T. C.

İSTANBUL 29 MAYIS UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS

POLITICAL DISCOURSE AND INSTRUMENTALIZATION:

IDEALIZED FEMALE IMAGES OF KEMALISM AND ISLAMISM

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Master of Arts

Zeynep AYDIN

Supervisor:

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Oğuzhan GÖKSEL

İstanbul – 2019

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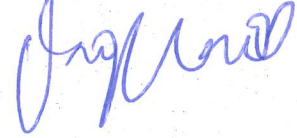**Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Oğuzhan GÖKSEL**

İSTANBUL

2019

T. C.

İSTANBUL 29 MAYIS ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Bilim Dalı'nda 030115YL05 numaralı Zeynep AYDIN'ın hazırladığı *"Political Discourse and Instrumentalization: Idealized Female Images of Kemalism and Islamism"* konulu konulu yüksek lisans tezi ile ilgili tez savunma sınavı, 16.04.2019 günü 14:00–16:00 saatleri arasında yapılmış, sorulan sorulara alınan cevaplar sonunda adayın tezinin başarılı olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.
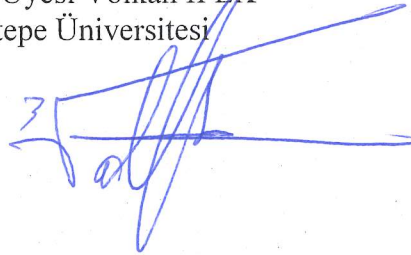
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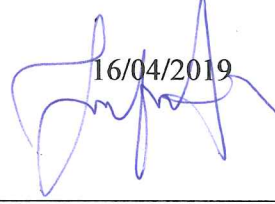
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Bu tezin yazılmasında bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uyulduğunu, başkalarının eserlerinden yararlanılması durumunda bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunulduğunu, kullanılan verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmadığını, tezin herhangi bir kısmının bu üniversite veya başka bir üniversitedeki başka bir tez çalışması olarak sunulmadığını beyan ederim.

Zeynep AYDIN

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İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

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SİYASİ SÖYLEM VE ARAÇSALLAŞTIRMA:

KEMALİZM VE İSLAMCILIK'TA İDEALİZE EDİLEN KADIN İMGELERİ

Bu tez Türkiye siyasetinde 1980 sonrası dönemde İslamcı-Kemalist kutuplaşması bağlamında gerçekleşenhegemonya tartışmalarını iki grubun idealize ettiği kadın tipi üzerinden değerlendirmektedir. Kadın; Cumhuriyet'in kuruluşundan beri Cumhuriyet değerlerinin bir göstergesi olarak araçsallaştırılmıştır. Bu tez ideal Kemalist kadın ve ideal Müslüman/İslamcı kadın tiplerinin 1980 sonrası siyasi alanda ne şekillerde araçsallaştırıldığını ve bu araçsallaştırmanın hangi yollarla sadece grup ideallerini yansıtmakla kalmayıp, aynı zamanda bu ideale uymayan kadın tiplerinin söylem ve, başörtüsü yasağında olduğu gibi, baskılar yoluyla dışlandığını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. 1980 sonrası dönemde görünürlük ve siyasi aktivizm anlamında yükselen İslamcı grupların laiklik ve modernite temelli baskılar karşısında ideal Müslüman/İslamcı kadını ne şekillerde toplumsal düzenin ve İslam'ın "gerçek versiyonunun" bir örneği ve taşıyıcısı olarak idealize ettikleri araştırılmıştır. Kemalist ve İslamcı söylemlerin birbirinden kalın çizgilerle ayrılan farklılıklarına rağmen kadın meselesinde benzer geleneksel-ataerkil refleks ve davranış biçimlerini içselleştirdikleri ve yansıttıkları aktarılmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu idealize edilen kadın tiplerinin ne şekillerde sadece grup dışında değil aynı zamanda grup içinde de bir dışlama aracına

dönüştürüldüğü araştırılmış ve bu iki yönlü dışlama pratiklerini aşmanın ifade ettiği öneme değinilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kadın, İslamcılık, Kemalizm, Cumhuriyet, Ataerkillik, Erkek Egemenliği, Modern ve Geleneksel İkiliği

ABSTRACT

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POLITICAL DISCOURSE AND INSTRUMENTALIZATION:

IDEALIZED FEMALE IMAGES OF KEMALISM AND ISLAMISM

This thesis aims to evaluate the post-1980 hegemonic struggle within Turkey in the context of Islamist-Kemalist polarization through examining the idealized female images of these two groups. Women has been instrumentalized as a carrier and token of Republican ideals ever since the foundation of the Republic in the 1920s. I aim to investigate how the ideal Kemalist female image and the ideal Muslim/Islamist female image have been instrumentalized in the post-1980 period and in what ways the instrumentalization of these images have not remainedsolely as signifiers of group ideals but have also been used for the social exclusion of women refusing to conform to these ideals through discourse and oppression, as it happened in the case of the headscarf ban. Islamist groups' – which have risen in terms of visibility and political activism in the post-1980 period – idealization of Muslim/Islamist women as an example of "true Islam"and as the means to challenge secularism and the top-down imposition of Kemalist modernity is examined. It is argued that, despite their notable differences, the Kemalist and Islamist discourses' have internalized and reflected similar traditional-patriarchal patterns of behavior in their treatment of women. How these idealized female images are utilized not only in treatment of out-group women but

also used in in-group challenges as well and the importance of overcoming these bidirectional exclusion practices are addressed.

Keywords: Women, Islamism, Kemalism, Republic, Patriarchy, Male Dominance,

Modern-Traditional Duality

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Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Asst. Prof. Oğuzhan Göksel for his guidance, patience and encouragement. I am grateful for his belief in me. Without his tolerance and patience, it would have been much moredifficult for me to finish this study. I am personally and intellectually indebted to him.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations	Bibliographical Data
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress
JDP	Justice and Development Party
RPP	Republican People's Party
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TWU	Turkish Women's Union
VP	Virtue Party
WP	Welfare Party

INTRODUCTION

Women have been a central subject in the debates between the discourses of Kemalists and Islamists[1], particularly after the 1980 period. The Kemalist modernization project envisaged women as a symbol of the new Republic's "modern face" and implemented a number of reforms regarding the political rights of women (e.g. universal suffrage). However, the domestic status of women was kept intact in a traditional way, ascribing them the duty to raise the future generations in line with the Kemalist/Republican ideals. This paradoxical status of women – between the "modern" and the "traditional" – obliged her to comprise both modern and traditional social roles without leaning much to either side. The process of top-down modernization under the leadership of men had kept the main features of traditional gender roles intact, and women's public and political presence were to an extent limited and/or permitted by men. It can be argued that women who had access to the facilities and rights provided by the Republic have gradually internalized a sentiment of gratitude that prevented them from questioning the essentially masculine structure of state-society relations and policy-making.

The politically turbulent years that led to the 1980s had witnessed to a rising awareness in a group of women within secular circles and they started to scrutinizethe male dominant political-social structure of Turkey. This led to an increasing mobility and formation of women'srights groups following a feminist agenda. Similarly, the Islamist women's visibility in public and political domains had rapidly increased in these years. Their rising visibility had become the central domain of the discursive war between Kemalist and Islamist groups, specified to the boundaries of the notorious headscarf ban. Although this period's discursive warmainly concentrated on the role of Islamist women, the rapidly changing socio-political dynamicshave made it clear that both ideologies – despite their differing discourses on women that both claim to be the

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[1] The word 'Islamist' is not used in any of its radicalized, militant definitions. The reason 'Islamist' is used instead of 'Islamic' is that the conceptualization of two terms differ in the concept of Turkish political and social understanding. While 'Islamic' is generally used in matters directly related to religious practices, duties and deeds 'Islamist' generally represents a set of political and social opinions incorporated to a religion-based framework that is actively being brought forward by people who values the political and social activism along with religious duties. Particularly in the context of Turkish society, two terms are perceived differently, 'Islamic' can be used as an adjective by many people, be it about a behaviour or making a charity or opening a place, while 'Islamist' connotates a certain attitude that actively engages in making politics and talking about the various aspects of an 'Islamic' life in order to compromise the Islamic life into the construction of the ideal society.

ideal form for women to comply with – subordinate women into secondary roles by placing men as "thesole authority" to decide the definitions and boundaries of women's identity by conceptualizing them as "passive agents to represent their ideals".

This thesis will present a representation of Turkey's two major political discourses in terms of their male-dominant character and we will focus in particular on their construction and utilization of "an ideal women image". While women are praised by both ideologies for their qualities and importance in social structures, both ideologies also want the women to remain in a more passive position particularly in terms of their engagement with "male domains". As a headscarf-wearing women who grew up within the Islamist circles, witnessed the rise of the WP and had a chance to closely monitor the changing climate and political activism within these circles – although initially with a much less awareness on the intricate workings of politics and gender – I have come to question the male dominant discourse of the Islamist people. At the same time, tracing the roots of the Republican/Kemalist female image has enabled me to study the male-dominant structure of Kemalism and the Turkish state.

The male dominant structure of politics, and of these ideologies, seems to be in interplay with cultural, traditional and religious concepts that each of them both feeds and is fed by this interplay. Why do women play such a crucial role in the construction of these two mainstream identities of Turkish society and politics? How do these ideologies construct themselves as the negation of the other? On what grounds are women instrumentalized as an influential and key actor for political agendas, yet, their agency remaining shackled to the limits of male-dominant power structures? How do these ideologies manage to subject women into molding practices, both physically and mentally, and exclusion and discrimination regimes, one for sake of religious/traditional values and the other for Kemalist/secular values, while legitimizing these practices in the name of protecting or emancipating or modernizing or developing her being and, rejecting and vilifying counter-views, even when these come from the women themselves? In the quest of searching an answer to these questions, this thesis attempts to examine the inner workings of both ideologies and the discourses that are related to women's body (e.g. the headscarf, the idea of motherhood, and the right to abortion) and lay out the exclusionist features weaved into these ideal images.

In addition to this Introduction and the Conclusion at the end, the thesis consists of four main chapters. The First Chapter features a literature review where the two idealized female images, that of the Kemalists and the Islamists, are traced within numerous publications, with a short background on the process of formation of these images, particularly the Kemalist female image, as it remained in a hegemonic position ever since the foundation of the Republic in 1923. Re-analyzing the Kemalist premises and women on that sense had enabled the formation of new women's rights groups among secular circles. Islamist women's rising visibility in the post-1980 years did not only accelerate the mobilization of the Islamist movement but ushered an internal challenge within the Islamist movement. The Kemalist and Islamist ideologies in the post-1980 had established themselves mainly as rivals over the headscarf problem. This has placed Islamist women into the center of the struggle of hegemony between these two political movements. The Islamist women's challenge to both Kemalism's strict definition of the "secular" and the Islamism's patriarchal tendencies had led the emergence of a new debate on the definitions of women within the Islamist circles while it also drew the attention of a number of women from secular circles. Today, although there are many women on both sides who challenge these idealizations, the hegemonic discourses over women largely preserve their status as they find much more ground in and are often justified by established cultural and traditional practices in Turkey.

The Second Chapter features the theoretical framework of this thesis, and the chapter also analyses notablehistorical socio-political events and discourses. Being one of the most debated paradigms, *Post-Structuralism*'s emphasis on power relations and its detailed accounts on the intimate ties between power relations and discourse provides us as an effective instrument in terms of reading the history of Turkey and social and political events from an original perspective. Women's position throughout the history and particularly in the context of politics is read and reflected through the utilization of Post-Structuralism. Reading both the historical and political events through the lenses of Post-Structuralism with a focus on women enabled the critique of the established power balances by which the gender inequalities and subordination of women are reproduced. The importance Post-Structuralism laid on the language and

how language is not simply a medium to communicate but acts as a significant indicator of an individual's perceived reality and what kind of meanings s/he assigns to that perception is utilized in assessment of media's and political figures' projection of women and womanhood. Post-Structuralism also plays a crucial role in understanding the self's embeddedness in these concepts of political and social and any concept one may imagine, that one's experiences can never assume an exteriority to those, as one's self is mainly constructed by these very concepts, nor can it bring an entirely objective interpretation to them. This is of vital importance in order to acknowledge the limits and boundaries of studying such subject. Being aware of its connection with the system it examines and the impossibility of applying an exteriority to it, this study attempts to lay out the importance of deconstructing the prevalent ideal female images for the purpose of achieving a better social compromise.

The Third Chapter provides an extensive historical background on women's history of Turkey. The chapter consists of two parts, and the first part deals with the women's status in the Ottoman Empire and throughout the Republican history until the 1980s. It is aimed to reflect the socio-historical process of women's status to provide a background to the historical process of the emergence of the dichotomy between the supposedly "modern"/progressivewomen and the "backward"/Islamistwomen. One has to have a grasp on the historical process of this dichotomy in Turkey in order to understand and evaluate the recent developments and shifting balance of power within the country. The Ottoman Empire's modernization process and the Kemalist modernization project are presented as they are of great importance in terms of understanding Turkey's emplacement of itself between the so-called West and East, how the conceptualization of these two have been reflected in both the political and social construction of the society, including the formation of the "ideal Republican women". This part is also important in terms of illuminating the history of women's rights movements in Turkey as this part covers the late Ottoman women movements in their search of equal opportunities and reclaiming their agency and how their attempts, similar to recent history, were met with the restrictions of the patriarchal society and how the status of women was designed within the limits defined by male socio-political dominance. The second part of the chapter extensively covers the post-1980 period as it

forms the historical scope of this study. This period saw a relative change in the strict interpretation of Kemalist ideals as newly emancipating women's rights groups had re-analyzed the early Republican period's treatment of women and their current social groups' male dominant characters. The formation of new women groups, influenced by the second wave feminism, and their importance in questioning the state policies and the Kemalist female image are illustrated in this part. The Islamist groups' rise in the political and social domains constitutes a major debate within the post-1980 period. Particularly the Islamist women's rising visibility and their *en masse* political activism greatly influenced the political agenda. The state's oppression of Islamist women on grounds of threatening secularism with their headscarf had turned into a long-standing problem on which the discursive debates between hegemonic narrations took place. Islamist groups' transformation process that led to the formation of the JDP (Justice and Development Party) has substantially influenced the power balances and relations in Turkey. Although theJDP embraced a different political agenda than that of their predecessors in its first terms, recently it has started to gravitate towards a more local and neo-Ottoman discourse than a Western-oriented one. There had been ameliorations in women's status in laws and policies, yet the JDP's general outlook on women have not advanced much further than the traditional and patriarchal definitions of women.

In the Fourth Chapter, information collected through an extensive research period is utilized in interpretation and analysis of the two main ideal female images established and maintained in Turkish society. This chapter consists of two parts: the first part is reserved to highlight the importance of media in the dissemination of group ideals, naturally the idealized female images. Books, publications, TV and radio networks, newspapers and magazine are tools that can be greatly utilized in the service of certain power groups' propagation of their discourse. This also enables the formation of justification grounds by which these discourses maintain themselves. Intricate relations between media groups and political groups are illustrated in order to understand the changing hegemonic discourses on women. The second part of the chapterfocuses on the utilization of idealized female images in the political space by conflicting groups and how and in what ways they are maintained. Women's centrality in conveying group ideals and how different womanhoodis used in the construction of

the "other" forms one of the highlights of this part. Patriarchal tendencies do not only remain limited to the traditional definitions of women that are mostly attributed to Islamist discourses, and used by them as well, but reveal themselves in supposedly "modernist" discourses as well. Women's body is being used by both discourses both in positive and negative grounds. Challenging voices, although few, in both sides to the hegemonic discourses on women are also presented. Particularly, a few Islamist women's challenge to the male-dominant structure of their group is utilized to reveal the patriarchal codes embedded in Islamist discourse. The changing power balances' influence on women's status in political and public space is evaluated to reflect the similar and different features of these two main discourses mentioned above.

In the last chapter, conclusions and theoretical insights are drawn based on the discussions that took place in previous chapters. The results of the lack of an inclusive understanding of women through examining the different female images created in Turkish society and the difficulty of overcoming such images due to their embeddedness in hegemonic discourses are emphasized. Political utilization and gains of maintaining such images are analyzed. The Islamist and Kemalist discourses' utilization of each other as a constitutive element of their self-definitions and how both share similar traditional reflexes in their treatment of women are highlighted. Challenging voices from women are presented and lastly, the possibilities of creating a more inclusive women perception are evaluated.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to provide a review of two hegemonic discourses (i.e. Kemalism and Islamism) regarding female images in Turkey. The effects of the construction and consolidation of the Kemalist female image throughout the history of the Republic on the post-1980 political debates and discursive wars are researched. The changing character of the secular women movements in the post-1980 period has enabled an internal questioning which resulted in increasing female-oriented demands. Their positioning themselves versus the Islamist groups, particularly against Islamist women, and the boundaries of this new mobility among women is examined. Islamist groups' rising visibility and influence is examined in terms of the women's position in these groups and the dominant discourse on Islamist women. This period's vital importance in the re-construction and consolidation of these two female images, through discourses, publications, political and social activities, and the female authors' and intellectuals' evaluation of the women's positions are reflected.

1.1. Kemalist Female Image as the Carrier of Republican Ideals

Turkey's history as a country succeeding an empire by changing its entire socio-political system had various effects that spread not only to the political and social memory of the country but to all aspects of life including gender relations and conceptualization. During the late Ottoman period leading to the Republic, the lack of formal education for women and its negative results over the country's overall progress was one of the highly debated topics among the intellectuals of the time. The founders of the Republic also showed great interest in female education and women rights. From the very beginning, they put great emphasis on women's emancipation. Not only that they believed in emancipating and educating women was important for catching up with the so-called "civilized" nations, but also for the future of the country since the women were expected to be the main educators of the country's future generations. Starting from the mid-19th century, women's rights and education along with their public visibility had sparked different debates among intellectual and political circles. These debates mostly embraced the modernization of women as a requisite in order for them

to acquire the same intellectual and social skills as men since this would enable the country to civilize faster projected the society's excessive expectations of women. They were expected to be modernized but not "too Westernized", educated, enlightened, active in public space but only as much as state allows them to be while keeping their femininity, meaning attractiveness, at a minimum in order not to spark any temptation while, at the same time, being biologically functioning housewives who would raise the future generations that would fulfill the country's civilizing mission.

The aforementioned self-contradictory aspects of the Kemalist female image, according to Durakbaşa, reflected the pragmatism of Kemalist ideology (Durakbaşa 1998, 147). As Kandiyoti puts it, Turkish modernization emancipated women but did not liberate them, as it was not the women themselves but the state determined the scope of her rights and life (Kandiyoti 1987, 324). This era witnessed clashing opinions on how much rights should be given to women and how far they should be allowed into state affairs. Kemalist female image, at the end of these debates, was drawn as an ideal state for Turkish women. One of the popular discourses of this period was that the state "granted" the women rights even before women showed any efforts to gain them (Durakbaşa 1998, Sancar 2012). The period's prominent male figures' efforts to settle the general perception in such a way was a part of strong state feminism which rendered the women's efforts that started in late Ottoman era and later, and more prominently, after the II. Constitutional Period into an insignificant part of the history of struggle for women rights (Zihnioğlu 2003, Sancar 2012). Doğramacı (1982, 87) was one of thosewho strongly emphasized the "grantedness" of women rights and how women should be grateful, in an excessive fashion, to Kemal Ataturk. Similarly, Arat (1992, 76-94) greatly emphasized the gratitude towards Kemalist reforms, taking them as the source of post-1980 women mobilization. As different sociologists argue, this attitude rather exemplifies state feminism which, in fact, employs the emancipation of women to demonstrate its feminist credentials to ground and legitimize its authoritarian administration (Hatem 1999, 67).

The process that led to the foundation of the Turkish Republic witnessed remarkable efforts to modernize the country and the people through a set of measurements and policies that implied Western-style modernization. Taking the

Western example as a base, the policies encompassed women rights and endeavored to extent women's visibility in public. The reformation process had employed women as an agent of the newly-established Republic, an agent that would convey the principles and ideals of the Republic through both her public and private presence (Sancar, 2012). Although the Republic has promoted women's accession to the public life and education, the state and its constituents kept their masculine identity. The nature of the reforms, albeit aspired to avail women of extensive rights, remained unable to exceed putting women into a certain shape drawn by the ideals of the republic notwithstanding the question of their applicability to all strata in the society or its level of restrictiveness over the women.

1.1.1. Ottoman/Backward versus Modern

The new Republic's disassociation from its past was strongly expressed through placing the ideals of the Republic against Ottoman Empire's politics, culture and so forth andwomen had become one of the main actors to display the idealized image of the Republic. During the process of "modernizing" the women, the image of Ottoman style women, or what was assumed to be Ottoman/Islamic women, was perceived as the opposite of what was considered as the "new/modern" women (Aktaş, 1991b). Although the new image of Turkish women was rather limited to the middle and upper classes of big cities rather than being spread homogenously across the country, it nevertheless created one of the most popular female images in the contemporary Turkish society. This image, as shortly mentioned before, stood as Ottoman women's supposed rival and this contradictory yet supplementary relationship between these two images, albeit changing to some extent over time and reproducing their various versions based on each respective period's political, social and cultural context, reached to today's Turkish society. Defining the relationship between these two images as "contradictory yet supplementary" refers to the constant emphasis of both parties, particularly the Kemalists', on one's differences from the other which helps to constitute their own self by defining what they are not. Kemalists/secularists who adamantly advocate the Western style modernization and conservatives/Islamists who advocate a discourse based on local and traditional values and modest/Islamic

womencan be referred to as the two main competing groups[2]within Turkish society (Arat 1999).

Kemalists, as the leaders of the Republic, managed to create a dominant discourse through the means of state power and education policies. This discourse has been imposed over apredominantly conservative Muslim society in the name of "catching up with the West" until recent decades. This process of top-down and somewhat forcible modernization created dissatisfaction among the religious and/or anti-Western people which formed the basis of a longstanding opposition against Kemalist ideals (Dedeoğlu and Elveren 2012, 83). The idealizedfemale image of the state refused any Islamic attire for women and considered it as a sign of backwardness in an Orientalist[3] attitude. This approach preserved its force in public space for a long time which resulted in the exclusion of a major part of the country's female population from the public spaces and duties, including access to the universities and public service. By attributing a "savior" image to the state, in other words to Ataturk, women were made to feel most grateful to Kemalism. This deep gratitude was indeed internalized by many educated women, depicted as "daughters of the Republic", as they believed that they obtained everything thanks to the Republic and to Ataturk and that this belief remained strongly popular until 1980s, when the global second wave feminism also influenced the Turkish women and inclined them to question the state-imposed feminism and masculinity of the early Republican period and current Turkish politics (Dedeoğlu and Elveren 2012, Göle 1991, Çaha 1996).From this point onwards, questioning the patriarchy and imagining new approaches concerning women has become more prevalent in the society.

Questioning the masculine structure of the state and their own groups, these women's efforts were realized on grounds of gender-based discrimination and violence. Modernity and secularism had preserved their places in their arguments against the "threats" of Islamism, which largely manifested itself in their opposition to the Islamist women as well. Although some once-accepted-sacred aspects of the state were

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[2] Group, here, is used not to refer a group of people whose opinions and behaviors are strictly uniform but rather people who share relatively similar opinions or feel closer to one group than the other.
[3] "Orientalism" is used here in conformity to Said's (1979) conceptualization of the term.

challenged by the women and new grounds were established for fighting against gender-based discrimination and violence, it did not establish a common ground for all women, free from groupism and exclusion.

It is also necessary to note that until recent decades even the women fitting the Kemalist female image could not manage to find enough place, as they still do so, to actively participate in state and government affairs due to state's masculine structure which will also be examined in this study in order to understand the ideal female images and their utilization by different groups (Sancar, 2012).

1.2. Islamist Female Image in Islamist Discourse in the Post-1980 Period

After the 1980s, Islamist groups' rise in political arena has brought different gender discourses into the platform. Employing a relatively traditional approach to women, the main duty of a woman was considered to be a mother. Along with her domestic roles, she was expected to be a good Muslim who would help in the construction of an Islamic society through raising virtuous children and socializing among women to teach Islamic values. This era has also witnessed to the increasing visibility of Islamist women as they appeared in the public space not as passive domestic members of the society but also as both university students and graduates and/or active members of political or non-governmental organizations. Although women's groups generally stayed in the back rows of such organizations, it was a sign of their rising visibility in upcoming years.

The popular Islamist female image in the 1990s was a good Muslim woman who was aware of her duties which included being a good mother and wife, and an active member who works only for the sake of Islam, nation and country and not for worldly desires, or organizations (Çakır 2000, 97). Despite Islamist[4] women's rising visibility that started in 1980s and the fact that the dynamic political atmosphere of the 1990s provided them an active place outside of their house, Islamist groups' gender

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[4] "Islamist woman'"is used with precaution since the term itself is highly politicized and loaded with a whole range of meanings. Using this term to refer to all women with religious attire might remain insufficient, even restrictive, considering the fact that in general, women with headscarf, or infamously known as *türban*, are perceived as Islamists, in a militant way, independent of their background. Furthermore, not all women who are affiliated with the Islamist identity wear headscarf which renders using the term based on looks rather superficial.

understanding did not seem to promise a neutral and inclusive approach in prevalent male-female dynamics or women's status as a human being. Islamist discourses on women showed a similar monolithic approach and limited treatment of the matter. Instead of understanding the individuality of the women and the versatility of the subject they presented, and still do so, a perspective limited by the traditional, and strongly patriarchal, definitions of women which render women generally into two types where the first group represents the ideal female image of the Islamists, chaste self-sacrificing mothers and wives and the second is generally, and negatively, portrayed as free and "easy" women (Tatlı 2001, 50). Their critique of "easy" women features the critique of modern system which, according to Islamists, corrupts, oppresses and enslaves the women and exploits women's body by sexualizing it for capitalist purposes. Islamic ideals are brought forward against this corruption as the only antidote of it without presenting an in depth and less partial analysis of the reasons of the gap between the Islamic ideals and the present situation of the Muslim societies and women's status in Muslim societies in general, other than putting the blame on traditional practices and values. The strong influence tradition has over the society's perception is disregarded when it comes to Islamic ideals which, in reality, most of the time its transformative power conforms the religion to its own values instead of Islamic ideals changing the unfavorable cultural practices (Çakır 2000, 50).

1.2.1. Predicaments of the Islamist Female Image

Discourses concerning women remain limited to the mantra of "there is no women problem" in Islam and it, in theory, reinstated her well-deserved status of which cannot be obtained in the exploitative nature of the modern world without investigating in what ways the ways this analogy strengthens the settled patriarchy or enables to render female voices or unjust practices they face, justified on allegedly religious bases, into trivial problems (Çakır 2000:45, Bilgin 2005). Their main argument "Islam gave women the highest status" remained rather a symbolic word that had little to no reflection in reality considering the fact that the interpretation and application of the Islamic values was highly intertwined with patriarchal practices that exist in Turkish society. They, similar to the Kemalist ideology, put great emphasis on women by which

they would build the Islamic society on the basis of a righteous and moral women/mother who would both set an example for the society and raise well-behaved and faithful children. While Islamist groups emphasized that "women were being exploited in modern societies and movements like feminism were only reducing her being into a material by shifting from women rights struggle to the sexual freedom campaigns" (Aydın, 2000), they did not question, if not strengthen, the oppression women faced as a result of patriarchal readings of Islam or the molds women were put in by the Islamists themselves. The idealization of women by male authorities did not only restrict the definition and possibilities of womanhood, butit also replicated the Kemalist/Republican practice of creating an idealized, male-approved women and employing it as an agent to present the ideal state of a Muslim society, not to mention the disproportionate moral burden they ascribe to women. Although there were few educated Islamist women who pointed the patriarchal and monolithic understanding visible in Islamist discourse, their voices faced accusations of feminism or being pro-Western due to their "unfitting" behavior (Çakır 2000, 40).

Defensive position against secularist critics is a major driving force for Islamists' discourse on women. Internal criticisms against the gender-biased or one-sided approaches settled in Islamist discourse are countered with first, evoking the memories of secular oppression reminding the lack of an alternative social force that would embrace conservative/religious women and second, accusing the critics for being pro-Western or corrupted by the evil doctrines of modernity. Situated on the ground of "complementariness of the sexes" (Hatemi 1995, Dilipak 1988), Islamists' discourses on gender relations tried to cancel out the criticisms and pacify the unrest among the Islamist women.

The Justice and Development Party's rise to power in the 2000s marked a new era for the Islamist wing. Defining itself as conservative democrat, the JDP employed a modernist and liberal approach in politics that enabled it to gain the majority of the votes including parts of the leftist, liberal and nationalist votes. Although the JDP seemedinitially promising in its women-related social policies, they did not manage to ultimately overcome stereotypical understanding of women (Buğra 2012, 47-67). The constant emphasis on motherhood, the gradual rendering of women into her domestic

identity alone through policies and political discourses revealed theJDP's stereotypical understanding of women which mainly represents the gender perception of the majority of Islamists.

