2.

⁴²⁹ For more information about *ulusalcılık*, see; Uslu, E. (2008). “Ulusalcılık: The Neo-nationalist Resurgence in Turkey,” *Turkish Studies*, 9(1), 73-97.

“The fact is, apart from the efforts of some to present ‘ulusalcılık’ as equivalent to nationalism and racism in order to destroy the concept of national interest [...], mutual influence on the basis of religion, sects, Sufi orders, and customs have more weight in the rising nationalism and chaos of concepts.”⁴³⁰

Hrant Dink’s murder, which was actually a result and, at the same time, an indicator of rising nationalism, produced a paradoxical position for *Cumhuriyet*. Normally, by claiming that the AKP government was weak in defending national interests against minorities, including Armenians, who were supported by the EU and the USA according to *Cumhuriyet*, the newspaper positioned itself on the nationalist front. However, after the murder, *Cumhuriyet* made an effort to differentiate itself from the nationalists. At that point the discourse of the violent character of the bad Muslims was a life vest for *Cumhuriyet*:

“Some people want to drag Turkey toward a ‘blind nationalist line’ ... [...] Köfte-maker⁴³¹ Nihat Acar in Gelibolu is lumpen and he has nothing to do with patriotism. He is a religionist, nationalist and fascist like the hit man and instigator of the Hrant Dink murder. [...] In this country, it is very easy to find a lumpen hit man, an action man who says “homeland-nation” ... Let us desist from picking on each other, making fun of the real patriots...don’t forget that every socialist, every revolutionary is a patriot!”⁴³²

Supporting the rising nationalism and generating a discourse on nationalism also had certain side effects: a series of ultra-nationalist murders, such as the murders of Hrant Dink and Priest Santora and the Malatya murders. In order to overcome this side effect, the real/fake nationalism discourse was activated:

“A campaign of conflating concepts and hitting below the belt is being conducted using the Hrant Dink murder. For example, there is an intense effort to conflate the concepts of ‘murderer’ and ‘ulusalcı.’ Can a murderer who is the man of fascists or the pawn of imperialists be an ‘ulusalcı’? [...] Ulusalcılık is republicanism, secularism, Atatürkism and independence... It is an anti-imperialist attitude.”⁴³³

⁴³⁰ Cumhuriyet, Şükran Soner, 13.03.2007, p.13.

⁴³¹ Köfte is a traditional Turkish meal.

⁴³² Cumhuriyet, Mustafa Balbay, 31.01.2007, 5.

⁴³³ Milliyet, Melih Aşık, 26.10.2007, p.15.

Once the causal relationship between murders and ultra-nationalism was nullified with a self-evident argument, the next task was to relate murders and rising nationalism with religious reaction, i.e. the bad Muslims:

“Two racisms are unfortunately escalating by feeding off each other... ‘Reaction’ and ‘racism...’ Do not narrow the angle by thinking that one is less dangerous than the other. It would be useful to take a look at the discussions of ‘Is the danger facing Turkey racism or reaction?’ from this perspective.”⁴³⁴

Intra-state criminal organizations were the other undesirable components of *ulusalcılık* and they were, therefore, also positioned on the same side as the bad nationalists:

*“A ‘patriotic forces union’ has been talked about for some time.
At the moment, 21 people have been detained and 15 people have been arrested...
Who are these people? What do they do?
In the operations, false soldier IDs, drivers licenses, yellow press cards, weapons, bullets and bombs were seized...
It is definite that these people are in a religionist-fascist structure...
Their job is working in a militia...
The job of collecting checks, bonds!!... [...]
There is a religionist fascist structure in this matter, but an “ulusalcı” identity is presented for the incident and, thereby, the real patriots, Atatürkists, are being blamed for whatever reason...”⁴³⁵*

Once those undesirable characteristics of *ulusalcılık* were attributed to traditional nationalism, which was already a bad category, it was easier to associate them all with the AKP and bad Muslims:

“The proof that this current of Turkish-Islam synthesis, which pushes citizens into a marginal position, which is being built on the basis of the cemaat, which includes the Sufi orders, which completely contradicts the Atatürkist nation-state concept, in which religionism and racism are intertwined, has nothing to do with

⁴³⁴ Milliyet, Güneri Civaoglu, 13.03.2007, p.17.

⁴³⁵ Cumhuriyet, Hikmet Çetinkaya, 10.07.2007, p.13.

the Atatürkist nationalist current is that AKP was first in the listing of the most nationalist parties among those who participated in Milliyet's survey."⁴³⁶

The real/fake nationalist discourse was also visible in *Milliyet*'s coverage in conformity with the rising nationalism of the period:

"As is known, the shame bill, (sorry, the oil law) that was returned by President Sezer had passed from the parliament with the votes of the AKP parliamentarians. So, wasn't there any objection from the AKP to the bill to which the Chambers of Geophysicians and Petrol Engineers, the Petrol-İş trade union and similar organizations, as well as the CHP, DYP and ANAP all objected? Let us say it immediately: there was...

AKP Adana parliamentarian Başoğlu not only objected to many articles in the bill, but also added an annotation in the text that passed from the commission."⁴³⁷

The title of the column from which the above- sample quoted was "Patriotic AKP Member". As a result of his opposition to the law on the oil market, Atilla Başoğlu, an AKP parliamentarian, became a patriot. On the other hand, other AKP parliamentarians, i.e. those except Atilla Başoğlu, became traitors because they supported a law that was not advantageous for Turkey but for the USA and the EU, as in the case of a military action against Northern Iraq in order to stop PKK:



Picture 14⁴³⁸

⁴³⁶ Cumhuriyet, Ali Sirmen, 13.03.2007, p.4.

⁴³⁷ Milliyet, Melih Aşık, 14.02.2007, p.16.

The message of the photo was clear; the real nationalist Turkish army, which is at the same time the fearless defender of the Republic against the bad Muslims, wants to take a military action against PKK in Northern Iraq, but it is prevented by the fake-nationalist and bad Muslim government, which is clearly a product of the USA, as indicated by the label attached to it.

