THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA
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MUSLIM – LEFT BEYOND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY IN TURKEY:
LABOR AND JUSTICE PLATFORM

MASTER'S THESIS

BATUHAN PARMAKSIZ

POLITICAL SCIENCE
MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

MUSLIM – LEFT BEYOND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY IN TURKEY: LABOR
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Within the scope of this thesis, it was questioned whether the Labor and Justice Platform, conceptualized as Muslim-Left, adopted a politics beyond the politics of identity. In this context, first of all, it was emphasized that Islamist and leftist movements in Turkey were different from those in other Muslim-majority countries, and reasons about that were presented. By reviewing the political history of Turkey on the basis of the state-society relationship, it has been observed that the expression of right-left political distinctions on the basis of identities rather than socio-economic foundations is an important reason. In this context, the positioning of Islamists and leftists as the other to each other prevented Islamists and leftists from acting on a common ground in Turkey until the 2000s. Secondly, a historical and conceptual analysis of Islamist movements in Turkey has been made and classified according to the distinction between protest and emancipatory movements / identity movements. Radical Islamist movements from the late 1960s to the 1990s have been classified as both protest and emancipatory movements and identity movements. The moderate Islamist movement represented by the National Outlook Movement and its parties has been classified as an identity movement. For the Justice and Development Party, the concepts of post-Islamism before 2011 and Muslimism (Muslim Nationalism) after 2011 were used and the Islamist movement it represented was classified as an identity movement.

Organizations such as the New Politics Initiative and People's Voice Party that

brought together Islamists and leftists in the 2000s, and the Labor and Justice Platform and Anti-Capitalist Muslims that emerged in the early 2010s were conceptualized as Muslim-Left. After that, the Labor and Justice Platform, which was established in 2011 to bring Islamists and leftists together on a common ground, was examined. There is a website that contains a regular archive of discussions, explanations, actions, news and comments about the Platform. For this reason, the website of the Platform was analyzed qualitatively by thematic content analysis method. In this context, the contents shared by the Platform members and the Platform's statements were divided into thematic issues in order to understand the Platform's political thought and attitude. As a result, it has been revealed that the Labor and Justice Platform, as a Muslim-Left movement, goes beyond the politics of identity for two reasons. First, the Labor and Justice Platform has been evaluated in the context of protest and emancipatory Islamist movements, with its structure prioritizing class politics. Secondly, although the Platform prioritizes class politics, it does not subordinate identity politics, adopting the principle of *"the identity of the oppressed is not asked"*. Therefore, they embrace the struggle for justice for all, being aware of the fact that there are those who suffer injustice and discrimination because of their ethnic and religious identities and gender. The attitude of the Platform on this issue has been examined through its approaches, actions, discourses and discussions on the Kurdish issue and gender equality.

Key Words: Muslim-Left, Labor and Justice Platform, Islamism, Politics of Identity

ÖZET

KİMLİK SİYASETİNİN ÖTESİNDE TÜRKİYE'DE MÜSLÜMAN-SOL: EMEK VE ADALET PLATFORMU

Batuhan Parmaksız

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Bu tez çalışması kapsamında, Müslüman-Sol olarak kavramsallaştırılan Emek ve Adalet Platformu'nun, kimlik siyasetinin ötesinde bir siyaset benimseyip benimsemediği sorgulanmıştır. Bu bağlamda, öncelikle Türkiye'deki İslamcı ve solcu hareketlerin Müslüman çoğunluk diğer ülkelerde ortaya çıkan hareketlerden farklı olduğu vurgulanmış ve sebepleri ortaya konmuştur. Türkiye'nin siyasi tarihi devlet-toplum ilişkisi temelinde incelenerek, sağ-sol siyasal ayrımlarının sosyo-ekonomik temellerden ziyade kimlikler temelinde ifade edilmesinin önemli bir neden olduğu görülmüştür. Bu kapsamda, İslamcı ve solcuların birbirlerine öteki olarak konumlanması, Türkiye'de 2000'li yıllara kadar İslamcı ve solcuların ortak bir zeminde hareket etmesini engellemiştir. İkinci olarak, Türkiye'deki İslamcı hareketlerin tarihsel ve kavramsal incelemesi yapılmış ve protesto ve özgürleştirici hareketler / kimlik hareketleri ayrımına göre sınıflandırılmıştır. 1960'ların sonlarından, 1990'lara kadar varlık gösteren radikal İslamcı hareketler hem protesto ve özgürleştirici hareket hem de kimlik hareketi olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Milli Görüş Hareketi ve onun partileri tarafından temsil edilen ılımlı İslamcı hareket, kimlik hareketi olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi için, 2011 öncesinde post-İslamcılık, 2011 sonrasında Müslümancılık (Müslüman Milliyetçiliği) kavramları kullanılmış ve temsil ettiği İslamcı hareket kimlik hareketi olarak sınıflandırılmıştır.

2000'li yıllarda İslamcı ve solcuları bir araya getiren Yeni Siyaset Girişimi ve

Halkın Sesi Partisi gibi oluşumlar ile 2010'lu yılların başlarında ortaya çıkan Emek ve Adalet Platformu ve Anti-Kapitalist Müslümanlar Müslüman-Sol olarak kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Bunun ardından 2011 yılında İslamcı ve solcuları ortak bir zeminde buluşturmak amacıyla kurulan Emek ve Adalet Platformu incelenmiştir. Platform'a ait tartışmaların, açıklamaların, eylemlerin, haber-yorumların yer aldığı düzenli bir arşivi içeren web sitesi bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle Platform'un web sitesi nitel olarak tematik içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Bu bağlamda Platform üyeleri tarafından paylaşılan içerikler ile Platform'un açıklamaları, Platform'un siyasi düşüncesini ve tutumunu anlamak için tematik konulara bölünmüştür. Sonuç olarak, Emek ve Adalet Platformu'nun, Müslüman-Sol bir hareket olarak iki nedenle kimlik siyasetinin ötesine geçtiği ortaya konmuştur. Birincisi, Emek ve Adalet Platformu, sınıf siyasetini önceleyen yapısıyla protesto ve özgürleştirici İslamcı hareketler bağlamında değerlendirilmiştir. İkincisi, Platform sınıf siyasetini öncelese de kimlik siyasetini ikincilleştirmemektedir ve *"mazluma kimliği sorulmaz"* ilkesini benimsemektedir. Dolayısıyla, etnik ve dini kimlikleri ile cinsiyetleri nedeniyle adaletsizlik ve ayrımcılığa uğrayanların olduğunun farkında olarak, herkes için adalet mücadelesini benimsemektedirler. Platform'un bu husustaki tutumu, Kürt meselesi ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğine yaklaşımları, eylemleri, söylemleri ve tartışmaları üzerinden incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müslüman-Sol, Emek ve Adalet Platformu, İslamcılık, Kimlik Siyaseti

ABBREVIATION LIST

ACC : Association to Combat Communism

CPT : Communist Party of Turkey

DP : Democratic Party

EU : European Union

FP : Felicity Party

JDP : Justice and Development Party

JP : Justice Party

İBB : Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality

ISIS : Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham

İSKİ : Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration

KCK : Kurdish Communities Union

MP : Motherland Party

MUSIAD : Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association

NMP : National Movement Party

NATO : North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NDR : National Democratic Revolution

NGO : Non-governmental Organization

NOM : National Outlook Movement

NOP : National Order Party

NSP : National Salvation Party

NTSU : National Turkish Student Union

PDP : People's Democratic Party

PKK : Kurdistan Workers Party

PVP : People's Voice Party

RPP : Republican People's Party

PTT : Postal, Telegraph, Television(Post Office)

SUCP : Soviet Union Communist Party

TOKİ : Mass Housing Administration

UN : United Nations

UNESCO : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

US : United States

USA : United State of America

VP : Virtue Party

WP : Welfare Party

WPT : Workers' Party of Turkey (Labour Party)

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the history of politics, there are many political ideas and movements that center the concepts of "good", "right" and "fair". Differences based on identity, class, and gender have revealed different antagonisms for a political struggle within the framework of these concepts. The domination of humanity over nature with industrialization, the emergence of "others" by the strengthening of nationalism, and the dominant imperialist exploitation and oppressed classes with modernization have been important problems. Somel (2014, p. 7) lists three major problems facing humanity in this age: social injustice, environmental destruction, and identity discrimination. The first two problems are related directly to capitalism. Firstly, most people in the world are constantly anxious about the future, as they live on base pay. Either they can't save or they can't depend on their savings. Second, there is no limit to the accumulation of capital for those who accumulate capital. For this reason, an endless increase in production and endless consumption of natural resources are paved. The damage to the environment increases with the use of natural resources in production and the release of harmful wastes to the environment. Due to intense consumption in rich societies, poor societies are greatly affected by this destruction. Third, it is indirectly related to capitalism, because the class dimension of wealth distribution has brought about racial, national, gender, and religious discrimination (Somel, 2014, pp. 7-10). It is natural that there are emancipatory, socialist, and egalitarian reactions to these problems. The left politics of Islamism emerged within this framework and turned into a social movement.

As an ideology and social movement, the politics of Islamism objects to the present situation and conditions. For this reason, many different Islamist policies have emerged in different geographies, from anti-capitalism to anti-communism, identity politics, reformism, leftist politics, right-wing politics. Considering the politics of Turkey, it is seen that there are two important factors in the politics of Islamism. One of them is the use of Islam in the reconstruction of Turkey's national identity. With the proclamation of the Republic, Islam was positioned as the "founding Other" of national identity. Then,

with the effect of the ongoing Cold War in the politically two-poled world order that emerged after the Second World War, Islam was used as an anti-dose in the fight against communism. Later, it was talked about within the framework of Turkish-Islamic synthesis against the radical Islamism that rose in the 1980s. The Kemalist's idea of Islam as "the other" and the military's interruption of the democratic process with coups, which undertook the protection of this regime, brought the national identity into a crisis in Turkey, which is mostly Muslim, with the effect of globalization. The attempt of the 28th February postmodern coup to throw the Muslim identity out of the public sphere is the top of the national identity crisis.

The second factor that determine politics of Islamism in Turkey is related to the class structure in the modernization process of Turkey. Turkey has adopted corporatism, import substitution industrialization, and neoliberal economic policies. In the foundation process of the Republic, socio-economic classification was prevented in Turkey with the effect of statism and populism principles. However, the strengthening of class-based social movements in Turkey has only been possible since the 1960s due to the influence of anti-communism.

These two factors are important for the Islamist movements in Turkey. First of all, the role of Islam in the construction of national identity has been the original point of the Islamist movement as a demand for recognition. Secondly, left-right spectrums emerged based on identities rather than socio-economic foundations and were expressed through dualities such as progressiveness-obscurantism, East-West, Sunni-Alevi, Turkish-Kurdish. The role of Islam as an instrument in the struggle against communism has also caused it to be more involved in right-wing politics. As a result of this whole condition, Islamism emerged as an identity movement in Turkey and gained power. In Turkey, where identities and identity politics are so decisive, Islamism that has taken place in right-wing politics, has grown as an identity movement, and is perceived as the other in the left-wing. Therefore, the emergence of Islamist left politics could only be possible in the 2000s.

The come into power of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) in the early 2000s, a party that came from within the Islamist movement, also played a role in the transformation of the Islamist movements. Since their first election, the change of the

center-periphery axis, the transformation of the public sphere, an Islamism policy compatible with neoliberal policies, and a new attempt to construct a national identity in which Islam is not the other but an immanent one, have led to the emergence of Islamist movements that embraced oppositional and leftist politics. Social movements, in which Islamists and leftists came together under the same roof, emerged for the first time in Turkish politics in the 2000s. Organizations such as the New Politics Initiative and the People's Voice Party (PVP) are the first organizations where Islamists and leftists came together. By the 2010s, Islamist movements emerged that embrace anti-capitalist idea, tried to lose the perception of otherness between Islam and the left wing, adopted a new typology of language and action, and would be conceptualized as the Muslim-Left within the scope of this thesis. Free Declaration (Hür Beyan), Acceptable Steps (Makbul Adımlar), Free Expansion (Özgür Açılım), Revolutionist Muslims, Anti-capitalist Muslims, Labor and Justice Platform could be named among the Muslim-Left movements in this respect. Among these movements, Free Declaration, Acceptable Steps, Free Expansion, Revolutionist Muslims were founded in the early 2010s, but they could not survive until today. Therefore, there are Anti-Capitalist Muslims and the Labor and Justice Platform as two important representatives of Muslim-Left movements.

Muslim-Left movements are worth examining from two perspectives. First, it broke new ground in Turkish politics, and secondly, it produced new discourses on Islamism. Establishing new antagonisms as Islamist movements, acting in partnership with the left, and adopting left politics of Islamism differentiate them from the mainstream and radical Islamism in Turkey. Another thing that differentiates Muslim-Left movements is that it makes possible Islamism's placed itself outside of identity politics. Therefore, within the context of this thesis, it will be questioned if the Muslim-Left can go beyond politics of identity in Turkey, where identities and identity politics are so important.

The Labor and Justice Platform, which is one of the Muslim-Left movements, will be discussed as a case within this thesis. There are several important reasons for choosing the Labor and Justice Platform as a case. First and foremost, the Labor and Justice Platform has not been fragmented since its inception and has acted within the framework of principles. Anti-Capitalist Muslims have undergone changes and transformations over time, and the group experienced a separation in itself. Following these changes; it became

difficult to examine Anti-Capitalist Muslims as a case. On the other hand, since the Labor and Justice Platform is a formation that acts in a framework of principles, it becomes easier to monitor the changes. Second, the Platform provides a convenient data archive for review as a case. There is a website where the Labor and Justice Platform share their actions, discussions, organizational structure, announcements, principles, aims, bibliographies and conduct archive work. Anti-Capitalist Muslims, on the other hand, have abandoned their websites and their social media accounts are not used actively. The Labor and Justice Platform offers the necessary archival studies that enable it to be considered as a case.

In conclusion, answers to the following questions will be studied in this thesis:

- What is the Muslim-Left as a concept and what does it mean?
- What kind of a political movement does the Labor and Justice Platform represent as a Muslim-Left movement?
- When evaluated specific to the Labor and Justice Platform, can the Muslim-Left go beyond the politics of identity as an Islamist movement?

1.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Between 2013 and 2019, thirteen studies were published about the subject of dissident Islamist movements in Turkey where Islamists and leftists struggle politically under a common roof that embrace the common values of Islam and the left wing. Six of these studies are thesis studies, five of which are master's studies (Ayata, 2016; Ekinci, 2014b; Güner, 2018; Ingleby, 2018; Koca, 2013) and the one is doctoral study (Karanfil, 2013). The other five are book chapters (Ekinci, 2014a, 2015; Koca, 2014, 2016, 2018) and two are journal articles (Başçı, 2017; Uestebay, 2019). In some of these studies, "Anti-Capitalist Muslims" has been used to express all these movements (Free Declaration, Acceptable Steps, Free Expansion, Revolutionary Muslims, Anti-capitalist Muslims, Labor and Justice Platform, etc.) (Ekinci, 2014b; Karanfil, 2013). In this context, Karanfil (2013) handled Anti-Capitalist Muslims in the context of social justice discourse. Ekinci (2014b) has discussed the causes of Anti-Capitalist Muslims, their relationship with the transformation of Political Islam, and the actions and discourses of Anti-Capitalist Muslims.

In the studies in which Anti-Capitalist Muslims are examined as a solo case, the emergence of Anti-Capitalist Muslims (Koca, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2018; Uestebay, 2019), the difference from Political Islam in Turkey in terms of action, discourse, and thought (Ayata, 2016; Ingleby, 2018), and the context of the transformation of the Islamist movement in Turkey (Başçı, 2017; Ingleby, 2018) have been examined.

Four studies examine the Labor and Justice Platform as an independent case from the Anti-Capitalist Muslims (Güner, 2018; Koca, 2013, 2014, 2016). Koca (2013, 2014, 2016) discussed the Anti-Capitalist Muslims and the Labor and Justice Platform in the context of the relationship between Islam and Socialism and see two movements comparatively. Güner's (2018) work, on the other hand, is the only study that includes the Labor and Justice Platform as a single case. Güner (2018) discussed the Labor and Justice Platform in the context of the relationship between Islam, Socialism, and the public sphere. In most of these studies, the semi-structured interview technique was used as a research method.

Four studies examine Islamist movements conceptually. While explaining these Islamist movements, Koca (2013, 2014, 2016) used the concept of left-Islam/ism. Ingleby (Ingleby, 2018), on the other hand, used the concept of Muslim-Left while describing the difference between these movements. However, these two definitions have superficial content, which is not explained or the indicators of the concept are not included clearly.

Lastly, only one of these studies has examined these movements in the context of identity-class movements. In the study of Ekinci (2015), Anti-Capitalist Muslims are handled as a case, and it is claimed that the Anti-Capitalist Muslim movement has evolved from an identity movement to a class movement within the Political Islamist movements in Turkey.

It is aimed to make contributions by this thesis with the resources given above. The first of these is to analyze this movement conceptually and therefore to conceive the Muslim-Left. In this context, the indicators of the concept of Muslim-Left and the conceptual position of Political Islam in Turkey have been tried to be explained. Secondly, by analyzing the Labor and Justice Platform independently from the Anti-Capitalist Muslims, its position within the Muslim-Left movements is tried to be established. Third, it has been searched Muslim-Left movements have moved beyond the

politics of identity. In this context, unlike Ekinci's (2015) argument, it was claimed that Muslim-Left movements prioritized class politics, but did not subordinate identity politics, and this situation was interpreted as beyond the politics of identity.

1.2. METHOD

Labor and Justice Platform have a website that includes files of actions, discourses, statements, interviews, news, comments. For this reason, websites were used as the primary source while examining the Platform. Platform's website provides qualified data both in terms of carrying out the discourse and discussions of Platform members and in terms of providing information about the Platform's way of thinking. In this context, the qualitative thematic content analysis method is used while examining the Platform's website.

Thematic Content Analysis is generally defined as *"a descriptive presentation of qualitative data"* (Anderson, 2007, p. 1). Çalık and Sözbilir (2014) consider Thematic Content Analysis as one of the three subheadings of content analysis. They define Thematic Content Analysis, also called Meta-Synthesis, as follows:

> *"Meta-synthesis (thematic content analysis) synthesizes and criticises the results of studies conducted in a specific content area by creating themes or matrixes."*

> *"...meta-synthesis, which is the qualitative synthesis of mostly qualitative studies implemented in a particular research topic, appears comparatively their similarities and differences."* (Çalık & Sözbilir, 2014, p. 34)

Based on this definition, thematic content analysis can be considered as a part of qualitative content analysis. Bryman (2012) considers qualitative content analysis as one of the methods of interpreting documents and, as he stated, *"comprises a searching out of underlying themes in the materials being analyzed"* (2012, p. 557). Schier (2012, p. 3) stated that qualitative content analysis is used in the following situations:

- *"When you are dealing with rich data that requires interpretation"*
- *"On verbal data"*
- *"On visual data"*
- *"On data that you have sampled from other sources (documents, internet, etc.)"*

-   *"On data that you have collected yourself (interviews, focus groups, etc.)"*

Labor and Justice Platform offers a lot of verbal data on its website, both belonging to Platform members and covering the Platform. Therefore, in this thesis, thematic analysis is handled as a part of qualitative content analysis.

With the Thematic Content Analysis method, the "What We Noted" section on the Labor and Justice Platform's website, which only includes the shares of Platform members, and the "Our Word" section, where the Platform's explanations are included, were examined. A total of 733 content shared between March 2011 and July 2021 were analyzed using this method and classified according to thematic issues.

1.3.   SYNOPSIS OF THE CHAPTERS

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction part. In this chapter, the reason why the subject of the thesis is considered important, the originality of the thesis, how it wants to contribute to the literature, and the method are included.

In the second chapter, it is explained how identities and identity politics are formed in the political history of Turkey, and how the right and left political spectrums are positioned against each other. After that, the Islamist movements in Turkey's political history are discussed conceptually.

In the third chapter, the Muslim-Left conceptualization is discussed. In this context, firstly, the emergence of Muslim-Left movements is explained. Then, what the concept of Muslim-Left includes is explained. Lastly, the Muslim-Left as a social movement is discussed in the context of the new social movements theory, and Anti-Capitalist Muslims and the Labor and Justice Platform are mentioned among these movements.

In the fourth chapter, first of all, the Labor and Justice Platform is explained descriptively. Afterward, the Platform's actions were discussed and its discourses were analyzed by subjecting it to thematic content analysis. Finally, the conceptual dimension of the Platform for Labor and Justice as a Muslim-Left movement within the Islamist movements in Turkey has been revealed and whether it is beyond identity politics or not.

In the last chapter, the results of the study carried out within the scope of this thesis are explained.

CHAPTER 2: IDENTITIES, POLITICS OF IDENTITY AND ISLAMISM IN TURKEY

It is hard to see the left and the Islamist movement together until the 2000s in the political history of Turkey. Although there were some left discourses within the Islamist movement or the search for common veins with Islam in the left-wing, the two movements were positioned in the opposite sides. In the political history of Turkey, there were many important historical milestones in which Islamists and leftists were faced. The single-party regime, the 27th May military coup, associations of anti-communism, the 12th September coup, the Sivas Massacre are examples of such historical milestones. These interactions were events in which Islamism and the left constructed their identity in complete opposition to the other (Aktay, 2014, p. 83). It is necessary to examine the legacy of Kemalist modernization and the development of the Islamist movements in Turkey to understand this situation. The Kemalist modernization process is evaluated in this thesis through the emergence of the center-periphery and right-left dichotomy. This evaluation gives information about the importance of identity cleavages in the political life of Turkey. Then the rise of the Islamist movements as identity politics and its relation with capitalism or Neoliberalism will be analyzed. The study of Islamist movements provides information on the place of the dissenter Islamist movements in the literature that are emerged in the 2000s and are conceptualized as the Muslim-Left.

2.1. CENTER-PERIPHERY AND LEFT-RIGHT: CONSTRUCTION OF LEFT AND ISLAM AS OTHERS

Political cleavages that exist in Turkey's political life show different characteristics in different periods but have also come cumulatively to this day. Keyman and Gümüşçü (2014, p. 16) stated that the four processes throughout the political life of Turkey were important and the emerging political cleavages were reflected in different dimensions with the effect of these processes. Center-periphery cleavage due to the modernization process since 1923, right-left cleavage due to the democratization process

since 1950, global-national cleavage due to the globalization process since 1980 and since 2000, identity-citizenship cleavage has emerged depending on the Europeanization process (Keyman & Gümüşçü, 2014, pp. 16-18). Similarly, Göksu (2013, p. 71) stated that the center-periphery cleavage would not provide a sufficient ground to understand the political life of Turkey and in addition to this cleavage, the right-left cleavage was added starting from the 1950s. Therefore, it is necessary to examine closely these two cleavages that shape the Islamists and the Left, in connection with the legacy of Kemalist modernization.

Mardin (1973) handled the modernization process of Turkey in the context of the center-periphery relationship. On the way to becoming a modern state in the 19th century, there were three problems faced by the Ottoman "center". The first was the integration of non-Muslims, the second was the integration of Muslims in the periphery, and the third was the transformation of the population into a political unity within national borders. Islamic reactions against the institutions that modernized and became secular in the 19th century, caused the provinces to become a place of obscurantism. What is important here is, as stated by Mardin (1973, p. 179), the upper and lower classes united around Islamic obscurantism.