1.3. A General Review of the Literature

One may find different opinions and studies, although not very widespread and versatile, in the scholarly literature considering women in Turkey. The masculine and patriarchal structure of the state appears to be a common problem pointed out by majority of the authors and intellectuals, regardless of their political stance or preferred ideal female images. Despite critical voices of some intellectuals, who are associated with modernist and secular groups, against state feminism and stereotyping of the Republican regime, the Kemalist female image preserved its place as a strong figure until recent times, and as a tool to "measure" one's level of modernization (Aktaş, 2001). A narrow interpretation of modernity is reflected in the drawn image of the ideal Republican women and it both restricted the Republican women themselves and ostracized the conservative/Islamist women from public space (Acar and Altunok 2012, 78). The Republican female image did not only limit its own subjects but it also excluded them in case they did not follow the exact same agenda of the state and did not correspond to the approved image (Zihnioğlu 2003:23, Sancar 2012). The shift from accepting Kemalist ideals entirely to critically evaluating the state feminism and intervention in order to achieve gender equality and to expand women rights, however, seemed to remain rather suspicious about women with headscarf and their public visibility, even organized against them (Çakır 2000:28, Göle 1991:116).

The fear of a weakening of secularism and of the "sharia supporters" was the main source of secular opposition against Islamist women (Bora 2002, 116-117). Although there were a few feminist analysts who interpreted the Islamist women's demand for individual rights and freedom positively, asserting that it would expand the public space, Islamist women's struggle for individual rights and freedom, vested in the headscarf issue, received no significant support from women's rights groups. Perceiving headscarf as a religious duty is problematized by claiming that it restricts the

questioning of headscarf as a sign of patriarchal control over women's body and sexuality and to this respect, Islamist women groups' compatibility with basic human rights like individuality is questioned (Acar and Altunok 2012, 96). Islamist men's use of the cornered position of the Islamist women and the headscarf issue instead of enabling alternative ways for them is also criticized (Göle, 1991). Same discourse is also used to neutralize the voices and struggle of the Islamist women by asserting that the headscarf issue remained as a topic among male debaters without questioning the background, that was, the state dominance that hindered the education of women with headscarf resulting in their late and weak appearance in public space (Üşür, 1992). The "oppressed-by-men-and-religion" position of Islamist women and their lack of self-determination are being criticized, again in an Orientalist attitude, while, at the same time, their demand to be able to receive education or to work in public space as an independent individual are met with strong objection and repulsion (Aktaş, 1991a).

Taking Islamists or simply people who are associated with a religious lifestyle as a uniform group whose aim, according to Kemalists, is to vandalize Ataturk's legacy and the secular Turkish Republic by being fed with the Saudi money and servicing to Arab interests was a common excuse for strong rejection and prejudice against Islamists (Lindisfarne, 2002). Göle and Şişman illustrate that the reluctance to accept women with headscarf who break the stereotypes by receiving a modern education, being successful and yet choosing to wear a garment considered to be very "un-modern" and backward which creates a trauma/contradiction for the Kemalist or modernist imagination (Göle 1991, Şişman 2005). Islamist women's resisting position against both the secular imagination and standardization, and Islamist men's identification of headscarf or religious duties with submission to their own authority is pointed out in different studies as well (Göle 2012, Tuksal 2000). Majority of the Islamist female authors and intellectuals', not to mention the insufficiency of their numbers, studies on women laid their ground mainly on these two approaches which, as a result, embraced a defensive or clarifying position.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Post-Structuralism

The main perspective to analyze this thesis's subject will be grounded on the precepts of the *poststructuralist paradigm*. Being one of the most debated paradigms after its appearance in the 1960s, poststructuralist paradigm was used, and is still being used, in different disciplines from linguistics to politics. It first manifested in the 1960s as a critical response to structuralism's certainty in its ability to reveal the defining structures, by those who were known or rather labeled as former-structuralists. Primary studies were based on linguistics and philosophy by which contributors attempted to uncover the veiled meanings behind a text and language, and settled philosophical notions through employing the methods of "deconstruction" and "genealogy". The method of this inquiry that traces the process of how things are naturalized in time and through what means and relations between ostensibly unrelated structures by which the present forms of thoughts and experiences are produced, reproduced and generalized is known as discourse analysis. Although it is widely used in different studies, discourse analysis does not have a uniform method and application as even the two main post-structuralist philosophers' – Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault – conceptualizations of discourse analysis is asserted to be different than one another (Göksel 2016, 473).

2.1.1. Key Concepts and Arguments of Post-Structuralism

Language stands as the fundamental subject of Post-Structuralism. For poststructuralists, there is not any social reality independent from language and the language constructs this social reality itself (Shapiro, 1988: 11, Hansen, 2012: 101 cited in Aydın-Düzgit, 2015: 155). Language, and anything that is said, is not simply a matter of randomly lined up words and idioms but the sign of a human's experience, an experience constructed through power relations and dominant discourse of one's society. Language, and naturally discourse, is used not only "gullibly" to point out what is present but "to produce meaning but also particular kinds of objects and subjects upon whom and through which particular relations of power are realized" (Luke, 1999 cited in Graham 2005: 4). Although being interpreted differently to a certain extent by

different philosophers and poststructuralists, Foucault's conceptualization of the term "discourse", which he refers to as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972:49), will be taken as central in order to understand the power-discourse relations and their broad effects in our society. Luke (1996: 8-9) explains, in Foucault's words, how these relations operate:

> These knowledge-power relations are achieved, according to Foucault, by the construction of "truths" about the social and natural world, truths that become the taken-for-granted definitions and categories by which governments rule and monitor their populations and by which members of communities define themselves and others.

The language, as the medium, produces a reality by which people speak, and eventually spread and enable the realization of that reality. This process, for poststructuralists, is never independent or disengaged from the functioning of power relations in a society. Elite groups, intellectuals, academicians and so forth sustain and reproduce discourses that will contribute to their respective purposes. Foucault (1972: 216) states:

> In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.

Foucault and other poststructuralists work to rather investigate these intricate relations in order to reveal the possible and mutual relations between what is accepted as natural and, long and complex history of power-knowledge relations than to develop a theory that would assume itself outside of the system and medicate it through a set of "objective" methods and discourses. For Post-Structuralism, nothing– including poststructuralist studies themselves – can elude itself from the prevailing system, let alone dictating an exterior objectivity to mend it. Hence, objectivity claims of a discourse stimulate poststructuralist argument on power's engagement in establishment of a discourse as superior to other discourses. One's ability to realize the intricacy of these prevailing systems and relations, including the fact that one's herself/himself is by no means outside of their constructive power, would enable her/him to deconstruct the once-accepted-natural state of things.

The Poststructuralist paradigm made its appearance in International Relations discipline in the 1980s, after the positivist epistemology and structuralist nature, detached from historical context, of the dominant discourses of International Relations were questioned in the late 1970s (Aydın- Düzgit 2015, Göksel 2016). The methods of genealogy and deconstruction, inspired by the works of Foucault and Derrida, were employed in order to examine the notions intrinsic to International Relations discipline, and to political science, and the settled narratives of which these notions are constructed by and through the dominant theories of the discipline. Understanding how notions such as state, power, sovereignty, war and conflict are defined, redefined and used enables one to understand the construction of the internal and the external, the self and the other and similar seemingly oppositional conceptions.

For Derrida, oppositional conceptions are never simply neutral but rather hierarchical, one of the two terms in the opposition is privileged over the other and it "supposedly connotes a presence, propriety, fullness, purity, or identity which the other lacks" (Devetak, 2005: 168). These terms are not pure or complete in themselves but rather unstable and dependent. Derrida argues in *Of Grammatology* (1976) that, "the first term is classically conceived as original, authentic, and superior, while the second is thought of as secondary, derivative, or even 'parasitic'". These oppositions or "violent hierarchies" and others of their form, he argues, must be deconstructed (Kharbe 2009, 374). Poststructuralist reading of International Relations reveals the prevailing binary oppositions in the discipline by which the dominant narratives are constructed through the discourses of the power groups in order to make a distinction, and to settle a superior- subordinate sense, between these oppositions. Poststructuralist reading of International Relations and politics provided, for the first time, an elaborate study of the relation between knowledge and political power, and questioned, by pointing out the political dynamics behind different interpretations, the epistemological and political impositions caused by them (Aydın-Düzgit, 2015).

2.1.2. Criticisms of Post-Structuralism

It is most likely that the questioning attitude of Post-Structuralism, which questions the very notions accepted by heart as fundamental and certain by mainstream Western philosophy, attracts great criticism as much as it does receive admiration. Theorists of mainstream narratives criticized post-structuralismfor being too abstract or anti-scientific, having no solid method that would lead to a conclusion, and not bringing a clear and analytical framework that is able to analyze the "real world". Keohane (1988: 392) argues in his article, where he studied and classified the approaches in International Relations as "rationalist" and "reflective" which Post-Structuralism falls under the reflective school, that "the greatest weakness (lay) not in deficiencies in their critical arguments but in the lack of a clear reflective research program". He points out that both the Waltzian neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism have such research programs and the reflective school, meaning Post-Structuralism as well, requires one yet it is such conventional approaches that confine one into the limits of particular methods for one to be recognized and accepted as "scientific" that Post-Structuralism rejects and so, does not build one.

It is important to understand the ground Post-Structuralism places itself by not having even a common definition or poststructuralists' refusal of labeling themselves as such because any kind of definition contains the problem of going beyond itself or reducing/limiting the possibilities of what it defines. Mearsheimer criticized critical theorists in couple of aspects. He states that "critical theorists have offered little empirical support for their theory" (1994, 44) and criticizes such critical theorists for contradicting their own theory in their questioning of realism and the explanation of how change occurs in international relations discourse. Some arguments brought by different critical scholars[5] on realism, according to him, point out the contradictions of these scholars and their thought since their questions refer to and base themselves on "objective factors" unlike their general belief in the socially constructed world. He equates the poststructuralist argument on the representations of the reality and the total

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[5] See; John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions" *International Security* 19/3 (1994): 42.

denial of the "real", a trap that some other authors also fall into[6], which; in return, I would like to use Richard Rorty's words to explain the poststructuralist argument on this matter. In his works, Rorty outlines the distinction between this aforementioned perception and the critical discourse by stating that "to deny the power to 'describe' reality is not to deny reality" (1979, 375) and "the world is out there, but descriptions of the world are not" (1989, 5). He points out that the existence of a real world out there does not mean or necessarily ensure that what we define, understand, and reflect as the "world" is also an objective reality. Poststructuralist approaches do not deny the existence of a "reality" (Aydın- Düzgit, 2015), but rather question the reliability of our perception of that reality and the distortion it brings through being exposed to and accepting of the constructed variations of those considered to be "real". Critical philosophers are to be interpreted not as "questioning belief in the real but confidence in its representation" (Gough and Price 2004, 2).

Although Post-Structuralism is criticized for its untraditional approaches and "instability", it is this realization of one's "interwovenness" to the systems and discourses that makes Post-Structuralism a systematic tool to analyze, without assuming an exteriority, the complex relations and positivist aspirations. Poststructuralist critique's purpose is rather to engage in a kind of critical thinking that problematizes and destabilizes a framework that would otherwise be taken for granted, thereby making room for the possibility of new perspectives than to replace what it criticizes. Davies (2006: 90) states that, the poststructuralist subject is "aware of its own messiness, its own vulnerability to the processes through which it is subjugated and governed, aware that reason 'is produced within discourses in which certain statements are privileged and others are silenced or excluded' and that 'reason is always situated, local and specific, formed by values and passions and desires'" (St. Pierre, 2000: 487).

The premises of the liberal and realist schools have a prescriptive attitude in their interpretation of international politics, human nature, sovereignty, power, war and other related notions. Their perception of state and home affairs, notwithstanding their different theoretical frameworks, embraces a certainty which believes that the

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[6] See; Charlene Spretnak, *The Resurgence of the Real: Body, Nature and Place in a Hypermodern World* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 64-65.

behaviorsof political actors and the result of some specific actions can be predicted based on these premises. The concept of identity is not considered, by the traditional theories of international relations, to be a primary subject to be analyzed and the basis of actors' behaviors was, from the perspective of a normative stance, excluded (Övünç Ongar, 2010). Post-Structuralism's emphasis on the identities, their complexity and interdependency with power struggles, and their possible fictionality creates, for its opponents, an instability which can render two supposedly opposing ideals or entities into similar status by uncovering their, actually, not-so-different motives. James Der Derian's (2002: 15) argument on the similarity, despite their differences, of America's president George Bush and the terrorist leader Osama bin Laden in their moral and epistemological certitude would make an example of such poststructuralist reading (Devetak, 2005: 161). This untraditional approach of Post-Structuralism provokes allegations about its moral ground (May, 1995) which is asserted to be a "dangerous tendency towards moral equivocation" (Devetak, 2005: 161). This allegation, in fact, signals what Post-Structuralism works on to uncover which is the settled perceptions do not provide any room for different interpretations as different, in front of the "original", is perceived negatively, as it is showed in Derrida's deconstruction of binary oppositions, in such case.

Foucault's reading of power and truth, which I hope to benefit from in this study in terms of its untraditional treatment of the matter that would provide different perspectives both for me and the readers, received various criticisms. One of them comes from Jürgen Habermas who interpreted Foucault's reading of the matter as a reversion of the received relation between truth and power. Traditionally, in relation between the truth and power, truth is assigned the dominant position in the hierarchy, and power remains dependent on it. Habermas (1995: 274) says:

> Foucault abruptly reverses power's truth-dependency into the power-dependency of truth. Then foundational power no longer need be bound to the competencies of acting and judging subjects—power becomes subjectless… The basic assumption of the theory of power [that the meaning of validity claims consists in the power effects that they have] is self referential; if it is correct, it must destroy the foundations of the research inspired by it as well. But if the truth claims that Foucault himself raises for his genealogy of knowledge were in fact illusory and amounted to no more

than the effects that this theory is capable of releasing within the circle of its adherents, then the entire undertaking of a critical unmasking of the human sciences would lose its point.

Habermas' critique implies that since Foucault treated reason and knowledge as effects of power he cannot claim any validity for his argument either. Yet, Foucault does not propose "a simple reversal of truth and power; rather, he 'calls into question the very possibility of all such 'simple' realities, relationships, and reversals'" (Dalton, 2008: 7). He does not offer the rejection of truth but the recognition of that "truth" is not so pure and obviously simple, as others would make it to be, and is highly affiliated with power relations. Genealogy does not simply aim to conclude a study with an annihilation of its constituents or to render it invalid but to explore the beyond of its façade and of our own perspectives. Margaret Wetherell (1998: 394) gives a concise explanation of genealogy: "The task of genealogy, then, and analysis, is to render strange usual or habitual ways of making sense, to locate these sense-making methods historically and to interrogate their relation to power".

Another criticism that Post-Structuralism receives is that despite the fact that it originally emerged as an attempt to deconstruct the Western episteme (Foucault, 1989), it remained Western, continued to observe the world through a Western lens which ignores the non-Western/post-colonial models and theories and is oblivious of the world outside the West (Övünç Ongur, 2010). The main reason behind this, according to Tickner (2003), is that the very notions of imperialism and colonialism are being excluded by poststructuralist paradigm. Although these criticisms have a substantial ground, it is possible to read, and uncover, this attitude of Post-Structuralism through poststructuralist reading as well. Poststructuralist paradigm, although possessing "Westernness", would provide an intimate analysis in order to deconstruct the presumed opposition between the West and the East through its analyzing methods and frameworks. The discourse, in Foucault's opinion, does not only produce knowledge but it also has the ability to endanger its existence, to shake its ground as well. He (1998: 100-101) states the instability and versatility of discourse as follows:

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it.

Methods of deconstruction and genealogy can be utilized in reading the dominant assumptions about Western/Eastern identities that long held its place in academic circles and within societies. Ascribed 'neutrality' of the dominant discourses of which a certain type of knowledge, a model, and a system is legitimated through can be challenged. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) exemplifies the use of deconstruction in reverse reading of and challenging the Western discourses on the East in a post-colonialist fashion.

2.1.3. The Utilization of Poststructuralist Concepts in This Study

The long and politically contentious history of the Republic has witnessed to the use of discourse as a practical means to define, construct and legitimize the ideals of respective period's power groups. Establishing a discourse on women in a society where women are ascribed the role of, both in past and present, the provider of country's future, by raising ideal children, and loaded with society's moral expectations (Sancar, 2012), provides a convenient ground to disseminate specific ideals not only because of aforementioned reasons but also because it is easier to construct someone who does not have or has less access to power hence, to discourse. Teun Van Dijk (1993: 254) arguments on the connection between access, discourse and dominance draws attention to the importance and results of this access. Social power, he says, is "based on privileged access to socially valued resources, such as wealth, income, position, status, force, group membership, education or knowledge… An analysis of the various modes of discourse access reveals a rather surprising parallelism between social power and discourse access: the more discourse genres, contexts, participants, audience, scope and text characteristics they (may) actively control or influence, the more powerful social groups, institutions or elites are." So power does not only produce discourse, it also

controls its accessibility and by whom it can be accessed. This point is important, for this study, to understand the period up until the 1980s and the changing social balances afterwards. Until the 1980s, the prominent discourse on women was drawn in the beginning of the Republic. This women were to be educated, enlightened, modern (in a Western sense of modernization) yet loyal to her national values and customs, and aware of her responsibilities both as an agent of the Republican ideals and as a women who holds motherhood as a most virtuous duty, for sake of her country's future.[7] Construction of this new identity for Turkish women, an identity which preserved its dominance until the 1980s, provided almost a litmus paper in evaluation of country's female population (Aktaş, 1991a).The ruling elite's, whichconstituted ofthe Kemalist/secular wing of the country, consideration and projection of any kind of Islamic statement as a threat and danger of a possible Islamist revolution would exemplify how the power discourse relation, "where the two are mutually supportive and directly imply one another" (Devetak, 2005: 162), enabled the repression and control of a substantial part of the population.

Discourse on women to dictate particular forms of womanhood enabled the exclusion of women who did not meet the qualifications of this discourse. Presumed opposition between modern/educated women and conservative/Islamist/backward women, where the first was deemed to be hierarchically superior, remained prevalent for a long period. Starting in the 1980s, the rise of Islamist groups in political arena and increasing number of female students wearing headscarf sparked the debates on this opposition once again. Islamist groups' access to discourse, although it was much less than that of secular groups until the 2000s, provided an opportunity for them to present an ideal Muslim women image to stand against the "modern" women. While it should be noted the aggressive secularism that emphasized, and forcefully implement, the impossible coexistence of "modern" and anything Islamic in general (headscarf in

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[7] "Turkish woman must be the world's most enlightened, most virtuous and most dignified woman. The duty of Turkish woman is to raise generations who, by their mentality and power and determination, is capable of protecting and defending the 'Turk'. A woman, fountain of the nation and the basis of social life, can fulfill her duties only if she is virtuous. Women, surely, must be eminent" (Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1959: 231). Kemal Ataturk's, the founder and the first president of the Republic, remarks on woman would exemplify the qualities of the ideal Republican woman.

particular) provoked an enmity in Islamist people towards this specific understanding of "modern", the Islamist literature's ascription of negative qualities to what they describe as modern women reveals that they also fall into the trap of creating a dichotomy between, and exclusion of different women. Both Islamist and secular discourses do not remain limited to exclude each other but they also create forms of exclusion/discrimination for their own subjects. In-group favoritism[8] seems to be prevalent in Turkish society which overshadows the attempts of reflecting the unjust in-group discourses and practices by charging the different voices in the group with strengthening the hand of the opposition or creates a sense of disloyalty to group ideals in case of one's critique of his/her own group.

The rise of the JDP in the early 2000s, which is still in power, strengthened the popular Islamist discourse on women. The emphasis on women's domestic roles and duties became more prominent. Yet this image, similarly to the Kemalist/Republican female image, was voiced overwhelmingly by male authorities in a quite self-confident fashion. General perception of the women in Islamist discourse will be further outlined in the study. More importantly, Islamist men's strong dominance over the discourse which did not, and still does not, allow almost any room for female voices, particularly the opposing or challenging ones, and how they render these voices into invalid or bizarre arguments will be examined on the basis of power knowledge relations.

Why is it important for this study, and for myself, to study and question the history of Turkish Republic with a focus on popular and seemingly conflicting female images created and maintained in this society, and through the methods of Post-Structuralism? In what ways, and to what extent, do these images define and restrict our perception of others? Instead of finding a definite answer and solution to social conflicts that perpetuate through exclusion as well, the purpose is to question the underlying

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[8] In-group favoritism refers to "the tendency to respond more positively to people from our in-groups than we do to people from out-groups" (Tajfel 1971, 159). The construction process of social identities creates stereotypes about the other groups by which the intergroup conflicts are generated (Andrew Michener, Social Pyshcology (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jonanovich, 1990), 430, cited in Hanife Andaç Demirtaş, cited in Hanife Andaç Demirtaş, "Sosyal Kimlik Kuramı, Temel Kavram ve Varsayımlar" *İletişim Araştırmaları* 1:1 (2003), 136. It is possible to examine this behavior in the light of poststructuralist study which provides an insight to understand how the differences can be constructed and codified as means of hierarchy, exclusion and naturalized as normal behaviors and how these stereotypes benefit different groups' interests.

reasons of the construction of these images and how our fixed and limited perspectives sustain these exclusionist behaviors and cause further disagreement in society. Post-Structuralism will be employed, by relying on its aforementioned methods and framework, in an attempt to study the popular female images in Turkish society. How particular discourses are situated as dominant that render the contrasting opinions and perspectives less important and enable the denial of rights of different groups of people or legitimization of unfair implications will be examined.

Particular terms used and emphasised by different groups enable their ideas to be constructed as discourses instead of these ideas remaning as speeches on different matters. Kemalism's emphasis on modernity, modernization and civilization, taking Western model as particular, and their sub-concepts, e.g. scientificness and progress, and the consistent use of these terms throughout the time enabled the construction of Kemalist discourse. Evaluation of the country and the people mainly revolved around these concepts, on how much the country and the people managed to meet the necessities of modernity. Islamists also used modernity to establish a discourse, however, their conceptualization of modernity was mainly negative unlike Kemalists, at least until the last decade. Islamists used, and still use, terms such as Western imperialism, modernity, capitalism and morality. Use of these terms and concepts, establishing counter-views and defenses, and trying to establish a popular approach enabled Islamists to establish their discourse. Consistency and continuity of certain terms and concepts in their speeches, writings, books and campaigns make these together a whole that establish them as discourse instead of them being discrete and independent units.

The main focus will be on the 1980s and onwards due to the country's changing political environment when Islamist and secular ideals clashed, with the rising visibility of Islamist-labeled figures in public domains, and the tension has reached its peak in following decades. The struggle between these two groups has determined, and still does affect, the country's political and social agenda (Toprak, 2005). The lack of rethinking the taken-for-grantedness of various perceptions, Kemalists' perception of the Islamist females, Islamists' perception of the "modern" females and Islamist females and so forth, ensures and sustains their stability and the mutual exclusion.

These images' relation to power groups, the ways they are utilized for political or personal gains should be reconsidered in order to discover the pressure and exclusion inhabited in these images.

Reading the present moment and exploring its historical background through a poststructuralist lens would help us, in this study, to better understand the process of producing and legitimating an ideal and acceptable female image in Turkish society. It requires one's to force herself/himself, in this case myself as a female and headscarf wearing member of this society, to look inside and out and beyond, by being aware of that in this process my experience and identity are not dissociated from the things examined in this study nor they apply an exteriority over, the things that one takes for granted or as the natural state of social life.

The scope of this study naturally will remain limited, not only because it covers the negative aspects of these female images, but also because a text is never fully detached from its author's perspective and experiences on the matter nor is it possible for it to bring a definite and undoubted interpretation. As mentioned before, this study is an attempt to question and uncover of a social problem in Turkish society which creates a hindrance for the establishment of a common ground for different social groups. Poststructuralist reading of power-knowledge relations will be employed in order to understand, and hopefully deconstruct, the production and dissemination of certain type of knowledge in the making and utilization of ideal female images in Turkish society. Deconstruction, as a method to uncover, understand and rethink the supposedly natural binary oppositions, and genealogy, as a method to track the history of power knowledge relations, will be employed in this study. Bleiker (2000: 25) explains that genealogy "focuses on the process by which we have constructed origins and given meaning to particular representationsof the past, representations that continuously guide our daily lives and set clear limits to political and social options". Hence, the ability to influence, shape and control people's opinions and behaviors is not exclusively limited to major political, social, historical or cultural events. Small and seemingly trivial oft-repeated practices, words and expressions that are ingrained in everyday life might as well be the extensions of "strategic ways to change the mind of others in one's own interests" (Van Dijk, 1993: 254).

CHAPTER 3: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF WOMEN'S STATUS FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE TO MODERN DAY TURKEY

3.1. Women's Status in the Late Ottoman Period

The Ottoman society was composed of segregation of sexes. The roles and duties of both sexes were primarily located in accordance with traditional and religious values. The life of women in the Ottoman era was mainly nestled around the domestic realm where she was expected to be a good housewife and mother. Female education, although not being widely popular, only included primary education of the Sıbyan Mektebi which provided religious education alongside basic mathematics and later on, included history and geography in its curriculum. The graduation age was around 6 and after that, there was no further formal education available for girls since basic religious education and calculating skills were considered to be sufficient for them while it should be noted that not every girl in the Ottoman Empire received even this much of education. After this short-term education, girls would remain in the borders of domestic life, sometimes including helping the family business or working in the fields depending on the family's socio-economic status, until marrying off and going to another household. For the women of the upper class families, aristocrats and the court, a better education was available noting that it was either homeschooling by the tutors instead of formal institutions, or in court women's case, by *Duhteran-ı Hümayun*, a school for girls that provided training in diverse subjects in the Ottoman Palace. Although both homeschool education and *Duhteran-ı Hümayun* provided a relatively much better education than the female subjects had ever received, it did not have a systematized functioning and advanced facilities as the formal male-only schools and *Enderun-u Hümayun*, where the *devshirme*[9] children would be raised to become statesmen, did.

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[9] Non-Muslim children taken from the lands conquered by Ottoman Empire, raised and educated to be Ottoman statesmen.

Women were considered to be under the protection of men, either their father or husband or, in case of the absence of both, the closest male relative. Although women did have a rather restricted life in Ottoman era, this is not to say they did not enjoy any rights or were solely properties of their male relatives, or locked up into the "harem" as the Orientalist accounts has imagined and portrayed them. Islamic law, shariah, was the common law for the Muslim population which provided women with rights of inheritance, filing suit against abusive husbands or other people, divorce, right to state her preference on the person whom she would be betrothed, although it was not uncommon that marriage decisions were made by families. The cases brought to the Kadı by women were registered to the juridical records that are preserved in archives in today's Turkey (Zilfi 1997, Zarinebaf-Shahr 1997, Jennings 1999, Okuducu 2014). Women were able to go to court and publicly set forth any complaint they had, with confidence that the court would listen to her complaints fully (Jennings, 1999). Although the rights women enjoyed were relatively less than men, which generally attracts criticism to point out the patriarchal structure of the society, it is important to evaluate a society and events took place within the frame of respective period's cultural, social and historical context. Albeit being insufficient, Ottoman women enjoyed greater rights than their Jewish or English contemporaries in matters of marriage, divorce, ownership or inheritance (Göçek and Baer 1997, Jennings 1999).

Working, although not common and especially not so well accepted for elite women, did take place in Ottoman society as either widows would run their late husbands' business or, a more prevalent example, women of the smaller towns and villages would work in the fields, gardens or manufacturing, particularly in textile sectors, although under miserable conditions, or sold the products of their skills in special women's markets (Köksal and Falierou 2013, Faroqhi 1997, Çakır 1994). Gender segregation prevailed in the big cities were not so strictly followed in small places since the female work force was also needed for families to sustain themselves (Ianeva, 2016).

Visibility of women in social life depended, although limited in any case, on different criterias. The difference in the implementation of social practices was shortly mentioned in the former paragraph. There was a distinction between elite/city-dweller

women and a female villager or lower socio-economic class women of the city in terms of application of the social practices. It was not only gender that conducted one's visibility in society but there were some other factors as well, be it for a man or a woman. Nina Ergin (2014, 103) noted that "wealth, age and position within the life-cycle constitued critical boundaries circumscribing access to public space, more than so gender". Ambros (2016, 5-6) mentions this difference by focusing on how the impact of one's visibility also depended on her status:

> Women from lower socio-economic strata or at the bottom of the social heap were more visible, working, shopping, selling produce or moving from door to door as peddlers and social go-betweens bringing gossip or arranging marriages, than women from the higher echelons of society who were less to be seen in the public sphere… At the same time, higher visibility was not necessarily related to frequency of visibility, for one could argue that poor women in crowds formed an 'invisible' mass, but rich women, although out much less often and not in the same numbers, were more visible for they represented power and wealth and pomp, something much more attractive than poverty

Zarinebaf- Shahr also noted the different practices of segregation between the rural and the urban settings. She stated "the gender division of space did not spread deeply into rural and tribal communities primarily due to the necessity of women's participation in agriculture and animal husbandry" (1998, 308).