In other cases rising nationalism and the discussion of nationalism were directly used to support the investments of media conglomerates, as when Serdar Turgut of *Akşam* used the nationalism discourse to support the communication company of the Çukurova Group:

“Since the government has recently started to give special importance to nationalism, I especially wanted to give this example. You know that Turkcell is a real national company. It is a company that was created with the entrepreneurship of Turkish capitalists and the creativity of Turkish infrastructure and a company of which every person who calls himself a nationalist should be proud. [...] I am asking those who try to engage in nationalism with billboards and vacuous slogans: What kind of nationalism is this? Do you have the right to trip up the businessmen and capital of this country in this way? Would the Turkish people, who have always loved those who gave them jobs and food, forgive the people who do this?”⁴³⁹

Serdar Turgut activated the real/fake nationalism discourse for the Turkcell Company, which was owned by the same conglomerate as *Akşam* and against which the Ministry of Finance had taken legal action. Serdar Turgut suggested that real nationalism requires supporting companies like Turkcell, not blocking their efforts.

By definition, discursive practices have a huge effect on reproducing the perceived reality for their target group. However, discourse is not confined within the limits of the reality that was reproduced by it. In other words, any discursive practice that aims at a social practice can include the reproduction of contradictory realities for the sake of the intended social practice. The relation between the discourses of sudden Islamic revolution and of moderate and creeping Islamization, shared a contradictory existence for the sake of the same social practice.

⁴³⁸ Milliyet, 12.06.2007, p.15.

⁴³⁹ Akşam, Serdar Turgut, 15.01.2007, p.15.

5.2.2.2.2. Moderate and Creeping Islamization

During the April 27 Process, while all kinds of discursive practices on sudden Islamic revolution, such as Iran and Algeria were being reproduced, another discourse on moderate and creeping Islamization was also circulating. The main reason for the need of adopting the moderate and creeping Islamization discourse was the more moderate stance of the ruling AKP compared to its ideological successors, such as the RP. Therefore, there was an effort to develop a discourse of moderate and creeping Islamization. The moderate and creeping Islamization discourse also included global cases like Indonesia:

“The place is the capital of the Banda Aceh state of Indonesia... Shariah law has been applied in the state since 2001 and a Muslim woman whose name and crime have not been disclosed is awaiting the execution of the punishment of caning. ... It is noted that the person who will beat her is also a woman. [...] Aceh accepted Shariah four years ago in the aftermath of the civil war.”⁴⁴⁰

Once an emphasis was placed on Shariah and violence, the other details became so unimportant that it enabled the newspaper to give conflicting dates about when Aceh started to be ruled by Shariah: both since 2001 at the beginning and for the last four years at the end of the paragraph. At first sight the report seemed not to contain any reference to conservative politics in Turkey. However, in the agenda of the period, which was occupied by the moderate Islam discourse and the presidential elections, Indonesia filled the same space Iran had filled in the sudden Islamic revolution discourse.

“Things are turning upside down in Indonesia, which is considered one of the examples of the moderate Islam style. In the regions that are affected by the fundamentalists, those women who go out on the street at night are punished by imprisonment, thieves have their hands cut off.”⁴⁴¹

“No women can wear shorts now, one cannot have a meal before iftar in Ramadan, people are praying collectively in the Ankara metro in such a way that it obstructs human traffic, etc. ... [...] In the coming year you are going to see that Turkey will change a lot. Especially after the elections you will see that Turkey is going to become a “moderate Islamic country.” For example, those people who are close to the

⁴⁴⁰ Sabah, 13.01.2007, p.1.

⁴⁴¹ Milliyet, 03.03.2007, p.9.

AKP and the conservative sections are going to come to the key spots in the mainstream media. You're going to see that our life on the street will change as well."⁴⁴²

The two excerpts quoted above were good examples of the power of discourse in fear-mongering. The Malaysia and Indonesia cases were compared with the case of Iran and identified as a model for the Turkish conservative in the February 28 Process⁴⁴³. At that time, as a part of the good and bad Muslim discourse, Malaysia and Indonesia were presented as good Muslims because of their moderate tone compared to Iran. However, in 2007 being moderate Muslims turned out to be a great danger that may result in the restriction of women's clothing choices; a real fear for urban middle class women.

It was claimed that the moderate and creeping Islamization of Turkey was very similar to the pre-revolution period in Iran. Fear mongering with the claim of the "Iranization" of Turkey continued, as in the headline of *Cumhuriyet*: "They Come Gradually":

*"Khazai, who had to flee his country (An Iranian Scholar): The mullahs in Iran were also presented as moderates [...] Khazai said that Iran should be a lesson for Turkey and added, 'I am sceptical of moderate Muslims. The mullahs never said that they were going to introduce an Islamic model. People thought that they would bring democracy.'"*⁴⁴⁴

The news addressed scholars and academicians, some of whom supported the AKP even though they were not traditionally conservative, because of the gradual improvements it had made in the field of human rights and democratization. Aside from the fear-mongering effect, these grand narratives were also used as a foundation for the good and bad Muslim discourse:

*"Islam is a sacred religion...
but moderate or radical, what is the real name of an 'Islamic state model'? .
One word:
Reaction!
So what is reaction?..*

⁴⁴² Milliyet, Ece Temelkuran, 04.04.2007, p.5.

⁴⁴³ For example, a news report appeared on the 20th page of the November 19 issue of *Cumhuriyet* defining Malaysia as a country with an Islamic, but not fundamentalist, identity. The report also claimed that the Muslim identity in Malaysia was not publicly visible.

⁴⁴⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 18.08.2007, p.1.

Iranian president Mahmud Ahmedinejad had started to hunt women on the streets of Tehran...

The hair of that woman that spilled over from her headscarf, the bangs of this woman that spilled over from her turban; were they in conformity with Islamic covering or not? ...

This is what (political) reaction is!..”⁴⁴⁵

Constructive structures employed in the above excerpt were the public visibility of Islam and the bad Muslims’ treatment of women. Declaring that Islam was a holy religion but that any version in the political sphere was the same in terms of reaction was an example of the Kemalist positivist understanding of religion, which limited religion within the boundaries of conscience and could not accept any further expression.