With the Republican system, the sultanic or patrimonial bureaucracy turned into a rational bureaucracy. The first aim of the founder elites was to construct a modern nation-state. Therefore, bureaucratic elites tried to integrate the periphery (people who had Ottoman and Islamic culture, not Westernized, who did not have a national consciousness) to the center (Westernist, secular, civilized, and progressive) with state-centric and top-down practices. This was the process of transition from personal rule to rule of law, from divine law to positivist and rational thinking and from religious community to nation-state. The modernization process that Mardin evaluates in terms of center-periphery relationship has two important consequences. One of them is, in the center, the founding bureaucratic elites of the Republic differ from Ottoman modernizing bureaucratic elites in terms of ideological standpoint. Republican bureaucrats adopted Westernization and tried to build a secular national identity but, in the Ottoman Empire, religion was a reference and had an important role in political life. The other result is, they were the same in terms of modernization by applying top-down and state-centered policy. As stated by Aktaş, Kemalism maintains the Ottoman administration approach

with different parameters such as *"laicism instead of sharia, the public instead of reaya, parliament instead of caliphate"* (Aktaş, 2014, p. 139). Kemal Tahir described this situation as a transition from the *Kerim* (Genarious, gracious, good) state to the *Kurt* (Wolf) state (Aktaş, 2014; Atilla, 2009). The Ottoman Empire represented *Kerim* state understanding, which had an economy based on agricultural production, no class conscious society, and where politics belonged to a certain entity. The founders of the Republic, on the other hand, adopted nationalization for being homogenized without a unifying sociological element such as religion, which led to the search for belonging and justice in the absence of the *Kerim* State (Aktaş, 2014, pp. 116-117). As Gülalp (2002, p. 12) noted that even if the details of religious doctrine are not fully known, Islam is an important phenomenon in the value judgments, social behaviors and political thoughts of people who have this religious identity but, *"to reach the level of contemporary civilizations"*, cultural identity was strictly forced to change. The founder elites of the Republic thought that the power of religion in political life and the pressure of the ulama class on bureaucrats were the reasons for weakening of Ottoman Empire and therefore, the role of religion in political life should be minimized (Köni, Rosli, & Mohamad Zin, 2015, p. 340). Islam and any traditional culture and behavior that is thought to be represented by Islam has been designated as the *"founding Other"* since the founding date (Güzel, 2002, pp. 33-34) and Islamic thought was brought out of public spaces such as education, politics, and economy. Top-down and state-centric regulations such as the abolishment of religious schools (madrasas) and caliphate, the control and the centralization of the education system, establishing a connection with the pre-Islamic Turkish history by constructing the Turkish history thesis and ignoring the Ottoman past, starting to turn the language of Azan to Turkish from its Arabic original, starting to use Latin letters instead of Arabic letters are among the practices carried out in this context. As Bora (1998, p. 42) pointed out, Islam was outside the universality of the Western civilization and the uniqueness of Turkish identity, and it would only be smoothed by secularizing and adapting to Turkish identity. Therefore, Islam and its strong symbolic and cultural role have challenged the government's strict political and institutional regulatory practices to build a secular national identity (Keyman, 2016, p. 216).

Another prominent part of modernization of Turkey is the absence of organized class structure. An organized class structure has not emerged and class conflicts have

been based on ethnic and religious identity. When the republic was founded, there was an undeveloped bourgeoisie, mostly non-Muslims, and there was a domestic bourgeoisie that was weak. There was an economy with a heavy debt burden due to capitulations (Keyder, 2014). The vast majority of the human workforce was peasants and the private sector was weak (Demir, 2005, pp. 870-871). Keyder (2014) evaluated the economic process of the single-party regime as *"the search for the domestic bourgeoisie"* and as a transition to capitalism depending on state capitalism and corporatism. There was no solid and organized working class in the early times of the Republic, and the economy had not developed on the basis of class relations. This corporatist model adopted by the single-party regime was also linked to the provision of political authority. Due to the Law of Takrir-i Sükun (1925) which was coming into force to protect the regime and to control the economy, the field of dissentient was destroyed completely, and the activities of trade unions were also terminated. The share of foreign capital in the country's economy was high between 1920-29. Because of the effects of the Great Depression (1929) in the world, Turkey, whose economy was dependent on foreign capital and had low production power, gave importance to domestic development. In this period, a third way was adopted between capitalism and socialism, and it is the practice of statism. According to the 1935 Communities Law, it was forbidden to establish associations on a class basis. Domestic industrial development was considered essential and the only way to westernization. It is thought that foreign capital and non-Muslim bourgeoisie collaboration prevented this, so a state monopoly should have been done.

In this way, two features of the Kemalist modernization process of Turkey stand out. One is the understanding of state and bureaucracy in the Ottoman Empire continued by the Republic regime. In this way, it was the national identity construction adopted by the founder elites of the Republic, which determined the dynamics of the relationship between the center and the periphery. Westernization, rationalism and positivism were used as the method to transcend the structure and idea of state and society from an imperialist view to a modern nation state. Society, economy and politics should be reformed to reach the level of Western civilization. Hence, the process of constructing a new national identity, in which Westernization was dominant and strict laicist practices were carried out, was a distinctive feature of Turkish modernization process. The other feature is the working class that was unorganized and weak at the time of the

establishment of the Republic could not be strengthened due to statism and populism practices. These practices prevented class conflict and the emergence of organized class structures. Thus, classes began to emerge based on identity, not on economic relations. Social inequalities emerged on the basis of identity, not on the basis of class conflict, and the search for justice manifested as discourses such as freedom of religion and freedom of expression. Considering all this, it can be said that identity building and economic practices are intertwined with one another in the modernization process of the single-party period.

The transition to a multi-party system in Turkey was also the same period when the Second World War ended. The foreign policy of the United States at the end of the Second World War had a strong impact on Turkey's political life. Therefore, it would be appropriate to summarize these events first. In the process that after Truman became president in 1945, the USA declared political, economic and military war against communism. While the US State Department prioritized the economic and political struggle against Soviet Russia, the Pentagon prioritized the military struggle. Thus, within the fight against communism, economic aids were provided thanks to the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that was established in order to provide military combat in the following years (Ahmad, 2003, p. 105). After England declared that it could not help Turkey and Greece, the Truman government wanted permission to help in 1947 that it would provide a total of $400 million, including $100 million to Turkey and $300 million to Greece (Koca, 2017, p. 546; Timur, 2003, p. 88). This method used to fight against communism was called the Truman Doctrine. After the Second World War, Turkey's relations with Soviet Russia worsened. Soviet Russia did not renew the 1925 Friendship Agreement in 1945. In 1946, Soviet Russia asked for the Montreux Agreement to be revised and to be included in the defense of the Straits. Finally, Soviet Russia asked for the northern part of the border drawn in 1921 to be rearranged. These reasons enabled Turkey to get closer to the West (Karpat, 2010, pp. 431-433). At the same time, the reports of Thornburg and Baker in the USA emphasized that Turkey was an important regional actor in the fight against communism (Timur, 2003, pp. 94-97). Finally, Turkey was involved in the Truman Doctrine that showed external threats from Soviet Russia and the danger of domestic communism inside (Koca, 2017, p. 546).

Thus, Turkey was placed in the West Block of the bipolar world that emerged after the Second World War.

As for Turkey, new opportunities for the periphery began to emerge after the end of the single-party era and Turkey's existence in the Western block after the Second World War. Although the open vote & secret count system was made in the first elections held in 1946, the results for the Republican People's Party (RPP) were not good enough. After the elections, RPP changed its strict secular policies because of the fight against communism and the unsustainability of these policies. Secularism was discussed and it was decided to raise the awareness of the citizens about religion and religious practices at the RPP congress held in 1947. In this congress, it was emphasized that spiritualism came to the fore in order to combat communism. Religious education outside of schools was allowed this year. In 1949, it was decided to receive optional religious education in schools and Ankara University Faculty of Theology was founded. In addition, Tekke, Zaviye and Mausoleums were opened to visitors in 1950 (Çelik, 2020, p. 408; Karpat, 2010, p. 357; Timur, 2003, p. 115).

After the Second World War, anti-communism became the center of political discourse in Turkey and one of the most defining features of political life (Çelik, 2020, p. 400). In fact, RPP sometimes accused Democratic Party (DP) of being a communist and DP and RPP had entered the race to fight communism in this regard (Timur, 2003, p. 47). This situation also created a major obstacle to the development of the leftist movements. After the amendments in the Communities Law in 1946, labor unions began to be established one by one, yet with the amendments made in the same year, labor unions and socialist parties were closed and many workers' leaders were arrested (Karpat, 2010, p. 451; Stephenson, 2011, p. 104; Timur, 2003, p. 102). Workers were not given the right to strike and collective bargaining, and an idea of union was developed that would act with (or by) the state, not against the state with the Labor Unions Law enacted in 1947 (Timur, 2003, p. 103). Additionally, the establishment of class-based organizations was prohibited by amending Articles 141 and 142 of the Criminal Code, and the penalties were increased with the amendments made in 1949 and 1951 (Timur, 2003, p. 115). Communism thus became a new "Other" for the regime. Timur (2003, p. 114) described this process as *"a model of democracy that does not have a left-wing but consists of only right-wing parties"*. Karpat (2010, p. 451) named the anti-communism policies implemented in this

process as *"cultural obscurantism"*. It also revealed a situation in which the Islamic opposition expressed itself with conservatism. The reaction of Islamic groups to modernism and secularism was reflected in anti-communism (Bora, 1998, pp. 82-83) and was expressed as nationalist-conservatism (Taşkın, 2008, p. 628). Anti-communism policies that started in this period would continue increasingly in the DP period, yet shaping the right-left cleavages in the political life of Turkey would take place in the 1960s.

In the election held in 1950, the DP took power with discourses that address the periphery, and DP became representative of the periphery. Later, the majority represented by the DP was called the center-right wing. Communism was the new "Other" but Islam continued to be the "founding Other". While the single-party regime described itself as civilized, progressive, Republican, reformist and secular, it defined its opponents as obscurant, Islamist, pro-caliphate, bigot. The Republican People's Party (RPP), which lost its power after the transition to the multi-party period and turned from the cadre party to the mass party, continued to use these discourses. Those who supported DP, which included dissident groups against RPP, defined themselves as nationalist, nationalist-conservative, spiritualist or religious (Demirel, 2009, pp. 415-417). In the Democratic Party period, Azan started to be read in Arabic again, Imam-Hatip Schools were reopened, and the ban on going to Hajj was abolished in accordance with the sensitivities of the periphery. For this reason, the RPP criticized the DP, by accusing them of betraying Atatürk's reforms (Subaşı, 2005, p. 226).

The Democratic Party was in power until the military coup whose aim was to *"protect secularism"*, *"prevent abuse of religion"* and *"protect the Kemalist revolutions"* on 27th May 1960 (Kurtoğlu, 2005, p. 212). The coup of 27th May was an important turning point in terms of Kemalism and left-right concepts (Demirel, 2009, p. 419). This military coup and the subsequent military coups are crucial for understanding the reflexes of the Kemalist center. It would be appropriate to use Mete Kaan Kaynar's (2010) *"car metaphor"* for a better understanding. According to this metaphor, the system formed by the establishment of the Republic by the military-civil bureaucracy is considered as a car. In the conjuncture that occurred after the Second World War, the control of the car had to be given to civilians. In the 1950 election, the civilians took control of the car. However, the soldier continued to sit on the side seat. When the soldier

thought that the car was being misused, he warned the driver, stopped the car as in 1960 and 1971, hanged the driver out of the car (even executed as in the case of Menderes' murder), and banned the driver from driving as in 1980. In the 1980 military coup, the car was renovated and modified. After this modification, gas, brake and clutch were added to the seat next to the driver. Thus, from the outside, everything seemed fine, and the fight, noise and intervention seemed to be absent. However, the car did not go unless the soldier stepped on the gas and the soldier was braking when it was necessary.

The 1960 military coup was carried out by sub-group officers, many of whom were trained in the US and took part in NATO duties, and Alparslan Türkeş, who read the coup statement, declared Turkey's commitment to NATO. After the coup, a more democratic ground was tried to be established with the 1961 Constitution being prepared by military-civil cooperation, and the Constitutional Court was established to control the political system. Imported subsidiary industrialization perspective was adopted as an economic system and the State Planning Organization was founded to make the resource distribution more rational (Alpkaya, 2009, p. 497). The 1961 Constitution also allowed the defense of a socialist system, but Articles 141 and 142 of the Criminal Code were in force and communist propaganda was prohibited (Koca, 2017, p. 550). Thus the Workers' Party of Turkey (WPT) was founded by unionists in 1961 and received the 15 seats of the parliament in the 1965 elections. Increased student and worker movements and union activities, and the emergence of theoretical and intellectual debates on the left such as *Yön-Devrim* (Direction-Revolution) and the *Milli Demokratik Devrim* – MDD (National Democratic Revolution – NDR) strengthened the left. The 1960s were the years that the left-right concepts became established literally. The first reason for this was that a great part of Marx's works were translated into Turkish in the 1960s, the published magazines and books reached the mass of readers, and the Left was close to the goal of power for the first time (Şener, 2010, p. 13) and that the left was now visible and tangible (Koca, 2017, p. 549). The second reason was that the right united within the framework of anti-communism (Yanık & Bora, 2017, p. 297). Therefore, it would be appropriate to examine the development of the left first. Then, the anti-communist formations that bring the rightwing together under the same roof are examined.

Until the 1960s, the left acted under pressure of the single-party era and anti-communism policies. The arrests of leftists in 1925, 1927, 1929, 1938, 1951-52 are

evidences of this pressure (Karsan, 2007, p. 41). Simultaneously, the relationship of the left with Kemalism before 1960 and the development of a left version of Kemalism also affected the 1960s. As it stated above, the Kemalist modernization prevented classification, economic class structures; and at that time the working class was powerless and unorganized. Therefore, a leftist movement based on the working class had not developed. In the period before 1960, the Communist Party of Turkey (CPT) as a party that can be evaluated in terms of the left, and the Kadro (Cadre) Movement, which developed the left interpretation of Kemalism, have an important place. Turan (2011, p. 263) studies the CPT's relationship with Kemalism in three periods. In the first period between 1920-1927, the CPT considered Kemalism as an anti-imperialist movement and therefore defined Kemalism as a progressive movement. In the second period between 1927-1937, the emphasis on anti-Kemalism was common, yet the CPT made this emphasis by accepting the Kemalism assessment of the first period as the true one; and claiming that Kemalism had changed. In the third period after 1937, it is a period when CPT embraces Kemalism and Kemalism is completely affirmed by CPT. Within the framework of this relationship developed with Kemalism, CPT was in the "center" ranks in the tension between center and periphery. The Sheikh Said Riot, the Tunceli and Ağrı riots were considered by the CPT as reactionary movements. In addition, the Soviet Union Communist Party (SUCP) / Comintern was the determiner of the political strategy and ideology of the CPT (Şener, 2011, p. 327). So the CPT was moving away from the periphery and alienating from the masses. This divergence and alienation increased with the development of anti-communism. The Cadre Movement, on the other hand, adopted an approach as a third way out of capitalism and socialism and negated class conflict. The Cadre Movement was the first deep-rooted and systematic advocate of the nationalist left in Turkey, trying to place nationalism in historical materialism, influenced by Lenin in the analysis of imperialism, advocating positivist-modernism and asserting that the bourgeoisie should be controlled by the state (Türkeş, 2009, p. 470). According to the Cadre writers, classes were not developed sufficiently due to Turkey's inability of industrialization; and the state had to be involved to prevent class conflict (Alpkaya, 2009, p. 477; Türkeş, 2009, p. 475). In this sense, it can be said that the Cadre Movement constituted a left interpretation of Kemalism and established an eclectic relationship with RPP by supporting statism and populism policies.

The coup of 27th May 1960 was a coup in which the discourse of Kemalism was dominated and the DP was demonized retrospectively (Demirel, 2009, p. 419; Şener, 2011, p. 341). Therefore, it might be normal for the leftists /socialists thought to be under the influence of Kemalism in the political environment dominated by both anti-communism and Kemalism, or in an attempt to legitimize it by re-interpreting Kemalism. In addition, especially after 1945, with the leftist practices of the Middle Eastern countries, such as the Palestinian Liberation Movement, anti-colonial revolutions in Iraq, the Egyptian Revolution led by officers, African / Arab socialist experiences, the thesis of "national democracy" put forward by the SUCP and the non-capitalist development strategies also affected Turkey's left-wing in which under the influence of Kemalism (Stephenson, 2011, p. 86; Şener, 2011, p. 344). While a new interpretation of Kemalism was developed by the left, the left determined its own frame considering the ideological orientations of the Kemalist modernization (Çulhaoğlu, 2007, p. 173).

According to Şener (2010), Turkey's left was divided into three different movements that defended three different power strategies in the 1960s. The first was the Yön-Devrim Movement, the second was the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) Movement and the third was the Workers' Party of Turkey (WPT). Strategically, three main problems separating these three movements. The first was about whether the transition to socialism would be direct or indirect, and the second was about whether the transition to socialism would be through parliament, revolution or a coup; and the third was to be led by which social class or strata in transition to socialism (Şener, 2010, p. 15). In summary, the *Yön-Devrim* Movement and the NDR Movement thought that the transition to Socialism should have taken place gradually because they did not see the working class in Turkey conscious enough and thought that the working class could not lead. Because of their distrust of the working class and the victory of the representative of the center-right Justice Party (JP) in the elections in 1965, the *Yön-Devrim* Movement thought that there must be a progressive military coup from the army, which they considered to be "vigorous forces". For the same reasons, the NDR Movement thought that the National Democratic Revolution should be realized by a national front, such as the domestic petty bourgeoisie, working-class peasants who were not collaborators. What should have led this revolution was the military-civilian intellectual group they called "intermediate strata". The *Yön-Devrim* Movement and the NDR Movement absolutely

thought that the working class was important for the realization of socialism, however the society should be conscious and the collaborative bourgeoisie should be cleared with policies to be implemented from above for this. On the other hand WPT, thought that it was necessary to switch to socialism under the leadership of the working class and the parliamentary path should be tried. Another important factor that shows the difference between the WPT and the *Yön-Devrim* Movement and the NDR Movement is the historical evaluation. While the *Yön-Devrim* Movement and NDR Movement described DP's coming to power as a counter-revolution in the transition to multi-party political life, WPT considered it as a progressive step in terms of public participation in government and overthrowing single-party power (Şener, 2010, pp. 349-363; Yanık & Bora, 2017, pp. 276-285). Finally, it should be noted that another feature that distinguishes the three movements from one another is the relationship between the CPT and the Comintern tradition. The *Yön-Devrim* Movement aimed at a revolutionary/socialist transformation that was not related to the CPT's tradition. WPT had a relationship with CPT in the past, but they wanted to break it. The NDR Movement was a movement that attempted to revive the CPT line, led by cadres that maintained their organizational and ideological ties with the CPT (Şener, 2011, pp. 335-336).

The conditions of the *Yön-Devrim* (Direction-Revolution) Movement and NDR Movement, other developments in terms of socialism in the world, and the progressive role attributed to the army made it normal for Kemalism to be reevaluated and to come up with a left interpretation. The *Yön-Devrim* is the movement of the intellectuals who gathered in the magazine of *Yön* that was published between 1961-1967 and then the *Devrim* newspaper that was published between 1969-1971. *Yön* magazine published the common declaration of intellectuals. According to this declaration, *"rapid development in the economic field"*, *"the agreement of people such as teachers, administrators, unionists, writers and administrators on a certain development idea"*, *"a new understanding of statism"* and *"a conscious intervention to the state"* were required in order to reach the level of modern civilization targeted by Atatürk (Yön, 1961). In this declaration, it can be understood that an emphasis on Kemalism, statism and Westernization attempts to do the leftist interpretation of Kemalism. However, it should be noted that the criticism of Kemalism was developed by the *Yön* Movement in matters

such as statism, nationalism, Westernization, and secularism, and sometimes they had a framework that transcends Kemalism (Şener, 2011, pp. 325-326).

The Kemalist revolution for the *Devrim* Movement was a progressive and unfinished revolution in the historical context, and the *Devrim* Movement established a direct connection between the Kemalist revolution and the socialist revolution (Karsan, 2007, p. 54; Şener, 2011, pp. 350-353). Accordingly, the statism policy implemented in the single-party period led to the development of capitalism, and populism negated the classes. Therefore, according to the *Yön* Movement, "new statism" meant statism that would provide planned development on the basis of social justice. The non-capitalist form of development was adopted because they considered Turkey as a country that was underdeveloped and unable to complete the capitalist phase. Therefore it was a "conscious state intervention" that should have provided development (Alpkaya, 2009, p. 497; Arslan, 2011, pp. 397-399; Şener, 2011, p. 354). In the context of populism, they suggested a land reform and educational campaign to get rid of landlords and usurers. They criticized Kemalist populism because it negated classes and was not popular enough, but they adopted an elitist approach similar to Kemalism in terms of the relationship established with the people (Arslan, 2011, p. 400; Şener, 2011, p. 356).

Theses of the NDR Movement and the *Yön* Movement on the subjects such as the gradual revolution, the progressive role attributed to the army (The military coup of May 27 was also considered as a progressive coup), the evaluation of that Turkey has not yet capitalized, the underestimation of the parliamentary democracy, and the evaluation of the Kemalist revolution as progressive were almost overlapped until the separation in 1966-1967 (Şener, 2011, p. 344). The *Yön* Movement also developed a critique of Kemalism, stating that Turkey was in the middle of the class struggle, that statism was a means of transition to socialism, that the ethnic aspect of the Kurdish question should be considered, that Westernism was reactionary, and that a link should be established between socialism and Islam instead of strict laicisim (Şener, 2010, p. 354). The NDR Movement, on the other hand, continued the ideological and organizational ties of the CPT, as stated above, and accepted all claims of Kemalist ideology without criticism (Stephenson, 2011, p. 117).

When the *Devrim* newspaper started its publication in 1969, the emphasis on Kemalism, secularism and anti-imperialism was even greater. The *Yön-Devrim* movement, which argued that a military coup should be a strategy, found support from the army, retired officers and civilians, yet the military coup attempt on 9th March 1971 was unsuccessful (Arslan, 2011, pp. 405-407). However, the military coup on 12th March 1971 served the opposite purpose, the *Yön-Devrim* Movement and WPT were closed and caused the left to be suppressed and radicalized. With the legacy taken over from the NDR Movement, many radical leftist organizations emerged one by one until the end of the 1970s (Stephenson, 2011, p. 124). Radical leftist organizations, which adopted the armed struggle, could not establish an organic connection with the workers' movement and could not act in harmony with it (Stephenson, 2011, p. 152).

In addition to these three main movements, it is necessary to add that the RPP defined itself as the *"left of the center"* in the mid 1960s. The definition of the left of the center was coined by İnönü before the 1965 elections. Fedayi (2004, p. 164) states that the left of the center meanings hold three cases together. The first is to evolve the RPP from a public institution to a political party, the second is the democratization of the RPP and the third is the social democratization of the RPP. The ultimate goal was to turn the RPP into a social democrat, non-elitist and non-Marxist party, which included political liberalism in the European sense; RPP would be a party that pays attention to the values and demands of the people, not the status quo, and advocates social justice (Fedayi, 2004, p. 180). There were also pragmatic reasons for coining the term *"the left of the center"*. The first of these reasons was the Cuban Crisis and the Letter of Johnson[1], and the second was the revival of left movements and its impact on RPP (Koç, 2017, pp. 43-45; Yanık & Bora, 2017, p. 289). According to İnönü, the statism policy that RPP followed during the single-party period was a manifestation of leftism, and populism was a manifestation of social justice, so the RPP had been in the left of the center for 40 years. At the same time, the left of the center was a policy that could prevent the extreme left, which reached levels that would threaten the regime (Demirel, 2009, p. 422). One of the factors that

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[1] The Cuban Crisis is the crisis that started with the nuclear warhead missile deployment of the US to Turkey and Italy and the USSR to Cuba and brought the USA and the USSR against each other in October 1962. The Johnson Letter is a letter sent by US President Lyndon B. Johnson to Turkey's Prime Minister İsmet İnönü on 5 June 1964 to prevent Turkey's intervention in Cyprus. For detailed information, see: (Koç, 2017)

made the center-left movement important was Ecevit's clear opposition to the 12th March 1971 coup (Stephenson, 2011, p. 156). The center-left movement, as an interpretation of Leftist Kemalism, was represented through six arrows in the 90s, the symbol of the RPP. According to this interpretation, it has adopted that Republicanism against democracy, Nationalism against globalization, the European Union and the Kurdish movement; secularism against political Islam, Populism against corruption, Statism against free market and Revolutionism against "frozen Kemalism" that emerged after the 1980 coup (Alpkaya, 2009, pp. 479-480).