Being an empire with such large territories, codes of female access to public space or public visibility varied from one region to another "where what set the acceptability of female conduct was the norms imposed by the local society rather than any state directed social standard" (Ambros et al. 2016, 3). It is expectable, if one does research, to see different set of social practices in two ends of the Empire where the socio/religious/ethnic settings would be widely divergent. Evliya Çelebi, for instance, in his accounts of Egypt, commented on the women who rode donkeys, an act inconceivable in Istanbul (Boyar and Fleet 2016:4). Similar examples were given on different accounts in both Evliya Çelebi and other documents. Different places, sometimes even places of the same region, adopted different practices such as the Balkan countries' perception of female workers that, in Bulgaria and Macedonia

workforce participation of young unmarried women, particularly in harvesting, was a common practice unlike Serbia, Bosnia and Montenegro where such behaviour would be unthinkable (Ianeva, 2016).[10] There were women, especially widows and women whose husbands were absent for a long time, who would run the family businesses and sustain their families (Ianeva, 2016). Female presence as Ambros (2016, 13) put it, in one way or another, was a "constant in Ottoman public space and (women) were not as secluded or shut away as has often been contended. Further, this public existence was not limited to the nineteeth century but was a factor in much earlier periods of Ottoman history". Women's presence in the public, through the changing of perception on women in the following centuries, had an impact on Ottoman society that brought fruitful results in women rights, although in the long run. Zarinebaf-Shahr (2001, 142) notes in the article that "women appeared as litigants and defendants in more than forty per-cent of all law-suits and property transactions in the Islamic court of Istanbul, Cairo, Aleppo, Damascus, Kayseri and Cyprus on the period from 1700 to 1850". In the seventeenth century, they took very active roles in Bursa courts, female silk workers or the prostitues in Thessaloniki claimed their rights or protested the working conditions in period between late nineteenth to twentieth century (Ambros et al. 2016:16, Köksal and Falierou 2013). There are also records on,Faroqhi (1997, 9) mentions, "exceptional women timar[11] holder, and especially female administrators of pious foundations in sizable numbers".[12]

Poor or wealthy, being female in Ottoman society had brought, on one hand, certain limitations on one's life and, on the other, society's expectations of a female. Although they assumed the aforementioned rights and lived more freely than the generally held view of docile creatures lacked of agency that were locked in big palaces and harems, they were not on equal-footing with Ottoman men, when compared in all aspects of life. Whether a wealthy city-dweller female or a field-harvesting women in

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[10] For a detailed account see, Svetla Ianeva, "Female Actors, Producers and Money Makers in Ottoman Public Space: The Case of Late Ottoman Balkans," in *Ottoman Women in Public Space,* ed. Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2016), 48-90, Evliya Çelebi, "Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi vol. IV," ed. Yücel Dağlı and Seyit Ali Kahraman (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001).

[11] Land granted by the Ottoman sultans between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, with a tax revenue annual value of less than 20 000 akçes.

[12] Hedda Reindl-Kiel, "A Woman Timar-Holder in Ankara Province during the Secong Half of the 16th Century," *Jesho* 40/2 (1997), 207-238.

the rural motherhood was the foremost duty socially expected of a woman to perform followed by her duties as a good wife to her husband and a housemaker that regulates the internal affairs and order (Enis, 2013). Possessing rights and enjoying freedom much less than men, the life envisaged for women was to live as "obedient, chaste, fertile and a silent community" (Okuducu, 2014: 57). Lack of a well-structured law system to spread to every corner of the Empire had created gaps that resulted in inadequate protection of women which entailed injustice practices. As mentioned earlier, women possessed the right to divorce, yet this only applied to women whose marriage was processed into the sicil (registry) or marriages registered in presence of a Kadı or an authorized-by-Kadı official which stripped women with nonconforming marriages of the benefits of such laws(Okuducu 2014,57-66).[13]

3.1.1. Early Modernization Attempts in Ottoman Empire

The period of regression saw the challenges of lagging behind the technological and social reforms that took place in Europe and eventually influenced the Ottoman Empire as it did other parts of the world. Sultan Selim III is known to be the first Ottoman ruler to start a compherensive modernization program for the Empire which is known as the *Nizam-ı Cedid* (New Order). *Nizam-ı Cedid* or New Order is "generally applied to the entire spectrum of administrative, financial, and military reforms introduced into the Ottoman Empire in the almost two decades of rule of Selim III… Yet in fact, it was applied by the Sultan and his contemporaries only to one part of his reforms, the new army created entirely outside of and independent from the older corps…" (Shaw 1965, 168). Although the attempt is considered to be a failure, since the new army could not actively perform due to the strong opposition of the old corps, the Janissaries, the attempt itself proved an example and a start for the transformation of the Ottoman Empire. Main reason for this, despite the failure of Selim's modernization, is that before Selim what was concieved of reform was more or less to restore the purity of old institutions and practices that had brought Ottomans to the top as a world power. Selim

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[13] Esra Yakut, "Şeyhülislam Çatalcalı Ali Efendi'nin 'Fetava-yi Ali Efendi' Adlı Fetva Mecmuasına Göre Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile Kurumunun Oluşması ve Dağılması," 1996, Accessed 20.05.2018, http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/19/912/11378.pdf

III's efforts revealed to the people and the officials that the development took place in Europe got far ahead of classical and old technics Ottomans use (Shaw, 1965). His successor Mahmud II, learned from Selim's mistake of wishing for a rapid change, continued the modernization process carefully. He abolished the Janissaries, the biggest opposition to the reforms, which enabled him to revive Selim's programme and go beyond it (Levy, 1968). After a while *Tanzimat* era, with the declaration of Imperial Edict of *Gülhane* in 1839, had begun which was characterised by various attempts to modernize the Empire and secure its integrity against the threats coming from both internal movements and external powers. Although *Tanzimat Fermanı* did not directly address the female subjects, it is considered a milestone for the changing social perspective that led to the extension of women rights in Ottoman Empire. In 1869, with *Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi*, primary education was made compulsory for everyone, including girls, and rüştiye (secondary schools) was made available for girls as well (Okuducu 2014, 133). Reforms included women, however, remained rather limited until the Second Constitutional Period.

A demand from society, to restore the Empire's fading power and reduce the authority of the absolute monarchy, and to eliminate a possible disintegration through following a set of reforms and renovating the old codes and practices to catch up with the rising powers of Europe, was about to arise. Empire's efforts by declaring Tanzimat did not seem to be adequate enough to satisfy the internal demands and external pressure. A group of students, civil servants and army officers who were later to be known as Young Turks decided to take actions against the policies of Ottoman government (Cleveland and Bunton 2009, Mardin 2000). First started as Young Ottomans, established by intellectuals dissatified with the regime and Tanzimat reforms, they were centered around their shared dislike for the form government took although they had varying views on other matters.[14] They sought to replace the absolute monarchy with constitutional monarchy in order to further the modernization of the Empire (Lapidus, 2002). The dissatisfaction spread not only the political matters but to

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[14]For a brief account on late Ottoman movements of thought see; Yavuz Çilliler, "Modern Milliyetçilik Kuramları Açısından 19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Fikir Akımları," *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi* 2015 (10:2) http://dergipark.gov.tr/download/article-file/17953 accessed 18.05.2018 DOİ: 10.17550/aid.76834

the zones of social and cultural practices where the women problem was manifested. Ottoman intellectuals started to address the problems caused by lack of female education, the inaccessibility of educational means for female subjects and their absence in the public space.[15] According to the period's intellectuals and journalists, women's development would be one of the key matters in transforming the society, naturally the Empire, and would provide the progress the Ottoman society desperately needed. They supported extensive education and public participation of women, however, one must not mistake that the traditional and religious values were completely forsaken. Young Ottomans, in early modernization period, had become aware of the problems of and were against copying everything from the West in order to modernize the society. They called for an urgent change, yet, in the 1860s, leading intellectuals and journalists including Ziya Paşa and Namık Kemal, complained that Westernization and open-door trade policies were destroying the handicrafts and cultural values (Mardin, 2000). Their wish to modernize, and relatively Westernize, the country had turned into a question between compatibility of this wish with keeping the cultural values of Ottoman society. İnalcık (1995, 141), after an illustrative summary of the early modernization period, draws a brief explanation to the period's unsettled perception on modernization:

> In the Turkish modernization movement finally the principal difficulties stemmed from the religious basis of the traditional society and state. In general, the Tanzimat reformers, although wanting to Westernize the administration and to borrow modern techniques, believed it to be desirable to preserve such basic traditional institutions as the shari'a, the religious courts, and the religious schools… Later, radicals who wanted wholesale Westernization and a national sovereignty like that of European states were to blame the failure of the Tanzimat upon this dualism.

In another part (1995, 148) he mentions this dualism that was not intrinsic only to judicial system which, in efforts of modernization, copied the French system while keeping the supremacy of sharia law intact:

> The story of Ottoman judicial system is repeated in every facet of Turkish life, not only in such institutionally regulated areas as education, but also in

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[15] What is meant by visibility in public space here is not the kind mentioned in the previous part, it is that women were never as well-equipped as men were to further their education, to create a strong public opinion, to hold official titles and duties, in other words, a visibility that had an influence, although it changed afterwards to a certain extend starting from late Ottoman period.

social life, ethics, manners and art. The common characteristics of all these changes were a dualism and a conflict between secular western institutions imposed or supported from above by bureaucrats, and traditional Islamic institutions sustained by the religious groups and supported largely by masses clinging to the traditional value system of the Turkish society.

The First Constitutional Era witnessed greater educational opportunities for women. With the declaration of Kanun-i Esasi (Basic Law), education equality was legally recognised. Sultan Abdulhamid II, who was enthroned upon his agreement with constitutionalist Young Ottomans, stayed in power until his deposition by Young Turks in 1909 and, unlike what Young Ottomans expected, he consolidated his power and displayed a strong authority which no other successor could manage to do afterwards. In 1909, Young Turks seized the power, restored the constitutional monarchy and period saw the domination of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in politics.

3.1.2. Women's Mobilization and Media's Utilization in Modernization and Women Movements in the Late Ottoman Period

During these periods, women's voices got louder and louder, claiming their rights and, along with groups of their male counterparts, working to emphasise the importance of educating women to be able to modernize the country and carry it into the future. A common mistake strikes one's eyes in many accounts on this part of the late Ottoman history where the opinion about the lack of a visible female mobility in articulating the needs of women is accepted without active consideration by many scholars, both Turkish and foreign, and by many people (Çakır1994, 313). It is particularly evident in writings after the establishment of the Republic until the 1980s, a period when the idea of the emancipation of women by the Republic, in a word by Ataturk, without any demand expressed by women of the period was quite strong. Mentioned earlier in the text, emancipator image of the Republic was engraved to the period's spirit that entailed a must-felt gratitude towards it, internalised by people for decades. Emel Doğramacı (1982), for instance, repeats this idea by stating that women rights in Turkey were granted without being demanded, further, without even being imagined to demand such thing. Some foreign scholars, as well, express similar opinions on late Ottoman women,

however, with different reasons. Jenny White (2003) mentions how the women rights brought by the Republican regime or any other reform of the era, did not originate as a result of public demand but rather imposed from above. Although it is true that the demand for women rights was not an en masse movement resonated throughout the whole empire but the effort of some groups of women in big cities, mainly in İstanbul, did manage to create a sense of collective agency that displayed a systematic effort to obtain equal rights for women. One of the reasons of the general misconception about the Ottoman women in foreign literature, particularly that of the late Ottoman period, might be the result of a comparative evaluation of the history of achieving women rights in different countries. Çakır (1994, 318) lays out this problem by pointing out that the problem stems from the meaning attributed to women movement which takes the struggle of suffragettes in England as its main example. She asserts the importance of evaluating each country based on its own social, cultural and historical process and based on the then values and social atmosphere.

Despite the above general assumption, the signs and evidence of a gradually growing women's movement, confident in what they wanted for themselves, can be traced in these periods. In the late Ottoman era, women managed to create a voice of their own to reflect their discomforts and point out the injustices they experienced as the female subjects of the Ottoman society. Some women engaged in debates on women rights and social injustices, as much as their circumstances have permitted, long before the Second Constitutional Period had begun. Just in the year before the *Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi* a newspaper named *Terakki*[16] (1868) had begun to be published. In this newspaper, women's rights in the West were being told as an example and to set new goals for Ottoman women. Female readers of the newspaper sent dozens of letters, talking about their demands for equal education or the injustices they experienced or observed in society or their requests to assume as much rights as men did.[17] As a result the newspaper started to publish a supplement in 1869, *Muhadderat*, solely for women and women problems (Okuducu, 2014).*Muhadderat* marks the first female-oriented journal in the history of the Empire which was followed by many other

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[16]Progress.

[17] To see the sample letters in their original language, see; Güldal Okuducu, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Türk Kadınının Kısa Tarihi* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2014), 111-114.

in following decades. After one year, *Nizamname* was in process which provided women with better education rights. Even at those times, there were women eagerly writing to the newspaper complaining about the hegemonic discourse on gender roles. A letter signed as Rabia, illustrated the results of preventing women from getting as much education along with her insights about the errors in hegemonic gender discourse which unable them to receive as much and produce as much their male counterparts did.[18]

New chapters opened in Ottoman social life with growing mobility in media and journalism. New journals and magazines, mainly female and family oriented, started to be published, illuminating women about education, home affairs, child caring and so on. These magazines encouraged women even more to write about their discomforts and use these platforms as a way to voice their opinions. The number of letters received from female audience had grown, generally signed with nicknames, complaining about the male dominance not only in daily social affairs but in media as well, that how it was so hard for women to find a platform to publish their writings and for that reason they even used male signatures to make them published (Çakır, 1994). *Şükufezar* was the first ever magazine owned by a women and whose staff was entirely made up of female authors (Yaraman 2001:39, Çakır 1994:26). Şükufezar aimed to express the female presence in public life, stated in its preface, to fence off the scoff they received from men as "*saçı uzun aklı kısa*" (long haired and small minded).

Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete (Newspaper for Ladies) began to be published in 1895 and continued to be so for 13 years, with an almost entirely female staff, is the longest published women magazine of the Ottoman period. The importance of progress of women, particularly by virtue of her role in raising the future generations, was emphasised and the connection between the conditions of women and the development of the society was highlighted along with informing its readers about their European counterparts. Although the motherhood of women was emphasised during the talks of female education, which continued to protect its centrality in Republican discourse as well, and women were informed about house and childcaring matters, it could not be said that *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* laboured to make women adopt "good mother" or

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[18] To see the letter in Turkish, see; Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2013), 24.

"good wife" roles. Although the authors and writers did not refuse their domestic identities, they questioned their position and make comparisons between men and themselves. Fatma Aliye, a well-known female intellectual figure of the period, expressed in her articles that one of the greatest obstacles in female progress was men and it was the same in civilized countries as well (Çakır, 1994). Mentioning the succesful Muslim women of the past in her writings, she reflected the lack of knowledge of women about their own history. Magazines and newspapers were not the only medium that women utilized as platforms to reflect themselves. Foundations were used, on one hand, to aid women and children in need or provide assistance during war times, on the other, to disseminate their ideals and attract more people, and in order to do so, media organs and conferencing were used (Çakır, 1994). There were various types of foundations from ones that displayed the solidarity between the Muslim and non-Muslim women to ones that strived to provide employment for women. Female education and intellectual and scientific advancement of women without forsaking the national traditions was the purpose *of Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti*, founded by Halide Edip, a leading figure of women movements, and her friends. These examples indicate the mobility that started to grow, and escalated in following decades, among Ottoman women and reflect the female demand and agency that gradually grew, that assumed to be nonexistent in pre-Republican period.

3.1.3. Women in the Early Republican Period and the Single-Party Rule

The early modernization period in the Ottoman Empire witnessed to debates about the position of women and the urgent need for her emancipation from old and restrictive traditions. "Modern reformist men" of the period pondered on the ways this emancipation could be enabled. In these debates, establishment of an ideal modern family had central importance as well, along with presentations of ideal modern women. These reformist men, according to Sancar (2012), actually considered themselves in an already modernized position and were dreaming of emancipating the women. Common view was that women could not be in the same position with men in political or technical issues as they were intellectually far behind. They, first, needed to be educated and then, should gradually be freed and integrated into public life. Unfortunately,

despite women rights were agreed upon by many in theory, putting this idea into practice was harder than expected and did not necessarily receive full and constant support even by its supporters. The question of how much emancipation was acceptable and applicable makes a central theme in this period's debates. Although many intellectuals and authors supported, and wrote actively for, the women rights and freedom there was fear of degeneration in case of giving too much freedom at once. The creation of an ideal female image for the new modern society started during these debates. Pro-modernization intellectuals wrote in newspapers and magazines about based on which ideals and values the "new women" should be drawn. Women weretaken as central to the development of healthy families for the future of the country. Sancar (2012) refers this period's understanding of modernization as "family-oriented modernization". A modernized and advanced country could only be achieved by creating modern, enlightened and hardworking families through the hands of these educated enlightened women, according to period's intellectuals. Yet, women's active engagement in debates and their effort to create their own agenda to pursue women rights occasionally faced various hardships, even mocking at times.

The period from the Second Constitution to the first years of Republic displayed a strong women's right movement, engaged in social mobilization and determinant in their efforts to express their own perspective. They, however, remained, or were kept, within the borders of a controlled freedom and participation. During the establishment of the Republic, Kemalist male authors and intellectuals claimed, against the strong demand from *Kadınlar Halk Fırkası* (Women's People Party)[19] that the women did not prove that they were qualified enough to obtain civil and political rights (Zihnioğlu 2003, 136-149). Acceptance of the right to education and employment for women, yet, canalizing them to "professions suitable to womenhood", disapproving the equal political participation and remaining aloof to female advocacy of feminism reveal that the modernist men of the late Ottoman-early Republic aimed for a gender regime that defined different roles and duties for women and men and, although encouraged female

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[19] One of the first political party initiatives in Turkey – founded under the leadership of Nezihe Muhiddin in 1923. After eight months, the government refused and gave no permission to establish the party based on the election law of 1909. The initiative turned into an association and took the name *Türk Kadınlar Birliği* (Turkish Women's Union).

participation they envisaged a place for women out of the space entitled to men and away from the "conflicting and stressing settings and institutions of the state and politics" (Sancar 2012, 192).

This perception remained intact in the Republican years as well. The leading female figures who struggled for women rights never found a place in the leading ranks of the newly established Republic. The efforts of the Turkish Women's Union to gain the right to vote and stand for election remained unanswered. Women received the right to vote and stand for election, interestingly enough, not during the 1921 and 1924 constitutions but much later, when the system turned into a one-party sytem and the *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası* (Republican People's Party) was the only option to participate in politics. Sancar (2012) takes this attitude of the Republic as a sign of, instead of being a "revolution for women's rights" as it is referred to by many, remaining as a limited civil code reform for women. Women of national struggle remained outside of, or rather not included to, the establishment of the nation-state and instead, new women were produced as public role models.[20] Efforts of the TWU's to further their cause received a negative feedback from founding male cadres and intellectuals of the Republic and were labeled, negatively, as feminism. Apparent in their motives that women should be active and modern yet the limits of this activeness and modernity and the spaces it can occupy should be decided by men. That is to say "the efforts for reform in women's status culminated in the 'state feminism' of the new Turkish Republic" (Durakbaşa 1998, 139). The TWU, due to not being considered national enough and, more importantly, based on the fact that women and men were equal now and women were granted their rights so there was no more need for women rights organizations, was eventually closed down.

Women first were given the right to stand for municipal elections and then, 4 years later, were given the right to stand for parliamentary elections in 1935. Yet, studies have shown that in addition to being in very few numbers in Turkish Grand National Assembly, most of the women were in position of silent observers and very

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[20] Sancar takes Afet İnan's role as Atatürk's adopted daughter to convey the image of ideal woman of the Republic as an example to Republic's production of conforming women. To see it in detail; Serpil Sancar, *Türk Modernleşmesinin Cinsiyeti* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınlar, 2012), 172- 184.

few among them were actively engaging members (Arat, 1989). Women made up only 4.5 per cent of the total representatives in their first term between 1935-1939 and, although this number was very small, upcoming decades proved to be even less succesful in terms of female participation in the parliament.

Table 1[21]

Women in the Parliament, 1935–1980
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

	Term	Number of Women in the Parliament	Women as % of total
1935–39	V	18	4.5
1939–43	VI	15	3.7
1943–46	VII	16	3.7
1946–50	VIII	9	1.9
1950–54	IX	3	0.6
1954–57	X	4	0.7
1957–60	XI	8	1.3
1961–65	1	3	0.7
1965–69	2	8	1.7
1969–73	3	5	1.1
1973–77	4	6	1.3
1977–80	5	4	0.9
TOTAL		99	

Women, despite the efforts of bringing a modern framework, were not ruptured from her previous domestic roles. The founders of the Republic, similarly to their Ottoman predecessors, considered motherhood as women's first duty. What was different now that women acquired a new role, along with her domestic role, that she would be an example of "modern women" who managed to preserve her national and partly traditional values while being intellectually satisfying and living in accordance with "modern values", a balance between too modern and too traditional, and also actively work for her country beside fellow men, most probably by raising qualified children though. Coming to the 1940s, women were started to be called back their home since,

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[21] Yeşim Arat, *The Patriarchal Paradox: Women Politicians in Turkey* (Associated University Press: London and Toronto, 1989), 52.

now, the war period was over and women were not needed in outside (Sancar, 2012). Public debates in this era go in between the claims of equal participation of women would result in neglect of their domestic responsibilities and equal participation is a must for gender equality. Political activity of women, as shown in the table above, gradually declined and the few active ones, among few numbers of women, had rarely spoken and it was mainly about the "feminine topics" like health, children and education instead of political issues (Arat, 1989 and 1987).

3.1.4. Women's Status in the 1950-1980 Period

The period until the 1950s saw the RPP's tight control and dominance over political and social arena. Efforts to keep the newly established Republic working and sustain the Kemalist nation-state spiritthrough political, social and cultural policies secured and furthered Kemalist cadres' dominance. Yet, the single party system could not have been maintained any longer due to the internal and external pressures aimed to loosen the strong statism and the RPP's monopoly over political and social activities. A new chapter has opened in Turkish politics with the transition to multi-party system. Feroz Ahmad (1993, 102) explains the reason behind this transition, saying "though external factors were significant in pushing Turkey towards political change, it was the erosion of the political alliance between the military-bureaucratic elite, the landlords, and the bourgeoisie which made the status-quo impossible to maintain". After decades of RPP dominance over the political arena, the Democrat Party made its debut as opposition. Turkey's way to establish a functioning democracy, however, faced various challenges such as repeating coup d'etats, military interventions, failing coalitions, fall of governments and so on. Two coup d'etats, one in 1960 and one in 1980, which allegedly aim to secure political and social order destabilized country's political and social settings, not to mention unsuccesful attempts of government forming. Women found little to no place in this part of Turkish history. No female politician gained as much popularity nor as much chaired as their male counterpartsdid until recent times. Tansu Çiller, the only exception in Turkish history along with very few numbers of female ministers, had become the first female prime minister of Turkey in the mid-1990s.

Until the 1980s, Turkey did not see any women's movement or any kind of visible female mobility. A small group of women, during the period between the founding of the Republic and recent decades, enjoyed the opportunities of education and employment yet, a major group remained neglected. Women's problems and needs received little to no attention in party politics and in media. Consequently, women remained as secondary citizens who only few of them had managed to actively occupy a place in public space and even when they did, the limits and forms of their presence had been decided by men and state. Tekeli, in her presentation for '*Türkiye ve Avrupa Birliği'nde Kadınlar: Ortak Bir Anlayışa Doğru*' symposium**,** stated that:

> Official discourse of the Republic that 'thanks to Ataturk, Turkish women got ahead of the Western women' eventually turned women into a silent majority… In this long period, a small group of privileged women who could benefit from the higher education and job opportunities made up Turkey's 'showcase'. But, majority of women who could not benefit from these privileges, as a result of prevailing patriarchal traditions, remained deprived of rights of property, education, income, social security and remained as unpaid family workers.[22]

Until the 1980s, male dominance, masculinity of social and state institutions, state feminism that rendered women into one acceptable form had not been questioned. Worldwide effects of the second-wave feminism arrived Turkey in early 1980s. Women started to mobilize around different foundations and political groups and masculinity, women rights and public visibility had come under question. 1980s is important not only for its visible female mobility but also for witnessing the rise of Islamic groups and women with Islamic attire, a group who had been received as an opposite of settled Kemalist ideals and modernity by the Republican/Kemalist and leftist groups. Social and political tensions peaked in these decades, state's long-standing agressive behaviours and pressure against Islamic groups received support from Kemalist groups and feminist organizations in fear of a so-called rise of reactionism. This tension between the modern and Islamic set the tone of political debates in Turkey. A slight move that can be considered Islamic created turmoil in political and social arena.

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[22] Şirin Tekeli, "**Türkiye ve Avrupa Birliği'nde Kadınlar: Ortak Bir Anlayışa Doğru**"
https://m.bianet.org/bianet/kadin/43145-on-maddede-turkiyede-kadin-hareketi accessed 20.06.2018

Women generally remained, both in political parties and in militant groups, in minor duties, selflesly giving themselves to their cause.

Women branches of political parties started to gain more recognition as women, particularly that of parties with Islamist tendencies, showed an impressive performance in electoral campaigns during 1990s. Yet, their efforts mostly remained as volunteer work instead of being repaid with high ranks and official duties. Recent decades saw growing female mobility and participation in both political arena and social activities. Female oriented foundations gained popularity and political parties started to accomodate more female representatives and party officials in order to enhance gender equality. Yet, with all these efforts, there is still a lot to be improved on matter. Increasing numbers of female in politics, increasing female education level and specialization did not seem to muddle through the masculine structure of the state and society. Changing social, cultural and political settings of Turkey in last decades will be throughly discussed in the next chapter where the reasons and motives of this work's concentration on post-1980s period will be presented along with the changing forms and discourses of state masculinity.

3.2. The Post-1980 Period in Turkey

Turkey started its life in the1980s with a coup. Political unstability, economic fluctuation, shortage of basic goods, growing terror caused by the conflict between radical groups that were a part of the previous period, distressed the law and order in Turkey to an extent that failing governments or coalitions could no more manage to cope with country's heightening problems. Following late 1960s, Turkish political life was becoming even more shaky, problems in economy with increasing inflation rates, rapid population growth that caused education facilities, already inadequate, to not being able to meet the needs of growing student body. Unemployment rate was increasing as economy failed to provide jobs for thousands of graduates every year. After the coup in 1971 martial law was declared and Turkish political and social life was seriously suppressed, "youth organizations were banned and all meetings and seminars of professional associations and unions were prohibited" (Ahmad 1995, 151).

Some newspapers were suspended and couple of journalists were detained, all strikes and lockouts declared illegal by martial law. Repression mounted even further after the abdication and murder of Israeli consul Ephraim Elrom. After the period of tight political control under the military regime Turkey went into elections in 1973 which resulted in the Republican People's Party's victory. Following these years political unstability had become a part of Turkish political life, where governments could not be formed and even when they did, they lasted only for a brief period without a strong and stable position. Coalitions proved to be unsuccesful as each party tried to push their own agenda instead of establishing a harmonious coalition that would deal with country's ongoing problems. The shadow of military forces kept the political life and politicians under scrutiny, hinting that a minor incident or a threat to the order would incite another takeover by the armed forces. Experiencing two coups in a short period Turkey's political unstability did not dissolve no matter how the military forces convinced itself that a coup followed by a short-term military government would quickly untangle the chaos country going through. Army's assuming of this role of the protector of the law, order and democracy, according to Ahmad (1995), dates back to the military coup of 1960 which he denotes as a turn in Turkish army's self-perception. The loss of the prestige of military ranks and officials during the early Republican period had, now, been reversed by this new role.

The problems of the former period continued to prevail, increasingly, clashes between radical groups surged that averagely 10 people were being killed on a daily basis. The chaotic atmosphere of the country resulted in another military takeover in 1980. On September 12, 1980 radios and televisions broadcasted the speech of General Kenan Evren, declaring that Turkish military forces took over the state administration in order to safeguard the unity and order of the country. Following the coup, the National Security Council set up by Evren took the control over all aspects of the country. It suspended the constitution, closed political parties, detained the leaders of political parties, dissolved the parliament, and suspended all associations and confederations of trade unions (Ahmad, 1995). Officials of these confederations and unions were ordered to be surrender. Military government grasped the system completely and was "determined to remove all obstacles which had hindered the healthy working of the

democratic order in a way that would preclude for ever the need for similar interventions in the future". In the name of restructuring the politics and institutions, thousands of people were detained, had their citizenship revoked. The use of torture was widespread, many died in prisons, and more than 500 people were sentenced to death of which 50 of them were executed.