The dissimulation theme directly associated with the presidential elections and the AKP-supported potential candidates’ intentions were questioned:

“Those politicians in our country who would like to show that they are ready to serve the ‘super power’ who hide their long beards and turbans inside their heads, but who reflect their dark mentality in the turbans of their wives [...] gave the impression that they sent the message ‘I can be your presidential candidate’ to the US administration. These cannot go beyond being people of takiyye, merchants of faith who have been educated in madrasa-like schools.”⁴⁴⁶

There were two different implications of dishonesty in the lines quoted above. First, the writer claims that the real aim of the president candidacy was to serve a “super power.” Therefore, candidates who come from a conservative background hid the real aims of their candidacy for the presidential office. The second implication was about the very point of coming from a conservative background. As is known, the conservative politicians of the time did not have an outlook similar to the stereotype of a reactionary Islamist.⁴⁴⁷ According to the writer, this was because they hid their turbans and long beards in their heads. Apart from the negative effect of wearing a turban and having a long beard, dishonesty was also associated with the conservative politicians with the help of the claim that they were hiding their real aims and their real outlook - read as ideology. In the end, by declaring the conservative politicians as

⁴⁴⁵ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 06.05.2007, p.2.

⁴⁴⁶ Cumhuriyet, Arif Çavdar, 04.03.2007, p.6.

⁴⁴⁷ The fact is that the stereotype of a reactionary Islamist is almost the same as the stereotype of a “muslim terrorist.”

nothing but people of takiyye, merchants of faith, the entire story was bound within the broader discourse of good and bad Muslims.

The chief of general staff's "real/fake secularist" explanation was frequently used as an element of the dissimulation-hypocrisy theme;

"The imam of the Hacı Ahmet Özeltürkay Mosque placed a box like a money-box in front of the door. Why? So that those citizens who come to the Friday prayers and who like giving to charity could donate to the mosque... They did. They received prayers for their well-being. The prayer ended. They opened the box. They counted the money... And the scandal was revealed. A 100 lira note... A 50 lira note... Were counterfeit. Yes, counterfeit. That is, not real [özde]... But fake donations [sözde]..."⁴⁴⁸

The excerpt quoted above is a good example of the transitional capacity of the discourses and themes. The honesty theme of the bad Muslim discourse can be articulated by the dissimulation discourse and they were both associated with the real/fake explanation of the chief of general staff.

Again, the danger came from dissimulating bad Muslims, but this time their treatment of women was the subject:

*"I watched the May 19⁴⁴⁹ ceremonies in Ankara on TV.... President Sezer and Prime Minister Erdoğan sat next to each other in the VIP box.... The eyes of RTE [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan] were not visible.. He was wearing dark glasses. [...]
Does RTE, who was wearing dark glasses, deem the May 19 ceremonies a kind of blasphemy? ...
Is he engaged in takiyye?..
With which glasses can a mentality that subjects women to covering from her hair to her toes look at young women at the May 19 celebrations?
Dark glasses!.."⁴⁵⁰*

⁴⁴⁸ Sabah, Yılmaz Özdi, 28.04.2007, p.3.

⁴⁴⁹ One of the national holidays in Turkey. According to the official history, the date corresponds to Mustafa Kemal's arrival in Samsun to start the National Liberation movement.

⁴⁵⁰ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 20.05.2007, 2.

The reason the author described sunglasses as “dark glasses,” “*kara gözlük*,” and the reason the name of the cloth that covered the lady’s face in the *Cumhuriyet*’s advertisement⁴⁵¹ was a “dark chador,” “*kara çarşaf*,” were the same: It was Kemalism’s everlasting binary of dark and light. That dark, dissimulating womanizer and bad Muslim Erdoğan will replace the president sitting next to him in a few months. The current president, Sezer, also emphasized the same danger in his speech at the opening ceremony of the Military Academy a few days after the chief of general staff’s real/fake explanation:

*“President: The dimensions of the reactionary threat that has followed the republic like a sneaky shadow are worrying. [...] Foreign powers want the political regime of Turkey to be transformed into a ‘moderate Islamic republic’ under the name of a ‘democratic republic’ so that Turkey can be a model to Islamic countries. Moderate Islam means religious rules affecting the social, economic and legal order of the state to some extent.”*⁴⁵²

An example of the reorganization of social, economic, political and legal spheres according to religious norms can be seen in the official May 19 celebrations:



Photo Tag: 43 years before, 43 years after

Picture 15

*“Date: May 19, 1964. Venue: Manisa Akhisar. Female students are wearing short-sleeve shirts and shorts at the ceremonies of the Festival for Commemorating Atatürk, Youth and Sports. Date: May 19, 2007. Venue: the same. But the girls are wearing long-sleeve track suits.”*⁴⁵³

⁴⁵¹ Cumhuriyet made a series of advertisements under the slogan, “Are you aware of the danger? Support Your Republic”

⁴⁵² Akşam, 14.04.2007, p.12.

⁴⁵³ Milliyet, 22.05.2007, p.19.

The photo and the news report ran under the title “From where to where.” The message was clear: Under the rule of the AKP, Turkey had gone 43 years back in time and the message was transmitted by the amount of the girls’ bodies that were left visible. The reason the girls were covered does not change the accuracy of the message:

“This year there were not just gymnastics movements at the May 19 ceremonies. Various scenes were also displayed. Therefore, girls wore red and boys wore white outfits. In order to ensure the integration of the colors in the shapes they were going to form in the scenes, the outfits were designed to be long-sleeved and with pants.”⁴⁵⁴

Although the reason for the long-sleeved outfits was the integration of the colors for the show, according to the discourse, bad Muslims were libidinous people who could not see women as individuals but always focused on their femininity and, as a result, tried to cover their bodies.

The claim that women’s visibility in public life was gradually decreasing was presented as the chief indicator of gradual Islamization:

“Today the basic principles of the secular democratic republic and its gains are under heavy attack. Secularism has been undermined to a large extent, the social structure has broken down completely...

Today it is impossible to see women on the streets and avenues in Anatolia!..At this point, what is the duty that falls upon the Turkish Armed Forces? To protect the constitutional order with the authority given by the constitution!..”⁴⁵⁵

“The Board of Education indicated that the cream on the cake in the textbook seemed similar to Arabic letters and it warned the Provincial Directorate of Primary Education. Eğitim-Sen [a trade union in the field of education] said ‘the cream brings to mind the ‘basmala’ [the Arabic prayer invoking the name of God].”⁴⁵⁶

The point in the report was not the similarity of the cream filling and the basmala, but rather the perception of irreconcilability between religion and modern education. According to the

⁴⁵⁴ Milliyet, 22.05.2007, p.19.

⁴⁵⁵ Cumhuriyet, Hikmet Çetinkaya, 12.04.2007, p.5.