It was stated that the main factor uniting the right was anti-communist formations in the 1960s. One of the anti-communist formations where the right met on the common ground against the left was the Association to Combat Communism (ACC) and the other was the National Turkish Student Union (NTSU)[2] (Koca, 2017, p. 545; Yanık & Bora, 2017, p. 297). Two prominent features of anti-communist formations can be mentioned. One of them is, while defining themselves as nationalist-conservative, Islamic emphasis was at the forefront in the fight against communism. An antagonism was being established between Islam and communism, and this was not just specific for Turkey. It also had a legitimizing and concealing purpose for the relations that the USA established with Muslim countries. In this way, it was tried to ensure the continuity of structural adjustment to capitalism (Kaynar, 2017, p. 310). Indeed, the US National Security Agency proposed Islam in 1958 as an antidote against communism. The 'Union of the World of Islam' organization was established in the 1960s to combat communism and nationalism and was financed by Saudi Arabia. Similarly, ACC, founded in Turkey in 1962, used Islam as an ideological apparatus against communism (Ahmad, 2003, pp. 130-131). As Koca (2017, pp. 548-551) pointed out, anti-communist formations were constructing "atheistic", "stateless" and "dishonorable" communist identity, and this perception of communism was reinforced by conspiracy theories and fear in the fight against communism. WPT had the opportunity to be represented in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey with 15 deputies in the elections held in 1965. Subsequently,

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[2] In fact, the establishment of these two associations was at previous dates. ACC was first established in 1948 in Zonguldak and the second in Istanbul in 1956, but the activities of these associations remained local. In the 1960s, it became a nation-wide association in the fight against communism. NTSU was established in 1916 by the students of Darülfünun and became a legal entity in 1927. In the 1960s, it became an important association in the fight against Communism by undergoing ideological transformation. For detailed information, see: (Çelik, 2020; Koca, 2017; Öztürk, 2016)

Communist Condemnation rallies were held in many cities under the leadership of ACC, and there were participation from NTSU, Justice Party (JP) Youth Branches and Türk-İş union (Koca, 2017, p. 563). On 18th March 1965, nationalist-conservatives won the elections held in NTSU, and anti-communist discourse blended with Islam began to prevail there. In fact, sentences and slogans such as *"fighting against communism is worshiping God"*, *"jihad against communism"*, *"Allah is with us"*, *"Our thesis is Islam"* used by NTSU at Communist Condemnation meetings (Öztürk, 2016, p. 115; Yanık & Bora, 2017, p. 297). Antagonism between Islam and communism was established through conferences and seminars organized by ACC and NTSU, and Islam was considered as an antidote to communism. This antagonism, established between Islam and communism, was not unique to these associations. Before the elections in 1965, JP's leader Süleyman Demirel stated that 98 percent of the country was Muslim and, it would not be permitted for those who want to bring communism to this country and formed his political rhetoric on anti-communism (Kaynar, 2017, p. 309; Koca, 2017, p. 551).

Secondly, they considered every political formation or discourse that could be considered left as a communist. It was previously stated that communism was the "other" for Turkey after the Second World War. For RPP, communism was the "other" too, and even the term left of the center was a policy against communism, which was called the extreme left. Members of the *Yön* Movement, which had a socialist ideology, were also establishing an antagonistic relationship between socialism and communism, and called communism a situation to be avoided (Arslan, 2011, p. 402). WPT was also a party that embraced parliamentary democracy and broke its connection with the CPT. However, all these left movements were evaluated under the threat of "atheistic", "stateless" and "dishonorable" communism. During the 1965 elections, Süleyman Demirel responded with the slogan *"The left of the center is the path for Moscow"* contrary to the discourse of the RPP's left of the center. One of the important examples is the *Bloody Sunday*[3] incident, that is the right-left opposition turned into a traumatic situation and anti-communism peaked. Before the Sunday of 16th February 1969 when the incident took place, many left youth organizations and labor unions announced that they would protest the 6th Fleet to come to Istanbul and organize a march against imperialism and

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[3] For detailed information on the Bloody Sunday incident, see: (Eren, 2012)

exploitation. Many anti-communist formations such as NTSU and ACC also declared that they would not allow this march and called on the Turkish People to fight against the communism. As a result of this, nationalist-conservative groups gathered on Sunday (16th February) attacked the marchers and two people were killed and many were injured (Eren, 2012, pp. 199-238). Bloody Sunday was a traumatic event in itself, but what makes it even more severe is the evaluations made after the event. İsmail Kahraman, the head of the NTSU at the time, considered the incident as *"the revival of national consciousness against the left and those sold out."* ACC chief İlhan Darendelioğlu said that the rise of the events was caused by the communists who were hidden under the mask of leftist, socialist, revolutionist and considered the event as *"the communists' revelation, the patriotic warrant"*. Necip Fazıl Kısakürek also stated that neither NTSU nor JP youth branches were determined to the spirit of the events, and that it was the awakening of the spiritualist people directly (Eren, 2012, pp. 241-244). The all left's being considered as a communist was not only limited to this event. Similarly, the workers' uprisings that took place in 1970, known as the 15-16 June events[4], were also evaluated by Süleyman Demirel as the rehearsal of the Communist Revolution (Stephenson, 2011, p. 147).

Throughout the 1970s, coalition governments were in power, there was political instability and economic turmoil. The 1970s were the years when the right-left conflict became radicalized and turned into political violence. At the same time, this violence between right and left was also directed to turning into ethnic and religious groups. Alevis were identified with the left, and Sunni Muslims were identified with the right, and those who were killed in the Alevi-Sunni conflict. The events that resulted in many deaths in Kahramanmaraş, Çorum and Malatya towards the end of 1970s are agonizing examples (Ahmad, 2003, pp. 142-144; Bruinessen, 1996, p. 8; Massicard, 2007, pp. 59-65; Zürcher, 2016, pp. 380-381). The 1970s were also the years when the PKK emerged, which adopted the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of Kurdish nationalism and then carried out violent acts through armed struggle in the 1980s (Ergil, 2000, p. 127). Rising acts of political violence, political instability and the economic crisis paved the way for the 12th September 1980 military coup.

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[4] The events of 15-16 June emerged as a result of the riots initiated by the workers against the draft law voted in parliament on 12 June 1970. For detailed information, see: (O. C. Özdemir, 2017; Stephenson, 2011, pp. 152-155)

As a result of this, the right-left distinction that emerges in Turkey is different from the West in terms of historical process and class representation. As Carlisle (2005, p. vii) stated that:

"The terms left and right are derived from the political divisions in the French Constituent Assembly, formed during the French Revolution in 1790. Sitting on the right of the assembly were those who favored the preservation of the monarchy and a more moderate course of change, the Girondins, while on the left in the assembly sat those who wished to overthrow the existing system and establish a more egalitarian republic, the Jacobins. The terms left and right stuck, with the left usually representing the radicals of politics and the right representing the conservatives. Over the next century, with the rise of utopian socialism and later, Marxism, those proposing conversion of the means of production from private property to social property held in common were regarded as leftists, while those seeking to preserve the status quo were regarded as rightists."

In Turkey, the right-left cleavage manifested itself as identity distinctions rather than on the basis of class inequalities caused by the industrialization process. The basis of this is that the Kemalist center prevented the class formation and prioritized the construction of national identity during the foundation of the Republic. The tension between the Westernist, bureaucratic, secular center and the periphery, which is called reactionary and Islamist by this center, contributed to the formation of the center-right with the Democrat Party's coming to power. Center-right was conservative. However, this conservatism, as Demirel (2004, pp. 68-69) points out, reflects the emphasis on the fact that while reaching the level of modern civilizations, the values that make the nation should not be abandoned, that spiritual values and national culture should be preserved. So the right had no problem with capitalization and modernization. The problem of either historical or cultural identity was preserved while this process was experienced. Therefore, the right represents a protest with a defense mechanism against the status quo in this sense. With the coup of 27th May, the overthrow of the government chosen by the people, the execution of leader Adnan Menderes, Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and Hasan Polatkan, and the increase of Kemalist emphasis in every subsequent coup kept this defense mechanism alive. The right could also catch different economic classes' fancy. It had the potential to receive votes from the lower, middle and upper classes. The underlying reason

for this situation is the ability of the right to address common feelings, values and identical expressions.

On the other hand, the Left was visible in progressive-reactionary, secular-religious, Alevi-Sunni dilemmas as a result of its relationship with Kemalism and civil-bureaucratic elites. The left had an opportunity due to the increasing student and worker movements in the 1960s, but the search for revolution in an easy way, the otherization of communism and the failure of the "progressive coup" illusion caused this opportunity not to be grasped. It is also dubious whether the Left movements correctly analyze the conditions of Turkey in those years. There was no direct imperialist exploitation process in Turkey. The army had declared its commitment to NATO in the 27th May coup. Articles 141 and 142 of the Criminal Code were still in force. The military coup of Turkey's army was not similar to the military coups in Iraq and Egypt. Adnan Menderes, who came to power with a relatively free and fair election, could not be lumped together with the kings in Iraq and Egypt (Stephenson, 2011, p. 123). As a result of these misleading evaluations, the left supported the capitalization process in Turkey in order to mature the conditions of socialism, became an ally of modernization, Kemalist revolutions and ruling elites, and became the enemy of tradition and masses (Çakır, 2012, p. 280). In the 1970s, the increasing radical left movements began to identify with ethnicities. Secularism was defined by Alevism and revolutionism associated with Kurdish nationalism. In fact, folklore and folk music items that are used in large events and shows by the left generally belong to the Alevi and Kurdish world. In this case, it has become commonplace for the left to be the "other" for the Turkish-Sunni social majority (Kılıçarslan, 2014, p. 197). Leftist Kemalism also began to be used to represent the six arrows of the RPP, as mentioned above, after the 1980s, and manifested itself in the 28 February coup, the headscarf crisis, and the tension between secularism and religiosity.

Consequently, the top-down policies of Kemalist modernization, the prioritization of national identity construction, in addition, the civil-bureaucratic-military elite's being the guardianship of Kemalist modernization, and the blocking of democratic processes by military coups caused the center-periphery and right-left cleavages to appear on the basis of identities, not on the basis of classes. These cleavages are two separate and intertwined identity expressions, which are the other to each other. For this reason, the right can apply the policies of economic liberalism and receive votes from the lower

classes even in the emergent class inequalities. For the left, the people are a mass that needs to be transformed. This transformation is something that must be done by force, even if the people do not have consent. The antagonism between Islam and communism, and the fact that everything about the left is considered as communism are important subjects, in terms of understanding why Islamists and leftists couldn't become a common social movement or why social movements that adopt the left interpretation of Islam didn't emerge.

2.2.   ISLAMISM IN TURKEY AS AN IDENTITY MOVEMENT

In the broadest sense, Islam is not only a religion that deals with the spiritual dimension, but also a religion that organize the non-spiritual world (Tunaya, 2007, p. 22). Political Islam or Islamism emerged in the 19th and 20th century within the framework of economic, social and political relations with the West as an activist, modernist and eclectic modern movement in the areas where Muslims were the majority (Ayoob, 2004, p. 2; Kara, 2014, p. 17). Islamism is defined as the effort of the Muslims, who have been demanding in many fields such as economic, political, cultural and social, and who try to find solutions to the problems in these fields based on Islam (Denoeux, 2002, p. 61; Koyuncu, 2015, p. 621). The struggles of the Islamist movements according to Kara (2014, p. 17) are as follows: 1) To reign Islam as a whole, including belief, worship, morality, philosophy, politics, law, education, etc. 2) To save the Muslims and the Islamic world from Western exploitation, cruel rulers, captivity, imitation and superstition. 3) To civilize, unite and develop. In addition to this definition, Koyuncu (2015, p. 621) also defines "Islamism in its narrow sense", known as political Islam, that emerged in the 1970s, tawhid being a central concept and emphasis on politics. Under this title, the term Islamism will be used to refer to political Islam, which is expressed in a narrow sense.

Islamism does not express a rigid and single ideological thought trapped in a certain history, it develops and reproduces itself according to new situations (Bulaç, 2005, p. 51). Considered in this context, it can be said that Islamist movements include different reactions, comments, demands and attitudes in different geographies, times and conditions. Ali (2000) examines the Islamist movements in two broad terms. The first is the protest and emancipatory Islamist movements that occur in countries where Muslims are in a ruling position. The second is the Islamist identity movements that occur in

countries where Muslims are minorities. In addition, Ali (2000, p. 12) considered the movements of the Muslim groups that emerged from the death of the Prophet Muhammed to modern times and made demands for the liberation and purification of Islam as a religious reformist Islamist movement. Religious reformist Islamist movements are also considered as a part of protest and emancipatory Islamist movements. There are two important contradictions in this classification. The first is the fact that the identity movements, which is one of two different categories, do not appear in countries where only Muslims are minorities. As Nafi (2012, p. 16) has stated, the emergence of political Islamic movements has been an attempt to protect the Islamic identity against the West and its influences. As can be viewed, the political Islamist movement that emerged and developed in Turkey is also considered as an identity movement (Gülalp, 2002; Yavuz, 2003). Secondly, it can be said that Islam is treated as a whole, both worldly and spiritually, also it offers an identity. Therefore, here comes the problematic of which interpretation of Islam prevails in the political sphere. On the one hand, it seems that Islamist movements interpret Islam on the basis of classless, egalitarian society and social justice in the face of injustice, such as imperialist exploitation and economic troubles in society. On the other hand, it is seen that Islamist movements adopt concepts such as capitalism and free market as Western values in different countries. For example, Islamism in Turkey started with a critique of modernization and later developed an eclectic system with modernization (Aykaç & Durgun, 2018, p. 155). Under this heading, Islamist political movements in Turkey will also be examined and categorized according to this classification. The position of the Muslim-Left movement, which is the main subject of the thesis, will be determined in the Turkish Islamist literature. A conceptual assessment should be made as well as a historical assessment of Islamism in Turkey in order to determine its position.

Until the end of the 1960s, there was no Islamist political formation or movement (as defined above) in Turkey. As mentioned in the previous title, until the late 1960s, Islamic political demands and reactions were expressed in a conservative-nationalist identity and center-right parties were supported. Towards the end of the 1960s, it can be said that two different Islamist political movements emerged: radical Islamism and moderate (mainstream in Turkey) Islamism. Denoeux (2002, p. 68) describes radical Islamism as

"politico-religious movements which, through extreme methods, strive to bring about drastic sociopolitical changes based on a revolutionary reinterpretation of Islamic doctrine that claims to go back to the fundamental meaning and message of the faith."

Violence can be justified in this context in order to overthrow the non-Islamic order (Denoeux, 2002, p. 68). Erkilet (2015, p. 91) has specified ten different criteria that distinguish these radical and moderate Islamist movements from each other. The first is the attitude towards the existing social order. According to the radical Islamist movements, Islam is adopted as an ideology and take the place of other ideologies. Therefore, it is necessary to change the current order and bring an Islamic order. Moderate Islamist movements, on the other hand, make limited criticism of the existing social order and focus more on issues such as drinking, gambling, and women's headscarves. The second is the attitude towards persecution. Radical Islamist movements take it as their duty for Muslims to strive against the persecution, regardless of the identity of the persecuted. For moderate Islamist movements, the identity of the persecuted is important, and their nationalist and right-wing tendencies are stronger. The third is the attitude towards jihad. While radical Islamist movements care equally about one's own jihad against both the self and the existing order, moderate Islamist movements precede one's own jihad and withdraw political demands. The fourth is the attitude towards right-wing politics. Radical Islamist movements distance themselves from right, nationalist, conservative politics and parties. Moderate Islamist movements, on the other hand, have a strong tendency to support right-wing, nationalist and conservative parties. The fifth is the approach to obedience to rulers. For radical Islamist movements, it is not enough for the ruler to be just a Muslim. They consider it obligatory to oppose the ruler deviating from Sharia. Moderate Islamist movements emphasize that it is necessary to obey the ruler and not resist him if he is a Muslim, even if the ruler is cruel. Sixth is the attitude towards secularism. Radical Islamist movements perceive secularism as a fundamental religious problem and emphasize the need for in-group and activist reactions to secularism, not individual ones. Moderate Islamist movements, on the contrary, do not perceive secularism as a fundamental religious problem and develop individual responses. The seventh is the attitude towards Islam itself. Answering the question "what is true Islam?" is a fundamental concern for radical Islamist movements. Therefore, for

radical Islamist movements, Islam is not a tool to overcome the troubles of modernization, but the aim in itself. Moderate Islamist movements, on the other hand, tend to accept everything that has been done and said in the name of Islam as Islamic. Therefore, they see Islam as a tool to solve the troubles caused by modernization. Eighth is the attitude towards the universality of the Islamic message. Radical Islamist movements defend the universality of the Islamic message. Moderate Islamist movements try to reconcile Islam with concepts such as democracy and secularism, which they define as a requirement of modern society. Ninth is the attitude towards imperialist politics. Radical Islamist movements are anti-imperialist, opposing economic, political and military concessions to foreigners. Moderate Islamist movements may lean towards political and military alliances with foreigners, on the grounds that it is a shield against the left or can comfort the Muslims in the country. The last one is the attitude towards power. Radical Islamist movements do not approve of participating in given power structures, taking a share of power, and reformist and coalitionist approaches. Moderate Islamist movements, on the other hand, aspire to operate the given political system and take a share from the power (Erkilet, 2015, pp. 91-93).

The increase in translation activities in the 1960s, the influence of radical Islamist ideologists such as Mawdudi, Qutub, Hasan el-Benna and the return of students who were educated in places such as Cairo, Baghdad and Damascus led to the emergence of new Islamist generations in Turkey (Aykaç & Durgun, 2018, p. 160; Yanık & Bora, 2017, p. 295; Yıldırım, 2012, p. 171). This new generation, which was effective until the 1990s, was both fighting against the traditional understanding of Islam in Turkey and discussing the establishment of an Islamic state instead of the current non-Islamic order with the concepts of *taghut*, *mustakbir*, and *mustafadin* (Aykaç & Durgun, 2018, pp. 160-163). The impact of the discourses and works of universal Islamic movements on this new generation has prepared a break from the Anatolian / Turkey Islamism, a way out of right-wing, nationalist, statist, sectarian and traditionalist perceptions in search of an independent Islamic identity (Aytepe, 2016, p. 190). Therefore, it is possible to evaluate radical Islamist movements in Turkey within the scope of both protester, emancipatory movements and identity movements. However, although many radical and revolutionary Islamic movements such as *Muslim Youth*, *İktibas Magazine*, *Kaplancılar*, *Hizbu't Tahrîr*, *Hizbullah*, *Akdoğuş*, *Mealciler* etc. were active between the 1960s and 1990s; it

cannot be said that they achieved social support as in the Muslim majority geography. As the representative of mainstream political Islam in Turkey for a long time, the parties of the National Outlook Movement were influential and gained social support. The National Outlook Movement, which can be evaluated within the scope of moderate Islamism, has developed as an identity movement. The National Outlook Movement is a movement established by Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the movement, represented by the National Order Party (NOP, 1970-71), the National Salvation Party (NSP, 1972-1981), the Welfare Party (WP, 1983-1998), the Virtue Party (1997-2001) and the Felicity Party (FP, 2001-Present).

Erbakan (2014) discussed the political thought of the National Outlook Movement in detail in his book *Davam* (My Cause). The main goal of the National Outlook Movement was to realize the *Just Order*. According to Erbakan (2014, p. 203), Islam dominated the world from 622 to 1683 and was the founder and guardian of the Just Order on earth. However, after the Vienna Siege in 1683, the material power fell into the hands of racist imperialists and they established the order to make all humanity slaves. In today's world, *"many things from sports to theater, from art to industry, from law to trade are under the control of the Secret World State."* (Erbakan, 2014, p. 93). The owners of the Secret World State are Zionists, and the order established by the Zionists is the exploitation and trickery order that tries to eliminate Islam. It is part of the Zionists' plan to try to be made with the Treaty of Sevres and the Lausanne Treaty, and its main purpose is to remove Muslim Turks from Islam and erase their historical consciousness. The Zionists' collaborators are the USA and the European Union (EU). According to Erbakan, the foundation of the European Union is based on Christian civilization. The main purpose is to put Turkey off with the promise of entrance to the European Union, then to become a member of the European Union with special status, and then to make Turkey a one state with Israel (Erbakan, 2014). For the realization of the Just Order in the 21st Century, spiritualism instead of materialism, dialogue instead of conflict, justice instead of double standard, equality instead of superiority, cooperation instead of exploitation should be grounded on (Erbakan, 2014, pp. 205-208). Therefore, Erbakan was proposing alternative institutions to be created by Muslim countries instead of the institutions that he saw as part of the Zionist order. United Nations Organization of Muslim Countries instead of United Nations (UN), Organization of Defense Cooperation of Muslim

Countries instead of NATO, Muslim Countries Common Market Organization and Union instead of the European Union (EU), Muslim Countries' Common Currency instead of Euro, Organization of Cultural Cooperation of Muslim Countries instead of UNESCO were proposed by him (Çakır, 2005, p. 566; Çalmuk, 2005, p. 558). It can be inferred that Erbakan and the National Outlook Movement have an anti-Western, anti-Zionist worldview. Westernization policies and national identity construction in Turkey were considered as part of the Zionist plan and criticized in this context. What Erbakan tried to do was to present Islam as a unifying identity, which he believed would provide national unity. As a political identity, National Outlook expresses both locality and nationality by offering a religion-based perspective on everything from foreign policy to current developments, from industrialization to education (Çalmuk, 2005, p. 554).

The year 1969 when the National Outlook Movement first entered the political arena as the National Order Party (NOP), was the year when the right-left and Alevi-Sunni conflicts deepened. Çakır (2005, p. 545) states that NOP has three social bases. First, the new elite who came from religious families of provincial origin, had been educated from the secular institutions of the Republic and were generally engaged in self-employment. Second, religious entrepreneurs interested in trade and industry in the countryside. Third, the low-income Sunni religious people, both in the provinces and in big cities. In addition, the vast majority of the NOP's cadres consisted of the Naqshbandi cult and Nurists (followers of Said Nursi) who both encouraged the establishment of the party (Çalmuk, 2005, pp. 559-563; Safi, 2007, p. 282; Yavuz, 2005, p. 591). In fact, in the first congress of NOP, it was emphasized that the main owners of the party were tariqas (Çalmuk, 2005, p. 561). The NOP claimed to represent the periphery and the right-wing mass, and had similar traces in the following parties. In 1971, the NOP was closed by the Constitutional Court, claiming that the secular principles of the state were changed by the party and that an Islamic order was desired to replace the Kemalist system (Yavuz, 2003, p. 209). The National Salvation Party (NSP), which was founded in 1972, determined a conservative Islamist perspective with the slogan of "morality and spirituality first" and adopted a national developmental economic perspective with the slogan of *"Heavy Industry Move"* (Çakır, 2005, p. 547). The NSP, which advocated state-led industrialization with the *"Heavy Industry Move"*, became an important party as a coalition partner during the 1970s. The masses that supported NSP were artisans,

tradesmen and farmers in the provinces, which were generally negatively affected by the policies the state pursued in favor of industry (Yavuz, 2005, p. 593). The political identity represented by NSP was an Islam centered identity, having an interpretation of modernization that is at peace with tradition and establishing continuity between the Republic and the Ottoman Empire. As Yavuz (2003, p. 212) stated, "*because of the Kemalist ban on overtly religious political platforms, subtle Islamic symbols and norms were interpreted and presented within the concept of culture rather than of religion.*". When the programs of NOP, NSP, WP and VP, parties of the National Outlook Movement and Erbakan's discourses were examined, any demand for the Islamic State was not encountered. The critique of secularism was based on the problems of religious freedom that believers faced in their daily lives, and it was judged for not having implemented "true secularism" because it contained anti-democratic elements. The problems of Muslims were expressed within the framework of democratic demands, and the political emphasis of Islam was based on certain symbols with Ottomanist expressions (Yıldırım, 2012, pp. 171-172). However, after the military coup of September 12, 1980, the NSP was closed down because it contradicted the principle of secularism.

After the 1980 coup, there were some changes both in terms of instrumentalisation of Islam and economic development model. The idea of Islamism, which was excluded from the political sphere, had the opportunity to express itself in a nationalist-conservative language, and in the process that started with the Democrat Party, it found political representation with center-right parties and then parties of National Outlook Movement. On the one hand, while Islam was instrumental in the face of the danger of communism and radical Islamism, on the other hand, it was struggling against the increased symbolic and cultural visibility of Islam. Following the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the increasing activities of Al Qaeda, the idea of Turkish-Islamic synthesis as a conservative project was developed to prevent radical Islamist movements in addition to the danger of communism (Ogru, 2009, p. 100; Taşkın, 2006, p. 389). After the 1980 military coup, in accordance with the Kemalist regime, Sunni Islam was adopted against radical Islamic thoughts. As Alam stated:

> "*During the coup the regime produced a three-volume work, Atatürkçülük (Ataturkism), in order to demonstrate the compatibility of Islam and Kemalism. The definition of 'Turkishness' in the 1982 Constitution included unprecedented*

references to Islam. Further, the same constitution (Art. 24) brought the provision of compulsory religious and moral education in the country's elementary and secondary schools under the supervision and control of the state. These concessions, along with the slogan 'the best Turk is a Muslim Turk, the best Muslim is a Turkish Muslim' were turned into a state strategy to contain and defuse the appeal of the left, the Iranian Revolution and of socially radical Islamism at home. In effect, the 1980 coup leaders emphasized for the first time on an official level that the religious component of the nation and state was important and worthy of respect. The alliance between nationalism and Islam is what differentiated the 1980 coup from previous military interventions." (Alam, 2009, p. 366)

The Motherland Party (MP), which came to power in 1983 under the leadership of Turgut Özal, developed new point of views on the effects of Islam and Ottoman heritage on the contemporary Turkey's society. It was one of the indicators that the minister of national education came from the tradition of Naqshbandi cult in the Özal period and that the national history began to be rewritten to include Islam and the Ottoman Empire. The word "national" started to be used mostly with an Islamic reference (Alam, 2009, pp. 366-367).