3.2.1. Turkey's Political Climate after the 1980 Coup

By 1982, new constitution talks were to take place in public which led the NSC to iniatiate a new one before public criticism became a serious challenge. The new constitution issued by military government was very tightly formed that no political activity disliked by military regime could be established or survive. The new constitution received 91.4 per cent of the votes[23] in the constitutional referendum, a result which even the military leaders did not expect. Following the referendum, the first general elections after military takeover were held in late 1983 with only 3 parties, military regime was determined to wipe out the traces of previous period's political parties and politicians, which 2 of them were already under the control of junta. Elections resulted with the victory of Turgut Özal's Motherland Party, an unexpected result for the generals and Evren.

After the coup, new political parties act had banned women and youth branches of political parties. Yet, this era saw the occurence of a strong women's movement. After 1980, Turkey's political and social settings started to change in a way that did not happen before. Statist elites' patronising and belittling attitude towards people, a remnant of the early Republican years, started to soften as the period's presidents Özal and Demirel appeared as relatively more prosocial than the previous leaders were which, as a result, the distance between the state and the people started to decrease. Kemalism, as well, as a very strong and all dominating component of Turkish state's character was influenced by the period's changing spirit (Çaha 1996, 137). Transformed into a closed and strict doctrine in the pre-1980s period, Kemalism got relatively softer

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than it was before. Liberalism and civil society were concepts brought to the agenda and widely debated in Turkish society in the 1980s. This change, both social and ideological, created a chance, particularly for women, to question the notions of their respective groups and group ideologies along with Kemalism's approach to and employment of women. State feminism and Kemalist feminism, which meant more or less the same thing for most of the time, had come under scrutiny. Women from leftist groups started to question their groups' male dominance and how their femininity was marginalized both by their groups and the Republican ideals. There were leftist women who actively engaged in political activities and demonstrations in 1970s yet these women associated themselves with being a part of proletariat instead of acknowledging themselves as women. But women in 1980s had put women forward as a social category based on gender and developed their policies based on this frame (Çaha 1996, 148-173). In leftist wing, women were positioned not as individuals but as wife, mother or daughter as it was in other wings as well. Women problem was not considered a problem but rather linked to the relations of production (Berktay, 1995). Feminism was considered a deviation, a threat against the class struggle (Tekeli, 1986). Noticing the sexist tendencies of even the organizations appraised for being democratic and modern pushed women to create platforms to debate over the problem of womenhood and hegemonic relations in Turkey. Forming consciousness raising groups and exchanging their ideas and experiences had created a self awareness among women and encouraged them to further their endeavor.

3.2.2. The Impact of Second Wave Feminism and Resurgence of Women's Movements in Turkey

Political activities entirely forbidden, formerly leftist women questioned and criticised the patriarchy in regard to their daily life practices in this era which led to a female mobilization, paradoxically, under an oppressive regime. Tekeli (1989) attributes the reason of a lack of women's movement in pre-1980 period to three factors which were, firstly, official political ideology, Kemalism, that claims women were already given all rights by the hands of state and second, dominant social ideology, Islam, that claims women do not have a problem of oppression and third Marxist left ideology that claims

women do not have a problem apart from the capitalist explotation. In early 1982, *Kadın Sorunları Sempozyumu* (Symposium on Women Problems) was organised by Authors Cooperative (*YAZKO*) supported by academicians like Şirin Tekeli, Hacer Ansal, Gülnur Savran, Tülay Arın and Nural Yasin who initiated one of the earliest women groups in post 1980 period which attracted more supporters after this symposium. In 1983, a feminist women page started to be published in *Somut* magazine (Çaha 1996, 145). Feminism, for the first time in a long while, took place in the press. They tried to publish as many writings of women as they could in feminist page's short term publication life. Page received criticisms, particularly from leftist camp. Due to the change in the administration of Somut magazine, feminist writers left – which caused the magazine to lose its popularity and decreased its circulation (Çaha 1996, Tekeli 1989). After this experience, a new initiative entitled*Kadın Çevresi*, shortly known as *KÇ*, was formed in order to publish books, provide consultation and help women to utilize their skills. This period also witnessed womenhood to become a popular theme in period's books, magazines and visual arts. Women's status and gender regimes were questioned in the stories of different movies followed by couple of TV shows and series. A group of women from *KÇ* who identified themselves with radical feminism published *Feminist* magazine and one year later followed by socialist-feminist *Kaktüs* magazine, mainly oriented towards leftist wing. After the publication of these two magazines, radical feminists and social feminists started to differentiate themselves from each other more visibly.

By the mid 1980s, feminist groups started to take actions that would make their names heard in public and would give concrete results in women problem. Accepted by United Nations in 1979, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, shortly known as CEDAW, formed the first subject of feminist groups to work on. Having different discourses on women, feminist groups worked on the same platform in these activities. They started a petition for CEDAW to be ratified and come into effect in Turkey. Petition, signed by 7000 people including representatives, artists, academicians, housewives and business women, was presented to the head office of the Grand National Assembly, besides reaching to the President through phone calls for him to convince the government (Çaha 1996, 174). In order to follow both the process of

CEDAW and the laws and regulations discriminative against women they established *Ayrımcılığa Karşı Kadın Derneği* (Women Foundation Against Discrimination). CEDAW was accepted by Turkey in 1985 and according to the Turkish Constitution of 1982, international treaties ratified by Turkish government are considered to have the force of law and bind the government as such.[24] Women took the streets in 1987 as an organized group, when adjudication in Çankırı justified violence against a woman.[25] (Işık 2002, 45-46). They protested against and criticised both domestic and external violence women experience. Feminist groups, although being perceived negatively by leftist groups, did support some leftist activities due to sharing same opinion on respective matter, in state versus left cases.

CEDAW's enforcement was not the only case monitored and actively supported by women. Laws that contain discriminative practices had also become the targets of feminist groups. Rape, domestic abuse, binding married women's right to work to her husband's consent and fighting against external abuse were couple of issues feminist groups worked on together and managed to get concrete results. These amendments and social change accelerated by feminist activities and visible female mobility, both on international and national levels, was also related to political parties' realization of the importance of female voters (Tekeli, 1991).

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[24] "The ratification of treaties concluded with foreign states and international organisations on behalf of the Republic of Turkey shall be subject to adoption by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey by a law approving the ratification. Agreements regulating economic, commercial or technical relations, and covering a period of no more than one year, may be put into effect through promulgation, provided they do not entail any financial commitment by the State, and provided they do not 42 interfere with the status of individuals or with the property rights of Turks abroad. In such cases, these agreements shall be brought to the knowledge of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey within two months of their promulgation. Implementation agreements based on an international treaty, and economic, commercial, technical, or administrative agreements, which are concluded depending on the authorization as stated in the law, shall not require approval of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. However, economic, commercial agreements or agreements relating to the rights of individuals concluded under the provision of this paragraph shall not be put into effect unless promulgated. Agreements resulting in amendments to Turkish laws shall be subject to the provisions of the first paragraph. International agreements duly put into effect have the force of law. No appeal to the Constitutional Court shall be made with regard to these agreements, on the grounds that they are unconstitutional. (Sentence added on May 7, 2004; Act No. 5170) In the case of a conflict between international agreements, duly put into effect, concerning fundamental rights and freedoms and the laws due to differences in provisions on the same matter, the provisions of international agreements shall prevail." Turkish Constitution of 1982, part 3, chapter 1, article 90 https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf accessed 05.08.2018

[25] In 1987, a divorce case of a pregnant woman who was subjected to violence by her husband was dismissed by the judge on the grounds of the idiom 'kadının karnından sıpayı, sırtından sopayı eksik etmeyeceksin (You should keep a woman's belly full (with child) and hit her back with a stick) said by the judge as rationale of this verdict, infuriated the people. (in Işık 2002, 45)

It is important to credit the efforts of these formerly leftist women groups in diluting the uniformity brought by the Kemalist ideals into the defining aspects of ideal women in the 1980s. They not only questioned Kemalist feminisim that silenced the women's movement but also introduced women as a subject to discuss the injustice practices institutionalized in culture and society that women faced, a platform independent from prevailing ideologies. Distinguishing their own problems resulted from being female in Turkish society from that of men had brought new perspectives and provided a better ground for women movements and studies to flourish independent from male agency. Started as small groups to discuss the all pervading sexist and discriminative tendencies, they managed to establish a platform to raise awareness of the practices of patriarchy and the problems women face due to patriarchy's prevalence in society. Although movement mostly remained limited to certain women groups, mainly women from Kemalist Leftist backgrounds, it established an organized platform to fight against sexist laws and cultural norms and pioneered next initiatives in following decade which will be addressed later in this text.

3.2.3. Islamist Women as the Rising Actors in Post-1980 Political and Public Spaces

The 1980s had not only witnessed the growing consciousness of these women. Similar to other groups Islamist groups, as well, suffered from the turbulent atmosphere of pre-1980 period. During the first years of 1980 coup, their publications, foundations and political activities were banned along with other groups. Necmeddin Erbakan, a prominent Islamist politician, academician and party leader who was politically banned and his two parties were shut down, represented the Islamist discourse, which was not widely spread at the time, combined with national values. Before 1990s, center right parties were more popular as they appealed to both moderately conservative people and modernist/liberal groups. Motherland Party and True Path Party were two main actors of the 1980s period. After 1983, Islamist groups started to re-gather by re-forming the old connections, foundations and publishing houses as state pressure started to loosen. Translation of the books of well-known Islamists like Hasan Al Banna, Mawdudi,

Sayyid Qutb and Ali Shariati helped Islamist groups to raise their consciousness. The Turkish-Islam synthesis[26] embraced by junta rule in order to restructure country's political and social milieu, also, provided a fertile ground for Islamist groups to improve themselves. One incident, however, has particular significance in the history of long-standing rivalry between "Islamism" and "laicism" in Turkey. The headscarf issue makes up the backbone of this dispute. Modernization process that led to the exclusion of Islamic/Ottoman components disdained by the founders of the Republic as they were considered backward was previously covered in detail. Ever since, covering was considered a feature of backward classes or poorly trained Anatolian women who use headcover as a traditional garment. After the foundation of the Republic there was no ban on headscarf yet, there were no women with headscarf in universities and public offices either. After 1960s the number of female students with headscarf had visibly grown. This incited the first debates over the issue. Increasing tensions over 1970s has reached its peak after 1980 which, through a regulation in dress code, headscarf was banned in universities and public offices. Up until this point there had been several incidents of stripping women with headscarf off of their education or jobs.[27] Mobilization of Islamist groups around the headscarf issue helped them to create a better interaction which led to a better systematized organization.

Islamist women, on the other hand, were in a stage of claiming their own identity independent from Islamist male groups. It was not only leftist women who questioned the masculinity of their groups. Islamist women, as well, started to voice unjust practices they faced both in their daily lives and as the subjects of state's oppression. Growing consciousness and education level of Islamist women has led to occurence of a Islamist women movement in which they started to express their own

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[26] "This was a thesis developed by the Aydınlar Ocağı supporting an authoritarian state and reinforcement of religion in education but they are against Islamic state and politicization of religion." Tatlı cites from Tapper (1991) in "Islamist Women in the Post-1980s Modern Turkey: Ambivalent Resistence" (Master's thesis, Bilkent University, 2001), 23.

[27] As an example, in 1967, Hatice Babacan expelled from Ankara University where she received education in Theology Department due to her request to attend classes with headscarf. In 1973, lawyer Emine Aykenar who called to the bar with a picture of her head uncovered decided to wear headscarf and was disbarred. Some other teachers and state official who refused to take off their headscarves were also dismissed from their jobs in the same year.
http://www.wikiwand.com/tr/T%C3%BCrkiye%27de_ba%C5%9F%C3%B6rt%C3%BCs%C3%BC_yasa%C4%9F%C4%B1 accessed August 12, 2018.

opinions and experiences towards late 1980s. Excluded by laicist/Kemalist groups who, at the time, had a very dominant presence in Turkish political life by being blamed to politicize headscarf and insult the secular nature of Turkish state, Islamist women did not find adequate support from their own groups either. Receiving university education, planning a career, questioning the settled gender roles particularly that of conservative families, the Islamist women faced criticisms from Islamist groups as well.

A well-known female theologian and author Hidayet Şefkatli Tuksal shares her experience in her interview with Ruşen Çakır as one of very few female students in Ankara University Theology Department in 1980s (Çakır 2000, 18-38). Her experience sheds light on the period's "Islamists' /conservatives" perception of conservative/Islamist women that she tells the discomfort they created as female students solely by being in a place they, according to her male classmates and professors, should not have been or even if they did, should not bother anyone, particularly by openly expressing their ideas. This perception mainly stems from settled cultural perceptions and religious interpretations paralleled to the cultural practices that place women into domestic realm and ascribe the burden of moral values to her. Islam's treatment of sexes is also interpreted in parallel with these cultural norms and is used to justify confinement of women into domestic realm and roles only. It is not to deny the emphasis on the difference of sexes that took extensive place in Quran, yet people's explotation of religious matters and diverting them in their own interest is usually imputed to the religion as well. This approach embodies orientalist connotations that take Islam, and Muslim people, as backward, suitable for unappropriate or abusive practices, including oppressing women. Turkish experience of secularism also takes this attitude of Western/modern perception that Islam and its symbols represent backwardness, and remind the "dark past" of Turkish Republic that pro-secular/pro-Kemalist groups fear of its revival.

The intertwinement of cultural and Islamic traits in Turkish society, although relatively takes place in this study, is not our main subject. Yet, it is important to have a grasp on the historical processes – both that of Islam and culture in Turkey in order to better comprehend the different contextualizations of religion. This will, hopefully, help

us to understand the reasons and outcomes of positioning of these respective groups themselves in the context of or against religious notions.

The Islamist women's increasing mobility did not remain as a struggle for headscarf. New magazines, columns and books were flourishing on Muslim women. New, and untraditional, opinions were being voiced, although majority of the field was taken by orthodox discourses. Yet, the efforts of women to reflect their experience created a broad effect. Particularly a debate between Ali Bulaç and Islamist female authors that took place in *Zaman* newspaper in 1987 about womenhood, feminism and women rights showed growing disturbance among Islamist women towards male agency that assume itself the sole authority to decide the limits and forms of womenhood (Çakır 2000, 39). Islamist women confronted both exclusion and oppression they were subjected by laicist/Kemalist groups and, being denounced as "*fitne*" (sedition) by Islamist groups (Eraslan 2002, 247). During this period the translation trend had great effects on the raising awareness among women. Translations of feminist authors' books, mostly translated in early 1980s by formerly leftist women who initiated the feminist movement in Turkey, had impact on Islamist women as well. This mobilization in different women groups eventually led their ways to be crossed in one point. Headscarf issue was being observed by feminist groups as well. Common attitude towards headscarf was rather negative among feminist groups as it was considered to be a "threat" of radical Islam, however, there were few feminists supported Islamist women's sit-in protests against headscarf ban, considering it a part of women's cause (Çaha, 1996, 194).

3.2.4. Women Movements in the 1990s

The 1990s marked greater political and social mobility both in women movements and in Islamist groups. Feminist women started to utilize their accumulated experience and knowledge they gained from their first attempts in 1980s. In 1990, they established *Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi* (The Women's Library and Information Center) to gather the works of female authors and works related to women's studies, a place used for both studies and gathering place for women (Mardin 2002, 183-204).

Violence against women was one of the prominent topics feminist groups emphasised and actively fought against. Their efforts in the 1980s to fight against discrimination and violence against women were institutionalized in the 1990s. They had built shelters for women subjected to violence. These places did not only provide accomodation but legal help to solve women's problems as well (Işık 2002, 41-72).

Uplifting the ban on headscarf in 1990 with a regulation issued by ANAP government induced secularism versus Islamism debates once again. Women groups, foundations and representatives adamantly opposed the litfing of ban. Women groups that took a stand against state's and society's oppression against women yet, unsurprisingly, abandoned their critic attitude towards state in headscarf ban, even supported it, when it comes to a women group outside of their clique. Distinguishing headscarf worn by university students from the one "traditionally worn by Anatolian women", claiming that it signifies radicalizing Islam and is a symbol of reactionism constitutes popular Kemalist/secular discourse. According to Göle (1991, 116) this stems from Kemalist groups' unwilligness to accept that a women with headscarf can be as qualified as they are and still preserve her religious identity. Göle says that Islamist women, with a profile unfitting to Kemalist ideals while having the qualities provided by modern education, hurt Kemalist women's pride. After lifting of the ban on women branches of political parties in 1980s, along with other political bans, women started to participate in political parties in line with their political values. Headscarf struggle in 1980s had received great support from *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party) which eventually attracted female volunteers to party cadres in 1990s.

Women branches of Welfare Party showed tremendous effort before the elections in mid 1990s which had brought victory to WP. High level of active participation of women in WP attracted much attention from both Kemalist and Islamist groups. These women were not only party members work for their party's vote rate, they simultaneously had represented the changing face of the traditional perceptions on women with headscarf/conservative women who, now, gained social and political recognition for their achievements. Yet, women's great efforts in this victory never properly repaid as majority of these women, as repeatedly preached to them by heads of

the party, believed in the importance of working for "*dava*" (cause) rather than expecting worldy benefits (Arat 1999, Aktaş 2001).

3.2.5. The Post-February 28 Process and Onwards

Prone to destabilization, Turkey's fragile political life was shaken by yet another coup in 1997. Labelled as the "postmodern coup", or famously known as the "28 February coup" was promulgated by Turkish Armed Forces on the grounds of considering then ruling Welfare Party's statements and several activities as threat and insult to the "secular nature and regime of Turkish Republic". Headscarf, continually debated since 1980s, was one of the cases considered a threat and banned, again, with 28 February decisions.[28] Demonstrations at university doors to protest headscarf ban got widely popularand continued for months and attracted support from many people. During this process, many female students were forced to either drop the school or remove their headscarf. In infamous "persuasion rooms", female students were subjected to psychological pressure to remove their headscarf. After the turbulent times of 1990s, in early 2000s, a new party was found by former Virtue Party[29] members known as Justice and Development Party in 2001.

Enunciated their break with their previous party's agenda, the JDP rose as a new face in Turkish politics in 2002, advocating liberal economy and full support for modernization, including EU membership, along with moderately conservative values, which, by identifying the party as conservative-democrat instead of Muslim-democrat, "sets a profile loyal to the central values of the Republic as well as to those of Western democracy" (Cizre 2008: 3).The JDP's party doctrine appealed to many people from different political views and, consequently, JDP won its first ever elections by lanslide and has been ruling the country, coming out victorious from every elections, ever since. JDP's first 2 terms in office, which consists the 2002-2011 period generally considered to be in line with their initial programme. In following years, the JDP embraced more of a culturally neo-Ottomanist discourse considered by some as a regression and JDP's radically shifting politics, turning face towards Middle East from Europe (Aslan et al.

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[28] Headscarf ban was not widely implemented in early 1990s.
[29] Virtue Party was a follow-up of Welfare Party.

2016). Although Erdoğan states that "Turkey is facing the West but Turkey never turns her back to the East", recent years show the growing cooperation of Turkey with her neighbours and becoming a significant actor in the region and loosening ties with her Western allies.

The JDP's stance on women bears the traces of culturally settled gender perceptions. Constant emphasis on motherhood and integrating women problems mainly to the domestic zone indicates JDP's not so different than the past attitude (Dedeoğlu and Elveren, 2012). Although the social policies did manage to reach a wide audience the scope of these policies was remained primarily limited to the families (Buğra 2012, 66). Although the party supports female education and employment, statements of the prominent names contain the idealization of a certain type of women which, generally, promote a modest, motherly and self-sacrificing image. Despite changing governments and political climates since the beginning of the Republic, outlook on women in Turkey has not considerably changed, considering the fact that in various social and political debates, both politicians and male members of the society do not hesitate to use discriminative, sometimes even derogatory, expressions.[30] Disguised under different discourses or ideologies, it appealed to different groups in different periods yet, being women in Turkey entails certain labels, depending simply on one's clothing.

Turkey's transition to a democratic and tolerant society, albeit not fully accomplished yet, had been, and still is, a rough journey. Particulary post-1980s had been a fluctuant period, where the political arena, dominant discourses and social structure started to change with the rise of new actors. For this reason, the scope of this study will take post 1980s as its time period. As mentioned earlier, increasing visibility of women with hedscarf, growing number of economic and social initiatives established by conservative people, increasing consciousness and political participation of these

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[30] RPP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's statements about Sema Ramazanoğlu, Minister of Family and Social Affairs,
http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/kilicdaroglundan-bakan-ramazanogluna-sert-sozler-40081895
Accessed August 15, 2018
JDP Ankara Municipality Minister Melih Gökçek's statements on abortion,
 https://www.haberturk.com/polemik/haber/747352-cocugun-ne-sucu-var-anasi-kendisini-oldursun-
Accessed August 15, 2018.

people had an impact in the dominant Kemalist discourse and its uniformity. Mobilization against state's oppression, reclaiming their voices against both being labelled and harassed by Kemalist/secular groups and, being left in the background by Islamist males' discourse, women with headscarf had become the fundamental domain of debates and controversies (Göle, 2012). In the history of Turkish Republic women has become a key in promoting certain images and is employed by every political group, being used to convey and disseminate one's group ideals. The politicians', male scholars' and almost all male population' imposition of their ideal women show the unchanging behaviour of employing women as an agent to convey one's group ideals and forms, albeit being far less aggressive than Republican era. Nonetheless all, whether political or cultural or religious discourses, seem to rely on women to influence and correct a society while, on the other hand, reckoning her as relatively weaker. This study's focus on post 1980s era mainly stems from period's turbulent and rapidly changing environment where two main female characters, Kemalist/Republican women and Islamist/conservative women, have come across. Utilization of these images, discursive debates on these different womenhoodswill be tried to be analyzed in order to highlight unmitigated social unrest caused by popularization of different female images depending on period's dominant discourse and women's situating themselves in middle of these debates that, generally, exclude them as active subjects and rather take them as their object.

CHAPTER 4: IDEAL FEMALE IMAGES IN THE MEDIA AND THE DISCOURSES OF KEMALISM AND ISLAMISM – MALEDOMINANCE AND POLITICAL UTILIZATION

In this chapter, the idealized women of the dominant power groups in Turkey, mainly that of Kemalists' and Islamists', will be examined through a reading of politics and media. Media power stands as one of the most influential tools in modern world to produce and propagate one's opinions to establish a discourse that would eventually enable one to influence the society and the general opinion. The power media possesses is significantly important in Turkey's conditions, a country where the support of media can establish a dominant discourse that can legitimize a coup as it happened in 1997, and also the power of media can enable people to prevent a coup attempt as it happened in 2016. Similar examples, though may be of less importance, can be found in the history of Turkey.

Media's importance for this study lies on its projection of aformentioned groups' gender outlook in which women and womenhood preserve their centrality in their language most of the time. Media was/is utilized, by different groups through various discourses, to propagate gender roles and to render certain forms of womenhood acceptable. Particulary if we consider the great importance ascribed to women, first by the founders of the Republic and then by other rising groups in Turkey, signalling the unchanging male-dominant character of Turkish political life, discourse on women seems to have a substantial importance in Turkey's political agenda that provides an easily provoked issue, enables parties to establish a discourse to render certain phenomena legitimate/illegitimate. The nature of media and media relations, how and in what ways it can be utilized for one's interests and ideals will be first part's subject. It will be followed by the analysis of complex relations between media and power groups in Turkey. Changing representation of ideal women in accordance with the period's dominant group and how different groups create a similar system of exclusion by using women discourse and legitimize their own patriarchal mindsets and dominance in the society based on these different forms of womenhood will be examined. Lastly, women's reaction towards these dominant discourses that render women into an

instrument will be studied in order to assess the possibilities of a more promising future in recognition of different womenhoods without the threat of exclusion.

4.1. Understanding the Workings of Media

Understanding the workings of media within the power relations poses a vital point. In a country like Turkey where the media started off with state support instead of as a result of a spontaneous process developed within the society, media-state relations have been in a constant interplay. According to Burton (1995:13) the main power of media lies in that it can shape people's views and be the source of their thoughts and opinions. This enables a discourse, an opinion, to become popular enough to be considered a de facto public opinion that both legitimizes its practices through reproducing itself and continues to obscure the ways it can be challenged. Constructing the public opinion or legitimizing the dominant discourses can be achieved through utilization of extensive media tools. Livingstone (1994, 12) elucidates this interaction between media and politics:

> [F]or they are social organizations which institutionalize particular forms and rights of access, modes of participation and types of influence. The political role of the media is not, therefore, simply dependent on the nature of the political process; because it mediates political communications, the workings of the mass media are also constitutive of that process. Mediated political control of the masses is easier in an elite democracy, where the media are under pressure to propound critically the ideas of the political elite to the populace.

She mentions the selective attitude of media in legitimizing particular forms. This constitutes the problem of inequal representation and level of influence and results as dominance of one form over the other. One who holds the means of access does have much more potential to create a broader influence. Identity of the dominant might change over time as a result of predictable or unpredictable economic, political, cultural events yet the character of the dominant seems to remain more or less the same. Once acquired the political dominance, respective group's ideals become more prominent in social opinion, and on women as well. Which news and arguments are chosen to be presented and in what kind of language, meaning which definitions, phrasing, wording

and visuals are utilized, are important to assess to discover the connotations, messages and sub-meanings these entail. Reading and listening the very-ordinary-looking news and stories and speeches through the lens of these details may reveal what kind of unchallenged, reproduced, repeated forms of subtle or not-so-subtle discrimination, exclusion or gender oppression lie beneath them.

For the same reason, it is as important to examine what news and stories are not featured and overlooked completely. Erdoğan (1997, 279-281) highlights the need to analyze the excluded and unreported news as much as the reported ones to understand the extent of "objectivity claims". For the choice of selection between what to and what not to report, and how to report it, reflect the character of respective media organ's assessment and perception of the social, their political stance and, eventually, their gender perception. Through a selective reporting of news, media can be utilized in reshaping the people's perception on certain issues, political events and social phenomena. Majority of people/societies who think they are being informed about the world through news programs receive them without questioning what kind of filtrations those are subjected to until they reach to their audience (Arikan, 2011:17). Minding that no news is untouched and all news, in one way or another is processed before being reported may help audience to achieve an extensive reading of political and social events and to see the unconsidered and latent messages they contain.

The media is involved in a close-knit relation with elite/power groups. Power groups' interests utilize media tools to voice their opinion, cloaked in a seemingly objective and impartial language, pretending to reflect the public opinion so that it would assure people of its accuracy. Van Dijk's treatment of the news as discourse, an extension of the dominant discourses, reflects the ambiguous lines between these two (Arikan, 2011: 31). According to Van Dijk a fundamental condition of social control through discourse is controlling the discourse and producing it (Van Dijk 1994, 275). Dominant discourse circulates through the hands of media which eventually helps the construction of certain images that prevail in the collective memory. These forms and images in the social memory gain even more plausibility over time, by the repetition of the similar discourses and practices that maintain these and eventually these forms become the reality itself. Ideas disturbing or challenging these long settled forms

receive public criticism, or from certain groups depending on idea's alleged political convergence, questionability of certain matters turn into a matter of social conflict. Foucault's (1988, 154-155) reading of criticism reflects the importance of challenging the settled norms to be able to think differently than we are used to:

> A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices that we accept rest. We must free ourselves from the sacrilization of the social as the only reality and stop regarding as superfluous something so essential in human life and in human relations as thought… Criticism is a matter of flushing out that thought and trying to change it: to show that things are not as self-evident as one believed, to see what is accepted as self-evident will no longer be accepted as such. Practicing criticism is a matter of making facile gestures difficult.

This study endeavours to apply this approach to the idealized female images in Turkey through reading the settled norms on womenhood, on the accounts of particular groups, by examining the political influence on and ties of politics with media. Dursun (2001: 124) takes news as constructs formed through collection of several reality-related pieces that construct the reality in power groups' favour and legitimizes the status quo by supporting the prevailing social order. That does not to say that the entire media, with all its members and organs, is constantly a tool of the power groups, for there are always oppositional voices as well, large or small, that contradicts or disturbs the prevailing opinion. Yet, ties with power groups provide much greater place, and influential power, for associated groups and media organs and, as mentioned previously, a disproportionate representation, results in exclusion of the 'different', prevails. Chomsky's works on media relations and politics reveal this binding relation that can assume a menacing role for both parties. Chomsky and Herman express this in their book *Manufacturing Consent: A Political Economy of The Mass Media* (1988, 13) which particularly deals with the nature of these intricate relations:

> Another structural relationship of importance is the media companies' dependence on and ties with government. The radio-TV companies and networks all require goverment licenses and franchies and are potentially subject to government control or harassment. This technical legal dependency has been used as a club to discipline the media, and media

policies that stray too often from an establishment operation could activate
this threat.

Similarly, Berkman and Kitch (1986, 197) analyse the process of a media member's close relationships with political actors can turn him/her from a watchdog into a policymaker. Media managers undertake the role of protecting the interests of power/political groups while power groups provide access and other facilities to associated media organs (Sağnak 1996, 126). This interdependency is sustained through mutual benefits and, in fact, contains a delicate balance in which one might turn against the other in case of disaggrement between parties which might result in sanctions from political groups' side and in smear campaign or negative propaganda from media's side.