⁴⁵⁶ Milliyet, 06.03.2007, p.16.

discourse, through these small and seemingly unimportant threats, moderate Islam exceeds its limits and starts to Islamize the public sphere. The same kind of irreconcilability also existed for modern consumption patterns, such as going on holiday;

“There used to be six tesettür [Islamic covering] hotels in Turkey in 2002. The number of these hotels, where women and men utilize many services in gender-segregated fashion, and which serve conservative segments of society, went up to 27 in the last year.”⁴⁵⁷

At first sight, the report seems not worthy to quote, as it uses a neutral discourse and reports the increase in the number of conservative hotels – the type of hotels mostly preferred by conservative people because they offer gender segregated beaches and swimming pools and do not serve alcohol. The only interesting thing in terms of discourse analysis is the stress on the rapid increase in a short time, as this corresponds to the creeping Islamization discourse. However, when the report is considered together with another one in the same issue, the link with the Islamization discourse becomes clearer:

“[Reporting about a research questionnaire conducted with students in a high school] There was also the question of ‘how religious do you describe yourself?’ In the 76th question of the survey, which was answered by students between the ages of 9 and 17. The students were asked to rank their answers to the question.”⁴⁵⁸

Here the discourse was not reproduced by a single report, but by the conjunction of the two. On the one hand there is a neutral report about the increasing number of conservative hotels. However, when discourse is concerned, numbers are never just numbers. In this excerpt *Milliyet* addressed the fears of the urban middle class individuals and activated their fear of gradual Islamization. Consumption patterns – e.g. going on holiday - were used for to induce fear in accordance with the urban middle class character of the reader. Furthermore, in combination with the first report, the second report used another example of gradual Islamization. Reading both news reports together, it must not have been very difficult for the urban middle class reader to connect the two and become worried about his or her children in the school who are asked about their religious beliefs.

⁴⁵⁷ Milliyet, 09.06.2007, p.17.

⁴⁵⁸ Milliyet, 09.06.2007, p.14.

The sphere of education was very fruitful for the reproduction of the gradual Islamization discourse because, like consumption patterns, education also directly addressed the urban middle classes through their children. The message was clear: If you do not want your children to be gradually deceived, be aware of the danger:

“A family that started to have suspicions because of the changes in the ideas and behavior of their daughter who studies at the Bağcılar High School found that a prayer room had been established in the basement of the high school and recorded this on camera. In the video, girls and boys come to the prayer room separately and pray. The deputy director of the school also participates in the prayer of the male students. [...] The father, I.K., who spoke about the changes in his daughter, said the following: ‘They brainwashed my daughter. Now she has become a child that constantly reads books on religious subjects. Right now she is listening to religious devotional songs on TV. She is getting up at five in the morning and praying.’”⁴⁵⁹

The real strength of the report was a quotation from the father of one of the female students, as he claimed that his daughter had been brainwashed. The family realized a sudden change in their child’s behavior. The story of the student was very similar to the paranoia of the Kemalists: Until the last day the reactionaries, i.e. the bad Muslims, will move slowly, i.e. gradual Islamization, and once all the necessary conditions are established, they will declare a Shariah regime. Again the middle class family notion was activated and parents were mobilized for the sake of their children.

However, gradual Islamization was not limited to the educational sphere, but spread to all aspects of social life:

“Yüksel street, which is a common spot for demonstrations and press releases, almost turned into an open-air prayer room yesterday because of the Friday prayer. When there was no more room in the prayer room in the basement of a business center that is located at the entrance of the street, the citizens who wanted to pray spilled over into the street. The congregation prayed by spreading out prayer mats and cardboard on the road used by pedestrians instead of going to Kocatepe, which is one of the biggest mosques in Turkey. The scene that took place on Yüksel street, where there are cafes and bars and which

⁴⁵⁹ Milliyet, 31.05.2007, p.3.

is the meeting point of university students and young people, surprised those who saw it.”⁴⁶⁰

*“The prayer room that the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality opened at the Kızılay station has lots of people at each Friday prayer time and these people spill over outside in a way that obstructs the pedestrian traffic. [...] While the scene that is repeated every Friday affects the pedestrian traffic at the metro, Kocatepe Mosque, which is only 600 meters from the Kızılay station, can remain empty at the prayer time.”*⁴⁶¹

It was not the first time the size of a mosque was inadequate for the praying crowds during the Friday Prayer and it will not be the last. However, according to the discourse this was something new, as the people sitting in the cafes were surprised. That means it was not something usual, but just another indication of the gradual and creeping Islamization that had started to dominate public life gradually, like the prayer room in a public transport ferry:

“Our reader Ramazan Gezginci describes as follows his proposal regarding the news in our newspaper yesterday, which reported that prayer rooms for men and women were seen in the plan of the Istanbul city ferries:

*Next to these rooms, a room should be opened for cursing thieves, dishonorable people, those who speak differently when in opposition and when in power, those who do not fulfill the many promises they make, those who use religion for politics, those who cannot account for their assets and properties, those who say ‘I borrowed from my son,’ those who bully their own citizens and then become as meek as a mouse in front of foreigners, those who gift public organizations to their supporters under the name of privatization, those who are unfair to the orphans and take what is rightfully theirs, those who are engaged in embezzlement on a large scale, those who are supporters of Ali Dibo.”*⁴⁶²

The reason for the annoyance in the report was the existence of a prayer room on the ferries. However, the annoyance was not directly expressed. Instead the attribution of dishonesty, together with many other bad characteristics, was used as a discursive method. In the end the message that those who reserved a room in the ferry for praying were bad Muslims was made very clearly.

⁴⁶⁰ Milliyet, 12.05.2007, p.16.

⁴⁶¹ Milliyet, 10.03.2007, p.19.

⁴⁶² Ali Dibo is an idiom used for gang-like structures that participate in corruption. Milliyet, Melih Asik, 12.01.2007.

In the end, when gradual Islamization reached its peak, when Turkey reached the point of no return like pre-Revolutionary Iran, the gradual, moderate and creeping Islam would give way to guns;

“[Quoting from a reader’s email] Claims that some radical groups have acquired weapons are circulating around. It is claimed that years ago some people prepared themselves for an environment of armed conflict on the streets.”⁴⁶³

Gradual Islamization will give way to Islamic revolution and the time of radical groups that have “prepared themselves for an environment of armed conflict on the streets” will come.