Economically, the export-oriented economic development model was used since the 1980s instead of the import substitution model, adopted in the previous years. The liberalization policies implemented by Özal created opportunities for the periphery. Neo-liberal policies implemented as a result of the globalization process led to the emergence of new business elites and new urban middle classes, mostly from Anatolian cities (Demiralp, 2009, p. 319; Narli, 1999, p. 40). The decline of state intervention in the economy, the strengthening of the free market, has led religious people to become more visible in the economic field. The establishment of business partnerships through different religious groups using foreign exchange resources provided by workers organized in Europe, the creation of interest-free finance institutions, and solidarity networks established through religious communities and sects led to the emergence of a new economic formation called *"Anatolian Capital"* or *"Green Capital"*. Religious groups, whose visibility increased with local TV, radio, newspapers and broadcasts, managed to create a space where they could express their identity and provide legitimacy (Demir,

2005, pp. 872-874). MUSIAD (Independent Industrialists and Businessmen Association), one of the important representatives of Anatolian Capital and consisting of Muslim entrepreneurs, started to be less dependent on the state, less demanding from the government, and creating its own space, competing not only in the free market but also competing with Kemalist thought, culturally and ideologically (Alam, 2009, p. 368). As Demiralp (2009, p. 321) stated that "*the establishment of MUSIAD has been an important milestone in the polarization of the secularist and Islamic camps in the economic arena.*" The founders of MUSIAD adopted globalization and integration with the world economy, but they were distant to the concept of capitalism and aimed to establish an "Islamic Economic System" as an alternative to the "Capitalist economic system" (Narli, 1999, p. 40; Ş. Özdemir, 2005, p. 841). This system, which is called "economic Islam" by Keyman and Gümüşçü (2014, p. 132), was aimed "*to link a free-market economy with religious and traditional values, and to create a morally loaded economic development.*" MUSIAD, which benefited from the opportunities offered by the free market and had the opportunity to legitimize its identity with Islamic values in the face of secular identity, has been an important formation for the Islamist political movement since the 1990s.

The Welfare Party, which was established in 1983 and succeeded in the 1990s, was formed under these conditions. The ideological thinking of the National Outlook Movement had not changed, but the Welfare Party succeeded by following an identity policy and taking advantage of the opportunities brought by globalization and postmodern thinking. Unlike NSP, WP was more globalist, liberal in the economy, and aware of the international political system (Köni et al., 2015, p. 343; Yavuz, 2005, p. 596). Apart from that, there were also significant differences between party programs. NSP was advocating the "Heavy Industry Move" that would take place under the leadership of the state throughout the 1970s. The Heavy Industry Move was an irreplaceable program for Turkey's independence for the NSP. However, the way to achieve national independence in the WP's program was not specified as the Heavy Industry Move. Whereas NSP advocated the protection of the domestic market, WP advocated extending the economy to the international market. Social justice, domestic peace, freedom of religion, ethnic neutrality, respect for labor, the interest-free economy and the end of corruption were key themes in WP's campaigns (Gülalp, 2002, pp. 63-64). Alongside with the Islamic economic groups that were strengthened due to neo-liberal policies, the Welfare Party

also received great support from the urban poor, who were negatively affected by these policies (Delibas, 2009, p. 98; Gülalp, 2002, p. 55). By pursuing identity politics, WP was able to appeal to different socio-economic classes. Gülalp (2002, p. 59) divided the socio-economic classes supporting WP into three groups. The first was the group known as Anatolian capital or Islamic capital. The second was the individuals that belonged to the professional middle class, which was usually conservative and provincial, having university degrees. The third was the peripheral elements of the working class that had recently migrated to the cities, apart from the organized working class that was close to the center. A group that supports WP but cannot be identified with its class position was the Kurds, who did not like the Turkey's governments' approach to the Kurdish issue, but also did not want to support the PKK. On the one hand, Anatolian Capital, which strengthened thanks to the free market economy and competed with capital groups created by the Republic bourgeoisie, on the other hand, the lower classes that were negatively affected by neo-liberal policies, and finally the support of different ethnic groups, which were disadvantaged due to their identity, led to the success of WP in 1990s. The "Just Order" discourse became meaningful for all these different socio-economic classes and identities (Dağı, 2013, p. 81). The reason for this was that peace, prosperity and stability became important issues for people (Köni et al., 2015, p. 343). It could also be observed that the WP did not break with the National Outlook ideology, despite its success with the support it received from the masses. The WP strictly maintained anti-Western, anti-Zionist worldview and wanted Turkey to leave the Common Market, abandon EU membership process and end the Customs Union Treaty (Çakır, 2005, p. 565). By the late 1990s, the WP had problems with the Kemalist regime. One year after coming to power, Erbakan government resigned after the National Security Council meeting on 28th February 1997. In this process, which is called "postmodern coup" in the media, briefings were organized by the army within the scope of "anti-obscurantist struggle", headscarved women were banned from entering universities, and thousands of people working in the public were dismissed from their jobs. Finally, in January 1998, the Welfare Party was closed with a decision of the Constitutional Court.

The 1997 crisis, in addition to the strengthening of Islamic capital, caused some strategic changes in Islamist politics. The Virtue Party (VP), which was established immediately after, was trying to emphasize its difference from the Welfare Party. The

discourse of the Just Order was abandoned and discourses such as democracy, human rights and European Union membership were brought to the fore. In the Virtue Party, the strife between the Innovative wing and the Traditionalist wing within the National Outlook Movement became even more visible. The main difference between Innovators and Traditionalists was that Traditionalists wanted to keep the party as an "ideological cadre party", while Innovators wanted to turn the party into a "mass party" (Çakır, 2005, p. 549). At the VP congress held on May 14, 2000, in the election between Recai Kutan, representing the traditionalists supported by Erbakan, and Abdullah Gül, representing the innovators, whereas the traditionalists won with 633 votes, the innovators lost with 521 votes (Akdoğan, 2005, p. 624). After the Virtue Party, which was closed due to its being a continuation of the Welfare Party, on 15th December 2000, innovators left the National Outlook Movement and founded the Justice and Development Party (JDP).

JDP, which came to power as the first party by winning the general elections on November 3, 2002, has managed to remain in power until today. It is difficult to say that the JDP followed a certain ideological line during the 18-year rule. The JDP declared that it was not an Islamist political party and declared that it had adopted the conservative-democratic identity when it was founded. The understanding of politics adopted with its conservative-democratic identity was expressed as follows:

> "*Politics is an area of consensus recognized by differences in the social sphere. Political authority should be based on legal, constitutional and political legitimacy. Political power should not be concentrated in the hands of a person or group, a limited understanding of government and state should be essential. Conservatism advocates evolutionist and gradual change against revolutionary transformation, is based on moderation rather than radicalism, believes in preserving tradition, family and social gains from the past.*" (Akdoğan, 2005, p. 625)

In brief, its conservative-democratic identity is defined as conservative in terms of history, tradition and family values, liberal in terms of economic policies, republican and democrat in the context of representative democracy (Kalın, 2013, p. 430). Unlike the political thought of the National Outlook, JDP did not see the European Union as a Christian union and did not adopt an anti-Zionist, anti-Westernist attitude. In fact, JDP

referred to more liberal concepts, such as Europeanization, civilianization and the consolidation of democracy (Duran, 2010, p. 17). Therefore, the European Union membership process was supported and concrete steps were taken to EU accession. By means of the implementation of the European Union adjustment programme, many have been achieved about democratization, supremacy of law and economically. In this context, the military's intervention in politics was restricted, broadcasts in Kurdish and politics in local languages were ensured, State Security Courts and the death penalty were abolished. Economically fast and comprehensive privatization program was implemented, policies were developed to support small and medium-sized entrepreneurs and to strengthen the middle class (Asef Bayat, 2013, p. 11; Dağı, 2013, p. 95; Demiralp, 2009, p. 328). JDP also changed the strict secularism understanding adopted by the state. Instead of assertive secularism, which developed with Kemalist modernization and adopted Islam as the "founding Other", it adopted Anglo-American type passive secularism, which approached all beliefs as neutral, and saw secularism as an integral part of democracy (Keyman & Gümüşçü, 2014, pp. 6-7). All these developments changed the axes of the center-periphery relationship (Kalın, 2013, p. 428). The army, which represents the Kemalist center, was no longer able to interfere with the administration, and Anatolian capital was in close contact with the government. The JDP strengthened its position in power with increasing voting rates in the 2007 and 2011 elections, weakened the military and civil bureaucracy that threatened its power, and started to gain control over the media and civil society (Özpek, 2017). JDP, consisting of cadres representing the periphery, has now started to be centralized.

As mentioned earlier, the tension between the center and the periphery, the right and left, the religious and secular segments was experienced on the basis of national identity. The crisis of 28th February not only pushed Islamist politics out of the political sphere but also changed discourse and strategy of it. As a result of this change, JDP has implemented democratization policies and has normalized the military-bureaucracy-civilian relationship by fighting with the Kemalist center and secularist elites. After the JDP has been centralized, national identity construction has become an important issue. In the third term of JDP (after the 2011 election), Erdogan declared that he would raise religious generations (Arat & Pamuk, 2019, p. 120; Yenigun, 2016, p. 240). Since then, JDP's conservative identity has begun to contain more Ottoman and Islamic themes. As

Uzer (2019, p. 5) points out, this identity can be defined as "…*returning to the Islamist movement's roots,…, without the extremist rhetoric about sharia.*" On 11th July 2014, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was a presidential candidate of the Republic of Turkey of that time, published a document: *"Document of Vision Towards New Turkey".* The "New Turkey" discourse, the 2023, 2053 and 2071 programs and the steps towards raising the religious generation, show that a new identity construction process has begun. 2023 is the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, 2053 is the 600th year of the conquest of Istanbul, and 2071 is the 1000th year of Malazgirt Victory. These dates are important for the JDP to build a new link between the Seljuk Empire, Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey with the rhetoric of New Turkey. In parallel with this situation, although passive secularism was adopted, sufficient steps were not taken regarding the freedoms of Alevis, non-Muslims, secular Muslims and non-believers in the public sphere. Instead, the visibility of Sunni Islam in daily life has increased, the efficiency of the Presidency of Religious Affairs has increased, religious (Islamic) education has increased in schools and steps have been taken to reduce alcohol consumption (Keyman & Gümüşçü, 2014, pp. 136-137). Towards the 2015 elections, the JDP created a common ground with the Nationalist Movement Party (NMP) on the fight against terrorism after the solution process policies with the Kurds ended due to the PKK's restarted armed actions. The failed coup attempt on 15th July 2016 further strengthened the NMP and JDP partnership, and Turkishness began to increase in Erdogan's discourses along with Islam (Uzer, 2019, p. 6).

In summary, until 2011, taking steps towards democratization by defining a conservative-democratic identity, JDP, as it strengthened its position in power, started the process of construction a national identity that defines Islam not as "founding Other" but as "founding core". As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to say that JDP has followed a certain ideological line during its 18-year rule. However, the debate on whether JDP is an Islamist party continues since its establishment. According to some scholars (Atasoy, 2009; Hale & Özbudun, 2010), JDP has really become a conservative center-right party by detached from Islamist politics and became the practitioner of neo-liberal policies. Tuğal (2009) even argued that the JDP absorbed Islamism by pursuing a conservative politics compatible with capitalism. However, what makes JDP Islamist is that it presents Islamic values and norms as common values in identity construction, and its effort to

impose these values and norms on daily life. Çınar (2011, p. 540) expresses this as follows:

> "*What makes the AKP Islamist is not a commitment to transform the Turkish state into an Islamic one, or to replace the secular foundations of the political and legal system with Islamic ones, or even to Islamicize society and public life; it is to reestablish Turkey's national identity as authentically Islamic, where Islam becomes the "glue" that defines and holds together the national community, replacing previous norms such as ethnic Turkism.*"

Considered conceptually, it cannot be said that the JDP carried out an Islamist politics as defined above in the period before 2011. The concept of post-Islamism, which Bayat (2013, p. 29) put forward and described as "*transcending from the duty-centered and exclusive Islamist politics toward a more rights-centered and inclusive outlook that favors a civil / secular state operating within a pious society*", may be more appropriate. According to Bayat (2013, p. 8), post-Islamism represents a condition in which Islamism must renew itself in order to adapt to the global system, and a project that combines Islam and democracy and modernity. In this sense, post-Islamism does not imply an anti-Islamist, un-Islamic or secular policy. Instead, it refers to the effort to integrate religiousness, belief, and Islam on the basis of rights and freedoms. Correlatively, Dağı (2013, pp. 72-73) treats post-Islamism as an attitude and a political strategy. Post-Islamism as an attitude adopts an attitude that continues to see Islam as a source of reference but opens up a field of freedom for different religious beliefs rather than a monopolistic interpretation of Islam. Post-Islamism as a political strategy also acts in the direction of democracy, rejecting the old revolutionary Islamist conception and creating coalitions with different social groups. Considering this, it can be said that JDP complied with a post-Islamist conceptualization for the period before 2011. Under the conditions after the 28th February crisis, favorable conditions have emerged for Islamists who have been pushed out of the political sphere, and the attitude towards democracy has been changed. Coalitions have been successfully established with different segments of the society by JDP and democratization policies have been implemented.

Considering the post-2011 JDP period, the desire to raise religious generations, increased Islamic emphasis and increased use of nationalist discourses have driven JDP

away from post-Islamism. Çınar (2011, p. 540) calls the identity construction process, in which JDP tries to replace Islam with Turkishness, as *"Islamic Nationalism"*. According to Uzer (2019), this identity is a "*quasi-Ottoman-Anatolian-Islamic*" identity. On the other hand, Yenigün (2016) made an extensive evaluation and established an antimony between Islamism and Muslimism and named the ideological identity represented by JDP as Muslimism. This antimony, established between Islamism and Muslimism, is based on the distinction between el-Affendi's (2008) Medina and Damascus model. According to Yenigün (2016, p. 229),

> "*Muslimism, an extension of Damascus model, is a quest for power and seeks Muslim interests worldwide. Islamism, an heir to Medina model, may be identified by an ethical pursuit of justice that occasionally clashes with Muslim political interests.*"

As a result, the JDP as an Islamist political movement can conceptually be considered post-Islamist before 2011 and Muslimist after 2011.

Consequently, the mainstream Islamist movement in Turkey developed different from Middle East geography that having the Muslim-majority. Considering that Islamist thought is a reaction to the problems of modernization, the difference of Islamist thought that developed in Turkey is due to the fact that it is not an imperial colony. Thus, in the Muslim majority geography, whereas Islamist movements developed a critique of capitalism along with a critique of modernization, mainstream Islamism in Turkey developed criticisms of the unifying element of national identity and Westernization. The reason is not just because Turkey was not colonized. The instrumentalization of Islam against communism and the prioritization of the Sunni-Hanafi understanding of Islam over other sects and religions through the Directorate of Religious Affairs, and the development of the Turkish-Islam synthesis against radical Islamism have important effects. Another important factor is that communities and sects play an important role in shaping political Islam. The communities and cults that formed a new Islamic bourgeoisie thanks to the neoliberal policies, were also training bureaucrats. As Gülalp (2002, p. 127) points out, identity movements are movements that transcend classes, contain or promise a network of solidarity between classes. Started with the National Outlook Movement and continued with the JDP, mainstream political Islam could receive support from different

socio-economic classes in accordance with this definition and offered Islam as a unifying identity. Çınar (2005) defines this mainstream Islamist movement as Islamist Kemalism and Göle (1997) as the counter-elite movement. Indeed, in his book titled *Türk Sağının Üç Hâli: Milliyetçilik, Muhafazakârlık, İslâmcılık* (The Three States of the Turkish Right: Nationalism, Conservatism, Islamism), Bora (1998) considers Islamism as the liquid state of the Turkish Right, which is the source of images, values and rituals. Considering the priorities and symbolic contradictions for the construction of national identity, it can be said that his evaluation is true in these studies. Thus, when evaluated conceptually and historically, a figure for the emerging and developing Islamist movements in Turkey is as follows:
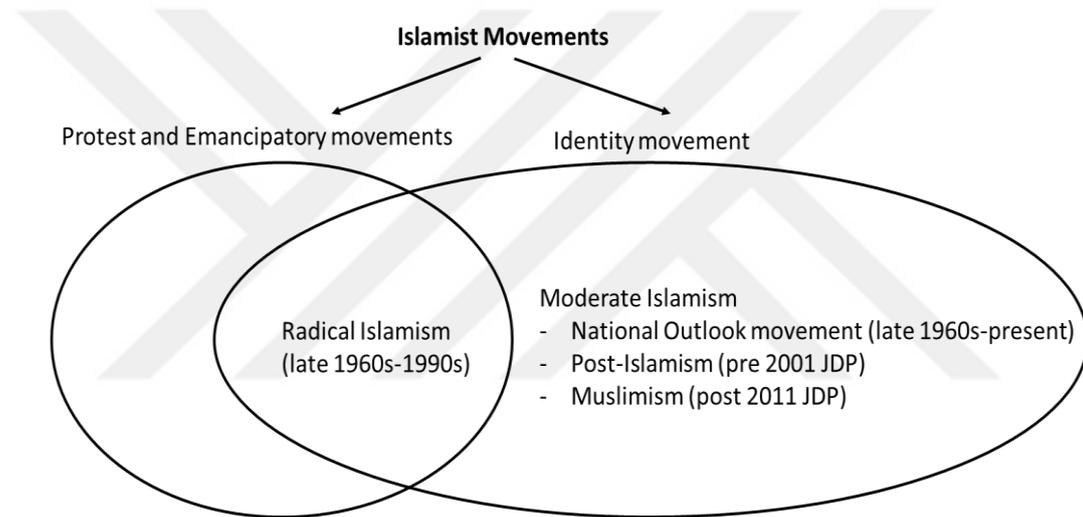
Figure 1: Islamisms in Turkey

Based on this figure 1, it is seen that the radical Islamist movements can be evaluated as both protest and emancipatory movements and identity movements. Moderate Islamist movements that constitute mainstream Islamism appear as identity movements.

CHAPTER 3: MUSLIM-LEFT: LEFT POLITICS OF ISLAMISM AND A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

When the political thought of Islamist movements in Turkey is reviewed, it can be seen that it is shaped as a right-wing politics where identity is prioritized. Considering that the cleavages such as center-periphery, right-left are also identity-based in the political life of Turkey, it cannot be said that a political and social movement that established a link between Islam and the left or socialism emerged until the 2000s. Thanks to the globalization process and neoliberal policies that started in the 1980s, political Islam, which rose as an identity movement and gradually became compatible with the global system, also led to the development of an understanding of Islam compatible with neoliberalism. However, it should be kept in mind that while the globalization process strengthens the periphery capital in Turkey, the working class has been negatively affected by this process (Gülalp, 2002, p. 60). MUSIAD, the most important representative of the periphery capital that got stronger in the 1990s, focused on class interests. On the other hand, HAK-İş, an Islamic workers union, embraced the class struggle, regardless of the Islamic common ground on workers' rights (Ş. Özdemir, 2005, p. 863). With the JDP coming to power, the continuation of the implementation of neoliberal policies both strengthened MUSIAD and caused an understanding of Islam focusing on class interests to become more visible. Atasoy (2009) calls this situation "*Islam's marriage with neoliberalism*". In addition to this understanding of Islam, following the changing center-periphery axis after 2011, a more nationalist and right-wing Islamist perspective has also emerged. These two factors led to the emergence of social movements that embraced the left politics of Islamism. The Islamists, who are opposed to the deepening of class divisions, the capitalist economic order, neoliberal policies and relations with the West, and the leftists who seek localization have entered into a common ground (Ekinci, 2014b, pp. 52-53; Koca, 2013, p. 65). These emerging social movements will be referred to as Muslim-Left movements within the scope of this thesis.

3.1.   SEARCHING FOR LEFT IN POLITICAL ISLAM IN THE 2000S

In the 2000s, Muslims and leftists who opposed the strengthening of the interpretation of Islam combined with neoliberalism began to dialogue and discuss Islam and the left on a common ground. As Ingleby (2018, p. 122) noted that *"one of the events that inspired the first dialogues between Muslim and secular leftists was the U.S. led invasion of Iraq in 2003."*. The 1st March Bill, which was widely discussed in the public, was not accepted in the parliament with the formation of internal party opposition. However, the opposition, which started with the invasion of Iraq by the US, created a ground where many former Islamists and leftists were on the same side (Ingleby, 2018, p. 122). And then, *The New Politics Initiative*, which was formed in 2006 by Ertuğrul Günay (former RPP deputy and leftist) and Islamist Mehmet Bekaroğlu (former member of the VP) was the first formation to bring Islam and the left together and called Muslim-Left in the public (Coşkun, 2006). Among the founders of the New Politics Initiative, there were many names from left and right such as Ayhan Bilgen from Mazlum-Der, Şinasi Haznedaroğlu (former VP deputy), Metin Kalkan (RPP deputy), Erdal Kalkan (former RPP executive), Haluk Özdalga, Nilüfer Arıak, Hayri Kırbaşoğlu, Ercüment Ege, and (former Human Rights Association executive) Kiraz Biçici. The New Politics Initiative aimed to initiate a discussion process with all segments of society through a new understanding of politics. In their announcement texts, they stated that the current understanding of politics was insufficient to solve the problems, and a politics shaped over identities underestimated the real problems:

> *"The sides of politics cannot be shaped over the discussions of belief, religion, sect, ethnic origin, or dress and form. The discussions on the difference of origin and belief are traps that prevent people from taking sides according to their real place in the life of society."* (Hürriyet, 2006, December 21)

Mehmet Bekaroğlu (2014, p. 432) stated that the basis of the New Politics Initiative was the idea of a party constitution that was financed by its members and all decisions were taken by the members. Bekaroğlu (2014, p. 432) stated that such a political party had three main objectives, such as the Medina Document:

> *"1) It will ensure the security of all humanity, 2) It will guarantee the life standard of all humanity - in terms of nourishment, prosperity, that is, something that can*

provide the livelihood of the people to whom a person is convicted to look after, 3) The freedom of all humanity"[5]

Although the New Politics Initiative was the first attempt of Muslims and leftists to create a common ground in the political arena, it was disbanded when Ertuğrul Günay and Haluk Özdalga joined the JDP in 2007. Later, the People's Voice Party (PVP), founded in 2010 by Numan Kurtulmuş, who left the National Outlook Movement, was a party that included many Islamists and leftists. Among the founders of the PVP were people who broke away from the National Outlook Movement, as well as people from the left, such as the former leader of the United Workers Party of Turkey, Zeki Kılıçarslan, and Cem Somel, who had served in the Labor Party. The PVP was important in that it was the first party to show that Islamists and leftists can act under a common roof by defending the same values, despite the Islamist understanding that was identified with right-wing politics especially during the cold war period (Koca, 2014, p. 295). Although PVP has a program that shows the common values of Islam and the left, it could not internalize and apply this program (Koca, 2014, p. 296). Just like the New Politics Initiative, the People's Voice Party ended after Numan Kurtulmuş and many names with him joined the JDP.

However, theoretical and critical debates trying to bring Islam and the left together in Turkey continued in journals such as İslamiyat (2002), Doğudan (2007-2010), Özgün Düşünce (2009), and Birikim (2010). Mehmet Bekaroğlu and İhsan Eliaçık, as two pioneers representing the common values of Islam and the left, came to the fore in this period and pioneered to establishment of the *Labor and Justice Platform* and *Anti-Capitalist Muslims*. Koca (2014, p. 289) refers to Mehmet Bekaroğlu as the representative of the social justice aspect of Islam in politics, and İhsan Eliaçık as someone who put forward the social justice aspect of Islam in a theoretical framework.