Collective memory[31], or social memory, plays a crucial role in evaluation of discourses, narratives and images. Narratives that remain in social memory provide a fertile ground for the construction or strengthening of certain discourses. From the very early stages of life, one finds itself surrounded by certain forms of politics, gender, religious rituals, education and so on which all appear to be very naturally saturated in daily language and everyday practices. Without even knowing the probable meanings of one thing, or by which events or process it was interpreted upon, one hears it enough to regard that as the "norm". This turns into a self-sustaining process particularly in case these forms appeal to one's senses or preferences, or provides a sense of dominance/superiority over the other, in which one does not oblige himself/herself to question this long settled, taken for granted forms. How one perceives man and women, political activism, traditions and cultural practices has a lot to do with what kind of assumptions, narratives and discourses are engrained in that memory. Our memories are being oriented, from verly early ages, to remember certain things in certain forms which, in most cases, appear as extensions of a wider political spectrum. Media plays a

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[31] I do not take collective memory as a uniform, single minded entity that evokes one single meaning. Rather it contains various memories that resonate differently with different groups of people. For instance; the headscarf ban, one of the most controversial issues in Turkey, resonated very differently with Kemalist/secular groups and Islamists groups. Seculars perceived women with headscarf as a threat to the secular nature of the state and opposed relentlessly while Islamists condemned it as a violation of basic rights such as education. "Headscarf" bears different, and constrasting, meanings for different groups, and so are the incidents related to it.

crucial role in disseminating these dominant discourses, dominant narratives of certain memories much easily and much faster.

4.1.1. Ties between Media and Politics in Turkey

Media in Turkey was established in the late Ottoman period. Media's birth in Ottoman society and the process catered this result had emerged differently than that of Western experience. Media in Ottoman society emerged as a result of political dynamics instead of flourishing through a natural process provoked by and fueled with social ones. First newspaper in the Empire was initiated by the support and command of Mahmud II in a realization of the media power in persuasion of the masses and in steering the public opinion (Sağnak 1996, 123). This state-led initiation culminated a state-sponsored and state-controlled image of Turkish media which had not stop following it until today. Late Ottoman-early Republican period saw extensive control over media organs. A period of political unstability and wars, a bleak future ahead, dissenting voices attracted state interference in behalf of "the unity of the society". *Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu* (Martial Law or Law on the Maintanence of Order) declared in 1925 known as the first media ban of the Republic which silenced oppositional media organs, shut down newspapers and magazines including some of the newspapers that supported the national struggle. Only existing oppositional party was closed down as well, due to their split of opinion on how the installation of the Republic should be executed. During the early Republican period and single party period until 1950s media presented uniformity on supporting and praising the state initiatives. Under the pressure of sustaining this newly established Republic strict measures were taken which included securing the media support for political and social measures and policies.

Coming to the 1940s, voices of discontent arose among public and politics towards the strict attitude of single party regime. The Democrat Party, with a commitment to provide a better open and people-oriented governance and social order and with great emphasis on freedom of press, has won the first election of the multi-party period. The Democrat Party was a split from the Republican People's Party and presented a less-elitist more-tolerant image during their campaign which attracted the

voters and media members alike. Yet, after its first term in the office Democrat Party started to show controlling reflexes, particularly towards opposing media organs, contrary to their first term in the office when they favoured the freedom of press and behaved in accordance with it (Koloğlu 1992:68). The conflict between oppositional media and government gradually increased as Democrat Party's fear for losing its popularity due to oppositional propaganda had worsen. Military coup of 1960 was a sudden blow to the premature democracy and multi party system of Turkey. Media organs' open support, despite being negatively effected by it in following stages, for 1960 military coup, calling it the "second establishment of the Republic"[32] and "a holiday for Turkish nation",[33] reflects a military-based perspective established in Turkish media. Interestingly enough, animosity towards the cencorship applied by DP government on the grounds of freedom of press, was not shown to an act intrinsically undemocratic and freedom-restraining such as coup. This seems to have different grounds of which three of them stick out the most; first, Turkish Army's emplacing itself to a distant yet guardian-like status over the politics and assuming the role of the protector of the secular state and Kemalist values, second, Turkish society's espousing of military's role over the society whether due to fear or genuine belief, third, political reflexes of media organs which correlate with interest-pursuing instead of ushering a democratic and as objective[34] as possible attitude. Yet, it is also possible to occasionally observe media's enablement of uncoverage of antidemocratic implementations (Altun et al 2016, 15).

Majority of the media sustains a life dependent to the present-dominant actor and it is used by the dominant of the period to silence the opposition (Koloğlu 1992, 70). Mainstream mediain Turkey generally aligned itself with power groups and, military among these power groups held a superior place until recent years, which used coup threats as a stick to "discipline" the Turkish political life (Temiztürk 2009,7). Route of political decisions were affected from the shadow of military that, the

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[32] Akşam Newspaper, May 28, 1960 frontpage headline.
[33] Tercüman Newspaper, May 28, 1960 frontpage headline.
[34] "Objective" as used here does not refer that it is possible for media organs to be objective in its "pure" sense. Rather it refers to embracing a fair-as-possible approach that does not intentionally distort things depending on the identity of the victim or sacralize situations it would normally not if it was not for self-interests, be it financial interests or identity/ideology-related aspirations.

decisions considered straying from certain parameters by military would not be enacted, although military has proved "less successful in persuading governments to actively initiate policy" (Jenkins 2001, 7). Media's treatment of the matter by behaving as the deliverer of military's messages from frontpages, conceptualizing the phrase "young officers are disturbed!" referring to a possible military takeover as a threat ever since the 1960s[35] reveal media's share in promulgating and leitimizing a dominant discourse. Similarly, media organs' support for parties they ideologically feel close presented a partisanship throughout the Republican history that work in legitimization of certain ideals on behalf of those parties or power/elite groups.

After the 1980 coup, media organs, particularly newspapers, faced strict implications and restrictions. Majority of the newspapers were closed down. Özal's liberalization move after he won the 1983 elections included the liberalization of media as well. This period witnessed a structural change in media ownership. Tradition of media organs being owned by people from the profession gradually decreased and ownership started to pass on the hands of people out of profession, with motives of profit-based commercial activity to invest in (Karagöz 2015, 120). That does not to say before the "profit-pursuits" media organs adapted an impartial character and did not form profit-based ties. Rather, after the 1980s financial power had become substantially superior in ownership and naturally creating a discourse parallel to that of their owners or that of their associate parties'/groups' ideologies. Media ownership started to attract more businessmen, names like Aydın Doğan, Ahmet Kozanoğlu, Mehmet Ali Yılmaz, Asil Nadir and some other names in following years as well assumed great shares of media companies which, as a result, "newspapers had become no different than industrial enterprises" (Sağnak 1996, 56).Golding and Murdock, on political economy of the mass media, express the necessity to admit that, above all, media organs are industrial and commercial organizations that produce and distribute commodity (Arikan 2011, 18). They are bound by their both political and economic ties and consequently, work in parallel with their mutual interests. This creates a sort of "self-censorship" "by reporters and commentators who adjust to the realities of source and media

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[35] Yusuf Özkır, 2015, https://www.setav.org/27-mayis-darbesi-ve-basin/ accessed December 15, 2018.

organizational requirements, and by people at higher levels within media organizations who are chosen to implement, and have usually internalized, the constraints imposed by proprietary and other market and governmental centers of power" (Herman and Chomsky 1988, preface XII).

Having said that, examining the media-finance-politics triangle in Turkey to the core would require a different and as extensive study of an enormous literature which now would stray this study from its main subject and would exceed my knowledge and purpose. Yet it is important to have a general grasp on the matter in order to understand the workings of these notions in creating, reproducing and maintaining the dominant discourses on female images. Intricate relations and ties endemic to this triangle that all simultaneously affect and are being affected by one another operate in influencing the route of political agenda, influencing the decision-making process of things to be included or not in that agenda that fuels the dominance of certain discourses.

Media's capability in affirmation/disaffirmation of certain notions enables the political power/government to orient the interpretation of the events or problems either negatively or positively depending on the advantages/disadvantages. Oktay (1995, 15) analyzes the workings of media in Turkey and how media is instrumentalized on behalf of power groups/government:

> [T]he most efficient and yet most latent version of propagandas of all descriptions are produced through these tools, stereotypes that strengthen the dominant consensus on nation, family, heroism, sense of duty, manhood, working and so forth are made internalized to the masses through these tools.

In addition, in Turkey, intellectuals comprise a notable share of opinion-constructing or maintaining "the dominant" in Turkey since the foundation of the Republic. This generally reflects itself through an elitist approach that claims to seek the best for people on behalf of people who "lack" as substantial opinions and vision for their own good as these elitist intellectuals possess. Founders of the Republic assumed this role of "emancipators of the masses" that is inherited by the following periods' elite groups of which intellectuals, and inside of them media members, comprise a part. This "savior" role culminated superiority, if not sacredness, of the state which provided ground for

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legitimization of unjust practices/discourses for sake of this superior institution's protection. Needless to say, state's superiority and unquestionable rightfulness as well, received support depending on the political identity of the present state/government holders. Oktay (1995, 342) thoroughly reflects this characteristic of the Turkish intellectuals as following:

> At this point, a symptomatic characteristic of the Turkish intellectuals is noticeable. Intellectuals, mediated from Young Ottomans and Young Turks, assumed themselves as transcended and considered country's salvation their duty. By virtue of this duty, a duty almost believed to be endowed by God, intellectual chooses to regard everyone and every opinion that ranked in his/her opposite as 'traitor'. Hence, he/she assumes an oppressive identity due to his lack of trust and confidence in social classes and strata, even at the very moments he/she sets off for the most libertarian ideals. Another point is intellectual's identification himself/herself with the state. It is, for this reason, not surprising to observe that these same tendencies are entirely preserved in journalists as well, who comprise a specific group among intellectuals. Similar to intellectuals, journalists fall prey to the conjecture that freedom and emancipation are achieved the minute the political/ideological discourse they support has come to power and even at the moments realities hit this conjecture with concrete facts they could not desist from supporting the dominant discourse.

Elitist approach of these people, be it politicians, academicians, intellectuals, media members etc., who assume themselves an authority, based on their financial or political or educational well being, in deciding the "common good" in the name of the masses sustains itself and produces its own legitimacy, by emphasising the lacking of the people, and generally renders opposing voices into traitors against the common good of the people rather than it being an opposition to their own discourses/ideologies. That is, if a discourse has more access to political and social domains, receives support from power groups, is objected to scrutiny in much lesser extent, it is possible for that discourse to prevail notwithstanding its accuracy or fair-as-possible judgments. Chomsky and Herman's (1988, 34) words problematise this "validation through popularization":

> If the articles are written in an assured and convincing style, are subject to no criticisms, or alternative interpretations in the mass media, and command support by authority figures, the propaganda themes quickly become

established as true even without real evidence. This tends to close out dissenting views even more comprehensively, as they would now conflict with an already established popular belief.

These people's or groups of people's access to media tools, which generally acquires a much higher proportion than that of the less-dominant or recessive groups, nurtures the reproduction and circulation of their own discourses. In this regard, media establishes different realities instead of reflecting the realities as they are and generally this process supplies the stability of the prevailing or dominant ideologies in the society (Van Dijk 1988, 13). Chomsky (1989, 17) mentions this elitist approach that considers the masses as rather "ignorant":

> Harold Laswell explained in the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences that we should not succumb to 'democratic dogmatisms about men being the best judges of their own interests.' They are not; the best judges are the elites, who must, therefore be ensured the means to impose their will, for the common good. When the social arrangements deny them the requisite force to compel obedience, it is necessary to turn to a 'whole new technic of control, largely through propaganda' because of the 'ignorance and superstition (of)… the masses.

This perception towards masses as "they must be taught what is good for them" does not only remain limited to the power struggles of different groups in general and of Kemalists and Islamists in particular. It transmits itself into every stratum, to every relationship that contains a "dichotomy" between parties that one side is socially, culturally and even better, "innately" considered superior to the other. Men's, independent of their political identity, self-authorization in defining, classfying and judging the female-related subjects as well contains this patronising behaviour that perceives the 'other' as less-capable, less-self determinant and less of whatever qualities men possess. It is, therefore, important to understand the mutual interaction and dependency of media and politics as the masculine structuring of the politics is directly reflected through media's language on women and establishes itself as the "norm" in gender perception of the society.

The Özal period would be the time when the relations and debates between media and politics intensified partly due to Özal's realization of the power of media,

and his wish to receive media support, and partly due to growing economic ties between finance and media groups. His liberal motives, however, did not remain stable in case of oppositional media voices, as it happens in every government's period in Turkey. His close relations with certain journalists, bringing them to official trips or inviting to dinners in presidential residence received criticism from opposing media members, his journalist supporters received nicknames such as "sycophant". These close relations between media members and politicians entailed a direct interference to the news and articles as well. Not only Özal, but his contemporaries and following prime ministers as well saw no harm to request the removal of certain news and articles (Sağnak 1996, 200).

Coming to the 1990s, media campaigns of and the rivalry between political parties intensified as the period saw the rapid expansion of media tools and their utilization, by politicians for campaing purposes and by people for following the electoral campaigns and debates. This has brought more emphasis on the media foot of the campaigns. Political parties took the utilization of media tools more seriously and worked with media specialists to present more influential campaigns. Naturally, this required compromise and agreements with media organs, along with establishing ties with financial groups in order to cover the expenses of electoral campaigns. This gives way to, or more likely consolidates, biased transmission of the political and social events. Not only the present authority procures its power and control over media but media, as well, gain opportunity to influence or interfere to political decision-making process or credibility of electoral campaigns. Particularly in 1990s the term "media terror" emerged based on various claims on media's blackmailing potential to raise its profit through advertisements (Sağnak 1996, 103).

Importance of receiving media support, or media's power in affecting the decision-making processes, garnered several opinions. While some claimed that media does not and should not have the steering power, some claimed the opposite through exemplifications. Cıvaoğlu's article on the effects of "media candidateness" and media's influence in electoral results reflects the period's complex relations and bilateral impacts. This also evoked a sense of dominance in media that entailed the idea of being a "kingmaker" (Sağnak 1996, 287). Media's dominance and effectivenes

proved to be useful many times in 1990s as well. The February 28 coup would make an on-point example to media's effectiveness in contributing to and becoming a tool of the dominant power and its self-proclaimed authority. TV programs' and newspapers' constant emphasis on the "threats" of the Islamic revival while simultaneously pushing an analogy of Islamic Revolution of Iran, calling the military for duty and legitimizing a military interference for sake of protecting the secular Turkish Republic legitimized the grounds for coup. This coup is even called as "postmodern coup", both by its supporters and opponents, referring to the direct role that media undertook in this process (Arikan 2011, 93). Nuraydın Arikan's (2011) book on media's role during February 28 in general and *Arena*'s[36] impact on the political process in particular display the interwoven structure of media and politics that it enables the legitimization of a coup while demonizing an elected government. Military, as the dominant power of the period, encouraged media members to support military's role and further, used warnings. Media members who tried to avoid contributing the process faced with intimidation and pressure.

Media's influence, however, does not always produce correlative results. 1995 elections would set an example to this. Despite the open support and campaign of two main media groups for two rival parties, unexpectedly, Welfare Party has won the elections. So the purpose here is not to measure the records of success of media or the authenticity of the news or media organs but to understand their workings in the dissemination of propagandas or anti-propagandas. Although the elections resulted differently WP, one way or the other, could not stay in power. Anti-WP propagandas, based on its Islamist tendencies, and an already established bias of the military and secular groups towards Islamist groups, induced the military interference.

After 1997, Islamist groups' rise accelerated instead of shrinking. With the JDP's rise to power, the balances and the main actors of the public and political spaces have started to remarkably change. JDP associated itself with liberal values while preserving a conservative-democrat identity. With consistent support from the people came expanding economic power and social influence that grew exponentially over

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[36] A newscast aired in the mid-1990s to 2000s, prepared and presented by Uğur Dündar, a renowned journalist and anchorman.

years and still continue today. A new class of wealthy Muslims prospered with the rise of JDP and this prosperity involved ties with finance groups. These finance groups, some of whose members are in JDP's ranks, invested in buying media organs, newspapers and JDP established a prominent media power that provide a wide network of discourse and support production. Particularly in recent years big media companies, TV channels and newspapers have passed to the government-friendly groupsAnti-government media organs or politicians face with scrutiny that harms plurivocality of Turkey's public sphere. JDP's seemingly liberal discourse has considerably changed and assumed a neo-Ottomanist conservative spirit in recent years. The change in JDP's discourse considerably influenced the people's political and social expression. Neo-Ottomanist and Islamist discourse, with references to the unity of the ummah[37] and a self-appointed leadership of Turkey of the Muslim-majority countries in the eyes of JDP supporters, constitutes the dominant discourse of the Turkish political life both at supreme and public level. Pro-JDP or Islamist media organs constantly push these discourses as now it seems to be Turkey's new character both in external and internal discourses. JDP's discourse on women has also affected from its Islamist tendencies and traditional gender roles which will be eloborated in the next part.

While talking about media, it is necessary to mention social media as its usage rate and, concordantly, its influencial power has skyrocketed since the late 2000s. Eventually this has brought a specialization in social media platforms for political parties as well. Particularly Twitter, over controversies or in pre-election periods, turns into a place of competition and fight on spreading true/false news, accusations or legitimizations, propagandas for opposing groups to dismiss each other that is systematically supported by political parties as well. Social media created another domain of influence of which parties compete to take the greatest advantage to accomodate their discourse. As the dominant power JDP does not abstain from blocking social media platforms based on various reasons, including the allegation of corruptions JDP was accused of in 2014. This kind of examples reveal that Turkey's unbalanced

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[37] The term Muslims use to refer the whole Muslim population of the world. In recent years, Erdoğan is being called by his supporters as "the leader of the Ummah" which reflects the succesful implantation of this discourse in the perception of pro-JDP people which currently makes up the major social and political group.

media relations and the dominance of the present authority in taking interest-driven decisions are prevalent in every period notwithstanding the ideology of the present authority. In Turkey's case, media have never really assumed a character independent of the state/government/powerful. Although pro-government media organs, too, face judicial pressure, as newspapers considered to be pro-government make up the top three in the list of lawsuits under the penalty of imprisonment (Altun et al. 2016, 19), that does not say that government-friendly media organs do not establish a discourse and work on its dissemination. JDP has created a discourse on women along with other subjects, or rather reproduced a discourse that combines Islamic and traditional values read, interpreted and expressed with patriarchal lenses, that voices itself through its political figures and media organs.

Up until this point, Turkey's history of different female images is reflected with elaborating the main actors of Turkey's political arena through a reading of intricate and mutually-feeding relations between politics, discourse and the use of media. This following part will unfold the ideal females of two main actors of Turkish political and social scenes in post-1980 period, Kemalists and Islamists, and try to display their similarities on limiting the womenhood of women and molding women into certain acceptable/ideal forms. How both ideologies are fueled with viril tones and male dominant discourses that instrumentalize women and womenhood in their quest of self-legitimization and domination over the masses while ostracizing women that does not fit into their ideals will be examined

4.2. Idealized Female Images of Kemalist and Islamist Discourses

Previous chapters laid out the importance ascribed to women from the beginning of the Republic and how this continued in the following periods, particularly after 1980, as women, both as a being and a concept, provided a fertile ground to attract a lot attention. But for what reasons do "women" attract great attention and continuously being called by people from the very "top" to the very "down"? Is it due to its "nature" itself that makes it polemical/problematic subject or is it due to historical, social, political, traditional, religious backgrounds it entails and is constructed over? On what

grounds is she instrumentalized as an influential and key actor for political agendas, praised by these utilizers for her high qualities, while synchronically, and contrarily, faces practices of male-dominant society that keep these politically/culturally/religiously-so-precious creatures behind or worse, under-developed? How do these ideologies manage to subject her into molding practices, both phsycially and mentally, and exclusion and discrimination regimes, one for sake of religious/traditional values and the other for Kemalist/secular values, while legitimizing these practices based on their purpose of protecting or emancipating or modernizing or developing her being and, rejecting and vilifying counter-views, even when they come from the women themselves? These questions, hopefully, will undertake the purpose of inducing new perspectives in readers' minds about their women perception which had motivated me to study this thesis.

I will start by examining the Kemalist ideal women and continue with Islamist ideal women. I will then proceed to examine the similarities of these two based on their strict, exclusion-based female ideals while, in fact, each of them constructs itself not only based on its own ideals but based on its difference from what it defines as the "other".

4.2.1. The Kemalist Female Image

The Republican female was one of the most influential instruments of the new Republic that remained as a cornerstone through decades. Even today, the Kemalist women-loyal follower of Kemalist ideals is a narrative used by secular circles, although it went through some changes over time. After the 1980s, this Kemalist female image had experienced internal doubts about the repeated chants of the Republican ideals that led some of them into questioning. Yet, this woman is ascribed, even today, the weight of representing "their Republic" against both to the external world as a token of modern/ized Turkey and, to the internal threats of "unmodern/backward" threats as a model of balance between too modern versus too traditional. According to Durakbaşa (1998, 147) Kemalist female image "reflected the pragmatism of the Kemalist ideology and was basically a combination of conflicting images: "an educated-professional

women" at work; "a socially active organizing women" as a member of social clubs, associations, etcetera; "a biologically functioning women" in the family fulfilling reproductive responsibilities as a mother and wife; "a feminine womenentertaining men at balls and parties".The Kemalist ideology's treatment of women contained a strict self-discipline and required veiling her sexuality particularly "in their relationships in the male world of public affairs" (Durakbaşa 1998, 149). While supporting women's participation, by pushing a sense of fellow citizenship alongside men that would help country's development, traditional gender roles and sexual morality ascribed to women remained out of question, even further, indigenised by Kemalist ideology. State feminism's immobilising character, although being questioned during 1980s, its perception of a uniform female image, adorned with high ideals and duties, remained solid and created an eclectic women's movement that applies the very same measures in deciding the "includibleness" of a woman, strongly internalised by Kemalist women as well, that led them to take an organised stance towards headscarf issue.

Political parties' approach to women, notwithstanding how sentimental and egalitarian it might try to seem, contained, and still does so, pursuit of self-interest that started particularly after 1980s, with a realization of female voters' votes are now completely dependent to their male-householders and parties need to appeal to the female voters as well. With a mobilization among women, both in Kemalist/secular circles and in Islamist circles, political participation of women evoked more debates on the grounds of representation and equality. Kemalists, with claims of representing the modern face of Turkish Republic and repeating the emancipation of women by the founders of the Republic, also display a traditional perspective in their treatment of women. Although they support women's participation this participation always remained limited and required certain qualities to be fulfilled, particularly by women. Early Republic's short-haired, makeupless, uniformly dressed, almost-genderless women did face changes throught 1980s and 1990s yet, how much is this image questioned in the following periods on the grounds of male-dominance and disproportionate moral burden ascribed to women?

Alankuş and Çavdar (2000, 107) reflect how the body of Republican women, as well, is used as an instrument by the patriarchal practices fostered by the Kemalist/secular ideology.

> [T]he body of the Republican women, as it was in the past and still is so, is marked as a political symbol as much as its Islamist counterpart. Hence, removal of the veil did not signify women's liberation from sexist mentality and its practices. For secular patriarchy, too, female body poses a threat that can cause anarchy unless it is controlled by the masculine authority, the keeper of the order. In this case, the cost for women to join the male-dominated public life was a genderless body.

4.2.1.1. Predicaments of Kemalist Female Image

Women's questioning of the settled norms of the leftist groups and the state feminism of Kemalism in 1980s, led women to question gender-based violence and discrimination against women along with supporting the political participation of women. Tekeli expresses this transition (Çaha 1996, 144):

> [T]hus we experienced a painful settlement with the past and Marxism that most of us once adopted and more importantly, by exhaustively analysing our experiences in daily life, we confirmed the effectualness and validity of patriarchy, sexism, male-dominant society in Turkey and had gradually become feminists.

Mobilization of the women movements and feminist groups, although led to an awakening among educated urban women on the traditional patriatchal character of Turkish society, it preserved the Kemalist ideology's attitude towards women with headscarf. In the changing settings of post-1980 period, the period when headscarf was "coded" as a threat to secularism, Kemalist/secular women image remained in the realm of Kemalist uniformity and its male-dominant settings, which allow a limited definition for women, that assumed an antagonist stance towards women with headscarf. According to Çağatay (2008, 35) crystalization of secular versus Islamist polarisation on the headscarf issue reveals how much Kemalist ideology, in terms of its internal consistency, relies on the Kemalist female image. Few secular/Kemalist women had questioned the Kemalist feminism and its patriarchal tendencies and even less had

questioned Kemalism in terms of its construction of the modern/secular versus Islamic/backward that turning headscarf into a problem by fixing the parameters of modernity and creating a formalist, exclusionist female understanding that hinders the development of a multi-dimensional, non-exclusionist female perception. Kemalist women movement itself, "by reproducing the nationalist ideology and male-dominant gender regime, obstructs the discussion of headscarf on a democratic ground that would also include the women liberation perspectives" (Çağatay 2008, 7). Dichotomization of the two was constantly fed in visual and print media even more intensely after 1980s. Women with headscarf, with their increasing numbers in the 'modern' institutions of the secular state, had become central in debates and conflicts in Kemalist versus Islamist tensions. The post-1980 period was intented to be a period of depolitization after the violent political activism of the previous decade. Earlier in this period, as mentioned before, military regime tried to install a hybrid Turkish-Islam synthesis. Çağatay (2008, 35) reflects the contradiction of employing such thesis, while systematically discriminating only the women, not the men, of that movement:

> Situating the headscarf as the opposite of secularism is paradoxical. Islamist movements were perceived as anti-regime threats ever since the foundation of the Republic yet, interestingly enough, state itself comprised Islamist movements by instrumentalizing them against leftist movements with this Turkish-Islam synthesis. This comprising did not contradict with the principles of secularism, rather, Islamist cadres had become the determinants of the post-1980 political conjuncture. It is rather meaningful that the males of the same movement were deployed in state institutions, while the women of that movement were perceived as threat against the regime by certain state institutions. Here, more than female body carrying the value of being a political-ideological indicator, it is seen that hegemony crisis in post-1980 Turkey is coded on the body of the women with headscarf.

Continuously pushing to create an antagonist "other" in covered women while drawing the ideal female through Kemalist women, Kemalist ideology as well restricts itself, or rather its women, into a formalist approach that ingrains the social disintegration and legitimizes it on the grounds of the proctection of secularism/state or the social order. This ideal is internalized by many Kemalist women, behaviours or dresses that reveal or refer to one's femininity are not welcomed since they do not comply with the ideal

women of Kemalism who is modern yet not "degenerated". Interviews in Çağatay's thesis (2008, 98-108) reflect the perception of a women's sexuality in Kemalist female imagination, considering its reflection as indecent, condemning behaviours related to it (buying fancy underwear for instance) by employing an analogy between the sexual morality of Kemalist women and of Islamist women. Couple of interviewees' constant emphasis on covered women's shopping for "red" underwear, by implying the "suppressedness" of these women by the male members of their circles, relating the reflection of women sexuality to being suppressed or amorality, while emphasising that buying such items is unthinkable for herself and her children do reflect that the drawn image of modern yet modest, genderless, ideal Kemalist women is in itself a restraining, exclusionist image that limits an innate part of women that it perceives as a threat to malestream society. That same image remained more or less intact throughout the years that similar examples can be found. Instead of her womenhood Kemalist female image embraced a fellow working citizen role, with a masculine appearance, that considered adorning her female body rather tawdry that would not suit to educated modern Turkish women. Zehra Arat's (1998) study on a group of women who were educated between 1920-1940 present examples of this understanding of rigid restriction of femininity in public places. She states (1998, 169) that "any reflection of femininity was scrutinized and often resulted in a scolding or an insult, if not punishment". Similarly, one of the students' anecdotes on her favorite literature teacher displays how the discourse of the period enabled and legitimized the shaming of women/girls for their "feminine" tendencies:

> One of the girls had her hair curled, and it looked kind of fancy. The teacher called her to the blackboard for an oral exam. She failed to answer the question. Then the teacher said something that I still remember today: "Instead of embellishing the exterior of your heads, embellish the inside." Isn't it a wonderful comment?

Kemalism, although provided women with rights and freedoms, maintained the traditional outlook of the Turkish society on women. Apart from restricting her femininity, subordinate position of women remained intact, although Kemalist premises projected an educated, enlightened, working woman, this woman could not evade, or

was not allowed to evade, the responsibility of a disproportionate moral burden as notions like honor and chastity relied, and still do so, on women. This superior-subordinate kind of perception between sexes is so intrinsic in society that many people, both "modern" and "backward" alike, do no hesitate to scrutinize women's activities or behaviours.