5.2.2.2.3. The Islamic Revolution

Examples of Islamic revolutions from around the world and domestic examples of communal violence were frequently stressed to create another grand narrative in this period. According to this narrative, there was an ever-present danger of sudden Islamic armed uprising in Turkey and conservative actors were the hidden organizers and agents of these potential riots. Historicity and specificity were not considered in the reproduction of this discourse, as if Iran or Afghanistan could be a model for the Turkish experience. Both historic cases could be associated with actual discussions of Turkey:

“[commenting on the Malatya murders] What does the type of killing remind you of? Isn’t it exactly the same as the executions broadcast by the al-Jazeera channel? ... Weren’t the hangmen cutting the throats of the detainees after tying them up and making them sit, saying that they had insulted the religion? ... [the murderers] are staying in a student dorm...because the students are preparing for the university exam...that is, they have “the future” in their minds in fact... They are able to go toward death while thinking of their future... Students... what does this word remind you of?... Taliban!...”⁴⁶⁴

Not all examples of the Islamic revolution grand narrative were so explicit. Some reproduced the discourse without any explicit reference to the Turkish case;

⁴⁶³ Akşam, Güler Kömürcü, 01.05.2007, p.17.

⁴⁶⁴ Sabah, Hıncal Uluç, 20.04.2007, p.23.

“One hundred thousand people demonstrated against the actions of those religionists who follow a fanatical imam in Pakistan in order to establish a regime similar to that of the Taliban, saying ‘no to extremism.’”⁴⁶⁵

At first sight, the report seemed to be a normal piece of journalism. However, when it is read together with many Republican Rally reports, which were printed in the following pages of the same issue, its effectiveness in reproducing the discourse becomes clearer. The number of participants in the Republican Rallies and the message that the crowds were “supporting neither a military intervention nor Shariah” was the key characteristic of the Republican Rallies, according to the media. Therefore, the number of participants in the Pakistan rally and the moderate message given by the participants became the connecting elements in the reproduction of the discourse in the context of the Turkish Republican Rallies.

The Taliban portion of the grand narrative enabled the drawing of connections with the imam-hatip schools (as the Taliban’s base is constituted by medrese students), the mistreatment of women and any kind of hostility toward art. The sample below did not include all of these functions, as it only referenced hostility toward art. Nevertheless, it was noteworthy in the way it built a connection with the Saudi regime:

“[The Saudis] mean to say: ‘Here is modernity for you. Here are the latest technology, buildings, modern car parks, shopping centers. What else do you want?’

Didn’t they destroy the ‘Ejyad Castle,’ which was a 350-year-old Ottoman heritage?

Just like how the Taliban destroyed the Buddha statues...

In short, tolerating the destruction of the AKM [Atatürk Culture Center], which is ‘one of the most unique symbols of republican architecture’ means being the Taliban...

Allowing such an act by the Taliban in Taksim Square, which is the heart of Istanbul, means allowing all kinds of Taliban-style acts from now on, and we cannot consent to that.”⁴⁶⁶

Ejyad castle is one of the Ottoman legacies in the Muslim holy city of Mecca. The castle was destroyed by the Saudi regime in 2002 to expand the area for prayer. The destruction was

⁴⁶⁵ Milliyet, 17.04.2007, p.15.

⁴⁶⁶ Cumhuriyet, Nilgün Cerrahoğlu, 02.04.2007, p.17.

controversial and it was highly criticized among the Turkish public. The reference to the destruction of Ejyad Castle operates on the good and bad Muslims discourse: The Saudis, who were also Muslims, but bad ones, destroyed the castle with the pretence of doing something good for Muslims, just as bad Muslims deceive good Muslims with religion. There were two other aspects that should be mentioned in the above sample. The first its holistic and, consequently, reductionist character. Similar to the case of the characteristics of good and bad Muslims, the Taliban narrative cannot be divided into its components, either. The AKM is one of the largest cultural centers in Istanbul and also contains the only opera house in the city. However, the destruction of the AKM means more than the destruction of a cultural center. Besides being the only opera house in the city, the AKM has a symbolic and monumental character, because for some supporters of a modern and European lifestyle, going to a Western classical music concert in the AKM is not only about appreciating art, but also the reconfirmation of modern and European values.⁴⁶⁷ If the AKM was demolished, which would have been a Taliban-style act, all other Taliban-style acts would also occur, such as the forced veiling of women. Second was the stress on Taksim Square, because with the Republic Monument, the Square stands as the modern and republican image of Istanbul, compared to other squares like Beyazıt and Sultanahmet, which are traditional and Ottoman and contain huge mosques.⁴⁶⁸

Among the domestic narratives that made their appearance, the Menemen Incident, the beheading of a young teacher and reserve army officer named Mustafa Fehmi Kubilay by so-called Nakshibendis in 1930, was one of the most widely used. In the Menemen narrative, the relationship was built through a historical identity. In the excerpts quoted below, the presidential election was highlighted and, not very surprisingly, *Cumhuriyet*'s opposition to a president with a background in the AKP origin was expressed through the Menemen incident. In the first one, Prime Minister Erdoğan was situated against Kubilay and the president and chief of general staff were located alongside Kubilay, and naturally against Erdoğan. It was very clear that the Kubilay front must not lose the office of the presidency, for which Prime Minister Erdoğan was expected to stand as a candidate. Also, the term perverted soul, *sapık ruhlu*, designated the libidinous characteristic of the bad Muslims. In the second example, the Kubilay theme was employed again for the presidential elections, but this time through Republican Rallies. In this text, besides standing alongside Kubilay and, therefore, belonging to the good Muslims, the office of the president was presented as the "castle of science and reason":

⁴⁶⁷ Çınar, A. Modernity, Islam, and Secularisms in Turkey, p.4.

⁴⁶⁸ For the importance of Taksim Square for the "contemporary image" of Istanbul, see: Çınar, A. Modernity, Islam, and Secularisms in Turkey, p. 115-9.