Mehmet Bekaroğlu was elected as a deputy from the Virtue Party in 1998 and started to do active politics. Bekaroğlu, who became a member of parliament in the 28th February process was a member of the Human Rights Commission in Grand National Assembly of Turkey, states that he was called a leftist because he expressed human rights violations, defended the rights of the "other" and tried to represent the Kurds in the

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[5] Translated by author

parliament. Expressing himself as a devout person and a Muslim, Bekaroğlu said that leftists in Turkey have a problem with religion and that they have a problem with freedoms and that is why he does not express himself as a leftist. However, he said that he could be considered a leftist in terms of his understanding of the concepts of labor, freedom and capital in a universal sense. He also states that as a Muslim, he interprets politics differently from traditional groups and parties in two ways. First, he differentiates himself by taking a stand for labor and justice against the free market economy. Second, he differs by acting on behalf of the other in matters of rights, law, freedom and human rights (Bekaroğlu, 2014, pp. 430-431). In his book *Siyasetin Sonu* (The End of Politics) (2007), Bekaroğlu states that the JDP is the product of neoliberal policies and social distortions that started with the 24th January (1980) Decisions. According to him, JDP has integrated all Islamic segments into the system and captured all segments of the society to the market (Bekaroğlu, 2007, p. 519). Despite this, he (Bekaroğlu, 2007, p. 520) states that the system has not changed in Turkey with the JDP and the tutelage system is maintained. This view of Bekaroğlu supports the statement of Kalın (2013, p. 428) that *"the center-periphery axes has changed"*. Because Bekaroğlu (2007, p. 520) also states that no major changes have been made in the constitution, political parties law and election law by ensuring social consensus, and instead that only the actors have changed in the current regime. In addition to all these, Bekaroğlu (2007, p. 522) says that politics is not over for Muslims, and that the politics of Muslims can only be possible with an emancipatory reading of Islam. What is meant by an emancipatory reading of Islam is not an expression like reform in religion. However, he (2007, p. 523) states that the Sunni caliphate-sultanate tradition derives from historical power struggles, not Islam. Therefore (2007, p. 523), the policy of Muslims should be to provide the peace and justice environment that Islam promises, and to fight against poverty, threat and oppression according to him. Bekaroğlu tried to practice his political thoughts, which he expressed as a Muslim person. After the failure of the New Politics Initiative, he continued in the cultural field with the Eastern Conferences Platform, which was established after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. This platform, which also includes many people from the Islamist and left wing, became an association in 2007 and started to publish a magazine named Dogudan (Eastern). In this magazine, of which Mehmet Bekaroğlu was the owner and editor-in-chief, many topics such as capitalism, imperialism, democracy, women,

neoliberalism, the Kurdish issue, Latin America and the Middle East news were discussed. After Mehmet Bekaroğlu's coming back to active politics in 2010, Doğudan magazine was stopped to be published (Koca, 2014, p. 293). He has been continuing politics in the RPP since 2014.

Another person who defends the common values of Islam and the left is İhsan Eliaçık (born in 1961), a theologian and an author. Eliaçık, who was a member of the radical Islamist group Raiders (Akıncılar) in his youth, points out that he was sentenced to one year in Mamak prison due to the "Akıncılar and Akıncı Youth Case" as one of the turning points in his life. Eliaçık, who stayed in the same ward with the members of the leftist organization, states that he had many discussions that formed his thoughts now (Eliaçık, 2014, p. 436). Although he accepts that his discourses are outside the Sunni tradition, he argues that he is within the Islamic tradition. In fact, according to him, what is really marginal and unconventional is the anti-communism and capitalistization of the Sunni Muslim majority. He states that there was no such thing as boasting about wealth, getting rich, or giving excessive importance to money, neither in Anatolia, nor in Islamic history, nor in Sufism. He attributes the reason why the Ottomans could not become capitalists to the absence of this culture. For this reason, he says that there was an attempt to become capitalist by the state and that the state expanded capitalism after the establishment of the republic (Eliaçık, 2014, p. 437). Eliaçık, who is the author of many books such as "Revolutionary Islam", "Other History of Islam", "State of Justice", "Innovators of Islam", "Property Writings", "Democratic Libertarian Islam", has more than twenty books including commentaries to date. Along with being an important reference and source for Muslim-Left movements, he conceptualized his political thought as *"Social Islam"* and explained it in the book that has the same name. According to Eliaçık (2018), Social Islam has two dimensions. First, Islam is defined as an essentially social religion, and Social Islam is an emphasis on the "social" content of the Quran. Eliaçık states (2018, p. 10) that the way to oppose the dominant paradigm of the age, which he defines as *"its totem as mamon (money / wealth), its taboo as property"*, is possible with Social Islam. The second dimension is *kaffarah*[6], which reveals the social essence of Islam or the social content of the Quran. In the Quran, the subject of kaffarah

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[6] Kaffarah is derived from the word (kaffar), which means to cover up, and is used to mean the veil that covers a sin due to a mistake.

is mentioned in four places: pilgrimage, accidental murder, divorce and oath (Eliaçık, 2018, pp. 12-15). Eliaçık (2018, p. 15) states that, in the light of the verses he has studied, four ways are used to make amends when a mistake is made. The first is to rescue someone who is in debt or is under yoke, the second is to find a poor person and give them food, and the second is to starve if they cannot afford them (i.e. fasting). These two things, which Eliaçık draws attention to the essence of Islam, form the basis of his idea of "Social Islam". İhsan Eliaçık's political thoughts and discourses have also been a source of inspiration and reference for many social movements and formations that try to bring Islam and the left together on a common ground. He founded İnşa Publications in 2006 and İnşa Culture House in 2012. He took part in the establishment and hosted many organizations such as Anti-Capitalist Muslims, Revolutionary Muslims and the Labor and Justice Platform.

The attempt to meet Islam and the left on a common ground, which failed in practice in the 2000s, continued theoretically and was discussed from both the Islamist and leftist communities. By the 2010s, social movements that differed from the previous generation of Islamists and Islamist thought, produced new discourses, brought Islam and the left together, adopted the leftist politics of Islamism, and were mostly university students or graduates, emerged and began to become visible. *The Labor and Justice Platform* and *Anti-Capitalist Muslims*, which were established in the early 2010s, continue to exist as important social movements that bring Islam and the left together[7]. Therefore, the emergence of social movements that embraced left politics of Islamism in the 2000s and the differentiation of these social movements from mainstream Islamist and leftist politics in Turkey in 2010 is a new situation. The concept of Muslim-Left has been preferred to emphasize this differentiation.

3.2. CONCEPTUALIZING THE MUSLIM-LEFT

The concept of the Muslim-Left was first used by the author Ahmet Hakan Coşkun (2006) to describe the New Political Initiative, and later this concept started to appear in the press. Coşkun (2006) says that the distinguishing feature of the Muslim-Left

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[7] Apart from these two social movements, there were groups such as Hür Beyan (Free Declaration), Makbul Adımlar (Acceptable Steps), and Özgür Açılım (Free Expansion), which were founded by university students in the early 2010s, but these movements could not survive.

movement initiated by Ertuğrul Günay and Mehmet Bekaroğlu is that they can both say *"we are leftists"* and *"we are Muslims"*. To put it more clearly, the New Political Initiative aims to overcome the tolerance relationship between Muslim and leftist and meet in a common theoretical framework. Ingleby (2018) also used the concept of the Muslim-Left to distinguish Anti-Capitalist Muslims from the mainstream Islamist movements in Turkish history. Emphasizing that the idea of Islamism is not an opposition to secularism, adopting a left-wing Islamist politics against economic injustices, and seeking common struggles with different identities are cited as distinctive features of Anti-Capitalist Muslims (Ingleby, 2018, pp. 11-14). Ingleby (2018, p. 97) mentions also the features that distinguish the Muslim-Left from the oppositional Islamist politics, which includes the critique of capitalism. First, the Muslim Left extends its egalitarianism to gender equality, non-discrimination and cultural pluralism, unlike cultural conservatives who embrace traditional gender roles and social hierarchies. Apart from that, while most Islamists point to Western imperialism and foreign enemies above all as responsible for the consequences of capitalism, the Muslim Left is targeting the ruling Muslim elite itself. This does not mean that Muslim leftists are any less anti-imperialist, but ruling Muslim elites are pointed to as the culprit and beneficiary of Turkey's exposure to uncontrolled global markets. Therefore, while conservative Islamists express their criticism more in writing and take care not to cross the line, the Muslim-Left is more involved in anti-government protests, combining their intellectual criticism with political activism, and bringing their criticism of the government into the public sphere (Ingleby, 2018, p. 97).

Hence, there are four outcomes regarding the concept of the Muslim-Left. The first is that it expresses a political partnership between Muslims and leftists. The realization of this partnership is possible by overcoming the state of otherness established between Muslim and leftist identities. Therefore, it can be said that Muslims differ from mainstream Islamism in their approach to politics, and leftists detach from the domination of Kemalism. Koca (2016, p. 528) describes this situation as "*saving Islam from the right politics and the left from Kemalism.*" Secondly, this partnership also includes a theoretical search between Islam and the left. Thus, this theoretical quest requires a left interpretation of Islam for the basis of Muslim identity and left politics of Islamism. Third, the concept of the Muslim-Left is used to describe a dissident. Islamist movement that emerged after

the 2000s, especially 2010s in Turkey. Hence, it is a concept specific to the 21st century and Turkey. Lastly, the concept of the Muslim-Left is used to denote a social movement. Therefore, it should be examined which social movement it should be considered within.

3.2.1. Left Politics of Islamism

When considered conceptually, the "Left" represented political and intellectual movements in which the poor, oppressed and exploited expressed rationality as social, political, economic progress, cultural and intellectual freedom, thought and life. "Right" defends individual property and freedom of enterprise, opposes the distribution of wealth and the reduction of differences between social strata and the tendency to freeze reality to preserve tradition, and ultimately wants to maintain the status quo (Kıranşal, 2014, pp. 105-106; Zeyd, 2002, p. 21). Henceforth, Zeyd (2002, p. 22) noted that "*at the level of practice, in the period of formation and development, the Islamic message falls into the left category as a contemporary category.*" Similarly, Aktaş (2014, p. 117) argued that considering the left's characteristic tendencies such as libertarianism, egalitarianism, and revolutionism; Islam has always been an ontologically left vein, and there have always been Islamic Left tendencies historically.

In this case, it can be said that the most important common point is shared between Islam and the left is an evaluation of history based on classes. Ali Shariati, one of the prominent representatives of Islamist and leftist thought and known as the God-worshiping Socialist (Assef Bayat, 1990; Cesur, 2002), explains a class-based historical evaluation with the dialectic he established through Abel and Cain. Shariati (1980, pp. 120-121) states that the beginning of history was the war between Abel who represented an economic system based on primitive socialism and shepherding; and Cain who represented a system based on agriculture, individual or monopoly property. At the end of the story, Cain wins by killing Abel and stays on the scene of history. Similar to Marx's historical dialectic, this interpretation has an important difference. According to Shariati (1980, p. 122),), it is the power that determines the acquisition of private property, not the private property that determines gaining power. It was the use of force that allowed the individual to gain the first private property. Therefore, power relations, which indicate the ownership of property, have also formed the basis of humanity's struggle throughout history. So, where is religion in the struggle between Abel and Cain? Shariati (2018)

explains the place of religion in this struggle in the history of humanity by an antagonism he founded between *"the religion of tawhid"* and *"the religion of shirk"*. According to Shariati (2018, p. 15), religion has never made war with irreligion, it is always vice versa. The concept of shirk used by Shariati does not mean godlessness. Shirk is a religion that deviates from religious truths and is one of the oldest religions in history. Lack of knowledge, discrimination, property relations, the phenomenon of class society and the superiority of a class to one another are the reasons that composes the religion of shirk. Thus, classes that have economic superiority use the religion of shirk as means of domination. In this way, it is ensured that the people adopt unhappiness, ignorance, humiliation as a bad fate and submit to the existing exploitation order. In this case, the statement *"religion is the opium of the people"* is correct when it is used for the religion of shirk. On the other hand, Tawhid emphasizes the belief, that there is only one God who created the whole universe, and all power is in the hands of the God, that all creatures come from the same root, that they are equal and tend to one direction, and that all values, powers and symbols except God must be destroyed. Contrary to the religion of Shirk, the religion of Tawhid is against the exploitation order and the salvation of humanity is only possible with the religion of Tawhid (Şeriati, 2018, pp. 15-36). As it can be understood from here, Tawhid points to a classless society.

This dialectic and antagonism are important for the Muslim-Left concept in two respects. First, a class-based historical evaluation made it easier for Islam to meet on common ground with the left (especially the Marxist / Socialist left). Second, considering organizations such as MUSIAD and the Islamist movement in line with neoliberalism; this antagonism established by Shariati has an important place in understanding the emerging opposition Islamist politics. On the one hand, an anti-communist and nationalist Islamic identity and the dimensions of the relationship established with the "others" are shaped by the power relations; on the other hand, the existence of Islamic movements that evaluate the relationship of "the other" with its socioeconomic dimensions makes sense with this antagonism. Therefore, one of the elements that form the basis of Muslim-Left concept is its approach to religious politics. Religion is not interpreted as a means of domination, but rather as a power that terminates domination relations such as oppressor/oppressed, exploiter/exploited, rich/poor, master/slave.

Another factor that causes these opposition Islamist movements to be considered within left politics is anti-capitalist attitudes. The evaluation of history and the establishment of antagonisms through the class struggle constitutes the basis for an anti-capitalist and leftist interpretation of Islam. Objections to capitalism and class conflicts in society are made by referring to the Qur'anic verses (Denek, 2010; Eliaçık, 2018; Şeriati, 2017). İhsan Eliaçık (2016, p. 206), the founder of Anti-Capitalist Muslims, states that Capitalism will never come out of the Quran. The two suras in the Quran are interpreted as an antidote to capitalism. The first of these is the *Al-Takathur* Sura and it deciphers the essence of capitalism by descending to the spiritual origin of man (Eliaçık, 2016, p. 301):

"*Greed for more and more distracted you [from God] till you reached the grave. But you will soon come to know. But you will soon come to know. Indeed, were you to know the truth with certainty, you would see the fire of Hell. You would see it with the eye of certainty. Then on that Day you shall be questioned about your worldly favours.*" (102/Al-Takathur: 1-8)

The second is *Al-Ma'un* Sura, which is an antidote to the legitimization of capitalism with religion (Eliaçık, 2016, pp. 304-305):

"*Have you seen one who denies the Day of Judgement? Who turns away the orphan, and who does not urge the feeding of the poor? So woe to those who pray but whose hearts are not in their prayer. Those who do things only to be seen by others. Who are uncharitable even over very small things.*" (107/Al-Ma'un: 1-7)

Since capitalism cannot emerge from the Quran, what kind of economic-political system does it arise in accordance with the Quran? Again, İhsan Eliaçık (2018) emphasizes the social aspect of Islam in this regard. In his book called *Social Islam: The Pillar of Religion is Sharing* (Sosyal İslam: Dinin Direği Paylaşımdır), he states that the economic-political interpretation of Islam is close to socialism and that the understanding of *Lehü'l Mülk* (Property belongs to Allah) evokes the understanding of communal property (Eliaçık, 2018, p. 10). The property belonging to God is interpreted in two ways. The first of these is the caliphate of man. Since the sole owner of the property is God, the person who uses the property is the caliph and his/her duty is to share them (Denek, 2010, pp. 38-39). The second is that public goods (natural resources: fire, water, self-growing

plants) are common, and the remaining goods can be owned by work and labor (Şeriati, 2017, pp. 119-120). Additionally, the prohibition of usury (2/Al-Baqarah: 275-279, 3/Al-'Imran: 130-131, 4/Al-Nisa': 161) and the prohibition of accumulating more than needed goods (such as gold and silver) (9/Al-Tawbah: 34-35) shows that capitalism and Islam are incompatible (Denek, 2010; Eliaçık, 2016; Şeriati, 2017; H. Yılmaz, 2019). Although this anti-capitalist attitude brings the political economy interpretation of Islam closer to socialism, it is not possible to evaluate Islam within a certain ideological framework such as socialism or communism. However, the political economy interpretation of left politics of Islamism explains the reading of history through class conflict, the place of religion in this class conflict, and the anti-capitalist attitude of Islam.

As analyzed in the previous chapter, although identity cleavages still remain important, only an interpretation of class conflict is not enough to make sense of left politics of Islamism. Injustice and inequality arising from the relationship of otherness and domination due to identity and gender differences are also within the subject of left politics of Islamism. Therefore, it can be said that another component of left politics of Islamism is the emphasis on equality between identities and genders. This emphasis on equality is based on the understanding of taqwa in the Qur'an. As Wadud (1999, pp. 36-38) states, Allah does not discriminate people based on their gender, identity and position, but on the basis of taqwa[8]. The best example of this is the discussions on Islamic feminism. The concept of Islamic feminism[9], which has been used and discussed frequently especially since the 1990s, comes to the fore with its aim of equality, especially gender equality. In this context, the tafsirs that based on patriarchal practices and foundations, the understanding of patriarchal Islam formed in the context of Islamic law and tradition/culture are criticized. Ultimately, it is aimed to reveal the understanding of Islam, which is believed to be ungendered/anti-sexist. In line with this goal, as Ali (2017)

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[8] Wadud defines Taqwa as follows: *"A pious manner of behavior that observes constraints appropriate to a social-moral system on the basis of one's consciousness or awareness and remembrance of Allah."* (Wadud, 1999, p. xxvi)

[9] Badran (2017, p. 37) defines Islamic feminism as *"a feminist discourse and practice expressed within an Islamic paradigm"*. Güç (2008) presents a broader definition by taking Islamic feminism as "*Muslim women's efforts to become individuals"* and *"Muslim women's consciousness"*: *"Islamist feminism is a discourse that critically evaluates the situation of women in religion and tradition, attaches special importance to gender equality, questions the patriarchal character of tradition and religious interpretations, and while doing these, that takes reference religious texts, especially from the Quran."* (Güç, 2008, pp. 653-654)

stated, Islamic feminism studies focus on three areas. The first is the studies on removing sexist and patriarchal interpretations from their discourse based on the basic sources of Islam, revising Islamic jurisprudence and reinterpreting tafsir, the principles of justice and equality. The second is the work on rewriting the history of Islam from a feminine and feminist point of view and rectifying gender roles. The third is the studies on the development of a feminist and feminine Muslim thought that is based on the understanding of Tawhid, which is the provider of equality, and which is based on sharia as a "way", not as a "rule"[10] (Z. Ali, 2017, pp. 25-27). Studies in these three areas show the effort to reach the essence of Islam and to reveal an egalitarian, ungendered/anti-sexist understanding of Islam. In addition, this understanding can include those who are declared as the "other" due to identity politics, therefore separated ones and make meaningful a struggle for equality.

As a result, the left politics of Islamism includes the following components. The first is the reading and understanding of the history of humanity through the class conflict determined by the power struggle. Secondly, the real war of religion is not against irreligion, but against the understanding of religion of shirk. In this case, the real battle of Islam is religion, which has emerged in the historical process and which the powers have turned into a tool of domination. It is possible to see a similar interpretation in Islamic feminism. The effort to reveal the essence of Islam against the patriarchal understanding that developed in the context of law and tradition/culture in the history of Islam shows that the real war is against the religion which has changed and has become a tool for domination. The third is emphasizing equality by adopting the understanding of taqwa and tawhid against the established relationship of otherness and domination. In this case, it is aimed to eliminate inequalities between both genders and identities. Considered in terms of the Muslim-left conceptualization, left politics of Islamism both provides a Muslim identity and accepts this Muslim identity on the left. However left politics of

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[10] Lamrabet (2017) states that there are two definitions of sharia. The first is the shari'ah as a body of laws (al ahkam al quraanya), and the other is the way of universal Revelation, which constitutes the essence of the Qur'an. It is necessary to distinguish fiqh, which emerged in the 19th century and was created based on the Qur'an and hadiths with the four classical schools of law, from sharia. Since Muslim ijtihad and law are produced by man and society and include a human interpretation, they are not part of Revelation, and in this sense, they are not holy. Therefore, by developing a critical attitude towards fiqh, sexist and patriarchal interpretations that contradict the essence of the Qur'an should be eliminated, and an understanding of sharia aiming at equality should be revealed (Lamrabet, 2017, pp. 60-61).

Islamism provides a motivation for political thought and action, it is not fully sufficient to explain the Muslim-Left conceptualization. As a matter of fact, the left in the Muslim-Left also expresses an attitude, a social movement and even a form of action and organization.

3.2.2. Muslim-Left as New Social Movement

It has already been stated that the term Muslim-Left is used to refer to the opposition Islamist movements that emerged in the 2000s and especially 2010s. After unsuccessful experiences such as the New Politics Initiative and the PVP, many social movements emerged between 2007 and 2013, mostly by university students that adopting or acting in parallel with left politics of Islamism such as Free Declaration (Hür Beyan), Acceptable Steps (Makbul Adımlar), Free Expansion (Özgür Açılım), Revolutionary Muslims, Anti-capitalist Muslims, and Labor and Justice Platform. Among these social movements, Free Declaration, Acceptable Steps, Free Expansion , and Revolutionary Muslims were organizations that adopted left politics of Islamism from different perspectives and could bring Islamists and leftists together, but they were short-winded movements and could not survive until today. Therefore, Anti-Capitalist Muslims, and Labor and Justice Platform will be discussed and studied as Muslim-Left movements within this thesis. Since the Labor and Justice Platform constitutes the main subject of this thesis, a more detailed examination of this movement will be made in the next section. Therefore, Anti-Capitalist Muslims will be discussed more in this paper.

These two movements can be discussed within the scope of the new social movement theory, in terms of their approach to different identities, differentiating from Islamists and Leftists, establishing different antagonistic relations rather than a conflict between identities, organizational structure, which do not aim for power but address many social problems.

In order to understand what the New Social Movements mean and what it is different from the other Social Movements, it is necessary to define the Social Movement first. Tarrow (2011, p. 9) defines social movements as collective actions against elites, authorities, other groups or cultural codes, developed by individuals with common goals and in solidarity, in a constant interaction with elites, other groups and elements.

Similarly, Çopuroğlu and Çetin (2010, p. 71) defines the social movement as "*collective human behaviors, which are established to achieve a common goal, which include conflict and reformist perspectives, and strive to create a new structure in a certain cultural system.*" The aims of social movements are to change the wrong things in the society by taking over the political power and to act by means of revolution or reform (Ertürk, 2011, p. 1494). With the radical changes in societies since the 1960s, movements, with different characteristics, elements and actors, such as civil rights, freedom of expression and student movements, women, peace and environment/ecology movements, nuclear disarmament movements have emerged. These new qualified movements are conceptualized and discussed as "New Social Movements" (Topal Demiroğlu, 2014, pp. 134-135). However, what is really new in these movements and the political effects of this "novelty" have not been fully clarified (Cohen, 1985, p. 663). According to Şentürk (2006, p. 41), what distinguishes new social movements from classical social movements is that they are not based politically, and they do not have a class and economic background, their members are heterogeneous and they are educated. According to Touraine (2002, p. 274), new social movements are new, as they separate themselves from the idea of controlling state power and manifest more in the individual-oriented cultural field than in the leadership-oriented one. Old social movements prefer to defend the sectors in which the middle class, consisting of wage earners, workers rather than the poorest in society. The new social movements represent a new generation that is sensitive to both social and cultural problems. What is important for this new generation is to raise awareness in the public sphere about educational, social and cultural issues instead of struggling with the problem of management of production tools. Similarly, Buechler (1995, p. 453) states that the difference between old and new social movements relates to social classes. While old social movements act only on the basis of the working class, new social movements are based on different social classes. According to D'Anieri, Ernst, and Kier (1990, p. 447), contrary to previous labor movements focus on wage increases or social security benefits; new social movements focus on the establishment of alternative economic institutions that need to be created to increase the quality of life, job satisfaction and worker control in the workplace.

In defining new social movements, concepts such as identity, pluralism, socio-cultural characteristics, and civil disobedience come to the fore and show themselves as

an opposition with a new set of features (Ertürk, 2011, p. 1496). According to Pichardo (1997, p. 411), the New Social Movement paradigm emphasizes both macro history and microhistory elements of social movements. New Social Movements theories link the new social movements occurring within the new social structure in the West, which began to transform with the 1960s at the macro level, and look at the impact of identity formation processes and personal behavior on social movements at the micro level.