4.2.1.2. The Secular Media's Treatment of Women Groups and Movements

Women mobilization in the 1980s, similar to its first stage during the late Ottoman-early Republican period when women demanded more than what emancipator men offered, received a scorning treatment from the media and their associates. In 1987, a group of renowned feminists organized a demonstration in Mothers Day to draw attention to the violence against women. In order to receive media and public support, organizers of the event had met with various media organs and journalists. General behaviour of the journalists were scornful, likewise the published news, and they gave similar answers such as "you all are pretty women, what are you even doing with this demonstration and all?" (Timisi and Gevrek 2002, 24). Demonstration took place in various newspapers in which Günaydın, known as an anti-government, critical newspaper back then, published pictures from the demonstration with "Seven Beauties in the Rain" headline:

> Six feminists (women rights defenders) started a 'no violence to women' campaign in Ankara. Campaign, planned to be started in front of Gençlik Parkı at 9.30 am but could not due to the pouring rain, was finally managed to be started in front of the … theatre thanks to the 'help' of a former journalist. Carrying banners of 'We love flowers', 'We love our mothers', 'We love women' feminists claimed that 'domestic violence turns violence into ideology'. Additionally, only one of these feminists is married.

Hürriyet used a discourse similar to Günaydın:

> 6 feminists, in their press statement, claimed 'media, mosque, court, customs and traditions are all supporting the violent men'…wearing badges of 'we don't want to live with violence threats', 'no violence to women' feminists claimed that 'domestic violence turns violence into ideology'. They stated that they have great numbers of supporters in Ankara yet instead of establishing a foundation they organized individually. It is learned that

only one of the feminists is married, while the rest does not consider marriage at the moment.

These newspapers, particularly Hürriyet, had been one of the most influential newspapers of the period. They were also on the group of newspapers that can be classified as pro-secular. First thing attracts the attention is that how, in both newspapers, the marital status of the participants is specifically, and actually irrelevantly, stated. A quite simple yet useful tactic to use in a society where the marriage, especially for women, is considered to be the ultimate way of protecting one's chastity, highly associated with one's status in the society. Marriage and family are considered to be the cornerstones of Turkish society. Although opinions on marriage and family as an institution is undergoing a change in last decade particularly in big cities, their centrality in the perception of the majority of the people and in the language of the politics remain intact. So for the respective period these notions bore even more meaning and instrumentality to legitimize and normalize humiliation based on marital status in public eye. Writers of the articles are well aware of the fact that specifying their marital status would negatively add to the credibility of their cause in public perception. Not only that, but this also feeds the general misconception that renders feminism into a shallow, hysterical misandry that writers tacitly employ to legitimize their ridicule of these women. Considering media's influence, extensively covered in preivous chapter, in shaping/feeding the public opinion such language is not merely random, or its effects is limited to that one particular print. Adding their marital status after mentioning their "claims" would be another way to trivialize the importance of their statements by dissociating the subject and participants' relevance to it, as if, being bachelor reduces one's reliableness on the matter, so their cause would be rendered to less of importance, if not a "womenly fuss". Bringing marital status into a vital issue as violence against women simply drifts the centre from the violence to the privacy of the participants. Reflections of the patriarchal codes in society that do not hesitate to interrogate a women's marital status, virginity, degeneracy and ascribe itself the right to subject a woman to certain standards were, and still are, prevalent, in Kemalists and Islamists alike.

Kemalist ideology's settled ideals for women also reveal itself in Kemalist women's aloofness to the feminist movements during the 1980s. Arat (1998, 27-28) mentions the relation between Kemalist women's rejection of feminism and their desire to preserve their status as a privileged minority:

> Considering themselves privileged and owing that privilege to the opportunities creted by the Kemalist modernization project, they have been fully dedicated to the nationalist cause and have not questioned the gender inequalities… Proud of their progres, they have been largely content and complacent. Privileged women who demanded more substantial changes and equality in political life constituted only a small minority, and they could be easily coopted or subdued by the Kemalist regime… Today, a younger generation of women who acquired power as corporate executives, concerned about preserving their privileged positions, also acts content and refrain from controversies. Such privileged and powerful women, including the former Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, may be products of Kemalist reforms and subscribers of Kemalist ideology, but they should not be mistaken for Kemalist feminists. Explicitly rejecting feminism and activism, their ability to fight for the protection of cherished benefits and rights, which came under attack with the rise of Islamists and the Welfare Party, is questionable.

The division between Kemalist women and Kemalist feminist women appeared in this period, although they shared a common dedication to the secular state and Kemalist ideals in front of the rising "threat" of Islamism Kemalist women's avoidance of being associated with feminism contains this fear of exceeding the Kemalist women image who would not associate herself with this new wave of activisim that was not a feature of the Kemalist female image, since Kemalism, with the hands of state, provided women with rights adequate enough for women to quit, or rather being forced to quit, their activism.

4.2.1.3. Parties with Secular Ideals' Treatment and Instrumentalization of Women

Political parties' treatment of the female participants and female voters would worth an examination to understand the seemingly different yet similarly male-dominant discourses and behaviors of different political groups. Always preserved a central place in the talks of modernity and instrumentalized as a model to prove the development of

Turkey, women's political participation as candidates proved to be nonfunctional, as the numbers always remained very limited and, the efficiency even less so. Couple of female members provided a "modern" showcase to prove that they are "in line with modern/Kemalist precepts". Despite having a Kemalist and modernization-based agenda, parties' treatment of the female participation revealed a dilemma, a dilemma that prevails from the beginning of the Republic, between what is said and what is done. For instance, the increasing the number of female members of parliament had been one of the debated topics in late 1980s. Women movements' demands for parties' to actively support and act for greater female participation was told to receive approval from parties yet different parties alike, SHP[38] and DYP[39] for instance, avoided concrete attempts (Yaraman 1999, 117). While verbally supporting greater female participation, elimination of female candidates in preselections, or appointing them to regions with zero chance of winning does contradict with flattering Kemalism's granting of right to elect and be elected to women. Göle's portrayal of women's position in a male-dominant political and social context in early Republic as "women drawn by the desire, permission, support and, consequently, supervision of men" continued to determine, and still does so, the limits of women's presence in political life (1991, 108). According to Tokgöz (1996, 57) during 1980s women's public participation has generated new roles and definitions which resulted in women's obtaining of new identities. On the other hand, a gap had emerged between women's public participation and political participation. Political parties headed towards establishing various discourses on providing greater place to women in politics. Yet, "the discourse worked on to be established by political parties was to not question the male-dominant structure of the politics" (Tokgöz 1996, 58).

Political parties started to focus on their female voters only in late 1980s-early 1990s as, now, the votes of female voters started to differ from that of men (Yaraman

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[38] Social-Democrat Republican Party, established as RPP's successor after 1980 military coup, to embrace former RPP cadres and votes and it maintained the same Kemalist/secular ideals as RPP.
[39] True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi), successor of Justice Party (AP) in post-1980 period, one of the centre-right parties in Turkey, presented a more rural-based image.

1999, 123).[40]This was one of the reasons that political parties ostensibly assumed a female participation-supporting image so that the changing votes of the female voters would be channelled into their own polls. Election campaigns of the parties were similarly affected by the push to appeal female voters. These campaigns, circulated through visual and print media including pamphlets, banners, slogans, pictures, flags, majorly focused on health, poverty and social security when mentioning women. The theme of these campaigns generally assumed the traditional roles of women, with little to no direct reference to women rights. Fueled with plenty of stereotypes, these election campaigns centralized women as the subjects of state services, instead of evaluating their status in regard to the male-dominant politics and language of the politicians (Tokgöz 1996, 69).

The enormous gap between the number of male and female members of the parliament, despite women made up half of the population, remained steady, if not widened, after 1980s, although it relatively improved in late 2000s up until now. Debates on whether it is necessary for women to be represented constituted the other part of the problem. Male dominant structure of the state generally assumed men as eligible to represent the people. Women's lower level of education was generally used to justify men's supremacy in public and political life. During the establishmetn of the Republic, talks on women rights extensively entailed the "unpreparedness" of women to absord these new rights due to their lack of education and "backwardness" compared to men. The founding men's assuming of a savior role, considering themselves superior, was an extension of patriarchal gender norms of the society. Same norms applied for a long time, and still do so, and manifest in the discourses on women. Confining women's development and her agency into adoption of certain social behaviours and education was used also during this period of changing behaviours of female voters. Ahmet Taner Kışlalı's (1996, 73-78) article on women and politics, as a Kemalist professor who defended Kemalism's vision for women, would make an example to present the justification of women's subjection to men in political decisions and inessentiality of women population's represented by women:

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[40] In Turkish society, practice of family members, particularly female members, voting to the same party as the father/male elder of the house was prevalent until recent decades. Although it still prevails, it is not as widespread.

A married woman who has no business outside the house lives in a much narrower scope. She would have much less knowledge than her husband about the lives of different social groups and general conditions of the society. There is no chance that she could assess and evaluate the economy in a dimension beyond daily shoppings and social events that go far beyond of her narrow circle. She is more devoted to customs and traditions and more conservative due to her more slowly changing environment.

Housewives have much less interest in political life than of men, because dimensions of political life would exceed her small world. Their lack of knowledge on political subjects, their lower levels of political participation (compared to men) can all be explained by their lack of interest in political life. Since political subjects are more of her husband's area of interest it is natural for her to join her husband's political decision. Being more affected from emotional conditions, taking refuge in the powerful in pursuit of security and determination are products of their shared condition in the society. Unknown scares people. Since women do not have enough knowledge about politics, against possible changes that they can not foresee they hold on to the powerful and determinant, and unavoidably display conservative tendencies.

We should remember one more time that the fact that women's inability to establish a political attitude independent from men generates the result that it is not sociologically compulsory for women to be represented in the parliament as a social profile distinct from men

Apart from stereotyping all "housewife" women into one singular image, consolidating women's stereotyped position by employing the discourse associating men with reason/power/determinance and women with emotion/ignorance/indeterminacy does not only reproduce and strengthen the subordination of women but it also contradicts his claims of advocating a "progressivist" egalitarian women perception resides on the precepts of Kemalism.[41] He uses his interpretation of "women's inability to establish a political attitude" to justify women's limited access to parliament as, for him, they do not need to represent themselves as men will do it on their behalf.

Rising demands from different women groups, particularly in the late 1980s, has taken a gradually increasing place in media. Particularly election periods saw extensive coverage of women. Yet, this coverage was highly related to political groups' pursuit of interests to attract their female voters. Consequently, increasing attention to women-related subjects and public demands in media organs was more or less a part of political

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[41]To see his articles on women, visit;
https://mustafakemalim.com/tag/ahmet-taner-kislali-yazilari/ accessed December 25, 2018.

parties' rivalry in receiving the greater share in election. Media's bulking of the women-related news and political campaings was reviewed in Semra Somersan's article, part of a series of articles titled as "Women and Politics" in *Cumhuriyet* newspaper in 1987 (Yaraman 1999, 120):

> One would get the impression from the media that in these general elections, political parties are competing to increase number of female candidates and suggestions to settle the women problem are overflowing… Several basic principles related to women rights are now started to spread to a wider spectrum. Even the current government party received its share from this wave, by promising district governership to women.

The media's extensive coverage, however, remained limited to pre-election campaigns, as women managed to take only 6 seats in the parliament after 1987 elections, as the parties did not preserved even the present number of female members of the parliament. As Yaraman (1999, 117) evaluates "this bulk in media was not oriented towards increasing the number of female members in the parliament but, clearly, to the votes of women as it is understood from the promises in political parties' advertisements and campaigns and their very low number of female candidates". Although this extensive coverage and attention had emerged both as a result of increasing women mobility and demanding voices of women and political groups' ambition to benefit from this new wave, Yaraman (1999, 114) points out that what was considered to be as efficient in this process as women movements was women's symbolic place in politics. Political parties' attempt to display a more female-oriented discourse and promising a future amelioration relied on different political motives. Tansu Çiller's position in Turkish political life would exemplify the utilization of this symbolic-ness and its reproduction by the media and political groups. Selected to be the head of DYP, Tansu Çiller's position as the first female prime minister of Turkey occupied great place in media, in the context of Turkey and women rights, on national and international levels. Yaraman (1999, 63) points out how, instead of well-known names of the AP-DYP line which generally identified itself with rural voters, choosing Çiller, in search of an image change and to accelerate the integration with the EU, reflects the extensions of the mindset that considers women as a symbol. This also coincided with the period, in early 1990s, that women movements and activism has considerably increased. Having a

female prime minister, however, does not seem to positively influence women's position in political life, nor does it seem to alter the male dominant structure of politics. This might have to do with the difference between being women in politics and making politics based on womenhood. This changes the level of effectiveness of female members of parliament on raising awareness and obtaining concrete results in changing the male-dominant structure of politics and social life. Evaluating the efficiency of the very limited number of female representatives would reveal another obstacle in reclaiming a female agency independent of the male-dominant political system. Their presence in parties remained limited to a symbolic place that entailed accomodating themselves to their respective political groups' behaviours instead of representing the demands of women or reflecting their individual opinions on the subjects. Female representatives' submissive position received critisim not only from several female activists but a female representative herself. Rezzan Şahinkaya, a member of parliament from ANAP, said "We, the female members of the parliament, are just samples in the parliament. In these two years I only learned how to raise and lower my hand". Yaraman's (1999, 130) analysis of Tansu Çiller's silence on womenhood worths attention:

> It is remarkable that Tansu Çiller makes no comment on womenhood or does not propose anything on the matter, or never even mentions the importance of being a female prime minister, despite DYP has established a discourse based on that, and indicates that even a female politician, whose womenhood was used in campaigns, has become mannish. This, once again, reveals that women's contribution to the political agenda is limited to her figure, in other words to her picture.

The media's coverage of in-party pre-elections of 1995 elections reveals that women would continue to remain symbolic, even quantity-wise. Utilization of women as a symbol of one's ideals seem to be ingrained into political and social spectrum so much, that, at times, female representatives themselves employed this discourse. Türkan Akyol, a member of parliament from RPP, in her comments on parties' elimination of female members from election lists said "This year was women's year and it was a good chance for Turkey to show that it is a modern state" and refers to women's symbolic usage in proving the level of modernity the country has reached (Yaraman 1999,

130).This discourse is irrefutably related to Republican/Kemalist instrumentalization of women, fetishizing her body as the ultimate ground to display how far it has come in the linear way of modernity that ends in reaching the West. Kemalist women themselves take pride in being the showcase of the state in modernization project, which provided them with being the privileged minority of the country. This presupposition of being at the forefront, or at the top, of the social structure had taken itself as the norm, similar to the linear modernization mentality that takes one as the norm and the process leads to it as a linear upward motion while subjecting others to examination based on its own example and considering the "unfitting" ones a deviation from the norm, while considering women with headscarf a deviation from the "norm". Having this elitist character, Kemalist/feminist women groups' self-positioning in front of the other women, assumed a superiority that took other women as subjects to be emancipated from both the patriarchal and religious oppression. Yet, their position as women was not independent from patriarchal practices, or their alleged superior position have not been able to shift the outlook on women that associates her mainly with domestic life or "feminine" occupations like beauty, diet, makeup and so forth. Media organs' female-oriented publications majorly comprised of beauty tips, latest fashion trends and housework tricks. Even magazines published by one of the women movements of 1980s, *Kadınca* for instance, majorly relied on these subjects while occasionally engaging few political debates and when it did, it mainly consolidated women's role as voters instead of using its influencial range to raise awareness to the settled perceptions on women in Turkish politics (Yaraman 1999, 121).

A series of articles prepared by Celalettin Çetin entitled "Women's Embark on Politics" intended to introduce female candidates of parliament generally concentrated on their private lives and magazinish informations along with a relatively small place to their parties' campaigns, with no mention of their female-oriented projects (Yaraman 1999, 120). Although giving extensive place to female candidates in a widely circulated newspaper does reflect the increasing female mobility in the society, however, focusing on their private life and non-political aspects might be argued to be the results of mainly two things; first, the mentality that limits women, independent of her position and identity, to "simple" occupations compared to "supreme" professions like politics, and

second, media's pursuit of attracting more readers by focusing on things that are considered to be more appealing.

4.2.1.4. The Post-February 28 Process and Present-Day Characteristics of Kemalist Discourse in the Context of the Republican People's Party

The 1995 elections, and the process that followed it, would be a significant point in Turkish political life. Increasing rivalry among parties and the WP's rising popularity among Islamist groups heightened the secular groups' fury and the constantly repeated discourse/praise of secularism and modern values had even more increased. WP's victory was traumatic for secular groups and media organs as their discourse on Islamism and WP always referred to the dangers of an Iran-like radicalization and the destruction of the state's official ideology. As mentioned in previous chapter, following term saw the popularization of an anti-WP discourse in media, on the grounds of defending secularism and Kemalist ideals, which paved the way for military takeover. Etyen Mahçupyan summarised the February 28 process in regard to media's position (Arikan 2011, 170):

> Carried into effect with media's manipulations and distortion of the news, this coup was staged seemingly to protect the regime from the shariah threat. The strategy was two-folded: the most marginal people of period's government partner WP were put forward and party was being identified with these people, and then the same identification was made between WP and all religious people. Thus, with reference to one example all Muslims in Turkey were "proved" to be shariah followers. Second strategy directly aimed creating fake religionists. Televisions were overflowing with the members of a cult named Aczmendi that was never heard before and suddenly disappeared after the coup. Later, it was understood that all those people were hired with money for this show and contributed to the regime.

This identification of Muslim people with radicalism harmed women with headscarf the most, as it happened in the previous decades. As men and women without headscarf of the same opinion could not be as directly distinguished, women with headscarf provided an easy target for secular groups' and media's anger. Particularly in 1999 elections, the WP's one female member of parliament had become one of the key names of the period

both in the talks of Islamism and secularism. Merve Safa Kavakçı, was the first ever women with headscarf to be elected as a member of parliament. In the day of oath taking ceremony she was kicked out from the parliament on the call of the then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit saying "This is not a place to rebel against the state! Please put this woman in her place!" accompanied by pro-secular furious members' claps and chants of "Out! Out!". Kavakçı's dismissal from the parliament was welcomed by Kemalist and feminist women groups, despite their efforts to increase the number of females in the parliament, on the grounds of their animosity towards headscarf. Emplacement of Kemalist ideals/secularism and headscarf as two opposing points had created a system of exclusion, reproduced and maintained by even the groups who assumed themselves defenders of women rights in Turkey.

Kemalist ideals that had fixated the definitions of modernity based on Western experience had also fixated the definition of not only ideal women but also the backward/unmodern women. So women who willingly wear headscarf and go to universities, or at least demand to go to universities, were denigrated in a popularized discourse as militantly motivated agents supported by foreign powers which would "legitimize" their expulsion from public spaces or an insult directed to them. Media's treatment of Merve Kabakçı did not only presented secularism-based judgments but judgments and comments on her body and fashion, including the use of a sexualized wording, close-up pictures of her feet with a title "*Çıplak Ayaklı Merve* (Barefoot Merve)", or trying to find her pre-headscarf pictures and even picturing her bald with photoshop. Sevda Alankuş's article (2000, 103-118) on the representation of Merve Kavakçı in secular and Islamist media attempts to reveal both sides' patriarchal phallocentric discourse. Secular groups' animosity towards women with headscarf is not the main subject of this text. Yet, it is of vital importance to examine that how women unfitting to secular ideals enables the exposure of the male-dominant language of secular media. For instance, İlhan Selçuk's article, a famous journalist prided himself for his radicalism on secular ideals, about Kavakçı shows a dramatic example of denudation of female body by a male eye (Alankuş and Çavdar 2000, 115):

> Merve… What was she saying to all men watching her while she was
> entering to the parliament? I am a woman! Uttering silent screams… in her

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every step, she was repeating with all her being that I am a woman, I am a woman... men's curiosity was at peak; men are attracted to women who feel shy around men. She was like a naked show star, knowing she attracted everyone's attention, and was being –hünsa (hermaphrodite)- down to her cells. Enjoying breaking the rules; she was exposing herself like she is naked in a headscarf show, enjoying annunciating her sex's difference from man. She chose the most effective way to annunciate her womenhood to the black-mustached men. She has brought the odalisque[42] spirit that chants the unequality of man and women into the parliament. Merve was actually not covering but exposing herself.

According to Alankuş and Çavdar, Kavakçı's presentation in the secular media makes a graphic example to male eye's right of disposition over the female body. Alankuş and Çavdar say:

> With this discursive manouvre not only the body of veiled women but all women's bodies are being constructed as objects of desire, are being humiliated and then the way to discipline this body is implicated…Hence, egalitarian and phallocentric discourse of secular media, links acceptance of women's visibility in public space to the neutralization of her threatening sexual identity or her man-likeness.

The practices of justification of the exclusion/humiliation of women who do not belong to the same group continue today. Political figures' sexist/discriminative speeches against women are legitimized on their behalf by even the women of the same political groups. Sexist remarks about women receive reaction depending on "who said it" and "to whom said it". Majority of these remarks contain the norms of patriarchy, independent of the politic figure's ideological stance. Although the 2000s had seen a shift in the balances of the politics with the JDP's rise to power and consolidation of its power by coming as the first party from the all elections ever since, discourse on women in political debates still insert the acceptable and unacceptable female images. Political figures' outlook on women, both Kemalist ones and Islamist ones, is intertwined with patriarchal codes and sexist tendencies. Unfortunately, many women comply with group discourse; even at times it produces discriminative/sexist remarks. The RPP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's words "Minister of Family already lied in front of some people and does not speak" on former Minister of Family and Social Policies

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[42]Female slave.

Sema Ramazanoğlu while he was adressing the sexual abuse of children in *Ensar Vakfı* received a lot criticism and anger. While he defended his words on two accounts, first a former JDP minister's use of these words and second, absurdity of bringing a gender-based interpretation to these words as "a minister is a minister, it does not matter if it is a man or a women".[43] Yet, it is clear that in Turkish society these words contain sexual meanings, both when used by an JDP official and a RPP official. His speech about male unemployment that associates violence against women with men's unemployment by saying "If man is unemployed, can not bring enough money home, this man would vent his anger on his wife" constructs a legitimization ground for violence against women while trying to critise government's employment policies. Priding it with being the party that emancipated women while legitimizing the patriarchal violence, whether intentionally or unintentionally, shows that Turkish politics and politicians are not capable of understanding the deep-rootedness of patriarchy in their mindset, be it a Kemalist mindset or an Islamist mindset. Unfortunately, these kinds of remarks of the politicians only attract the criticism of the opposing group's women and media organs, same with the Islamist/conservative politicians' remarks which will be examined following this text, that the women and media organs of the respective politician's group mostly remain silent, if not try to justify the words.

Taking pride in being Ataturk's party that granted women their rights, the RPP's treatment of its female members does not seem to be promising in terms of overcoming its male dominant structure. From the establishment of the Republic until the 2000s, number of RPP's female representatives had not surpassed 20 of its total number of representatives and most of time remained 2 on average.[44] Only in recent decades, the RPP had raised the number of its female representatives, albeit still disproportionately low compared to the number of men. Similar to the situation in the parliament, local administrations of RPP are also overwhelmingy dominated by men. A small group of RPP supporter women from Antalya, a city in southern Turkey that RPP has never

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[43]http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/510699/iste__onune_yatarim__sozunun_kaynagi.html accessed January 3, 2019.
[44]Nuray Keskin, "Kadın Milletvekilleri (1935-2011)", https://www.academia.edu/5395940/Kad%C4%B1n_Milletvekilleri_1935-2011 accessed January 3, 2019.

nominated a female candidate from, protested RPP for not nominating a female candidate. A local journalist, Mustafa Koç, has criticised RPP's gender policy and referred to RPP's sexist character and general indifference of the party member, both men and women, to this attitude.[45] Although there are considerable amount of women who would fit in RPP's vision of an ideal woman in their vast numbers of female members and supporters, and RPP is the second leading party with considerable amount of seats in the parliament, women do not make up even the 15 per cent of RPP representatives. While displaying a pro-gender equality image in line with their democratic and secular ideals, RPP's failure of establishing even a numerical equality, or getting close to it, in party does not accomodate their long-settled discourse also envisioned in RPP's party program.[46]

4.2.2. The Islamist Female Image

Rising mobility and visibility of women with headscarf in public spaces after the 1980s has brought them not only to secular groups' notice but to the Islamist circles' as well. In order to understand Islamist circles' women perception, first we need to look at how a woman, the "ideal women", is portrayed in Islamism. The emergence of an Islamist revival within Muslim societies was highly related to their encounter with West and its dominance. Islamists' efforts on bringing an alternative to Western ways of political, economic and particularly cultural practices entailed the examination of the reasons for Muslim societies lagging behind Western powers. Reasons for this weakening that resulted in Western domination were generally attributed to Muslim societies' losing of their commitment to religion and entanglement of traditional values with religion which hindered the flourish of Muslim societies. Their main emphasis was on the Islamic state, getting rid of the evil customs of the Western societies that had taken over Muslim societies, restoring the Islamic values which were intertwined with local and cultural customs and traditions for a long period of time. Although Islamism-based works primarily dealt with establishment of the ideal state, run by Islamic values, establishment of this state is highly associated with an ideal Muslim society, comprised

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[45] https://antalyakorfez.com/haber/25199-cinsiyetci-chp accessed January 3, 2019.
[46] https://chp.azureedge.net/1d48b01630ef43d9b2edf45d55842cae.pdf accessed January 20, 2019.

of conscious and virtuous Muslims. Members of this society, both men and women, are expected to be good Muslims aware of their responsibilities in construction of an Islamic society. These responsibilities were generally attributed based on gender differences. Women, in Islamist works, generally appears in the traditional role of a housecarer, child bearer and good wife to her husband. Similar to Kemalism, Islamism took women as central in constructing its ideal society, as women would be the carriers and raisers of the future generations. Her purity as a Muslim and as a womam was of vital important on that sense, in order to raise the children that would secure the future of the ideal society she was expected to be qualified in these two. This role of women was just as accepted in Turkish society as it was in other largely Muslim societies. As previously mentioned, centrality of her traditional domestic roles took place even in the modernization project of Kemalism that aimed for a modern, educated women figure.

4.2.2.1. Islamist Discourse's Foregrounding of Ideal Muslim/Islamist Women as a Defense against Modernity and Secularism

Increasing women mobilization and waves of feminism had resonated among Muslim societies as well. Islamists' general attitude on women rights was to praise Islam for being a religion that granted the women all the rights she needs and raised her to the highest status. Denigrating movements like feminism for being a tool of Western ideologies that correpts Muslim societies, Muslim women's debates on male dominance of the society and their support for women rights were generally overridden either with aforementioned discourse on women's status in Islam or these women's adoption of degenerated Western values. Islamist ideology's treatment of women's place in society does not only include her domestic duties, although they make up the majority of the discourse, but her role as Muslim women who actively work for the establishment of an ideal society, although in her own limited environment. This version of activism remains limited to a narrow definition of social participation, since women are considered to be sedition for society.

Post-1980 Islamism in Turkey experienced a change and gained a new dynamism, due to period's shifting political discourses and activism,

whichencompassed an improved discourse against the charges directed by secular groups. The status of women has become a heated debate that was discussed not only on grounds of Islamic philosopy but as a discourse to counter secularist critics that associate religion and women's backwardness. Discourse on women that praise her, her status in Islam, and explain how Islam does not subordinate women was, in actuality, surged as an effect of secularist opposition. Dichotomy between the ideal (Muslim) women and degenerated/Westernized women is an oftenly employed analogy among Islamist writers and in Islamist publications. Similar to Kemalist ideology's ideal women, Islamist ideology's ideal women is constructed by its contrast to the antagonist other. In front of the degenerated and sexually objectified women Muslim women was an example of chastity, motherhood, sacrifice and morality. Western values' degradation and sexualization of women, turning them into "easy" and "free" women, and Turkish feminists' importation of Western-made rights are constructed as threatening that would lead to degeneration of family and moral and religious norms (Dilipak 1988, 24-25). Their presentation of an ideal women, however, seems to be unquestionable, for their portrayal of this women is claimed to be based on the scripture and Islamic jurisprudence. This claim constantly repeated and reproduced by the religious figures which all of them happen to be males, has widely been used to counter the in-group criticisms that came from women against the patriarchal and formalist definitions of women in Islamist thought. Although opposition to West formed a major part of the Islamist discourse situates itself in a modern framework in post-1980. Tatlı (2001, 29) argues:

> Islam in the post 1980's Turkey stays within the boundaries of modernity. They use the modernist dichotomy of East/West with a different emphasis. Their main opposition to West evolves around the criticism of cultural modernity rather than the material contours of modernity such as Western technology or capitalism…The discourses of Islamists are embedded in the modernist framework, both in the sense that they are using the conceptual and political tools of modernity and they create urban centered political Islamist movements.

Their critique of modernity mainly revolves around the degeneration caused by the importation of Western values that do not comply with the values of Turkish-Islamic character of the society.