“A fact appeared when commemorating Third Lieutenant Kubilay, who sacrificed his life in order to save our republic from the religion peddlers, Shariah supporters, and bigots with perverted souls, along with the watchmen Hasan and Şevki, who died with him, in a large ceremony in Menemen... Apart from the messages of our president and the chief of general staff, no voice was heard from the speaker of the parliament, prime minister or the members of the government... I wonder why? Is it because they are afraid of the spirit of Kubilay? In order not to confront thousands of Kubilays in Menemen again?”⁴⁶⁹

“Returning to the nation, which the main opposition will refer to, is somewhere else, it is in the social opposition that is developing outside the parliament... it’s in the hundreds of thousands who scream ‘Turkey is secular and shall remain secular’ at Atatürk’s mausoleum and in the squares, who curse political reaction in Menemen...[...] This is no ordinary presidential election. Yes or no to an independent, contemporary, secular Atatürk republic? Political reaction is climbing up to Çankaya [i.e. the president’s office]. Shariah, whichever camouflage it uses, may not enter the castle of science and reason!”⁴⁷⁰

The Sivas Incident can be cited as another example of domestic themes that were very closely related to the violent characteristic of bad Muslims. On July 2, 1993, after an event organized by the Pir Sultan Abdal Association, an Alevi-based NGO, the Madımak Hotel in Sivas, which was hosting participants from the conference, was set on fire and 33 people died. The people who set the hotel on fire claimed that Aziz Nesin, one of the participants, had insulted Islam. The incident was also utilized as a grand narrative in the April 27 Process:

“The Sivas massacre was commemorated in front of the Madımak Hotel, where the murder was committed, by a crowded group, even though 14 years have passed since then. The crowd, which shouted slogans of ‘the murderers shall be held accountable by the people,’ was booed by a group of 50 that was waiting in front of the provincial public library. Then the demonstrators gathered in front of the Madımak Hotel and shouted ‘alive’ while the names of the deceased were read out loudly one by one. Pir Sultan Abdal Culture Association head Kazım Genç, who spoke here, emphasized that the mentality that created the massacre was in power with all its cadres and said, ‘We shall maintain our struggle

⁴⁶⁹ Cumhuriyet, Akın Duru, 03.01.2007, p.6.

⁴⁷⁰ Cumhuriyet, Alpaslan Bertay, 04.01.2007, p.7.

against imperialism, fascism, racism, reaction and poverty with determination in the 14th year of the Sivas massacre.”⁴⁷¹

As a final example of the grand narrative of Islamic revolution, the lines quoted below from *Akşam*’s editor-in-chief and his anger toward the head of the Radio and Television Supreme Council (*Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurulu*, RTÜK) clearly demonstrate the social practices that were aimed at the Islamic revolution grand narrative specifically, as well as all other discursive practices in general. RTÜK fined SHOW TV, a television channel that was also owned by the media conglomerate holding *Akşam*, because of the violence portrayed in Valley of Wolves, *Kurtlar Vadisi*, an ultra-nationalist TV series, and as a result Turgut wrote about the head of RTÜK as follows:

“Those who are close to him say that he really likes being called “mullah” anyway. Apart from this, the attribute of “preference mullah” [a mullah that does not respect people’s preferences, but decides their preferences for them] is a job description that is compatible with the meaning and importance of today, because whatever the job description of the head of RTÜK, it might sound as if there is a modern perception. The way the present chairman works, his behavior and his outlook on life fit the definition of a “mullah” perfectly. The man deleted in an instant a series that had become very popular among the public. Moreover, he is also telling tons of lies about what he is doing and how he is doing it. We would have believed his lies if there were no witnesses. Look and see, this “mullah” will not stop, he will constantly interfere with our free will, he will take the right of preference from us. [...] ‘The censor mullah’ will do his job successfully, if he is approved, this scum can even be promoted to ‘Ayatullah’ from ‘mullah.’ Turkey has been turned into such a country. [...] If you do not want to live in the kind of country that is desired by the mullah, then resist these people, protect your legal rights and life choices.”⁴⁷²

Although the decision of RTÜK was not an issue of adult content or protecting the morals of the community, but rather a result of the series’ violent content being broadcast in prime time, Serdar Turgut preferred to use the ‘mullah’ metaphor that was always functional regardless of the topic. In other words, the *mullah* theme is always aimed at social practices -- protecting the interests of the media conglomerate.

⁴⁷¹ Cumhuriyet, 03.07.2007, 1.

⁴⁷² Akşam, Serdar Turgut, 18.02.2007, p.5.

5.2.2.3. Social Practices

In light of the foregoing analysis of the textual and discursive practices of the newspapers' coverage during the April 27 Process, the picture of the political economy of the period can be drawn. The first thing this picture can show us about the political economy of the period and the final aim of the textual and discursive practices conducted within it, are the limits of the historical hegemonic center of the April 27 crisis. As in the February 28 Process, the main actors of the civil and military bureaucracy were very effective during the process:

*“At the 139th anniversary of the Council of State, the judiciary criticized politics again and a definition of political reaction that will be discussed extensively was put forward. Council of State head Sumru Çörtoglu said that all actions that are contrary to the principles and revolutions of Atatürk were reaction.”*⁴⁷³

Seen from the perspective of the social practices of the newspapers' discourse, the analysis of the above-quoted report from *Sabah* is explanatory in two ways. First, it is a good example presenting the hegemonic alliance between the judiciary and the other participants of the historic hegemonic center. Furthermore, in terms of this hegemonic alliance, it gives an idea about the comprehensiveness of the hegemony of the historic hegemonic center by defining every act that is contrary to Kemalist principles and reforms as reaction. Second, *Sabah*'s discourse in reporting the event, which was also reported by all the other newspapers covered in the study, is also useful for understanding the failure in the formation of the hegemonic bloc. Underlining that judiciary “again” criticized politics and made a “very controversial” definition of reaction, *Sabah* gave the government a tool to use against the historic hegemonic bloc. On the other hand, the judiciary's hand was still powerful against the government thanks to other actors of the judicial wing of the historic hegemonic center:

*“Turkish Bar Associations Union head Özdemir Özok said that the AKP was the political formation of the ‘sufi order-politics-trade’ relationship, which was a product of the September 12 coup d’état.”*⁴⁷⁴

“The deans of the law faculties expressed their reactions to the inability to make appointments for the vacant positions in the high judicial organs because of the absence of the minister of justice and his representatives at the High

⁴⁷³ *Sabah*, 11.05.2007, p.25.

⁴⁷⁴ *Milliyet*, 01.04.2007, p.22.

Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK). In the joint statement made by 11 deans of law faculties from various universities, the government was criticized and it was said that ‘we expect this situation, which interferes with the independence of the judiciary, to be brought to an end.’”⁴⁷⁵

Universities’ support for the historic hegemonic center was not confined to the Faculties of Law, either:

“YÖK Chairman Prof. Teziç said that the constitution package, which involves the election of the president by the public, was a very serious issue and added that ‘this arrangement would lead to an invitation for an authoritarian regime in Turkey. It is very dangerous.’”⁴⁷⁶

“YÖK Chairman Teziç reacted harshly to the constitutional amendment that involves the election of the president by the public: the political majority of today wants to seize not only the government, but also the state. This would be an invitation to an authoritarian regime.”⁴⁷⁷

The distinction between governmental power and state power in Teziç’s comments is worth mentioning, as it overlaps with the Gramscian distinction between civil society and political society. What Teziç meant by governmental power corresponds to political society, while state power is equivalent to civil society, to the domain of hegemony and consent. According to Teziç, the state is something outside the political realm and it is too valuable to be left in the hands of politicians. Following the same logic, what Teziç meant by the authoritarian regime of the political majority attained by capturing civil society was the creation of a new consent, the realization of a new hegemony by a new hegemonic alliance.

Republican Rallies were the mobilization of the existing, but weakening historic hegemonic center:

“The rally yesterday is the rebellion of an honorable nation against being treated like a ‘flea.’ The psychological operation that the USA, the EU and their desks inside tried to apply by spending massive amounts of wealth has failed. It went bankrupt, it was defeated... this is its summary. If the funeral of

⁴⁷⁵ Milliyet, 25.03.2007, p.21.

⁴⁷⁶ Cumhuriyet, 12.05.2007, p.1.

⁴⁷⁷ Akşam, 12.05.2007, 11.

*Hrant Dink is broadcast live for eight hours on the TVs and if the fact that two million people marching to the Atatürk Mausoleum screaming 'we are all Mustafa Kemal' is not shown on the same TVs... We had said this. Let us say it again... The Turkish press will live with this unforgettable shame from now on.*⁴⁷⁸

A clear statement of traditional Kemalist perceptions, but then, in the very same issue of *Sabah* another columnist had this to say:

*"There will be a rally in Ankara next Saturday. It is presented as 'loyalty to the republic' but everyone knows the truth: to prevent the election of Prime Minister Erdoğan as president by provoking the military. To try to use the bayonet to make people do what they could not do at the ballot box."*⁴⁷⁹

Contrast this with *Cumhuriyet*'s perception:

"Those who look at the red squares and gnash their teeth are the merchants of faith who have equipped society with sufi orders and religious communities, they have enormous monetary power...

What will the citizens, who pay for their own red and white crescent and star and participate in the rallies, do in the face of the monetary power of the religionists? ...

The elections will be held soon...

And they have neither a satisfactory organization...

Nor sufficient money...

*Moreover, they are divided...Those who want to divide Turkey have fragmented the organizations that are against the religionist parties."*⁴⁸⁰

The three examples quoted above explain why the existing historic hegemonic center was weakening. The first two are from the same newspaper, but written by different columnists. Contradictory comments from the different columnists of a newspaper is a usual practice in the press, but in this case the totally opposite perspectives of the two columnists tells us about more than the openness of a newspaper, especially considering the monophony of Turkish

⁴⁷⁸ Sabah, Yılmaz Özdil, 15.04.2007, 03.

⁴⁷⁹ Sabah, Emre Aköz, 13.04.2007, p.20.

⁴⁸⁰ Cumhuriyet, İlhan Selçuk, 01.05.2007, p.2.

newspapers in such vital issues. In the transition period of *Sabah*, which resulted in a total change in its ownership and, therefore, in its discourse and stance, on the one hand Yılmaz Özdil, who supported the Republican Rallies but complained of the (non)presentation of the meetings in the media, represented the previous ownership of the newspaper and, thus, the weakening historic hegemonic center. On the other hand Emre Aköz represented the next ownership and the new formulation of the historic hegemonic center. The third excerpt was from *Cumhuriyet* and written by İlhan Selçuk, for decades a representative of the existing historic hegemonic center. It was as constant as it was decades ago, but not so powerful anymore. At that point it should also be noted that *Cumhuriyet* has always had a very limited readership compared to newspapers like *Sabah* and *Akşam* that address a wide readership. Furthermore, *Cumhuriyet*'s influence depended on its role as spokesman for the Kemalist elite, so with the weakening of the historic hegemonic center, it automatically lost its importance.

Similar to the hijacking of the Susurluk Rallies in the February 28 Process, a rally hijacking also took place in the April 27 Process. This time the people's sensitivity against PKK violence was hijacked for the sake of the mobilization of the historic hegemonic center. Increasing nationalist reaction against terror attacks was channeled against the government with the help of public demonstrations that used the same motives and style as the Republican Rallies:

“‘Homeland’ rallies will follow the ‘republican’ rallies: the request of the Turkish Armed Forces for a massive reflex against terror received a response. Some civil society organizations took the decision to organize ‘homeland’ rallies. The organizations, which are led by the ÇYDD, will also hold ‘silent rallies against terror.’”⁴⁸¹

“Approximately 3,000 METU graduates, who came from different parts of the world and Turkey, held a march to Atatürk’s mausoleum yesterday on the grounds that Atatürk’s principles and the republic are being systematically eroded.”⁴⁸²

The role of the TSK as the triggering actor of the nationalist rallies is worth mentioning in terms of the hegemonic alliance.

⁴⁸¹ Akşam, 09.06.2007, p.11.

⁴⁸² Milliyet, 24.06.2007, p.19.