Çopuroğlu and Çetin (2010, pp. 73-74) define the general characteristics of the new social movements as follows: 1) They also turned to non-economic demands. 2) They started to be structured in an anti-bureaucratic way. 3) Instead of uniting around a leader cult, it emerged as volunteer activist associations with equal management rights. 4) They have spread and expanded in parallel with the developments in communication technologies. Similarly and more broadly Johnston, Larafia and Gusfield (1994, pp. 7-8) list the characteristics of the new social movements as follows: 1) The actors participating in the New Social Movements do not belong to a homogeneous class and tend to overcome the class structure. 2) Actors are various in terms of their value judgments and ideas. 3) Motivation sources are related to identity and culture issues rather than economic issues. 4) Actors express themselves individually rather than expressing themselves through group or class. 5) They reflect the personal and sincere aspects of individuals. 6) They prefer civil disobedience rather than violence as an action strategy. 7) The organization and dissemination of new social movements is related to the credibility crisis of traditional channels for participation in Western democracies. 8) Unlike traditional mass parties and centralized bureaucracies, new social movements tend to be decentralized. Pichardo (1997, pp. 415-417), on the other hand, discussed the distinctive features of the New Social Movements from three perspectives. 1) Tactically, New Social Movements prefer to mobilize the public by using extraordinary tactics and stay out of normal political channels. 2) Structurally, they are anti-institutional and they are organized in a fluid, non-solid way. 3) In terms of its participants are those who belong to the new middle class or are not defined by class boundaries, yet have common concerns about social problems.

Another discussion that is important in the New Social Movements debate is about whether the influence of classes is decreasing (Clark & Lipset, 1991; Ertürk, 2011). Ertürk (2011, pp. 1508-1510) states that the phenomenon of class, and in particular the

working class, is in decline in the face of global capitalism and that the influence of the working class is decreasing in the new social movements, but it would not be true to claim that social classes disappear in an environment where inequality and income distribution among individuals increase even more. From this point, Buechler (1995, p. 442) states that for new social movement theories, although it is a critical response to classical Marxism, some new social movement theorists have updated and revised traditional Marxist assumptions. Buechler (1995, pp. 457-458) divides theories of new social movements into two; the cultural and the political versions. The political version indicates that there is continuity rather than a break between the old and new versions of social movements. In this context, a pro-Marxist interpretation is developed, the potential of class or worker-based movements is not disregarded. Conversely revised with contemporary interpretations. The cultural version makes a post-Marxist determination, noting that there are important differences between anti-system social movements and new social movements. The post-Marxist approach claims that there is a break between interpreting structural changes between the old and the new situation.

Considering the Labor and Justice Platform and Anti-Capitalist Muslims in Turkey, it is possible to address the Muslim-Left movements within the framework of the New Social Movements theory; due to their organizational structures, ideology, and different typologies of action. First of all, both social movements have adopted the horizontal organization style. There is no specific leader and hierarchical structure within the movements. They try to adopt a democratic attitude in their decision-making processes and they try to ensure gender equality in their meetings. Second, it can be said that both Anti-Capitalist Muslims and the Labor and Justice Platform are close to pro-Marxist political ideology. As New Social Movements that adopt left politics of Islamism, they both make a class analysis while evaluating the existing social and political structure. They adopt an attitude against violence in their criticism of both the system and the current government. Furthermore, these Muslim-Left movements consist of participants from different classes, not just one class. In addition, by making a social justice-based reading of Islam, they demand justice for all segments of the society who are declared as other by the regime and who are disadvantaged. Finally, with different typologies of action, they draw attention by going beyond traditional actions for political and social gain.

The effort of the Labor and Justice Platform to bring together Islamists and leftists and its intellectual activities on the common values of Islam and the left have made it an important place among the Muslim-Left movements. Anti-Capitalist Muslims is another Muslim-Left movement that is more controversial in the public, more mediatic, that comes to the fore with its criticisms of the system and aims to change the system, and thus more radical. Anti-Capitalist Muslims prioritize overcoming the relationship of otherness established between Islam and the left in Turkey's political life and confronting the past in many actions they participate in or organize. They came to the fore for the first time in 2012 with their participation in the 1 May Workers' March. After they performed the funeral prayer for the workers who were victims of worker murders at the Fatih Mosque in the Fatih district, which has become the symbolic venue of the Islamists, they walked to Taksim, which became the symbolic venue of the left demonstrations, and joined the procession. The banners they were carrying included slogans such as *"God, Labor, Freedom"*, *"You Can't Serve Both God and Money"*, *"No to Capitalism with Wudu"*. In addition, one of the most striking banners was the slogan *"Freedom for slaves"* and this slogan was also available in Kurdish, Armenian, and Arabic. İhsan Eliaçık, the spokesperson of the group, said in a statement:

> *"40 years ago, the youth gathered here and in mosques gathered to stone Deniz Gezmiş, and they stoned him. Today, we are announcing that we have inherited rejection. This message is given to Turkey. We are giving a message to conservatives and socialists. It's going to get bigger and bigger."* (Hürriyet, 2012)

This statement, which is the first of many confrontations by Anti-Capitalist Muslims, expresses the confrontation with the past regarding the Bloody Sunday event that took place in 1969. After this resounding action, Anti-Capitalist Muslims were organized under the name of the Association for Struggle Against Capitalism. The name of the association also expresses a reaction to the development of the understanding of Islam, which was instrumental in the fight against communism in the past, and denial of inheritance. Furthermore, Anticapitalist Muslims state that the choice of this name is an attempt to melt the Cold War era ice between Islam and the Left, to embrace the left and extend an olive branch to the left (Koca, 2014, p. 315). Another meeting that Anti-Capitalist Muslims participated in to confront the past is the Sivas Massacre commemoration. Anti-Capitalist Muslims first attended the rally organized by the Pir

Sultan Abdal Cultural Association on 23rd June 2013 in Kadıköy Square to commemorate the Alevis who lost their lives in the Sivas Massacre on 2nd July 1993 with the banner that wrote *"We Came to Be One"* (Adilmedya, 2013a). Afterward, they participated in commemoration ceremonies for the Alevis who lost their lives on the anniversary of the Sivas Massacre. They were also invited and attended the iftar tables organized by the Djemevi during Ramadan (Adilmedya, 2013b). These confrontations, while expressing sincerity about Anti-Capitalist Muslims, have been instrumental in overcoming the antagonism established between Islam and the left. Anti-Capitalist Muslims have shown through these confrontations that Muslim identity is not an identity that harbors anti-communism and is expressed in the Sunni-Alevi dichotomy, that it has a revolutionary potential and that they have adopted left politics of Islamism in a revolutionary way.

Anti-Capitalist Muslims, operating under the Association for Struggle Against Capitalism, announced their emergence as an organized movement by publishing a manifesto (Antikapitalist Müslümanlar, 2012). This manifesto consists of three parts: objection, identity, and appeal. In the first part, an objection to capitalism is expressed because of its negative socio-economic consequences. Capitalism was defined as the enemy of God, humanity, nature, the poor, the hungry, and the deprived; and this hostility was expressed as the reason for capitalism's existence. For this reason, Anti-Capitalist Muslims stated that they were looking for the heart of the age, that they wanted paradise, that is, an unlimited, classless land of justice and peace (Darussalam). In the Identity part, Anti-Capitalist Muslims define two identities intrinsically. The first is Muslim identity. As stated in the Manifesto, a Muslim is defined as

> *"...those who surrender the fact that all property on earth and in the heavens belongs to Allah, are content with it, and therefore do not disturb the state of peace in the natural order, and want to maintain and maintain the natural state of peace".* (Antikapitalist Müslümanlar, 2012)

The second is its Anti-Capitalist identity. They describe this identity as follows:

> *"Our opposition to capitalism is a historical emphasis. Because Capitalism is the name of the system that dominates our age. Every prophetic message stood against the dominant system of its time. That's why we emphasize 'anti-capitalist'. We see every anti-capitalist outlet and discourse as our natural ally, regardless*

of their religious belief or disbelief, their race, language, color or ideology. We want to share the same platform and struggle environments with them." (Antikapitalist Müslümanlar, 2012)

In this part, which is followed by references to many verses, it is stated that the state should be freed from all kinds of race, religion, sect, official ideology, and individual emphasis and that concepts related to the common good such as rights, law, justice, freedom, equality, and fraternity should be met.

In the last part, the appeal, freedom for slaves and headscarf, and objections to official ideology, compulsory military service, environmental destruction, capitalism, and the current political order are expressed. The Manifesto ends with the emphasis *"The Property belongs to Allah!"* (Antikapitalist Müslümanlar, 2012).

Anti-Capitalist Muslims and Labor and Justice Platform enabled the destruction of the antagonistic relationship between the left and Islam with an oppositional identity, and the opportunity for Muslims and leftists to meet on the common political ground in Turkey thanks to their actions or words, and the foundations on which they were based. It is possible to see the common points of Muslim-Left movements in their objections. First, their objections are to the traditional/conservative Islamic understanding. This understanding, as it can be expressed in a nationalist language, includes an emphasis on inequality. Its expression in a nationalist language can be seen in the JDP's emphasis on Ottomanism and the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. On the other hand, Islam is not seen as a sociological unifying element for the Muslim-Left. However, the Muslim identity provided by the Islamic faith represents a search for social justice, and the ultimate goal is the manifestation of this social justice without distinctive features such as religion, language, and identity. Along with being used as a nationalist language, Islam is also a way of equality for them. For the Muslim-Left based on the understanding of taqwa, injustices arising from genders and identities are against Islam. For this reason, their objections to the traditional/conservative understanding are also an objection to patriarchy and interfering with the secular lifestyle. Second, Muslim-Left movements object to the use of Islam as a pragmatic tool to implement neoliberal policies. In particular, the objection brought by the Muslim-Left against an understanding of Islam that legitimizes classification is the understanding of Islam in which a classless society that promised.

This objection points to the antagonism that Shariati established between the religion of Tawhid and the religion of Shirk. Third, they voice an objection to capitalism and its negative socio-economic consequences. Objection to Capitalism, which is seen as the dominant and hegemonic power of the age, is seen as a requirement of the Islamic faith, but also as a necessity for ending the class conflict in human history. For this reason, the Muslim-Left has the potential to come together and find common ground with any social movement that has an objection to capitalism. Finally, the objection of Muslim-Left movements is the Left's essentialist approach to Islam or religious belief. As it is stated in the previous section which studied the development of leftist thought and movement in Turkey, they state that common ground can be established based on anti-capitalism instead of the left which is associated with the binary oppositions like progressive-reactionary, secular-religious, Sunni-Alevi. At the same time, these movements which bring Muslims and Leftists together, try to fill the gap created by an alienated left in Turkey, where is a predominantly Muslim majority country, by trying to destroy the antagonistic relationship between Islam and the left.

Taksim Gezi Park Protests constitute an important place where these objections can be seen together and as an example of putting the unity of the Islamic and leftist groups into practice. The Taksim Gezi Park protests, which started at the end of May 2013 when the government wanted to cut down trees for pedestrianization of Taksim Gezi Park and the police used disproportionate violence against those who opposed it, so protests spread throughout the country. These protests started as an environmentalist movement and later emerged a wider social opposition, both through the government's rhetoric and increased police intervention. Since the third term of JDP, the discourse of *"raising a religious generation"* and the increasing visibility of conservative Sunni discourse and thought in the public sphere, regulations regarding alcohol consumption and opposition to abortion etc. have been perceived as interference in private life by people who have adopted a secular lifestyle. One of the reasons why the Gezi Park protests involved broad social opposition is the opposition to this intervention. Prime Minister Erdogan's rhetoric towards Gezi Park protesters was aimed at establishing an antagonistic relationship of "us versus them". His evaluation of the Gezi Park protests as *"solidarity between the extremists and the RPP"* and his rhetoric that *"we are barely holding back fifty percent"* can be cited as the first examples of this (Bianet, 2013, June

3rd). He claimed that,during the protests, alcohol was consumed in mosques and that the muezzin was threatened in the following process, that activists in Kabataş attacked a woman wearing a headscarf and dragged her on the ground, and that they had footage of this events (BBC News Türkçe, 2013, June 11). Muslim-Leftists, who actively participated in the Gezi Park protests from the very beginning, opposed to capitalism, environmental destruction, government's misuse of wealth and power, interference in secular lifestyles (such as the prohibition of alcohol and deprivation of people's freedom to sin), and to the antagonistic relationship that Erdoğan wanted to establish. Moreover, their participation in the Gezi Park protests went beyond theoretical quests among Islamists and leftists and put them into practice. In particular, Anti-Capitalist Muslims demonstrated the understanding of Islam they adopted during the Gezi Park protests with their actions and practiced meeting with the left on the ground of a common struggle. During the protests, they performed every Friday prayer in Gezi Park and performed the funeral prayer in absentia for those who lost their lives during the protests (Adilmedya, 2013, June 7a). In order not to cause any provocation in these prayers, of which İhsan Eliaçık was the imam, the activists also protected those who prayed, by standing around them (Adilmedya, 2013, June 7b). In addition, they organized iftar in Gezi Park during the protests that continued throughout the month of Ramadan and broke their fast at the tables they called "Earth Tables". These sharing-oriented tables eliminated the relationship of otherness between Islam and the left in the Gezi Park protests and received positive reactions from the left. This action has also opened a door to new practices between the left and Islam. In fact, as Göle (2013) puts it,

> *"Earth Iftar Table shows the coexistence of secular Muslims and religious Muslims, moreover, the desire to learn from the former from the latter. For white Turks, the Islamic habitus is not something that can be acquired with a single rehearsal. But today, far from despising Islam, they 'intend' to learn it again."*

The Labor and Justice Platform also supported the Gezi Park protests by organizing a forum with Islamist and leftist participation and made a statement as a result of this forum. In this forum, the Gezi Park protests were discussed in all dimensions, and the discomfort regarding the current order was expressed as follows:

"We condemn the use of police violence against the people, regardless of who is in power. Legal arrangements should be made urgently to prevent the violent suppression of the demands of the people. In this country, peace has not yet been made with the Kurds, no peace with the Alevis, the rights of workers and the poor are still not respected, deaths due to work accidents continue, while some people are enriched by the state, a significant part of the society is impoverished. A language of politics in which everything is evaluated in terms of wealth and power, and political power and economic growth is sanctified is not a language that reflects the morals of Muslims." (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2013, June 14)

Another example of where Muslim-Leftists' object together is the Union of Action Against Imperialism and NATO. This Union, which was established by organizations that came together with the slogan *"Turkey Should Leave NATO, Imperialist Bases Should Be Closed"*, was declared in a press release made at the İnşa Cultural House on 1st March 2013. In this Union, besides many leftist organizations, Anti-Capitalist Muslims and the Labor and Justice Platform are also present. In these actions, in which Muslim-Leftists both realized a confrontation with the past and emphasized the anti-imperialist aspect of Islamism, the current government's understanding of Islam was criticized and the opposition to capitalism&war was emphasized. Eliaçık likened the first action of the Union to the action of the 6th Fleet and explained that they rejected the legacy of the past:

"Muslim youths stoned Deniz Gezmiş, who symbolically repelled the 6th Fleet in the 1970s. With our march to Dolmabahçe, we will de facto show that we reject this shameful legacy." (Evrensel, 2013, March 1)

Although these two Muslim-Left movements come together in common actions for common purposes, they also have important features that differentiate them from each other. Koca (2014) mentions four important points that separate the Labor and Justice Platform and Anti-Capitalist Muslims. First, while the Labor and Justice Platform envisages a system of common values between Islam and the left, Anti-Capitalist Muslims define the common enemy. Secondly, the Labor and Justice Platform, which emphasizes the importance of tradition, refrains from using a language that will disturb Sunni Islam and becomes a people-centered movement. Anti-Capitalist Muslims, on the other hand, seem more marginal with their criticism of the values of Sunni Islam and are

more radical with their opposition to the system. Third, the Labor and Justice Platform is a movement focused on discussion rather than action. In search of common values between Islam and the left, the Platform focuses more on the discussion to be cautious in their steps they take and to use careful language in the statements to be made. Anti-Capitalist Muslims, on the other hand, started as a movement towards 1st May and came to the fore with their actions. These two Muslim-Left movements differ from each other in their course of action. The Labor and Justice Platform organizes actions that do not worry about popularity, do not adopt classical action styles and avoid stereotypes, and aim to gain social and political gain in the actions organized. Anti-Capitalist Muslims, on the other hand, became more popular due to their anti-system rhetoric and their leftist discourse, and they gradually took on a leftist structure (Koca, 2014, pp. 329-332). Additionally, some dilemmas arise between the two Muslim-Left movements. For example, although the Labor and Justice Platform is a more people-centered movement, it is organized only in Istanbul and remains in a limited environment. However, they keep their website updated as a systematic resource for their discussions on Islam and the left. On the other hand, although Anti-Capitalist Muslims are organized in many parts of Turkey through the Association for Struggle Against Capitalism, they mostly use the ideas of İhsan Eliaçık as an intellectual resource. However, although Anti-Capitalist Muslims actively use social media, the Association does not have a systematic source or website for its activities, actions, and discussions.

CHAPTER 4: LABOR AND JUSTICE PLATFORM: *"AGAINST SLAVERY AND EXPLOITATION"*

The Labor and Justice Platform was established in January 2011 after the meetings held in December 2010 by people from the Islamic and leftist community. Adopting the motto *"Against Slavery and Exploitation"* (Kula Kulluğa ve Sömürüye Karşı), the Labor and Justice Platform operates within the framework of the purposes and principles they have determined. In the first version of the Document published in March 2011, the Platform states that it aims to *"contribute to the struggle for social justice against all kinds of injustice and oppression, without ignoring the fact that the exploitation of labor by capital is also an oppression"* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011a).

In the same Document, the Platform (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011a) sets out the following sub-targets for this purpose:

- To bring together all the segments who strive for this purpose but do not engage in dialogue and stand at a distance.
- To create a common ground of thought and action for people who struggle against oppression based on different beliefs, values and philosophies.
- To search for a radical social justice discourse and politics that will encompass the entire people of Turkey.
- To contribute to the creation of a common intellectual and operational vein by breaking the relationship of otherness between Islamists and socialists, and states that it predicts that this will make a meaningful contribution to the struggle for rights and justice of all peoples of the world, not just in Turkey.

The Labor and Justice Platform determined four basic principles in the second part of the Document which is defined as the starting point. In this section, capitalism which is defined as the most hegemonic slavery order in the historical process is criticized over unequal society, exploitation of laborers, exploitation of nature, consumer culture, commodification, individualistic/competitive culture. The first two of the principles

determined in this framework include putting the struggle for labor and justice at the center. Putting labor at the center of the struggle means taking sides with labor against capital. Putting justice at the center of the struggle also means defending everyone's right to live humanely, regardless of religion, language, or gender, and sharing the world with other living beings fairly. Stating that current problems should not be drowned in conceptual discussions in this context, the Platform put the problem of patriarchy, the Kurdish problem, problems based on faith and ecology on its agenda. The third principle is that it is completely opposed to political and intellectual elitism. What is meant here is the alienation of the intellectual and political elites from the public, especially in Turkey. Against the one-sided, top-down propaganda, enlightenment, and awareness-raising approach, the Platform states that the propaganda of a consciousness that will become evident in relations with various segments of the public and in action or experience should be adopted. Finally, the Platform defines tradition as follows:

> *"an expression of the search for a world of meaning for the people of modern society, who are always frustrated by the discourse of 'change' and 'happy tomorrow', and an activity that produces the past in which anti-hegemonic social struggles are rooted"* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011a).

Therefore, as the fourth principle, clearly states: *"The Labor and Justice Platform stays away from the smug, elitist attitude of modernism to brandish 'tradition' altogether and turn a 'new page'."* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011a).

4.1.   THE PLATFORM'S POLITICS OF PRINCIPLES

The Labor and Justice Platform, as an organization that brings together Islamists and leftists who are positioned as the other in Turkish politics, has adopted a politics within the framework of principles. For this reason, the text of the principles is revisioned in time and they also publish the old versions of the Document to see the changes during time. In the last version of the Document, twelve basic principles are stated (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2019). Accordingly, the Labor and Justice Platform;

- *unifies:* The platform aims to break the intellectual and operational miscommunication between different people and groups fighting for social justice

and to create a discourse and action ground that will enable them to struggle together.

- ***is on the side of justice:*** The platform defines justice as the delivery of the right to its owner and believes that oppression and injustice can only be destroyed with a perspective of struggle that comes from below and embraces the whole.

- ***is in favor of the order of the workers:*** The intent of the Platform here is to organize the workers, to defend and improve their rights, and to build examples of freer and fairer forms of production.

- ***does not ask the identity of oppressed:*** Due to the Platform's anti-capitalist struggle, it does not subordinate or neglects the struggle arising from inequalities such as race, sect, gender, etc. Therefore, Platform does not look at the identity of the victim of injustice, does not maintain a hierarchical relationship, and cares about struggling side by side.

- ***first takes care of their refik (friend, associate):*** While the Platform does not remain indifferent to the injustices that exist in the world, it acts with the awareness that it cannot keep up with all the struggles for justice. For this reason, the Platform tends to start the struggle practically from the nearest neighborhood.

- ***strives with them for the liberation of the oppressed:*** The Platform acts based on learning from the existing struggles for justice and acts with the subject who has been subjected to injustice.

- ***is local:*** The Platform prioritizes local-specific values and dynamics against the hegemony of universalist solutions, so it does not ignore the accumulation of local struggle and social experiences.

- ***is against elitism,***

- ***"appreciative disobedience" to tradition,***

- ***works horizontally, not vertically:*** Adopting a horizontal organization, the Platform takes consultation as a basis in its relations with its environment as well as in its internal functioning, and avoids hierarchy.

- ***gives importance to authenticity in its action,***

- ***is based on moral transformation:*** The Platform believes that the struggle for rights and justice has an important place in the creation of a new moral-political society.

The Labor and Justice Platform has also determined its organizational structure and its rules within the framework of principles and shared these principles on its websites (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2014b). Accordingly, the Platform operates with three circles: the Hamaliye[11], the executive board, and the general group. The general group consists of people who have established a heartfelt connection with the Labor and Justice Platform, participated in its activities, and are in the general mailing group. The executive board consists of people who are members of the Platform, pay their dues, actively participate, and fulfill their minimum responsibilities. The Executive Board is the decision-maker and executive body of the Platform. Hamaliye is the body that assists the executive board, takes responsibility for the operation of the Platform, and fulfills these responsibilities. This body has no decision-making authority.

The Labor and Justice Platform conducts decision-making processes interactively and adopts a democratic way. The Platform takes all the decisions regarding its general operation at its general meetings. These meetings are held on Sundays every two weeks and are open to the participation of anyone who adopts the principles of the Labor and Justice Platform, but the opinions of the members are taken as an advisory base when making a decision. One person is responsible for preparing the agenda of the meeting, collecting the proposed agenda, making the announcement, and preparing the archive. A moderator and note-taker are determined at the beginning of the meetings. The moderator is chosen from the Porter group, as they have known the activities and the process, and the note-taking task is chosen from any members. When making meeting decisions, unanimity is sought. If unanimity cannot be achieved, a three-quarters majority is sought. Decisions are shared with everyone regardless of whether they attend the meeting or not, and if there is no objection by those who do not attend the meeting within 24 hours, the decisions are deemed to have been accepted as they are. In case of any objection, it is expected that the reason will be stated by attending the next general meeting otherwise, the decisions are deemed to be accepted as they are. The Platform has two mail groups: the general mail group and the executive mail group. Anyone can be a member of the general mailing group, but those who use hate speech or talk about what is considered a

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[11] It is a concept derived from the root of "Hamal" in Arabic, and it is expressed as a person/group that performs physically difficult jobs. Here, it is used to mean the people who do the work given by the executive board, help the executive board, do/organize the work to be done.

crime against humanity, who share insulting content against any belief, identity, or race, and those who use sexist profanity while sharing their thoughts, will be removed from the group. The executive mailing group was established among the members of the executive board.

Apart from all these operating principles, there are also principles regarding Platform Thursday Chats/Consultations, Reading Groups, website, social media, financial affairs, and association affairs. The Platform organizes Thursday Chats once a week or every 15 days, consultation meetings are held in the week when chats are not held. Reading groups have also been created to produce ideas for the political goals of the platform, and reading groups make presentations to the Thursday Consultations every 3 to 6 months.