4.2.2.2. Islamist Women's Rising Mobility

Post-1980 Islamism in Turkey had experienced a major female participation in political activities and rapidly increasing number of female authors who write on Islam, women and women's participation in "*dava*" (the cause). Political parties' women branches were banned after the 1980 military coup, yet the mobility among women was much higher then any previous periods. Although women were now more visible and active in public places and social and political activities, the debates surrounding women in Islamist circles continued to revolve around her domestic roles along with her devotion to raising the Islamic cause, by being a good Muslim which, again, entailed motherhood and being a good wife. Raising awareness and voices of few Islamist women against the male dominance both in country and in the Islamist circles had distinguished itself in late 1980s. This resulted in women's active participation in debates surrounding women in Islam. According to Çakır (2000, 39) although there were couples of reasons for men, who held the authority in their hands, to allow women to engage in these debates:

> Starting from 1980s, when Islamist movements started to rise, men who monopolized the potency had let women, to a certain degree, to engage in debates on women in Islam. By this way, they would be more convincing and a "preoccupation" would be enabled for the increasing number of educated women. But going beyond the traditional male dominant perspective was never allowed. As a result, the traditional view of "there is no women problem in Islam" started to be defended increasingly by women as well… However, despite all barriers, a group of women who do not perceive the subject similar to men, and do question traditional approaches and their adoption managed to flourish.

Women's participation in activities within the Islamist circles, accelerated through 1970s and rapidly increased in post-1980 period, embodied a discourse that would legitimize their activities that went hand in hand with men. The concept of *bacı* (sister), although was not a new term and rather used often in society, was used as a way to

create a safe area, a sense of kinship between the men and women of the groups to dispose any kind of gender-based thoughts and emotions. While the gender of the women in these groups and organizations was emphasised with this word *bacı*, same word was also signifying the wide distance from sexuality (Aktaş 2005, 2). Aktaş exemplifies the treatment of *bacı* among Islamist circles with a quote from Süleyman Çobanoğlu:

> First of all, there was women whose milk was *halal*[47] and her body was *haram*[48] which was the mother. Then there were women whose milk was haram and body was halal which was the wife. Finally, there were women both her milk and body were haram who was *bacı*.

Degenderization of these women in early periods of their participation to social activities bears a resemblance to the experience of their Republican counterparts. Similar to Republican women, whose public participation was required disposal of traces of their sexual identity; these women were associated with a title that provided a protection for them against the accusations of sedition. Although women's covering in Islam projects the concealment of her sexual identity, conceptualization of *bacı* in Islamist organizations does not seem to be instrumentalized in a women-based mentality. It rather seems to be a product of masculine mindset intertwined with patriarchal practices that needs to degender women in order to be able to coexist without inciting any indecent behaviour. Although women themselves adopted this concept too, as the only solution for them to exist in these activities without feeling a sense of guilt, their fear of being sedition stems from the patriarchal practices more than the religious norms themselves. For religion both men and women are responsible to preserve their chastity and should avoid any immoral acts or anything leads to it, and degenderization of women, while men were not even considered to be subjected to same practice, reveals the patriarchal practices disguised with an allegedly religious justification. Society's ascription of women with a disproportionate moral burden, as a result of its patriarchal structure, presents itself in both Kemalism and Islamism, albeit

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[47]Religiously permitted.
[48]Religiously forbidden.

under different disguises. Changing perception and treatment of *bacı* in late 1980s[49], compelled by rising numbers of more educated more questioning Muslim women, exemplify the changing roles ascribed to women, by men, depending on period's changing women profile.

4.2.2.3. Islamist Women between the Hegemonic Discourses of Islamism and Kemalism

Rising demands of Islamist women for participation in public spaces had to struggle against two actors, "jacobin Kemalists and reactionary conservatives" (Aktaş 2005, 10). Their efforts in political activities were supported by Islamist men, as long as these activities did not entail demands for official powers and remained as voluntary work. Women's reclaiming of their identity, incorporated within the Islamist framework, had begun in late 1980s. Islamist media's long standing male dominance enabled them to have a free hand in writing on women, drawing ideal forms for her, without receiving any serious challenges. One of break points in the disclosure of male dominance in Islamist circles on women-related subjects was the debate that took place in Zaman newspaper in May 17, 1987 incited with an article written by Ali Bulaç, a well-known journalist majored in sociology and theology (Çakır 2000, 39).[50]His criticism of women's rights movements all together and holding feminism and "degenerated" feminist women accountable for distortion of the family and gender values, using a derogatory language, sparked a heated debate between Bulaç and a group of Islamist female authors and intellectuals. Bulaç's attack on feminism by deploying a discourse that actually ostracizes all women rights-related activities, countering it with praising women's status in Turkish history and culture reflects the typical discourse of the Islamist authors, media and publications:

> [N]ow they want to damage the male-female relations that contained a
> balance, either good or bad, and reached from first people to today.

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[49] For a detailed account see Cihan Aktaş, *Bacı'dan Bayan'a: İslamcı Kadınların Kamusal Alan Tecrübesi* (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2005).

[50] Titled as "*Feminist Bayanların Kısa Aklı*" (Short-mindedness of Feminist Women) Bulaç's article attacked feminism and feminist women, holding them accountable for the degeneration of the family and gender values. Choosing a title as '*aklı kısa*' Bulaç makes reference to a famous sexist Turkish idiom '*saçı uzun aklı kısa*' simply translates as 'long hair short mind' referring all women being half-wit.

Feminism is a rebelling occupation that calls women to revolt against men. The same philosophy that turned men against God with humanism, now try to damage the nature with technology, rendering human into a irresponsible, aimless, consuming, simple creature. But while these were being done, man and women were sharing the same bed. Now women are being imagined as inimical to men, and men are worrily standing in front of this pesky wave that will make his life miserable. If this antagonism and hate between man and women would become a natural part of social life, if feminism would become a life-style then humankind will come to an end… Because women do not want to share the same bed with man, rather she is being made to believe that men used her as an object, as a slave, exploited her and took her individuality from her hand throughout the history.

In the next paragraph, he associates feminism with homosexuality and lesbianism, holding feminism accountable for lesbianism and homosexuality while attacking the West. Then attacking modernity and its outcomes, constructing a discourse by interrelating unrelated subjects like abortion, environmental pollution and killing of people with nuclear weapons to exemplify the cruelties of Western societies, ending the paragraph with blaming "moderns" for betraying God, people and nature.

In our history and culture women has never been mistreated and belittled. She was never forced to work in factories like a slave, never left in a need of a piece of bread in the streets of slums, never had her chastity been put up on sale. Whose fault is it then, if she is desired to be put in these situations with deformed industrialization and stupifying modernization? Why do not feminists oppose to the humiliating practices of objectification of women by capitalist marketing and industrial centers that instrumentalize her in sexual exploitation? Why is being an object of marketing and advertisement considered human right while a young girl's demand to cover her head and go to school is not considered her natural right? Were not you defending human rights and women freedom? Let's say women herself chooses to be a slave by covering herself, does she not have the right to do so, in this age of ours when everything is claimed to be determined by individual choice? No, covering is not slavery but freedom, a noble revolt against this disgusting modernism that damages human life. Feminist women, you are short-minded and your heads are in the clouds!

There are couples of things worth examination in the above article. His hatred toward feminism seems to be based on a very limited, and paralysed, conceptualization of feminism that renders it into a simple man-hating irrational movement that does not

entail historical and socio-cultural realities. This overly simplistic treatment of feminism is latently being dispersed over all women rights movements, blaming them, and eventually Western societies, for the deformities both of Western societies and of Muslim societies. The last parapragh presents a very typical reaction and generalization of Islamist men, be it authors, intellectuls, media members or religious figures, that proudly chants the same discourse that, women have never been mistreated in our culture, referring Islam's granting of high status to women and claiming themselves to be perfectly operating this idea, which is simply incorrect. This discourse of priding its own culture and history on treatment of womenseems to be rather self-refuting, particularly in the context of this text, considering an idiom, born and bred and long-settled in Turkish society, that directly refers to a gender-based scorning is used as a title. Apart from this idiom to be contradicting with his claims of women's "never-mistreated" status, his humilitation of and vulgar language towards women who do not fit to his ideal implies an exclusivist attitude. Establishing his support for headscarved women and their struggle on grounds of creating an antagonist "other" displays correlation to practices of making politics over ideal and unfitting womenhoods that positions these two as opposite.

Although Bulaç's article did not target Islamist women, his charges against feminism received great criticism from a group of Islamist women, revealing article's sexist and discriminative langugae. Debate that took place in *Zaman*newspaper included well-known Islamist female intellectuals and authors. Responding articles of female authors extensively reflected the male-dominant structure of the Islamist circles that allow no room for questioning of this dominance that actually embodies the practices and mindset of patriarchy and is being disguised under the concept of being a divine truth. A couple of these responding articles are worth mentioning by virtue of their spot-on evaluations and their reflection of Islamist women's growing discontent towards Islamist men's authority:

> Apparently he sees women as a sexual commodity as he is worrying that women will not share the same bed with men… Contrary to the author's convictions, women's fundamental problem is not whether to share or not share the same bed with men. Women strive to be in equal conditions, to receive humane treatment. They try to put across that they did not come to

this world only to bear children and do chores… Considering feminism as the reason of homosexuality and lesbianism is also fallacious… In Ottoman period that the author admires dearly, many poets wrote on the beauty of boys. Would not it be considered a defamation and trickery, if it is not due to ignorance, to associate this sexual deviation that comprises different psycho-dynamics to feminism?" (Çakır 2000, 40).

Mualla Gülnaz's article (Çakır 2000, 41) draws attention how men's fear of feminism is directly related to their fear of losing their dominance and power over women:

Yes! Feminism calls women to revolt against men's dominance. At home, at work, in the streets… Why is this so feared? Instead of beating around the bush, why do not you think about giving up on this dominance? The best way to destroy this feminism monster! is to destroy its raison d'etre. We should admit that it is very hard to give up on habits, particularly the ones that this comfortable. But being a slave to God starts with defeating its own *nafs* (self)…

Yıldız Kavuncu's (née Ramazanoğlu) article (Çakır 2000, 42) highlights the Islamist men's fencing off of Islamist women's enquiry of male dominance and women rights in Islamic traditions by preaching women's status in Islam. The problem is while women's discontent stems from the reality and experience, Islamist men bring forward an ideal instead of questioning how much this ideal is put into practice in real life.

We do not say that we should mingle feminist movements and Muslim women. But the problem of Muslim women being prevented from using her rights exists for centuries. By saying "all rights of Muslim women is given by Islam" in a stern tone and ending the discussion does not solve the problem, rather, immobilises it, renders it unsolvable… Women who are busy with her house, work and prayer is also worth respect, but, threating the women, who is intellectually gifted and capable to produce original ideas, with "becoming man-like" and losing her femininity is very ugly. It is this mentality that sees and presents women only in terms of her sexuality, not as human.

This argument between Bulaç and a few Islamist women continued for couple of months which attracted the attention of other Islamist journalists, media members and religious figures. Unsurprisingly, these women's rightful protest received a lot of criticism from their colleagues in *Zaman* and people from other Islamist domains (Çakır

2000, 42). Mualla Gülnaz in her interview with Çakır (Çakır 2000, 49) mentions few well-known names of Islamist circles such as Nabi Avcı, Erol Göka and Ahmet Çiğdem who supported them while authors like İsmet Özel kept orating a widespread belief on women's lack of religiousity. She says in the same interview that "I remember that oft-repeated discourse on women's being something like a flower, a vase that needs to be preserved and protected at home was intensified during those days". The women discourse of the Islamist circles, defining her as a domestic creature always less-smart, less-capable than men so naturally in need of protection remained more or less the same, particularly in case of women's attempt to go over the lines drawn by Islamists. Having great confidence in their discourse, due to their belief that this is how Islam itself projected the male-female relations, "unfitting" women like these mentioned women did not only face being lectured by mainly male "authorities" but their religiousity has come under question as well. Going beyond or questioning the "ideal women" of Islamist ideology, that claims to draw this ideal purely based on Quran and hadiths entails a general anger that apparently justifies the questioning of a women's piety. Media's importance on producing, disseminating and maintaining of certain forms and ideas was previously mentioned. The majority of access to means of producing and settling a discourse is monopolised by the dominant group/idea. This, as this example shows, enables this ideal female image to be not only dominantly maintained but used as a justification ground to fence off any in-group criticism, even if they are based on realities that women experience on micro and macro levels.

4.2.2.4. Ideal Muslim Women in Islamist Publications

Portrayal of ideal Muslim/Islamist women was a widespread subject in Islamist publications. Women and family oriented magazines abounded with qualities of these ideal women, along with the threats of modernization to these women (Acar 1991, 280). Constructing a duality between ideal women and modern women these magazines continued to bring forward these ideal women as a defense to and antidote of this anti-prototype, similar to the discourse of well-known Islamists. This idealization, of media publications and of prominent Islamists, appears to be problematic in terms of ascribing a disproportionate burden to women in presenting the example of a "perfect" Muslim in

front of the charges from seculars and West, while burdening her with the duty of protecting Muslim community's "honor" and integrity, and its concealment of Muslim women's status in practice and its negative outcomes and supressing the debates on this problem. Islamist men's excessive concentration on ideal Muslim women almost operates as a fulfilment of one's own piousness on the grounds of displaying an effort to 'correct' the society. Similar to Kemalism that situated women into the center of its modernization project, Islamism centers women to the construction of ideal society. Reproduction and maintaining of this discourse does not only stem from Islamists' comprisal of traditional definitions of women but this, latently, shakes the responsibility off of men's shoulder. Once women become central in debates and questions of honor, chastity, piousness in her every behaviour is justified to be scrutinized.

Acar's study (1991, 280) on variety of Islamic women-related magazines displays these magazines' opinions on womenhood. While all share similarities on women, there are some differences in their discourse and conceptualization of women. They share a common disfavor towards West and its product "modern women". This modern woman seems to be loaded with ambiguous definitions and features that threats Muslim women's piety and readers are being warned towards the threat of "becoming a modern woman" (Acar 1991, 283). Anything considered to be modern (makeup, fashion, vacations for instance) is disposed in the context of anti-Westernization. Interesting that, now, three decades later, these activities once considered to be a part of modern/capitalist enemies have become a big part of Islamist circles' life style, enabled a big market of "modest" fashion, vacation and consuming opportunities appealing to conservative/Islamist consumers with its "modern" yet allegedly Islamic features and consumed by also these very same people, and their children, who once attacked Westernization en masse. Although the "West" as an enemy still preserves its place in the agenda and discourse of Islamists and Kemalists alike, although on different grounds, incorporating these "Western/capitalist" behaviours into an Islamic lifestyle seems to be a rapidly increasing trend among Islamist circles. One of the magazines in Acar's study, named *Kadın ve Aile* (Women and Family) "to complement its stand on anti-Westernization, Kadın ve Aile devotes nearly half its space to material on women's

roles in the household, in other words to presenting the image of the ideal women" (Acar 1991, 284).

> For the Muslim women, shame and honour are of primary importance. She is completely devoted to her husband and her home; she does not show herself to strange men, does not look at them. Her house has separate quarters for men and women. She does not go out without her husband's permission, and does not receive any male or female guests at home without his approval… (The Muslim women) covers the beauties of her body, does not adorn herself outside of her home, and does not show her treasures to strangers… (For her) the main obligation is to establish a family and raise children. She is a loyal wife to her husband and an affectionate mother to her children. She looks after the house, does the chores, cooks, and strives for the proper upbringing, education and socialization of her children.[51]

Another magazine, *Bizim Aile* (Our Family), appears as relatively more "liberal" with a more intellectual approach and it engaged in some political debates related to women rights as well; yet, their stand on the matter was limited to the headscarf ban. And on other matters related to women, for instance 'its stand on women's work out of home conforms to the mainstream Islamic position (a women's place is in the home) (Acar 1991, 293).

> The argument that women can only be happy if they work (outside of home) is a fallacy; because for women to work outside without any need or obligation to do so means neglect of their home, family and children. This influences the psychological well-being of future generations.[52]

These widespread approaches to women, her duties and her place revealed itself in political activities of Islamists as well, which will be examined in the following part.

4.2.2.5. Islamist Women's Political Activism and February 28 Coup

Women's experience of political activism in the late 1980s and onwards, by being volunteers, exemplified women's secondary, and open to instrumentalization, status in

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[51] M. Esad Coşan, 'İslam ile Batı'nın Arasındaki Derin Farklar', *Kadın ve Aile*, November 1985, p.4 (cited in Acar 1991, 285).
[52] Meral Kaçar, 'Sohbet: Yavuz Bahadıroğlu', Bizim Aile, February 1988, p.3. (cited in Acar 1991, 293)

Islamist circles. Constantly advised to stay home, women's political activisim during late 1980s early 1990s was generally justified on grounds of serving to "dava". Both educated young girls and women, expelled from universities and public space and mobilized around headscarf protests, and housewives who did not engage in political activism had come together in these activities and contributed to it on different aspects; university students with their activism, dynamism and resistance and housewives with their solidarity, maturity and life experience (Eraslan 2000, 212). First initiated by Welfare Party officials, mainly by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who was then party's chair of Istanbul, establishment of a women branch in party provided a new domain of activism for women who could not utilize their skills anymore, neither in universities nor in public spaces and politics, on that sense, was thought to provide them access to the public spaces (Çakır 2000, 93). Apart from their mobilization around headscarf problem, their genuine belief in this *dava* enabled women's active participation to the party en masse. For the first time in the history of Republic, women of a political party were performing a head to head, one to one, campaign to mobilize voters, much more intensively than their same-party colleagues. Arat (2005, 9) in her study covers Islamist women's experience in Turkish politics, highlights the unexpected and astounding mobilization of WP women:

> I was struck with the political activisim of *Refah* Party women. The intensity and extent of *Refah* women activists' engagement in politics was striking even beyond the Turkish context. It had been long argued that women lacked interest in politics. Even though feminist literature clearly contested the claim and argued that women were more involved ad interested in politics than the orthodox political scientists assumed, women have not been militant activists in large numbers within the party ranks…Women, in less than a decade, helped carry the party- which was a marginal one in the late 1980s- to power, as the larger coalition partner of the government… They were women brought up in a secular context and they had adopted many of the values propagated by the secular Republic. As party workers, female activists mobilized other women through a process of apolitical politicization. In other words, both those who took part in the party organization and others who were recruited as members were politicized in the social context of personalistic networks cultivated through neighborhood relations, which they caried into and prserved in the political domain. Party members successfully tapped the traditional mediums of socialization and politicized them… They remained committed activists, because they derived personal/individualistic satisfaction from the

solidarity, comradeship, and patriotism that their common engagement delivered above and beyond the emotional satisfaction of religious observance. Their success was a result of crossing the boundaries between the private and the political, secular and religious, democratic and authoritarian, and individualistic and communitarian. Their failures were defined by the boundaries they were unable to cross, such as the glass ceiling separating themselves from the men in their party.

Women's participation in party activities was not welcomed by the more conservative groups within the party. Yet, after seeing the results of their participation that benefited the party, both in numbers of members and in widening its sphere of influence, women's participation had received greater support and encouragement. Between 1990-1995 women branch of the party displayed a great endeavour, and achievements, even more than the male party members. Yet, despite their great efforts their position in the party did not go beyond than being members who work for devotedly, only for God's sake, and were not ranked in official duties and candidacy, positions that considered to be "worldly" gains, apparently only by party's women members and not the men. Women gathered in this "women ghetto"[53] separate from men, filled with feelings of devotion with no thought of personal gain. Although Sibel Eraslan, head of the "ladies' commission"[54] of Istanbul during this period, states that it was not WPofficials decided for such segregation but women themselves established it in that way, their efforts to surpass this line in following years proved that men were not in favor of women engaging in the central administration of the party that considered to be men's space (Çakır 2000, 96). Women's enormous efforts that carried theWP to victory received no concrete gain in terms of women's representation in the party. In 1995 general elections there were not any women in the candidate lists. The WP's attitude received criticism from women's right activists, referring to its injustice treatment of female party

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[53] Name used by Sibel Eraslan, referring to its all-women, filled with sisterhood-like emotional ties structure that acts as a home for these women (Çakır 2000, 89).

[54] Welfare Party used "ladies' commissions" instead of "women commissions". Arat (2000, 41) explains this choice on several grounds; using "ladies", "a form of reference used more in private relationships and usually in singular together with the first name of the women in question, to qualify a public organization harked back to pre-Republican times when the word was more commonly used". And she adds a male party official explanation on the matter as; "not all women could become ladies, however, Refah Party believed that all women were actually ladies. The preference for the word "ladies" rather than "women" reflected the high esteem in which the party held women. The euphemism also revealed that the male leaders who named the organization considered that the word "woman" needed to be substitued by a more grafecul or "polite" alternative".

members who carried the party to victory (Yaraman 1999, 133). Even women's magazines of the Islamist circles, *Mektup* for instance, demanded support for WP without making any remark or comment on women's candidacy or deputyship (Yaraman 1999, 132). None of the 21 female applicants for candidacy were given a chance to stand for election (Yaraman 1999, 131). Althoughthe WP's attitude reflects a combination of traditional-patriarchal definitions and religious interpretations and limits of women in proportion to men's leading status, this did not receive a noticeable criticism from party's ladies' commissions. One of the leading female members, Halise Çiftçi, theWP head of ladies commissions of Ankara, even consolidated WP's attitude in her comments, by criticising the duplicity of other parties who supposedly seem to raise number of female candidates, quoted in *Pazartesi* magazine of *Kadınlara Mahsus Gazete* regarding criticisms WP received had said*: "*WP is a party in accordance with Turkey's fabric. A party inside the system. Male-dominant perception prevails in Turkey. In all political parties too. Even those who said 'we will bring quota application for women do not heep their words." while referring the male-dominant structure of other political parties in Turkish politics (Yaraman 1999, 132).It might be due to the desire to present a univocality or adoption of a realist approach to the dominant discourses in the society, however, such comments reveal a general espousal of party's then attitude towards its female members which, criticised by these women in following periods.

Women's belief in participating in political activities only for God's sake, Eraslan stated that they believed doing it for "worldy" gains such as mayorship or member of parliament would have decreased the worth of their deeds, had turned into an internal questioning of their male colleagues contentedly being candidates, mayors and government officials (Çakır 2000, 97). This questioning, although not widespread, was not welcomed by party's male cadres. Arat explains (2005, 66):

> This sense of fulfillment was, ironically, also an obstacle to women's pursuit of higher levels of public office within the party organization. Women were disinclined to seek higer office, because they were content with what they were doing. Yet, there were also other serious patriarchal obstacles to how far women could seek higher positions within the party. Some of the most successful leaders did seek public recognition in return for their work in the party ranks. Sibel Eraslan, the successful president of the

Istanbul province, or "the Refah Party women who carried Tayyip to the mayoralty," as she was named by the press, sought public office for her close circle after Tayyip Erdoğan became the Mayor of Istanbul. She was refused. Instead, she was "accused" of becoming like "feminists." The assumption was that women worked for a cause and were not expected to ask anything for themselves… Soon after, Sibel Eraslan and the women she worked with in Istanbul were to be replaced by a different cadre of women, more subservient to the central organs of the party than Eraslan's group had been.

After the 1997 military memorandum, the "postmodern coup", Islamists had faced a serious repression process. Following this, headscarf ban and protests against the ban had intensified. Female students faced harsh implementations of the state, including being subjected to violence. Although Islamist media, civil society organizations and political figures had supported headscarved students, after 1997 process the numbers of actively in-field people had started to drop and many retreated from their once so vehemently expressed fighting spirit. Çakır (2000, 84) along with his quotes from internal criticisms towards this abandonment of the headscarved students, outlines the situation during 1999-2000: "Students with headscarf had very little external support. Men who once eulogized their 'Islamic solidarity' more than the girls' protests and claimed that headscarf was everyone's problem both men and women, were not even counted to twenty". Eraslan (Çakır 2000, 102) draws the attention to how headscarf "cause" benefited many men to further their status:

I do not know if they claimed and protected the cause but, through writing on headscarf and gaining votes over it, they had come to really good positions. They have become good writers and thinkers. But all unjust treatment was received by women… After all these disappointments… I've come to understand that with these experiences we established our own identity. Women, in order to realize her own power, had to experience these betrayals and abandonments.

The February 28 Process and the WP experience inclined Islamist politicians to be more cautious and to assume a more moderate discourse in facing the realities of reel politics. Criticisms they received on their women discourse during WP, had experienced a shift in Virtue Party, successor of WP, and 4 women were appointed to stand for elections. Merve Kavakçı and Ayşenur Tekdal were wearing headscarf; Nazlı Ilıcak and Oya

Akgönenç were not. On VP's female candidate preference, Hidayet Şefkatli Tuksal, in her interview with Çakır (Çakır 2000, 30) narrates that some party members recounted that the party administration originally did not want to appoint a candidate with headscarf but grass-root female members pressured the administration, they said Nazlı Ilıcak and Oya Akgönenç would not represent them. Whether this is true or not, female candidates with headscarf signals VP's effort to present a more moderate and "acceptable" image. After the elections, 3 female candidates were elected, apart from Ayşenur Tekdal, yet, Merve Kavakçı was dismissed from the parliament due to her headscarf. Merve Kavakçı had received great amount of attention both from Islamist and secular media. Against secular media's negative labelling and insults towards Kavakçı Islamist media centered her as a token of their changing, and more qualified, image. Alankuş and Çavdar (2000, 108-109), in their comparison of Islamist and Kemalist media's treatment of Kavakçı that reveals both sides phallocentric and patriarchal language, analyses Islamist media's stand as such:

> Islamist media had tried to reverse the hegemonic discourse of secular media that constructs its "positive" identity by attributing such features "anti-modernist, reactionist, uncivilized, pro-totalitarian/theocratical" to its opponents (Islamists). Consequently, Islamist media was seen in a struggle to prove that it itself is the one who is "modern, progressivist, civilized, democrat and secular." Therefore, we see that the references of the hegemonic were placed in the centre instead of the Islamic references. In this way, Merve Kavakçı's urban, elite, well-educated identity was praised as the symbol of Islam in Turkey being freed from the rural and modernized. In an article written by İdris Özyol, by saying "… we are coming… with good English skills, with internet, with Tom Waits songs, with Che Guevera dreams, with Yusuf İslam enthusiasm, with jihad in Oganen… we are coming. We know more, we read more and we listen different songs, we are better than you and knowing this drives you crazy." claims of Islam, which was tried to be kept in the periphery through Merve Kavakçı's elite identity, to the centre is celebrated… By the way, it is seen that Islamist media, while problematising secular media's exclusion of women with headscarf and defending Merve Kavakçı, had assumed the characteristics of Islamist patriarchy and phallocentric discourse. Islamist media had denigrated the unveiled women body that it assumes as 'fitne' and deemed this body worthy of being treated as man's object of desire, while sacralizing covered women body and assuming it as chaste and acting as its custodian. But, Islamist media did not present a discourse that presents women as man's lacking opponent while defending Merve Kavakçı, contrary to secular media that labeled her with stubborness and sedition, traits attributed to women,

Islamist media evaluated her through "bravery, manfulness, true to her word", traits considered to be superior man's indicatives. So Merve Kavakçı, while men who could not protect her were blamed with cowardice, a womenly deficit, was being praised with a manly virtue, bravery.

In Islamist media's phallocentric discourse…Hasan Karakaya (from Akit newspaper) does what İlhan Selçuk did for veiled women body to unveiled women body and presented Islamist version of phallocentric discourse.He says that what is done in the name of "modernity" and "emancipation" is a part of operation to denudate and eventually stupify women, and then saying women are "taken out from the cages" and "condemned to lustful appetites' brutish desires".Following with an ironic tone; "…women should be more denudated so they can be caged more easily. First you will remove the headscarf… then a button from the blouse, and then the second, and then!... Then you will shorten the skirt… first midi, then mini, then throw away the skirt… I wonder if with this headscarf ban are they trying to get them to bed more easily?" he ascribed himself the right to denudate the 'sinful women body' as the object of his desire.

These examples from the Islamist media's discourse on women signal both, the male-dominant understanding and double-standard in their perception of chastity which seems to be binding only for women as he sees no harm to talk openly about a woman in a sexualized fashion, and their desire to show the improvement they have made in terms of what is considered modern.

4.2.2.6. The Post-February 28 Process and Present-Day Characteristics of Islamist Discourse in the Context of the Justice and Development Party

After the turbulent year of the 1990s, early 2000s had seen the birth of a new actor of Turkish political scene. Founded in 2001 by a group of politicians split from VP along with some other politicians from other center-right parties, the JDP has won the first election it participated and continued to win consecutively since then. Its preeminent dominance since 2001 had enabled JDP to establish its discourse, supplied with its growing economical ties and media ownership. Distanced itself from the *Milli Görüş* (National Outlook) tradition of VP, JDP portrayed an image combining liberal values with its conservative-democrat identity, as party defined itself as such, promoting EU membership and values. Although there had been a gradual shift in JDP's discourse

over years, their approach to women seems to be grounded, and expressed, on more or less same ideals that they incorporated from their Islamist identity and their internalization of patriarchal definitions of and practices related to women. JDP's has shown interest in women representation and women-related social policies. Turkey's EU candidact process has opened new doors in terms of social policies and gender mainstreaming which, majorly implemented from JDP government (Dedeoğlu and Elveren 2012, 41). However, treatment of women in Turkish politics and laws as rendering her presence into family instead of treating her as an individual, a settled practice ever since from the Ottoman to Republican history, continued to be the initial ground in decision-making processes on women. JDP, on that sense, continued to consolidate women's position as more of a domestic figure in its discourse on women.