The hegemonic alliance was not stable and, in some cases, certain groups in the alliance may break off from the alliance and seek a new one. Çukurova Groups seemed to be on the edge, but needed some extra motivation for entering into the new hegemonic alliance and announced its need for extra motivation through an editorial in its newspaper *Akşam*:

“Since the government has recently started to give special importance to nationalism, I especially wanted to give this example. You know that Turkcell is a real national company. It is a company that was created with the entrepreneurship of Turkish capitalists and the creativity of Turkish infrastructure and a company of which every person who calls himself a nationalist should be proud. [...]I am asking those who try to engage in nationalism with billboards and vacuous slogans, what kind of nationalism is this? Do you have the right to trip up the businessmen and capital of this country like this? Would the Turkish people, who have always loved those who gave them jobs and food, forgive the people who do this?”⁴⁸³

Akşam offered the government a chance to prove its nationalism over Turkcell, a communication company owned by the Çukurova Group and that had some problems with the Capital Markets Boards of Turkey during the time when the rallies were organized. As a response to the rising nationalism of the period, the ruling AKP put many advertisements on billboards in major cities. Through the editorial, *Akşam* told the AKP that engaging in “nationalism with billboards and vacuous slogans” is useless. Instead, the AKP should support a national company like Turkcell, if it wants to make use of the increasing nationalism of the rallies. Otherwise, Turgut warns the government against losing the support of “Turkish people, who have always loved those who gave them jobs and food;” that is, Turkcell.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the historic hegemonic center formation of the April 27 Process was the discord among the media. Unlike in the February 28 Process, the political-economic interests of the central media outlets were not compatible. The consequences of the disharmony among media institutions were reflected in newspapers in the shape of reports and columns that were critical of the indifference of some newspapers to the process and the Republican Rallies:

“Look at the scenes in our sector outside of the Doğan Media....

⁴⁸³ *Akşam*, Serdar Turgut, 15.01.2007, p.15.

Apart from 1-2 groups that do not have wide access and that are secular, 2 newspapers and a television channel that have been confiscated by the state (I exonerate my colleagues who work there and their journalistic principles)... The rest are newspapers, TV channels and radio channels that support the AKP.”⁴⁸⁴

“The president spoke with the journalists at the opening of the Atatürk Museum Villa, pointing out that the republican rally was very good and said that “the messages at the rally were spot-on. I watched the press in amazement.” Sezer said that the press had managed the presidential election process very badly.”⁴⁸⁵

The economic competition between the newspapers and the conglomerates which owned them was the basic reason behind the disharmony among the newspapers in the process:

*“A young businessman was standing next to me. He asked a question that everybody speaks of but nobody dares to ask to my face: ‘Mr. Altaylı, as far as I know, you worked in the Doğan group for 13 years. Now you write articles against your former group due to POAŞ [Petrol Office Joint Stock Co.]. There is no doubt as to the accuracy of what you write, but still, doesn’t this disturb you?’”*⁴⁸⁶

“Aydın Doğan is using his own media as a weapon so that Sabah-ATV, which was taken over by the TMSF [Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency], will rot in the hands of the state. He is having its reporters write reports that will affect the judiciary and it is advising the TMSF through his lawyers.”⁴⁸⁷

Although not covered by the research of this study, the existence of more powerful alternative newspapers and the centrist newspapers’ reaction to these alternative newspapers is also worth mentioning in terms of the historic hegemonic center because the coverage of these alternative newspapers constituted different resources for the people the center was trying to mobilize in the April 27 Process:

⁴⁸⁴ Milliyet, Melih Aşık, 08.05.2007, p.19.

⁴⁸⁵ Cumhuriyet, 20.04.2007, p.1.

⁴⁸⁶ Sabah, Fatih Altaylı, 17.01.2007, p.21.

⁴⁸⁷ Akşam, 28.06.2007, p.1.

“It’s unbelievable, the other day we (together with our editor-in-chief İbrahim Yıldız) made a list of the religionist newspapers that are distributed free of charge...

The result?

One million, 200 thousand...

No, you did not read this wrong, in today’s Turkey one million, 200 thousand newspapers are distributed free of charge everyday...

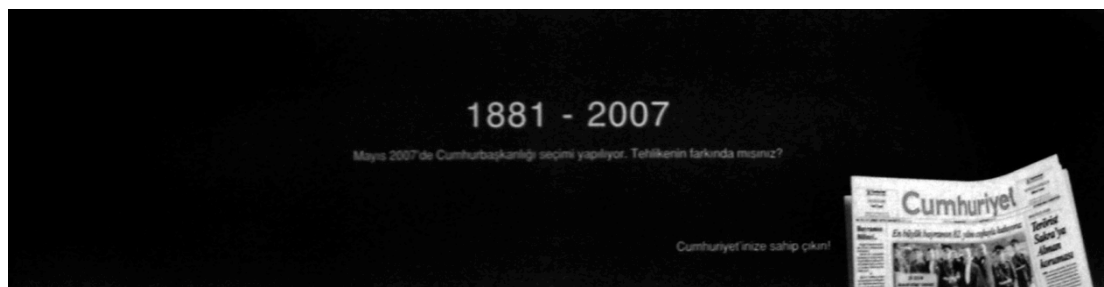
How big a monetary power is this?...

Who is providing the money?... ”⁴⁸⁸

“Anavatan party parliamentary Sarıbaş asked whether there was any takiyye in the sale of the Star newspaper during parliamentary questions, and he asked for the prime minister and Minister of Energy Güler to respond.”⁴⁸⁹

Star newspaper, which was previously owned by the Uzan Group, was confiscated by the TMSF as a result of the bankruptcy of the Uzan Group’s İmar Bank. Later, the newspaper was put to tender by TMSF. At the end of the tender, Star was sold to the Koza Group, which is close to the ruling AKP according to many, such as the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper.

Supporting and protecting the republic was never only about supporting and protecting the republic:



Picture 16⁴⁹⁰

Through this advertisement *Cumhuriyet* – which literally means republic in Turkish - the newspaper called for the support of the people for the Republic, which *Cumhuriyet* thought was under threat. On the other hand, it called for the support of people for itself, for the newspaper *Cumhuriyet*. It should also be noted that in the advertisement 1881, the birth date of

⁴⁸⁸ Cumhuriyet, Mustafa Balbay, 07.01.2007, p.2.

⁴⁸⁹ Cumhuriyet, 07.01.2007, p.6.

⁴⁹⁰ Cumhuriyet, 04.03.2007, p.1.

Mustafa Kemal, was picked as the birth date of Republic of Turkey and 2007, the year that presidency elections was held, was picked as its date of death. The message was clear: Once an AKP-oriented president was selected, it would be the end for the Republic. *Cumhuriyet* identified itself with the Republic through the identity implied by its name. It asked support both for itself and for the Republic. Although the Republic of Turkey continued to live after 2007, beyond the date of death *Cumhuriyet* had imagined, *Cumhuriyet* did not insofar as the newspaper and the historic hegemonic alliance it belonged to began to weaken after 2007, a fact that is among the major conclusions of this research.