Within the framework of all these principles and purposes, the Platform produces discourse and politics with an inclusive and argumentative method. The Platform collects the actions they organize and participate in, intellectual activities, and comments on the agenda on their websites in a regular archive, and websites become an important resource for understanding the Platform. For this reason, first of all, a qualitative thematic content analysis of the website will be made to understand the Labor and Justice Platform, its political thought, and attitude. Then, its actions and intellectual activities will be examined.

4.2.   MAPPING THE PLATFORM

Labor and Justice Platform carry out regular archival work on its actions, intellectual activities, conversations, interviews, quotes, and news and comments on its website. Therefore, the website is an important resource for understanding the Platform's political thought and attitude. For a better understanding, the Platform's website is analyzed qualitatively by the thematic content analysis method.

There are thirteen main titles on this website. These titles are as follows:

- ***Who are we?:*** This title contains a summary of the activities of the Platform and its aims and principles.

- *Workshops:* This title contains announcements and information regarding the Platform's "Our Commons Workshops" activities.
- *Conversations:* In this topic, the Platform's conversations on many topics of interest, announcements about Thursday conversations, and conversations that it finds important and published elsewhere are shared. Interviews on Islamism, the Kurdish issue, patriarchy, workers, class issues, agenda, etc. are shared under this title.
- *Our word:* Under this title, the Platform publishes explanations of any event on the agenda, action announcements, information about the Platform, and holiday messages. This title has an important place as it contains only the Platform's own words.
- *What we noted:* This is the title where Platform shares the most content. Theoretical and historical debates on many issues that the Platform's members consider as the main issue, as well as articles in which it states its positions on the agenda are included here. Since the members of the Platform share their own words, this title constitutes the most important source of the Platform's political thoughts and attitudes.
- *Guest posts:* Under this title, guest articles written within the framework of the Platform's principles are shared.
- *Translations:* Articles, conversations and interviews that reflect the Platform's world of thought and are seen as an important resource by the Platform are translated and shared under this title.
- *Patriarchy:* In this topic, the Platform deals with issues such as violence against women, male violence, women rights, gender equality, feminism, Islamic feminism.
- *Interviews:* Under this title, there are interviews with people who are the subject of the Platform's areas of interest and interviews published in other media.
- *Quotation (İktibas):* The Platform shares the articles and resources that appeal to the world of thought and are published in other media under this title.
- *News-comment:* The news and comments produced by the Platform regarding the issues on its agenda and the actions it has taken and participated in are shared under this heading.

- *Multimedia:* In this title, there are visual posts related to the Platform's events, news and actions.
- *Publications:* This title includes the texts of the speeches made at the symposiums, the Platform's annual evaluations, reports, and publications.

In addition to these titles, the Platform has also published a bibliography titled *"Social Justice in Islam & The Left which is not Against Religion: Native Texts"* consisting entirely of local sources on the world of thought (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2020). This bibliography consists of books, magazines, articles, and newspaper/online articles. Among the book sources, there are names such as Cemil Meriç, Kemal Tahir, Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, İdris Küçükömer, Nurettin Topçu, Hüseyin Hatemi, who are also an important reference source in Turkish political thought. As contemporary sources of ideas, books by Mehmet Bekaroğlu, Ruşen Çakır, İhsan Eliaçık, Alev Erkilet, Cihan Tuğal, İlhami Güler, Muhammed Nur Denek, and İdris Özyol are among the sources. In the 2000s, the efforts of some Islamists to bring up, examine, and deepen the emphasis on social justice in Islam, and the efforts of some socialists to think and establish socialism that is not against religion, were the subject of magazines and were covered in special issues. Therefore, discussions on Islam and the left in journals such as Tezkire, İslamiyat, Özgün Düşünce, Doğudan, Birikim are also included in the bibliography of the Platform. Likewise, articles that are handled academically in the context of Turkey, columns, and discussions on websites are also included in the bibliography.

The "our word" and "what we noted" sections on the Labor and Justice Platform's website are two important sections, as they include discourses on which the Platform took a stand on the agenda as a result of joint consultations, and the discourses reflecting the thoughts of Platform members. The "Our word" section consists of posts that include the Platform's actions, its attitude towards current events, its approach to identities, and gender issues. In this section, where a total of 98 articles were shared, the distribution of topics is shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Distribution of the content shared in the "Our Word" section

Issue	Number of Articles
About Platform	9

Actions (Iftars, Workers, Homeless, Bank Protests, Gezi Park)	44	
Otherness and Identites (Kurdish issue, Migrants, Armanians)	20	
Gender / Patriarchy	6	
Turkey Politics and Agenda	13	
Religious Holiday messages	6	
Total:	98	

On the website, the section with the most content regarding the Platform's world of thought and political stance is the section "What we noted". In this section, the intellectual discussions of the Platform, its attitudes towards a current political event, and theoretical discussions and inquiries are carried out with the articles written by the members of the Platform. For this reason, this section will be subjected to the thematic field study specifically. In this section, 635 articles published between 2011-2021 were analyzed and divided according to thematic issues (Table 2).

Table 2. Content shared in the "What we noted" section according to thematic issues

General Topic	Thematic Issues	Number of Articles	Total Number of Articles
Internal evaluation of the Platform	About the Labor and Justice Platform	8	8
Platform's political thought	Quran, Islam, Muslim	82	228
	Debates on Islam-Left	38	
	The Second Run of Islam	41	
	Islamic Economics	14	
	Critique of Capitalism, Left, Socialism	53	
Platform's attitude towards Turkish politics	Turkey Politics and Agenda	109	157
	Criticism of the Right in Turkey – Islamism, Conservatism, Nationalism, Secularism	48	
Platform's approach to otherness and gender	Identities (Kurds, Alevis, Roma, Circassians, Armenians, Immigrants)	59	84
	Patriarchy	25	
Platform's actions	Urban Studies	28	102
	Workers and Subcontracted Workers	50	
	Gezi Park	18	

	Iftars	3	
	Homeless	3	
Other topics	Cases in the other parts of the World	14	56
	Book / Movie / Series Reviews	17	
	Other Issues	25	
Total:		635	

As can be seen in Table 2, the content shared by the Platform in the "What we noted" section can be categorized in eighteen thematic issues. These eighteen thematic areas can be analyzed under six topics. These six general topics are as follows: Internal evaluation of the Platform, Platform's political thought, Platform's attitude towards Turkish politics, Platform's approach to otherness and gender, Platform's actions, other issues. In the articles written about the Platform itself, there are topics such as annual evaluations, the experiences of the Platform members, what the reason that they take part in the Labor and Justice Platform for, and how their days were spent on the Platform.

Considering the number of shared content, basic and theoretical discussions on political thought have an important place for the Platform. On this subject, there are articles by the Platform in which they discuss what kind of an understanding of Islam they have, how they establish a theoretical and practical connection between Islam and the left, how a political economy suitable for Islam should be, and the left and socialist thought regarding the criticisms of capitalism. In addition, since the Platform aims to feed its political thought from local sources, in the articles they publish with the label of "The Second Run of Islam", names such as Ahmet Yesevi, Hacı Bektaş, Mevlana, Ahi Evren, Yunus Emre who are cultural references of Anatolian geography and understanding of Sufism in the Seljuk and Ottoman Empire are discussed.

Another important issue for the platform is the posts in which it determines its stance on Turkish politics. In this title, there are explanations and attitudes regarding the agenda, as well as a critique of Turkish politics. Particularly being careful to distinguish itself from right-wing politics, the Platform also makes a rereading of the political history of Turkey.

One of the issues that makes the Platform unique is its efforts to strengthen the relationship between others in Turkey. For this reason, the contents of identities

positioned as Turkey's other also determine the Platform's position on identity politics. Especially the Kurdish issue and patriarchy have an important place for the Platform.

The Platform also takes care to conduct a detailed discussion regarding its actions. For this reason, there are shared contents about workers' protests and workers' issues, iftars, urban studies, and actions organized for the homeless people.

Finally, the Platform does not remain indifferent to events taking place in other countries and shares its comments on them. In addition, intellectual issues such as the evaluation of books, movies, and series and other issues that the Platform is interested in are discussed and shared by the members.

The "What we note" section is an important source of reference for the Platform, as it includes Platform members' own words, main discussions, problems, points they consider important, and attitudes. Therefore, this section will be the basis of the review of the Platform.

4.3. PROTESTS AND INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES OF THE LABOR AND JUSTICE PLATFORM

In line with these purposes and principles, the Labor and Justice Platform has been carrying out protests and intellectual activities since 2011. One of the things that makes the Labor and Justice Platform unique is that they adopt a different typology of action. They act within the framework of certain criteria regarding the events and actions they will organize or participate in. First, they argue that the action taken to show their side is insufficient and the addressee should not be limited to certain groups only. Secondly, they prefer places that will increase the impact of the action rather than the usual places. Thirdly, they argue that it is necessary to go beyond the classical form of action such as meeting, walking, shouting slogans, making a press statement, and dispersing. Fourthly, they take into account the number of participants and state that actions, where the turnout is less,they decide that it would be better if the meeting was cancelled. Fifthly, they care that the profile of the activists participating in the action is as diverse as possible. Lastly, the colors used in the banners, the instruments used in the demonstration, the melodic structure of the slogans, and the contents of the banners should not have features that can

be attributed to the certain groups and should be in original content that can reach the public (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2012a, pp. 22-23).

4.3.1. Protest Activities

According to these criteria, the protests carried out by the Labor and Justice Platform grasped public attention and were also heard in the press. Actions organized by the Platform can be grouped into four categories.

Workers' Actions

While the platform has been supporting the workers' protest since 2011, it acts together with the association named Taş-İş-Der (Subcontracted Workers Solidarity and Assistance Association), and organizes charity events for workers and their families. The Platform tries to stand by the workers, support them and make them be heard especially in the search for rights of subcontracted workers. Taking care to stand by the workers who want to be given their rights, who want to work in humanitarian conditions, and workers who are dismissed because they are union members, the Platform has participated in workers' protests against companies such as PTT, Casper, Texim, Narin Triko-Karaca, Greif, Punto Deri, BELTAŞ, Ülker, Çapa Hospital. At the same time, they express their support for workers' actions in a Muslim-Left language. They concluded their statement in support of the PTT subcontracted workers, who took action because their wages were not paid, with a verse from the Qur'an (42/Al-Shura: 39) and emphasized the importance of solidarity for those whose rights were violated (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2013, April 27). Supporting the Casper workers, who were dismissed because of their unionization, in February 2011, the Platform visited the resistance tents of the Casper workers, held interviews to make the workers' voices heard (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011, April 7, 2011, June 6, 2011, May 19). The significance of these interviews is that it criticizes the conservative Islamist community's approach to unionized workers. The workers, who stated that they were blamed of being "terrorists", "communists", and "lack of piety" because of their attendance to a union state that they are only in search of rights and justice that are the basic of Islam (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011, June 6). The Labor and Justice Platform also helped the workers and their families with the Solidarity with Workers events it organized for Ülker and Texim

workers (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2012b, 2014a), and emphasized the importance of the concepts of class struggle, solidarity, and charity work with these events (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2012, October 10). They have been participating in the May Day protests since 2012 and reflect both Islamic and leftist emphasis in the banners they carry in these protests. Some of these banners are as follows: *"Labor, Justice, Freedom"*, *"We are Servants of Our Rabb, Not Capital"*, *"Small servants should not think that they are Razzak"*, *"Union of workers will defeat capital"*. The Platform also uses Muslim-Left language in the call texts explaining why they participated in 1 May. Many reasons are listed, such as workers being sentenced to a minimum wage below the hunger line, not even being paid for their labor, and not getting their rights, high unemployment rates, poor working conditions, and female workers being exposed to inequality, harassment and violence due to their gender (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2019, April 25). They describe their ultimate goal as follows:

> *"We have a demand for an earth where every child of Eve and every human being live equally and freely, and where good morals prevail. We have a dream of a world where neither the state nor the capital is used. This is possible in an order where we produce fairly and distribute fairly.*
>
> *We can build this world together by using the intelligence that Allah has given us and by following the good moral values Allah sets an example. This is not impossible. And we consider it a fard.*
>
> *That's where we're walking. We are waiting for you too!"* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2019, April 25)

In addition, the Labor and Justice Platform participates in the Conscience and Justice Watch, which has been held for 90 weeks since 2012, in which the victims of worker murders are commemorated. Lastly, since April 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they have been organizing a program called Workers' Voice on social media (Labor and Justice Platform's YouTube account) at regular intervals, enabling workers to express their problems. The bans implemented in Turkey during the pandemic are criticized by the Platform as they are in favor of the capital and make conditions more difficult for the workers:

"The government allocated only 1.1 percent of the gross domestic product, which is the result of the production of all workers in the country, to cash support during the epidemic process. While using public resources, it followed a policy of protecting capital, not workers. In 2020, 177 thousand workers, including 34 thousand female and 143 thousand male workers, were dismissed under Code-29. In other words, approximately 15,000 workers were fired every month on the grounds of Code-29. Moreover, in the first year of the epidemic, approximately 861 workers died due to covid-19. In other words, the government has said to the workers for a year that 'your life is not important to me'. Order killed us, not covid!"[12] (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2021, April 27)

After this statement, Platform members performed a funeral prayer in absentia for the workers killed during the pandemic period at Mihrimah Sultan Mosque on April 29, 2021, made a press statement in Üsküdar square and prayed for the workers. After the press release, the police intervened and fourteen Platform members were detained (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2021, May 2).

Protests against Urban Transformation Policies

The second category is the actions taken against the negative consequences of urban transformation policies. Since 2013, the Platform has been supporting the Neighborhoods Union, which is composed of associations and cooperatives established by neighborhood residents, who are fighting for their living spaces with the agendas of urban transformation, risky areas, and zoning amnesty, especially in various neighborhoods in İstanbul and İzmir. The implementation of JDP's Urban Transformation Policies by TOKİ (Mass Housing Administration) is criticized by the Platform in terms of the fact that capitalism works in favor of capital. Three important areas of criticism are put forward by the Platform. The first is to define broad powers for TOKİ for urban transformation (Kaya, 2012; Talha, 2015). Thus, individuals who directly deal with banks and borrow money are created with the effect of TOKİ, which prevents organized structures such as cooperatives that enable low-income groups to come together and own a house (Kaya, 2012). For this reason, TOKİ, whose main aim is to

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[12] Code 29 means *"the termination of the employment contract due to the behavior contrary to the rules of morality and goodwill by the employer"*.

make low-income groups homeowners, stays away from this goal while trying to maintain its presence in the market with the help of the state (Talha, 2015).

The Platform objects and reacts to the rent created by this practice, which is a result of neoliberal policies, and its reinforcement by the state. The second is related to the sociological dimensions of urban transformation. Lower-middle class citizens living in urban transformation areas are cut off from their social ties and removed from their economic environment (Kaya, 2013). Therefore, citizens who are already low-income and open their businesses in the neighborhoods they live in, are also forced to leave and dragged into a worse situation. This grasps the attention of the Labor and Justice Platform with the class dimension of urban transformation. For this reason, they support the actions of the neighborhood residents in many parts of Istanbul, visit the neighborhoods and make their voices heard by interviewing them. The Labor and Justice Platform supported the resistance in the Tozkoparan, Sarıgöl, Cumhuriyet and Kirazlıtepe neighborhoods against the destructive effects of urban transformation. The third is related to the aesthetic, spatial, and cultural destruction caused by urban transformation. In the articles published by the members of the Platform, this situation is discussed by evaluating Istanbul between the concepts of the city (şehir) and the urban (kent) (Kaya, 2014a, 2014b; Soysal, 2013). While the city represents a concept that is used as synonymous with *"Polis"* and has political, commercial and administrative dimensions, where property is not determinative, the urban represents a modern concept based on *"burg"*, which is also the root of *"bourgeois"*, and in which property is determinative (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2014c; Kaya, 2014a). One of the main differences between these two concepts is that the city represents planning. The Platform, especially in the actions they participated in, objects to the problems of this planning (or lack of planning or wrong planning) towards the city, a city like Istanbul that contains historical, spatial and sociological accumulation. They demand *"planning for the people, not for the money of rent"* (Tekin, 2018). Ahmet Yusuf, one of the members of the Platform, expresses the destruction caused by the planning made for rent as follows:

> *"... these projects, shopping malls, etc., that we see and frequently encounter with similar ones today, show us that the center of the Muslim, society, individual, city no longer covers Islam and Justice, but market, power, capitalism, etc. Even the mosque is surrounded by those huge skyscrapers, plazas, etc."* (Yusuf, 2013)

Iftars

The third category of the Platform's actions is Iftars, which are more appealing to the Islamic community, also an awareness-raising initiative and trial to reflect the spirit of Ramadan. Especially "Luxury Hotel Front Iftars", which was one of their first actions, reached a wide audience and found its place in the press. The Platform organized the first iftar in front of Conrad Hotel in Beşiktaş in August 2011, and held two more iftars in front of luxury hotels in Gezi Park in Taksim the same year. The ultimate purpose of this action, which was initiated with the slogan *"We Came to Open the Earth's Table, Resisting Those Who Plan the Blessings of the World!"* is clearly stated in the following statement distributed to the participants:

> *"While nearly one-third of Turkey lives below the poverty line, the minimum wage in this country corresponds to a meal for a few at an expensive iftar table. We do not want Ramadan tents to turn into cultural events that reproduce poverty. Our call does not only cover the waste in Ramadan. Our call does not only cover 'waste'. We want to raise a voice that does not tolerate these relations of production and consumption, which undermines the dignity of man as a human being. The reason why Ramadan was the month of action and the hotel fronts were chosen as the venue was clear: It would be possible to transform an interval in which everyone is more or less sensitive into an attitude that would extend to all times and places of life. Ramadan could have turned into a symbolic starting point for the best intentions, ideals, desires and mobilizations for a just life, and a lifeline for our personal and social resurrection."* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011b)

In the following years, iftar programs were continued with the themes of fraternity, the homeless, the unemployed, immigrants, and labor, and Peace Iftar was organized to invite people who were hurt by both Turks and Kurds due to the Kurdish issue. Therefore, as a form of action, iftars have a unifying function and a destructive function for othernesses. At the same time, it reveals solidarity and becomes an activity based on sharing, not luxury and waste.

Protests for the Others

The fourth category is the actions taken for the disadvantaged segments of the society, who are seen as the "other" for both class and identity reasons or who seek their rights. An example of this is the "If One of Us Gets Cold, Everyone Gets Cold" protests organized by the Platform for the homeless in Taksim and Eyüp districts. As a result of the actions, a report (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011c) was prepared for the homeless people and three main demands were expressed. First, the opening of homeless dormitories/centers for the homeless, especially in big cities, with the cooperation of the governorship and the municipality, and providing services for 365 days / 24 hours. Secondly, buildings or hotels are rented by the relevant state institutions and put into operation immediately for the homeless people until these facilities are opened. Third, the provision of a telephone service for people living on the street to report to the authorities which works around the clock, and the coordination of this service with health and social workers and law enforcement officers (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011c, p. 15). Apart from this, the Platform's activities for women's problems can be cited as an example. The Platform, which opened a section titled "patriarchy" on their website, participates in the feminist night marches held on March 8 and participates in actions against femicides. Similarly, the Kurdish issue due to their ethnic identities and Alevis due to their religious identities are on the agenda of the Platform.

4.3.2. Intellectual Activities

Apart from the actions, the Platform also carries out intellectual activities, where theoretical discussions and readings on the common values of Islam and the left are carried out, and discussions on what can be done about current problems. In this context, the Platform's debut event, the Labor and Justice in the Middle East and Turkey Symposium, was held with the participation of names from the Islamic and Left communities. This symposium was in memory of Mohammed Bouazizi, who burned himself to death in Tunisia in 2011. Altay Ünaltay, Cem Somel, İhsan Eliaçık, İlhami Güler, Metin Karabaşoğlu, Metin Kayaoğlu, Ahmet Örs and Zeki Kılıçarslan were speakers, and Suat Yalçın and Hidayet Şefkatli Tuksal were moderators at the symposium. In the symposium, which consists of two parts, the subject of theoretical approaches to the issue of labor and justice was discussed in the first part. In the second

part, practical pursuits in the struggle for labor and justice were discussed. Thus, the Platform has shown that with this debut event, it aims to carry out both theoretical and practical works together. In 2012, the Platform organized the Labor Issue and Workers' Rights Struggle in the Istanbul Symposium. Zeki Kılıçarslan, Hasan Köse and Foti Benlisoy took part as speakers in this symposium, which was also attended by İSKİ Subcontractor Workers, İBB Workers, Subcontractor Workers Solidarity and Aid Association, HEY Textile Workers, and Domestic Workers Solidarity Union. In 2019, the symposium titled Searching for Law and Peace in Turkey organized by the Platform. Zeki Kılıçarslan delivered the opening speech of this symposium on behalf of the Labor and Justice Platform, Canan Kaftancıoğlu and Mehmet Bekaroğlu from the RPP, Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu and Ayhan Bilgen from the PDP, Cihangir Islam from the FP participated as speakers and academics, journalists and NGO representatives attended. In the first session of this two-part symposium, the Crisis of Law and Democracy was discussed, and in the second session, the title of Rethinking Peace was discussed. In addition, the Platform organizes reading groups on Islam and the Left, covering topics such as Tafsir, Relationship between Islam and Socialism, Islamic Economics, and the Urban. Another intellectual activity of the Platform is Thursday Talks. Continuing since December 2011, Thursday Talks not only provide socialization with the new members of the Platform but also serve as in-group training. In this Thursday Talks, many topics such as Turkey's current problems, protests in other parts of the world, worker murders, occupational accidents, human rights violations, women, discrimination, and polarization are covered. The Platform has been organizing Our Commons Workshops (Müştereklerimiz Atölyeleri), in which many topics such as literature, sociology, urban studies, labor studies, Islamism, the Kurdish problem, and social movements are mentioned since 2018. Forty subjects are included in these workshops, which are held twice a year, in the fall and spring terms (Table 3).

Table 3. Number of "Our Commons Workshops" by issue distribution

Issue	Number of Workshops
Turkey Politics	5
Patriarchy	4
Islamic thought / Liberation Theology	4

Nationalism	3
Islamism	3
Literature	3
Social Sciences / Philosophy	3
Class matter	2
Urban Studies	2
Marxism	2
About Labor Party	2
Communism and Islamism	1
Human rights	1
Immigration / Immigrant	1
Kurdish issue	1
Social Movements	1
Ecology	1
Other issue	1
Total :	40

The topics of the intellectual activities of the Platform show that the Platform is trying to strengthen its theoretical knowledge while dealing with the main problems of Turkish politics. Trying to bring Islamists and leftists together, the Platform creates its discourse on the topics discussed in these intellectual activities and pays attention to the language it uses.

4.4. MUSLIM-LEFT BEYOND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY: *"THE IDENTITY OF THE OPPRESSED IS NOT ASKED."*

In the second chapter of this thesis, the reasons why Islamists and leftists are seen as the other to one another in Turkey were stated as Islam being an important part of the symbolic values and identity of right-wing politics in Turkey, and the formation of right-left cleavages on the basis of identities. In addition, Islamist movements (both mainstream and radical Islamism) have also existed as identity movements in Turkey. Especially the National Outlook Movement, which started to rise in the 1990s, acted within the

framework of the politics of recognition as an identity movement. When JDP came to power, it changed the center-periphery axis with neo-liberal policies and democratization steps, started to use a nationalist language after 2011, and attempted to redefine national identity, cares about and prioritizes identity politics. The fact that the politics of identity is so important in Turkish politics is that there is a constructivist approach to national identity.