Women's representation in the discourse of Islamist media and politicians, although the characteristics of JDP period Islamists present a considerably different image than that of WP period, entailed the same patronising attitude of the male dominant political structure and social life. Particularly JDPofficials' remarks on women reflect the traditional and patriarchal patterns of imagining women in certain moulds, constant emphasis on their status as mothers or daughters or expecting them to behave themselves particularly around men, considering women who do not fit in these moulds as rather marginal. Why is it important to assess the politicians' remarks, either coming from a secular or conservative politician, in assessing the exclusion practices towards women? The importance of discourse, holding the ways to access, was extensively mentioned in previous chapters. Coming from a politician's mouth, words do not only remain as his personal opinion, rather it turns into a debate subject, both applauded and contested, for days both in visual and print media. For instance, notable JDP leaders' statements on debates surrounding "working women versus motherhood" can be seen as example of this way of thinking. Several JDP spokespeople have said on numerous occasions that women who avoid motherhood for sake of working would be considered half women.[55] Working women, both mothers and single ones, in society already face scepticism, harder conditions and less pay they their male counterparts.

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[55]http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/erdogan-anneligi-reddeden-kadin-eksiktir-yarimdir-40113493　　accessed January 5, 2019.

Although JDP discourse reflects the belief on women and man being equal as believers and none is superior to other, the JDP's positioning of women in this context feeds the injustice practices women face due to being defined in very limited domestic definitions. While conservative politicians believe that praising women through her domestic positions is the best way to raise her status as it is how Islam did supposedly in the same way, they do not seem aware of the possible negative outcomes of this attitude or how it actually feeds the ongoing gender-based discrimination in the society. Although many politicians, including the President himself, occasionally try to promote women proctection and justice their discourse inherits the cultural presuppositions of women's "weakness" and "incapability" either implicity or explicitly. A research made by Hacettepe University on violence against women indicates the politicians' outlook on the issue does consolidate the settled gender-biased judgments in the society.[56] The adoption of this already culturally settled mentality places or rather reiteratewomen's less-beingness in society's perception. Bülent Arınç's, former deputy prime minister, words to Nursel Aydoğan, member of parliament from Peoples' Democratic Party, saying "Lady be silent, as a women be silent!" signals the adoption of the stereotype that women should remain silent, as rather submissive than assertive.

Media members, some of whom have other titles as well including religious scholar and politician, who write on women or on the women-related debates in the agenda seem to feed the same discourse that internalize the ideal women and ascribes her much greater moral and social responsibilities compared to man, while not forgetting to add that "man and women are equal before God", and expect her to present the best example of it. The idea of expecting women to be more restrained, more morally responsible and self-effacing seems to be substantially strong; however, women with headscarf seem to be subjected to even more scrutiny, both by seculars and by Islamists. Hayrettin Karaman, a well-known Islamic scholar and author, wrote an article in Yeni Şafak newspaper, one of the leading media organs close to theJDP government, on women with headscarf and smoking. His article shows a clear example of how an act considered improper, with some exception provided to men, is considered even more

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[56] Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması
http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/KKSA-TRAnaRaporKitap26Mart.pdf accessed January 7, 2019.

improper for women with headscarf due to them wearing headscarf and making their religious identity visible unlike men who do not carry any sign of their religious identity, yet ascribes themselves the right to criticise women's behaviour.

> I can not approve and render permissible smoking for anyone, but ladies with headscarf come are at the top that list. When I see headscarved woman who openly smokes, I get the impression that she is saying to those who are different from her: "Do not be deceived by my headscarf, do not give up on me, I have a lot to share with you". Smoking, due to harming one's health, is not permissible for anyone, for women with headscarf it would also be indecent along with being haram… In our tradition, women do not smoke, and underage boys do not smoke around their elders, students do not smoke around their teachers because this would be indecent.[57]

His prioritization of women with headscarf in implemention of "decent" behaviours exemplifies this instrumentalization of women as a sign, a model to represent the ideal and true Islam while men, including underage boys, are privileged to practice the very same act considered indecent for women solely based on the traditional definitions of gender roles. Due to great criticism he received, particularly from the Islamist women, he wrote another article to "clarify" his argument, yet, the second article seems to reflect the same stereotyping and morally prioritization of women with headscarf, openly discriminating women without headscarf while he explained what he meant by "those who are different" in his first article.[58] He emphasises that he said smoking is *haram* (religiously prohibited) both for men and women, yet, it should be asked how does he approve something he himself labeled as haram when it comes to men's smoking, and of underage boys under some conditions, based on making reference to tradition? How is it expected from women to present an entirely decent, a perfect model Muslim image because she chose to wear headscarf? It is interesting that one of the most popular discourse used by Islamist men, by using Quranic references, is men's leader position in the family, namely in the society yet when it comes to moral responsibilities, Islamist men seem to impute the obligation of setting an example to women's shoulder while simultaneously regenerating a discourse on women's less-being than men in religion,

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[57]https://www.yenisafak.com/yazarlar/hayrettinkaraman/basortulu-sigara-2039345 accessed January, 7, 2019.

[58]https://www.yenisafak.com/yazarlar/hayrettinkaraman/basi-ortulu-sigara-2-2039401 accessed January 7, 2019.

intelligence and so forth. This reveals that Islamist discourse on women is not only fed by religious interpretations, that would actually hold both men and women responsible in setting an example, but patriarchal and traditional practices that prioritize men, justify their actions solely based on their gender. Going beyond the limits of the ideal women of the Islamist discourse results in exclusion of even the same-group women as well.

In last decade, women rights had received an increasing attention from political parties and media organs, particularly to take the advantage of appealing the female voters. Women's political participation is one of leading subjects on the matter. Although the discourse of parties' programs on women diverge from one another in their conceptualization of women's status, rights and the amelioration of their conditions, their low levels of female representatives and respective politicians' sexist remarks on women show that their official discourses envisioned in party programs are proven to be unmatching with their actions. The JDP' conceptualization of women in its party program makes references to women's domestic duties, particularly raising healthy generations, with adding JDP's commitment to encourage women's active participation in social life and political activities.[59] Yet, their number of female representatives, as well, remains very limited compared to their great number of male representatives. Although JDP seems to actively promote gender equality outlook in terms of political participation, their numbers of male and female representatives are overly disproportionate. Looking at the statements of the party officials and the language of the government friendly media organs JDP's discourse on women seems to incorporate a combination of Islamist and traditional-patriarchal definitions of womenhood which is reflected through party officials' statements. Campaign to demand headscarved representatives organized by Islamist women in 2011, JDP had not responded to these demands on the grounds of inconvenience of the time and social conditions. Fatma Bostan Ünal, member of JDP's caucus, was excluded from the party due to her insistence on having headscarved representatives (Yılmaz 2015, 204). In 2013, 4 female representatives from JDP decided to wear headscarf in parliament. These representatives had not shown a support to the campaign for headscarved representatives and, according to Yılmaz (2015, 205), they were rewarded by men with

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[59]https://www.JDPParti.org.tr/parti/parti-programi/ accessed January 8, 2019.

candidacy instead of women who struggled to advocated headscarf during the campaign. Sırrı Süreyya Önder's, the representative from the Peace and Democracy Party, proposal on regulating the parliament's dress code in support of headscarved women were met with silence by these women as well. Yılmaz interprets these women's position as obedience to the male authority that eventually marginalizes the women who openly challenge to the male authority.

Although the RPP officials' sexist remarks receive great criticism from pro-JDP groups, women and politicians, their silence on JDP officials' sexist remarks seems paradoxical. *KADEM* (Women and Democracy Foundation), a JDP-affiliated women organization vice-chaired by President Erdoğan's daughter, is one of the most well known government friendly women organization that embraced an inclusive pro-women identity. Kılıçdaroğlu's remarks on Sema Ramazanoğlu and violence against women had received a lot criticism from *KADEM*. JDP affiliated politicians' sexist/discriminative remarks on women are not openly criticised by *KADEM*, although it was actively involved in opposing a JDP proposal of a previously changed law considering rape victims' marriage to their rapists.[60]

Islamist discourse on women that renders women into a limited definition idealized by many and used as a justification ground to decide a women's "decency" or "indecency", by trying to ground its claims on religious and cultural references, seems to be still intact for the most part. Although there are contesting voices from a few Islamist women, their sphere of influence seems to be limited compared to men's dominating position, not to mention the amount of criticism and accusations they received from their male counterparts.

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[60] In 2003, the advisor of the Minister of Justice asserted, during the Turkish Penal Code debates, that in case of rapist marrying the victim he should be exempted from penalty. Although this law was changed in 2005, the bill proposed by JDP in 2016 heatened the debates on this issue once again. The bill proposed impunity for individuals married to under age children in case of 5 years of hassle-free marriage. Although JDP members and state officials claimed that the arrangement was proposed based on a social reality in Turkey and it will not cover the rape victims the bill withdrew due to severe criticism it received from opposition parties, non- governmental organization and public. Albeit under age marriage is still in practice in different parts of Turkey, proposing a law that can and will be exploited, and will harm the female population the most, instead of ameliorating the defective cultural practices only paves the way for further institutionalization of gender-biased cultural codes.

CONCLUSION

Gender understanding in Turkey seems to have such a wide-reaching influence that its characteristics, patriarchal traditions and phallocentric language, influence the daily practices. Its influence is spread to a wide spectrum in the settings of political, social, cultural and religious perceptions of the society. It does not remain as a minor force in influencing the relations and balances in different areas of life but act as a determinant in the construction of these relations. Its patriarchal structure centralizes women as a ground to ameliorate the society, ascribes women with a higher burden in terms of the morality and quality of the society. This, and many other factors, supply and maintain the dominant versus subordinate positions in terms of gender relations. Women are perceived as the passive actors of male agency. From the small details and conversations of daily life to the political discourses, the men-women duality are mainly perceived, and continuously keep being re-constructed, in regard to this male-dominant gender relations.

Major political forces of the country seem to rely on their discourses of idealized women. Women, in this sense, remain a key aspect, being instrumentalized both as a canvas for a group to demonstrate its ideal definition and convey this ideal to the society, as a sample used in measuring the acceptability and properness of women. Similar to male-female relations, political groups' idealization and construction of women contains this mentality that regards itself an authority to dictate a certain, approved definition for women while rendering some other definitions as lacking. After the establishment of the Republic in 1923, the discourse on the dichotomy between secular state ideology and backwardness that associated with religion has become a constitutive power in state's treatment of both political and social affairs of the country.

The post-1980 period witnessed the long standing Kemalist female image being challenged by another rising idealized female image, which was the Islamist female image. The assumed opposition between Kemalist/secularist state ideology and Islamist ideology appears to be the main ground on which the ideal female images were constructed. Although both claim to be rooted in different values and settings, their discourse and way of constructing their ideal female images seem to share similarities.

While both accuse each other on grounds of either limiting or degenerating women by making different points on the matter, both embrace the stereotyping and exclusion practices for women. Praise of their ideal women entails the construction of an anti-image that burdened with all kinds of negative aspects. This paves the way for generations of exclusion practices or furthering the existing ones that help widening the gap between different social groups.

The secular(ist) identity's association of Islamist women, and headscarf, with religious and male oppression that Islamist women are not capable to eradicate due to their lack of qualities Kemalist women possess and their yet to be "modernized/enlightened" position attributes the same subordinate position to women with headscarf that secular circles critized Islamist men for. Although ideal Kemalist female is praised for possessing the qualities of modernity and civilization, she is not completely ruptured from her traditional identity either. She more or less remains in he boundaries drawn by the secular patriarchy which, although valuing her as a fellow citizen to men in the construction of the Turkish Republic, prioritize men as the leader of the society while emphasising women's domestic duties in order to raise an ideal future generation. Modern day secular/Kemalist ideology, which is mainly represented by the RPP as the leading group of the wing, embraces more or less the same treatment of women. While in theory, it advocates the same ideal values of Republican ideology; their application of these values remains limited. Not being able to reach, or get close to, gender equality in terms of in-party numbers of male-female officials and representatives would make an example. The Turkish Constitution's treatment of women, as well, embraced a quiet patriarchal spirit although it was mainly prepared and maintained by secularist groups and governments. Women's constitutional position got relatively better in recent decades yet the enforcement of these laws remain weak in practice.[61] Women with headscarf, although the RPP has softened up its stance in recent years on the matter as it has embraced a more moderate attitude towards religious people on the grounds of equality and freedom of expression, are still considered an anti-image in practice by secular groups, particularly due to being received as JDP-

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[61] For more information on the laws that promote gender inequality see; Çağlayan Kovanlıkaya "*1980 Sonrası Türkiye'de Politik Alanda Kadınlar ve Kadın politikası*" (PhD dissertation, Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi, 1999).

supporters en masse. The assumed dichotomy between the "modern" and the "backward" seems to still be used in its Western conceptualization that considers religion and religiosity as backward while attributing the modernity to secular and supposedly progressive groups. Although Kemalist/secular ideology envisions itself as modern and progressivist, it also has incorporated major parts of the patriarchal reflexes of the Turkish society.

Islamist ideology's prioritizing women's domestic duties, needing to label her as either mother, daughter or wife while praising her given-by-Islam status restrains her to the boundaries that exclude and ignore her individuality and agency. Although religious references, many interpreted by male scholars, are utilized in the culmination of this discourse on women, and its suitability to women's nature is constantly emphasised, one can not distinguish where the lines of scholars' interpretations of religious sources end and the lines of established patriarchal traditions within Turkish culture begin. Since one's identity is never dissociated from one's judgments and interpretations, this applies to the interpretations of the religious sources as well. While Islamist ideology gives women right to enter public sphere, this is conditioned with her entrance to be beneficial for the Islamic cause. Yet, men's presence in all spheres of public and political life is not subjected to the same level of scrutiny, while both have the same responsibilities in religion, which does show that the construction of Islamist ideology relies on the patriarchal concerns in terms of its treatment of women. Fencing off internal and external criticism with a theoretical principle such as women's status in Islam instead of evaluating the grounds of particularly the internal criticisms does not only strengthens the prevailing status quo but also blocks the ways in which the problems women face might be resolved. The dichotomy between the ideal Muslim women and the modern/free women pushes a discrimination that results in rendering the other less valuable, so that it legitimizes the grounds to discriminate the other.

While both ideologies seem to have confidence in their idealization of women, meaning that they take their ideal women as a guide for women to comply with, the lack of considering other possibilities, or learning to respect them, plays a vital point in understanding the limits and deficiencies of such idealizations. Women's positions in both ideologies remain less important and secondary. Although diverging from each

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other in terms of ideals, visions and concepts both incorporate patriarchal tendencies and practices and prioritize and value men and manhood over women and womenhood. Women stand as much more passive than men, vulnerable to male-dominant practices due to these practices constantly being reproduced and justified by culture and tradition that meddled in political ideologies as well.

Construction of an ideal woman in these ideologies draws on its difference from the "other". While defining its qualities, it emphasises the "negative" qualities of the other in order to strengthen its own positive claims. Tatlı (2001, 137) highlights the Islamist-Kemalist opposition's formative power in construction of their ideal women:

> In Turkey, the opposition between the Islamist ideology and the secularist state ideology has created a very original discursive space in which the identity of women is constructed. After the establishment of the Republic in 1923, the dichotomy between Islam and secularism has played a constitutive role for both the secularist state ideology and Islamist ideology, each of them defining itself as the negation of the other. During the process, the identity of women has become a crucial symbol an indicator for both ideologies. The discursive space developed the basis of women's existence and body had become a "fertile" sphere where these two ideologies conflict with each other and where power relationships are inscribed.

Male dominance is a considerable determinant in these ideologies' treatment of women, yet it is not only men who maintain this gender relations and exclusion practices. There are consirable amount of women on both sides who internalize these discourses and practices whether consciously on unconsciously. Previously mentioned, women who felt grateful to the founders of the Republic and who opposed women with headscarf during the 1980s and onwards in the name of protecting secularism had internalized Kemalist ideals as sole path of country's way to a Western style modernization. While doing so, few women had questioned the patriarchal tendencies of their own group and ideology and few of them had tried to question their perception of the "other", Islamist women. On that sense, ideal Kemalist female image and its reiteration of this Kemalist-Islamist opposition, by excluding a group of women while considering themselves the spokesman and representative of all women, had been studied by a very few in-group women.

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Kemalist women's questioning of Kemalist tradition's patriarchal tendencies had started in the 1980s. Their enquiry of early Republican period's state feminism and the traditional-patriarchal gender understanding had played a transformative role in these women's construction of a gender-sensitive and gender equality based discourse. Şirin Tekeli, Deniz Kandiyoti, Nilüfer Göle, Fatmagül Berktay were couple of leading names of mobilizing women groups during this period. Their studies of male-dominant structure of politics and patriarchal practices in social life raised awareness on the matter. This followed by campaings against violence against women, raising awareness on gender equality in politics and actively mobilizing around this matter under the roof of newly established women oriented foundations and platforms.

Secular/Kemalist women groups' embracement of feminist identity and more actively working to propagate women rights, however, seem to mainly remain within the borders drawn by Kemalist-Islamist opposition. Their questioning of state feminism and Republic's employment of women as an agent of its ideals were debated on the axis of expanding the possibilities of Kemalist women, by still considering it the norm, without giving much attention to its exclusionist character. Although there were few women who supported headscarved women's right to education, general of these groups incorporated a statist attitude that excluded headscarved women from the public space by assuming them as a threat, either used by Islamist men and their political aspirations or by foreign powers. This fear of "foreign powers" strangely seems to manifest itself in both Kemalists and Islamist, albeit on different grounds. There were few women on secular side of the polarization who showed an interest in the "other" women, beyond the lenses of threat to secularism. Nilüfer Göle, with her studies *Modern Mahrem* (1992) and *Seküler ve Dinsel* (2012), would make an example to this. Her studies, particularly Modern Mahrem, extensively covered Islamist women's position in the context of a constitutionally secular yet traditionally religious country. Her approach to Islamist women and their struggle had assumed an enquirer spirit that ponders on the possibilities and dilemmas of this struggle. Although it is impossible for a study to be independent of its owner's political, social, cultural and all aspects of her/his identity and, due to this, would result in certain drawbacks, as it happens in Göle's study, it can

be taken as an endeavour to open up the way for a better mutual understanding between parties.

Göle's study had received much criticism from secular circles due to going beyond the settled traditional patterns of thoughts and definitions about Islamist women (Çakır 2000, 44). Her study, and other studies on Islamist women, had received criticism from some Islamist women as well. Nazife Şişman (2000, 128-134) covered the deficiencies of these studies. She states that the couple of first problems of these studies, apart from assuming themselves as the norm while marginalizing the headscarved women by subjecting them to a modernity/secularism test that, are bearing a superficial approach to the matter and the lack of knowledge on Islam both as a religion and as a social and historical dynamic. She asserts that these studies determine an ideal norm by which they evaluate the headscarved women's "positive" or "negative" "development" (Şişman 2000, 133). Another deficiency, according to Şişman, is that these studies' affirmation of headscarved women as the "transformers/modernizers" of the Islamism in which she mentions Göle's study as an example to this approach (Şişman 2000, 134). Çakır (2000, 44-45) states that "these studies show the interest towards Islamist women and Islamist movement yet, to what extent these studies had managed to improve the lack of knowledge and prejudices of the secular groups is dubious. In other words, it can not be said that these studies had brought the 'Islamist women' and the 'secular women' closer, moreover, it is clear that some of these researchers do not have such concern".

Although studies that roam around the lines between Kemalist and Islamist discourses do acquire certain shortcomings, not to mention being in very few numbers, there had been some other promising advances. In 2013, a campaign organized for headscarf freedom in public spaces by *Başkent Kadın Platformu* (Başkent Women Platform) received a considerable support from many different human rights organizations and feminist organizations.[62] Among them, there were well-known feminist academicians as well, including Şirin Tekeli, Fatmagül Berktay, Nükhet

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[62]https://www.timeturk.com/tr/2013/03/02/feministlerden-basortulu-kadinlara-destek.html
accessed January 14, 2019. Headscarf ban is partly lifted in October 2013, followed by further lifting in 2015 and 2016.

Sirman, Serpil Çakır and Şemsa Özar, of whom some were the leading names of post-1980 women movements in Turkey. A platform established to demand headscarved representatives, campaigned in 2011 for the JDP to include such representatives, supported by a number of well-known Islamist female authors and intellectuals, yet these efforts were met with suspicion and even perceived as a threat to JDP government in Islamist circles and media organs while receiving support from and coverage in secular media organs (Yılmaz 2015, 203).

KADER (Foundation for Supporting the Female Candidates), mainly established by secular groups, and similar organizations actively work on to establish a better gender-equality in representation. Their efforts to raise awareness on the matter and achieve concrete results may bring a further compromise between different women groups who also work on gender equality in political participation. Although political grouping in Turkey, along with settled prejudices, does influence the gap between women groups, sharing similar concerns and still being at the peripheries of a male dominant political structure may eventually enable these women groups to establish a common platform to debate these concerns, independent of their identities.

Male dominance that grounds itself on the pillars of patriarchal traditions in Islamist tradition was also challenged by a few Islamist women. These women, most of whom had received high education and were experienced in political activism as well, challenged the Islamist men's subordination of women and legitimizing the patriarchal practices they incorporated by referring to Islamic sources. Their assumption of themselves as religiously and socially superior manifested itself in their constant discussions on women's responsibilities, that connects being a good Muslim firstly to her domestic duties and her level of satisfying her husband's needs while in fact this approach appears as an extension of patriarchal traditions, considering the fact that there are many women unmarried or do not have any domestic titles. Sibel Eraslan, Cihan Aktaş, Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, Mualla Gülnaz, Elif Toros were the leading names who challenged to the male dominant discourses in Islamist circles. However, their challenge received very few support and rather criticised by the majority. Subjected to a scrutiny from both Kemalists and Islamists, Göle (2012, 58) describes the position of Islamist women as "a challenge to the secular definitions of emancipation of women and a

resistance towards to men's Islam that identifies headscarf with submission to his own authority." Similar to Göle, Eraslan (2002, 247) points out that "Islamist women were subjected to exclusion practices by Islamists for being considered a sedition and by Kemalists for being considered as reactionists."

With the JDP's dominance in political life, the perception towards and possibilities of women with headscarf have changed. They are much more socially and politically visible and present a much more active agency in all spheres of life. Yet, as exemplified previously, the outlook on women in Islamist circles still majorly comprise a male-dominant character. There are few women who raise their voices against statements in line with this mentality that were made by some famous scholars.[63] However, several points appear problematic in this matter. First, these kind of statements receive very few criticism, most of them made by women, while the majority of the people try to legitimize these statements on several grounds while vilifying the in-group critics. Second, the politicians' sexist/discriminative remarks do not receive even that much of criticism from Islamist circles. In case there is a criticism from a group member, he or she is generally declared to be a betrayer or degenerated by Western movements like feminism. Previously mentioned that, both Kemalist and Islamist politicians' discriminative/sexist remarks do not receive criticism from their own group while their treatment of opposite groups' politicians' remarks seem implacable. Group identity turns into a stick to correct any in-group opposition, on the grounds of not strengthening the hand of the "other". Along with that, for Islamist women, it contains the charges of being "degenerated" by Western movements like feminism. Islamist women's struggle for headscarf seems to remain as the major domain where they voiced their concerns about women rights. Few Islamist female intellectuals had been involved in organizations and campaigns, particularly women-related ones, outside the Islamist circles. *Başkent Kadın Platformu*, founded in 1995, presented a unique image considering the milieu it was born into. Actively participating in human rights campaings and women-related campaigns both in Islamist and feminist circles, its members like Hidayet Şefkatli Tuksal had become one of the well-known for

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[63] Nureddin Yıldız's, a famous scholar among certain Islamist groups, remarks on working women and Hayreddin Karaman's remarks on headscarved women who smoke received a lot of criticism from several female Islamist authors and intellectuals.

their efforts in building an inclusive women understanding in Turkey.[64] In recent years foundations like *KADEM* had become recognized for their women-oriented, violence against women and gender mainstreaming campaigns. Although they maintain their silence towards theJDP officials' discriminative/sexist language, they try to present a better inclusive demeanor in issues such as gender equality and discrimination towards different women groups.

Women continue to remain as a significant part of the debates in macro and micro levels of politics, society and religion. The language of majority of these debates comprise a male-dominant mentality that, by taking the advantage of its dominant position, reproduces and reaffirms the settled definitions of and limits on women. Political groups' male-dominant discourses that utilize the construction of an ideal female strengthens the settled patriarchal codes and the exclusion practices that go over the idealization or vilification of certain types of women. This utilization of women hinders the redressing of this long-standing dichotomization between different womenhoods. Features of the dominant discourse on women seem to go through a transformation since the 1990s to today with the recession of Kemalist female image. Yet, that does not to say that discourse on women entirely changes depending on period's dominant power. Contrary, although the language, the materials and treatment of the matter might seem to differ, both discourses, Kemalists and Islamists, contain the male dominance that idealizeswomen in a certain form while excluding the unfitting. Both do not seem willing to deal with the androcentric nature of Turkish political life. This maintains the grounds by which the politicians' statements on and media's projection of women render themselves legitimate. Women's projection in media organs, independent of their political identity, still entails a sexist language that defines and classifies and judges women in terms of her "properness" and "chastity", latently questions their victim status in case of rape or murder by utilizing the settled traditional norms that ascribe the moral burden to women.[65]Women's experience in political and social life, particularly in political parties, seems to continue to stay within the limits of "men's support, permission and supervision" (Göle 1991, 108). Women's activism in

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[64]http://www.emekveadalet.org/alinti/hidayet-sefkatli-tuksal-2/ accessed January 15, 2019.

[65] To see examples from Turkish media's sexist attitude see, https://listelist.com/turk-medyasinda-cinsiyetcilik/ accessed January 16, 2019.

women-related matters remains in the boundaries of their respective groups for most of the time. Political utilization of "women" seems to attract a considerable criticism mostly in case of opposite group's utilization. In case of few women who present a different-than-group approach and try to go beyond the fixed parameters of both sides in various matters, they face in-group criticisms and exlusion practices of the hegemonic discourses.

The shift from the discourse of Kemalism to Islamist discourse in politics, although considered to be promising particularly in terms of the resolution of the headscarf problem, considering that the male-dominant structure of politics and political parties is still prevalent shows that women take place in politics still more as "subjects" of political debates rather than "active agents" in their own right. Their few in number position and those few numbers' following of the group politics and facing exclusion in case of opposing to party discourse, as it happened in the case of Fatma Bostan Ünsal, shows the difficulties of breaking the ties between the male-dominance and politics. Yet, although the current numbers are few, more women's participation in cross-group activities to establish a better mutual understanding, freed from group bias and prejudices and presuppositions, may enable the formation of more mutual platform to discuss the problems women from every group face. Raising awareness about the importance of having *an inclusive women's rightspoint of vi*ewmay reduce the influence patriarchal political identities have on social polarization, opening ways for different women groups to interact more with each other in achieving their common goals. Internalization of group ideals and identities, both in men and women, to a point that normalizes the exclusion of different womenhoods should eliminated in order to establish a more inclusive, more gender equal society, along with transforming the settled traditional-patriarchal discourses on women.

Potential Objections

Both Kemalism and Islamism offer a set of, although different, freedoms and possibilities for women. Although in this study the shortcomings of both groups are mainly tried to be examined, there are many voices that advocate Kemalism's and

Islamism's, and of post-JDP period, liberating character in terms of their stance on women. Kemalist modernization project's implementation of extensive rights to women, ameliorating women's legal and social position are of great importance in terms of paving the way for further improvement. There are arguments that advocate Kemalism liberates the women and the only way for women to live an in equal and free conditions. (Arat 1996, Doğramacı 1992, Kışlalı 1994) In these arguments, Atatürk's vision for women to be active and educated members of the society and emphasis on the modernity generally go hand in hand, emphasising the importance of Kemalist model modernization for women in reaching to the desired modern status. Realization of this vision would be the only way that enables women to achieve the level of freedom and modernity they aim for. In Islamism as well, there are arguments that defend that Islam, in the way described within the boundaries of Islamists' debates, liberates women and provide the most-suitable lifestyle for her. (Dilipak 1990, Ersan 1997) Their arguments generally take women rights in Islam and examples from the female companions of the Prophets. The problems women face mainly attributed to an un-Islamic lifestyle. Generally, there is no specification of Islamism in their arguments, as they consider that their arguments are directly derived from Islam, the lack of examining the influence of cultural and social traditions in their arguments make it rather a matter of human-specific arguments instead of religion's ultimate judgments, which is why these arguments are perused under Islamism. There are also supporting arguments of JDP's reforms on women's legal and social rights. (Ateş and Yavuz, 2017) JDP's efforts in improving the woman-related laws and making regulations in social welfare system are appreciated, which I also recognize their importance. Yet, the purpose of this study is to examine their shortcomings in their approach to women and how these arguments have, one way or another, intimate ties with traditional gender codes that reflect itself through the day-to-day practices and in the speeches of political party officials, despite the fact that these arguments have valid points and have contributed to woman's status. Their positive contributions are credited, while looking for ways to improve the mindset that the negative practices stem from.

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