As an Islamist movement, one of the differences of the Labor and Justice Platform than other Islamist movements in Turkey is its approach to politics of identity. For this reason, it is important to question whether the Labor and Justice Platform, as a Muslim-Left movement, goes beyond the politics of identity in order to understand its position within the Islamist movements in Turkey. While examining the Islamist movements in Turkey, the conceptualization of Protest and Emancipatory Movements and Identity Movements is used. The Labor and Justice Platform's search for a common point of justice demand by for both Islamists and leftists by adopting left politics of Islamism to anti-capitalist attitude; and the principle of *"the identity of oppressed is not asked"*; and its use of left-wing language and jargon shows that it is more suitable to be evaluated as Protest and Emancipatory Movements.
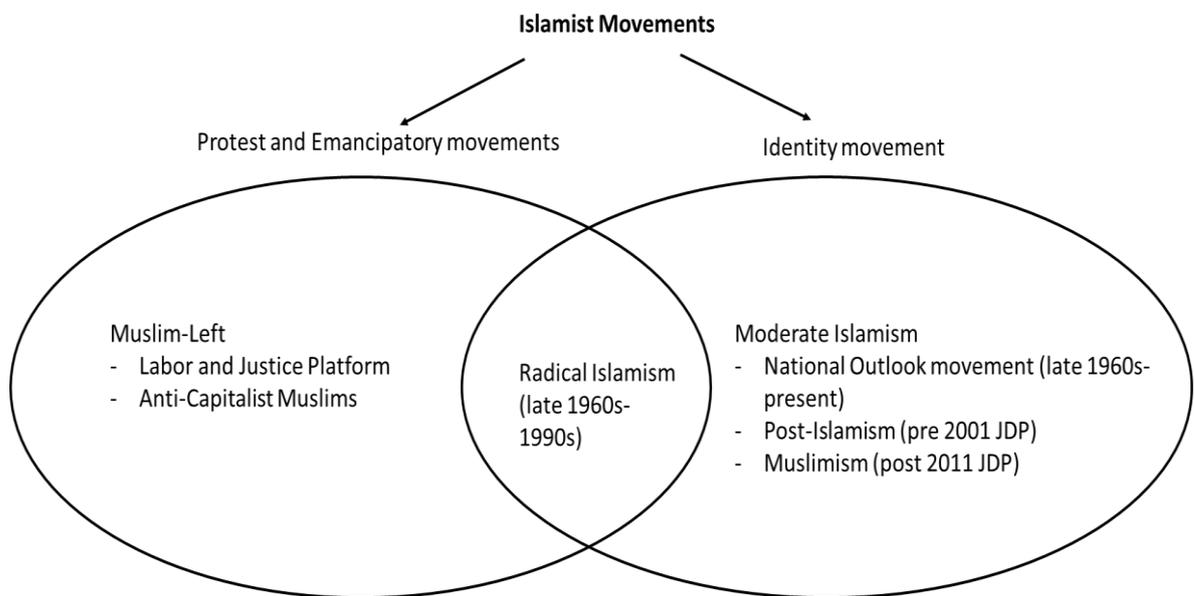

Figure 2: Locating the Labor and Justice Platform in Islamism in Turkey

This is not the only feature of the Platform that distinguishes it from the Islamist movements in Turkey in terms of identity politics. In addition, the Platform's approach to ethnic and religious identities and gender issues shows that it does not subordinate identity politics. The fact that it acts within the scope of politics of recognition regarding the demands of Kurds, looks at gender from the perspective of Islamic feminism, and can also defend LGBT+ rights distinguishes the Platform from mainstream Islamists.

These two distinctive features of the Labor and Justice Platform form the basis of the argument that it goes beyond the politics of identity. Therefore, the points that the Platform differs from the mainstream Islamist movement in Turkey will be discussed as the first step, and then its perspective on the Kurdish issue and gender will be examined.

4.4.1. The Platform as Protest and Emancipatory Movement

It is observed that the source of the Platform's discussion and motivation on political thought is shaped by its discussions on five main thematic issues. Adopting the fundamental debates of left politics of Islamism, the Platform bases its political thought on mostly domestic and fundamental sources (the Qur'an). In addition, in its discussions on Islam and the left, the Platform tries to establish a common ground for action. Another discussion topic of the Platform is the discussion of Islamic economics as an economic-political interpretation. Lastly, the Platform expresses its critique of capitalism not only on Islamic foundations, but also by making use of left and Marxist/socialist thought. Therefore the left's critique of capitalism and the class struggle have an important place in the political thought of the Platform. These thematic issues, which constitute the political thought of the Platform, have also led to the differentiation of the antagonism it has established. As mentioned before, the Platform as a Muslim-Left movement criticizes the idea of Islamism compatible with capitalism. Thus, it targets Muslim elites and establishes an antagonism between two different Muslim identities and politics of Islamism.

It is possible to observe different variations of Islamist politics all over the world. Many Islamist movements, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan, ISIS in Syria, Ennahda in Tunisia, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the National Outlook and JDP experience in Turkey, base their existence on their Muslim identities and state that they get the

legitimacy of their policies from Islam. Likewise, the Labor and Justice Platform, as an Islamist movement, bases its politics on Muslim identity. It can be seen that these different experiences of Islamism take place in very different spectrums in their political struggles: right – left, radical – moderate, capitalist – anti-capitalist. At this point, the Labor and Justice Platform opened up the question of the Muslim identity it adopted, and shared articles about this questioning in the "what we noted" section. The visibility of Muslim identity has increased in the transformed public sphere after the JDP came to power in Turkey. Differences of Muslim identities have also emerged in the transforming public sphere. The Muslim identity discussed by the Labor and Justice Platform, which has adopted left politics of Islamism, has also developed within the framework of the antagonism that Shariati has established between the religion of shirk and the religion of tawhid. One of the members of the Platform, Kamil Kani Aygördü (2021), defines Islam as *"a religion against religion, a return to the essence, an Abrahamic deconstruction, a hanif stance, that is, every attempt at reformation, as it undermines the interests of a domineering authority that has basically backed up the clergy."*. In this context, it has been criticized that the Islamist movement in Turkey was added to the neoliberal system and the state with the JDP's coming to power and its transformative influence (Kızılkaya, 2013, 2018; Talha, 2013).

For the Labor and Justice Platform, the moral dimension of Muslim identity in the political arena is an important topic of discussion. Mehmet Yılmaz (2018), one of the authors of Platform, questions the legitimation of many things such as violence, theft and murder based on Islam. Dealing with this as a moral dilemma, Yılmaz (2019), in his later article, divided this dilemma as morally deterministic and principled, and tried to explain different attitudes on different issues. (Table 4)

Table 4. Some differences between determinists and principled in Muslim identity

	Deterministic	Principled
Basic Thought	In religion, everything has a decree.	Religion sets principles. Details are determined over time according to the principles.

The realm they wants to establish	Asr-i Saadet simulation	Life in the modern world based on Islamic principles
Advantages	Automatic legitimacy	Easy adaptation to conditions and time
Disadvantages	Inability to keep up with conditions and time	The need to prove that they have made an authentic comment
Moral Values of Actions	The moral values of all collective acts are determined by religion.	Principles were preached. Partial situations should be interpreted according to these principles.
Possible Reaction When Faced with a New Situation	Fatwa of Bin Ba'z's death fasts	Karadawi's fatwa for democracy
Package Sentence	*"Islam is such a perfect religion that even it is determined with which foot to enter the toilet."*	*"It is necessary to carry the embers, not the ash from the ancestral furnace."*
Mind-Transfer	The information given by the transplant cannot be obtained with the mind.	The information given by the transplant can be obtained with the mind.
What to do when faced with a new situation?	They look at the black-covered book, asks an authority.	They looks at the meaning and thinks.
Plenty of exemplary verse	5/Al-Ma'idah: 3 and 6/Al-An'am: 38	2/Al-Baqarah: 71

Source: Yılmaz, M. (2019). Halatın İki Ucu. Retrieved from https://www.emekveadalet.org/notlar/halatin-iki-ucu/

As can be understood from here, the principled attitude reflects a more rational and questioning Muslim identity, interprets Islam as a universal religion that is dynamic and suitable for all ages, and uses the Qur'an and only authentic hadiths as the main reference source. It can be said that Labor and Justice Platform is closer to principled between the two moral foundations as determinist and principled. This principled stance also has practical outcomes and consequences for Platform members. For example, Talha (2014), in his article in which he criticizes Muslim-Conservative power aspirants, establishes a relationship between deeds and intentions and states that a Muslim should

question this if the intentions do not coincide with the concrete outputs. Similarly, Büyükcoşkun (2013) and Altıntaş (2014) criticize that after the mining accidents, politicians, those responsible, and the employer avoid responsibilities by calling these work accidents *"destiny"*. Büyükcoşkun explains the necessity of a Muslim attitude in the main difference between morally principled and deterministic approaches, by addressing the issue of faith in qada and destiny, which is one of the conditions of being a Muslim:

> *"We believe in qada and destiny, we hold the account that we are obliged to give and to ask. We do not forget, we will not forget. We have a pledge from those who took the lives of our brothers, sent them to death in plain sight, those who measure human life with profit, and those who reduce safety to the cost of risk. They lie, but we will not be convinced. We are not satisfied, Allah will not be pleased. Deaths in the mines are neither qada nor destiny, but murder!"* (Büyükcoşkun, 2013)

4.4.2. Beyond the Politics of Identity

The antagonism established by the Labor and Justice Platform, which takes the basis of its political struggle from this Muslim identity it has adopted, is not limited to the understanding of Islam. In its approach to the events in Turkish politics, the Platform looks not only from the Islamic perspective, but also from a left and from class perspective. When the action categories of the Platform are examined, it is observed that the class dimensions of the actions that they organize, participate in and comment on are predominant. For this reason, it attaches importance to union activities and participates in workers' actions. However, the Platform acts with the awareness that the order of injustice, inequality, domination and exploitation is not only class-based. The actions of the Platform on the urban, Gezi Park protests, iftars, actions for gender equality, and the bond established between Islam and the left are important in terms of identity as well as class. The platform explains the principle of *"The identity of the oppressed is not asked"* as follows:

> *"The Platform is aware that the relations of exploitation and domination are not limited to the production and distribution of social wealth, but are reproduced*

through inequalities such as race, sect, gender etc. It is aware that ethnic and gender-based discrimination and injustices are intertwined with the labor issue and inextricably change and transform each other. While conducting its anti-capitalist struggle with this awareness, it never subordinates and neglects the unique causes and dynamics of identity struggles. It directs its energies to these and similar issues as much as he can reach his perpetrators and gives voice and shoulders. It does not have a hierarchy in the field of struggle, it prefers to run side by side." (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2019)

As a requirement of this principle, the Platform is based on class struggle, and equally supports the search for rights of "other" segments who suffer discrimination and injustice due to their ethnic, religious and gender identities. As it can be understood from here, the Platform tries to determine the demands and limits of a Muslim policy instead of seeing Islam as a sociological unifying factor. An important output of this is that it does not need to emphasize the unifying aspect of Islam in the approach to ethnic identities. Secondly, it does not care about identity differences such as Alevi-Sunni, Muslim-non-Muslim, religious-secular, and instead emphasizes the struggle for justice.

The stance of the Labor and Justice Platform, especially regarding the Kurdish issue, shows that it also deals with this issue in terms of identity. Platform, which is part of an organization called Peace Initiatives[13], published the statement *"Silence Guns, Let Peace Speak"* in the "Our word" section of their website and called for a march. This declaration, published in 2011, also includes demands regarding the Kurdish issue. These demands are listed as follows:

- *"Let the politicians arrested under the name of KCK be released."*
- *"Repeal the Anti-Terror Law and specially authorized heavy penal courts."*

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[13] The groups that make up the Peace Initiative are: Anticapitalist Students, Peace Movement, Youth for Peace Initiative, Women's Initiative for Peace, Art for Peace Initiative, Be an Eye For You Initiative, Blok Academy Group, Democracy and Freedom Movement, Initiative for Those Who Bring Joy to Hearts, East Southeast Associations Platform, Durde, Labor and Justice Platform, Universal Culture Magazine, Truth Justice and Memory Studies, Human Rights Association (İHD) Istanbul Branch, Kesk Istanbul Branches Platform, Global BAK, Global Action Group, Kurdish Writers Association, MAZLUMDER, We Want Freedom Initiative, Left Quest, Theater Critics Association, Turkish Writers' Union.

- *"Absolute freedom of expression should be guaranteed by law, so that we can freely discuss the new constitution without any pressure."* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2011, November 25)

Supporting the resolution process, the Platform sees this process as an opportunity for the realization of peace. For this reason, it supported more than 600 prisoners who went on hunger strike, and voiced their demands, on the grounds that they demanded the right to defense in the mother tongue during the resolution process and that Abdullah Öcalan was not allowed to meet with his lawyers and deputies for a year (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2012, November 3, 2012, October 24).

Organized a Peace Iftar in Saraçhane Park during Ramadan in 2013, the Platform unfurled a *"We Pray for Peace"* banner, condemning the massacres in Syria and Egypt, accompanied by prayers in Kurdish and Turkish, emphasizing the brotherhood of the Turkish and Kurdish people (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2013, July 29).

In 2015, the resolution process came to an end when President Erdoğan declared that he did not recognize the Dolmabahçe Agreement. Thereupon, the Labor and Justice Platform called for an action, saying, *"We do not remain silent, we do not become partners in the persecution."* In this call for action, the Platform said, *"As the Ummah of the Prophet of Islam, who trampled on tribalism and advised us on peace, we will shout our demand for peace so that we can still call each other brothers."* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2015, August 28). In the action held on 30 August 2015, the Platform unfurled its Turkish and Kurdish *"We Want Peace"* banners and listed its demands as follows:

- *"We demand that the state stop the operations immediately and stop using weapons in civilian areas"*,
- *"We demand that the PKK declare a temporary ceasefire in order to expand the political space opened by the PDP"*,
- *"We demand that the process continue in a transparent manner in line with the Dolmabahçe agreement."* (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2015, August 31)

Finally, the Platform has taken a stand against the dismissal of PDP mayors elected in the southeast region since 2016, and the appointment of trustees (kayyum) in their place, and the arrest of PDP politicians. In its statements, the platform defends the

solution of the Kurdish question in a democratic framework, based on the understanding of decentralized government, and based on equal and free representation of the peoples (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2016, October 31).

The Labor and Justice Platform also stands against patriarchy and, by adopting an Islamic feminist stance, separates itself from both traditional/conservative Islamic thought and the essentialist approach of secular feminism. Islamic feminism presents an important ground for criticism in explaining how Islam is used by the masculine political power and overcoming the tension in traditional Islamic understanding with the increasing visibility of Muslim women in the public sphere (Z. Yılmaz, 2014, p. 375). Although JDP, a conservative party with Islamic leanings, has achieved many important achievements for women's rights, it approaches with a conservative perspective and reference to Islam in its policies and discourses towards women. JDP sees the family as the natural focus of women and deals with the issue of women through domestic responsibilities and traditional women's roles (mother, wife) (Coşar & Yeğenoğlu, 2011; Günindi Ersöz, 2015; Unal, 2015). The establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in 2011 and the *"Strong Women, Strong Family, Strong Society"* discourse on women's policies, encouraging marriages, encouraging women to give birth, reflect this perspective on women and gender. As a mother and wife, women are considered as *"part of collective structures such as family, community or society"* and as a tool that *"carries/transmits/reproduces tradition"* (Altuntaş & Demirkanoğlu, 2017, p. 82). This new patriarchal perspective, which is described as *"neoliberal-religious/conservative patriarchy style"* by Coşar and Yeğenoğlu (2011) is criticised by the Labor and Justice Platform.

The Labor and Justice Platform has a section called "Patriarchy" on its website, and it shows its stance against patriarchy with the translations, announcements, quotations and news they publish. In addition, the Platform has a "Labor and Justice Women's Group". Every year, the Platform participates in the feminist night march on March 8, International Women's Day, and the actions held on November 25, Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The Thursday Talks they organize cover topics such as domestic labor, violence against women, harassment and rape, women's labor, headscarves, masculinity, feminism, and women's rights.

The Platform also cooperates with the Muslims Against Violence to Women Initiative, which was founded in 2013. Platform members are among the founders of this initiative. The Muslims Against Violence to Women Initiative is an organization that opposes masculinity as a means of oppression and violence on women by transforming into a power identity and aims to combat the inequality, discrimination, and violence that women suffer simply because they are women. In addition, she declares that they are open to solidarity with all women's organizations that produce discourse and take a stand on all kinds of violence and inequality mechanisms that affect women's lives directly or indirectly and that they stand by all women regardless of identity who have been persecuted (Kadına Şiddete Karşı Müslümanlar İnisiyatifi, 2013). The Platform supports the establishment of this Initiative by publishing the call text and actions on its website (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2013, April 16). Acting with the Initiative, the Platform also participates in reading the Qur'an and discussing women and men in Islam. Similarly, the Platform cooperates with the Women in Mosques movement and makes their voices heard on their websites. The Women in Mosques organization turned into a movement with a campaign launched by a group of Muslim women to improve the position of women in mosques. Women focus on two basic problems in mosques, physical and social. Physical problems are problems such as the limited, inadequate, and irregular places reserved for women, the elderly, and the disabled in mosques, and the absence of free and permanent ablution facilities. Social problems are problems such as the restriction of women who want to be in mosques, their exposure to insulting behavior and words by men, and their exclusion from the mosque community. Women in Mosques aims to address these problems and to improve the situation of women in mosques. However, Women in Mosques, which thinks that the administrative arrangements to be made will not be enough, aims to build and spread a mosque culture that will include everyone (Kadınlar Camilerde, 2017).

The Labor and Justice Platform participated in the *"Immediately Prevent Femicide"* campaign organized by the Women Strong Together Platform in 2019 and called on women to raise their voices at home, at work and on the street for 5 minutes every evening at 20:00 for a month (Emek ve Adalet Platformu, 2019, September 28).

The Platform acts within the framework of the principle of *"the identity of the oppressed is not asked"* with the attitude it has taken for the implementation of the

Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence). Turkey signed the Istanbul Convention on 11 May 2011 and became the first country to become a party by ratifying it without reservation in the parliament. Based on this Convention, which came into force as of March 2012, Law No. 6284 *"Protection of the family, prevention of violence against women"* was enacted. The purpose of the contract consists of four articles:

- Protecting women from all forms of violence, combating violence against women and domestic violence, preventing and prosecuting violence.
- To contribute to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and to promote real equality between women and men by empowering women.
- Protecting and supporting victims of violence.
- To ensure coordination in order to ensure cooperation between all institutions and organizations in the fight against violence.

However, the Istanbul Convention is especially opposed by conservative groups. Objections to the Convention concentrate on two main arguments. The first is the claim that Articles 3 and 4 regulating gender equality legally guarantee same-sex unions and this situation disrupts the social structure. The second is the allegation that the decision to remove men from home, based on the woman's statement, breaks up families (Satıl, 2020). After these discussions, which took place in the media and the public, on 20th March 2021, Turkey withdrew from the Istanbul Convention with a presidential decree and the agreement was abolished as of 1 July 2021.

In the face of these arguments, the Labor and Justice Platform demands equality, freedom, and justice for women does not want women to be defined only with adjectives such as wife, mother, sister, and daughter; and objects to the conservative community that subordinates women and assigns gender roles to women based on the patriarchal Islamic understanding (Emek ve Adalet Kadın Grubu, 2020, May 14, 2021, July 1; Kılınç, 2019). In addition, the Labor and Justice Platform, which opposes the criminalization of LGBT+s through religious discourse, expresses its objection in its statement regarding the repeal of the Istanbul Convention:

> *"We do not accept this demonization, we declare that we will defend LGBTI+ and women's rights to the end, and that we will not give up this solidarity. Neither*

institutions and organizations that speak on behalf of Muslim women and try to create opposition, nor men who cover their words with religious discourses to protect their power will not be able to harm our solidarity. As women and LGBTI+s, whether they wear headscarves or not, Muslim or non-Muslim, none of us will be able to suppress our demand to live equally and to live a life free from violence and fear." (Emek ve Adalet Kadın Grubu, 2021, July 1)

In conclusion, the Labor and Justice Platform differs considerably from the Islamist movements in Turkey in two respects. The first is that it pursued the left politics of Islamism as a protest and emancipatory movement and separated from the mainstream Islamic thought with the antagonisms it established. Despite the instrumental use of Islam in the fight against communism and radical Islamism in Turkey, Muslim-Left movements try to break this instrumentality with the antagonisms they established between Muslim identities and to destroy the relationship of otherness established between Islam and the left. As a result, the Labor and Justice Platform has formed its political stance in this way by establishing antagonisms such as the oppressor-oppressed, the exploiter-exploited against the understanding of Islamism that is compatible with capitalism and adopts neoliberal policies and the use of Islam in a nationalist perspective and has taken its place against the relations of domination. As an Islamist movement, this political struggle of the Labor and Justice Platform exists as a class movement outside of identity politics. Secondly, the Labor and Justice Platform has acted with the awareness that although it prioritizes class politics, the relationship of domination due to identities also produces injustice, and has stood by those who have suffered injustice due to their ethnic, religious, and gender identities. As an example, the Platform's stance on the Kurdish issue and gender equality has shown that it does not subordinate identities. These two main features that distinguish the Labor and Justice Platform as a Muslim-Left movement from the mainstream Islamist movement in Turkey show that it has adopted a politics beyond identity politics.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Within the scope of this thesis, answers to the following questions were sought:

- What is the Muslim-Left as a concept and what does it mean?
- What kind of a political movement does the Labor and Justice Platform represent as a Muslim-Left movement?
- When evaluated through the Labor and Justice Platform, can the Muslim-Left go beyond the politics of identity as an Islamist movement?

In this context, it has been observed that the formation, emergence and rise of political Islam and leftist movements in Turkish politics are different from those in other Muslim majority countries. The main reasons for this situation can be listed as follows:

1) During the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the construction of national identity was a priority, and in this context, Westernization and secularism were at the forefront. The founding elites of the Republic consider Islam as the founding other and define the national identity as the secular Sunni-Hanefi Turkish identity. Therefore, the fact that Islam is the founding other has created a national identity crisis for Turkey, which has a Muslim majority population. As a result of strict secularism policies, the emergence of an Islamist movement was only possible at the end of the 1960s, but these movements were constantly pushed out of the public sphere as a result of the constitutional court and military coups.

2) Due to the principles of statism and populism, the emergence of an organized class structure was prevented, and communism became the other for Turkey as Turkey took its place in the Western bloc after the Second World War. This situation has brought two important consequences for both left and Islamic reactions. First, Islam was used instrumentally to combat communism. Therefore, Islamic reactions were expressed through nationalism, conservatism and spiritualism on the basis of anti-communism. Secondly, everything about the left is characterized as communism, even if it is not communist. Therefore, the left's self-justification

was possible in the context of its relationship with Kemalism. In this context, the relationship of the left with Islam and the majority of the Muslim population has also sometimes become problematic. The left, which expresses itself through oppositions such as progressive-reactionism, secular-religious, sought the ways of revolution rather than being a class-based and grassroots social movement, and thought that the masses of people should be transformed with top-down policies.

3) After 1980, Sunni Islam was also used instrumentally against the radical Islamism that emerged outside of communism, and a conservative understanding of Islam was developed with the idea of Turkish-Islamic synthesis. On the other hand, due to the adoption of neoliberal policies with globalization, Islamism has been organized outside the state and has risen as an identity politics. During this period, the left after the coup also weakened and left-Kemalism was represented by the six arrows of the RPP.

As a result of these, identity cleavages and politics of identity have become important in Turkey. Right-left political spectrums are expressed on the basis of identities. In this context, the development of Islamism has been in the context of right-wing politics and identity movement.

The emergence and development of the Islamism movement in Turkey was examined both conceptually and historically under these conditions, and Ali's (2000) classification of Islamist movements as Protest and Emancipatory Movements and Identity Movements was used. In this context, Islamist movements in Turkey emerged in the late 1960s, including radical Islamism and moderate Islamism. The radical Islamist movement existed in Turkey between the 1960s and 1990s, but failed to find social support. The radical Islamist movement, which defines the current system as taghuti, can be classified as both Protest and Emancipatory and Identity movements, with its criticisms of the traditional understanding of Islam and its reformist aspect.

The Moderate Islamist movement, represented by the National Outlook Movement and its parties that emerged in the late 1960s, has become mainstream Islamism in Turkey. The main objection point of the National Outlook Movement, which sees Islam as a sociological unifying element and criticizes Westernization and the West, has been towards the construction of national identity. Therefore, in the environment

created by neoliberal policies after 1980, the National Outlook Movement started to rise as an identity movement and found social support, with the presence and support of sects and communities in the free market independent of the state. However, the Islamic movement and Muslim identity were excluded from the public sphere as a result of the military intervention as the guards of the Kemalist regime. Ultimately, the JDP, which was founded by separating from the National Outlook Movement and can be defined as a post-Islamist, transformed the public sphere, military-civil bureaucratic relations and changed the center-periphery axis with its democratization steps until 2011. After 2011, the increased visibility of Sunni Islam, the policies of raising a religious generation, discourses such as the New Turkey, the construction of a new national identity by the JDP after 2015, and this time the conservative/traditional interpretation of Islam, which is inherent in the national identity, and the use of a more nationalist language are enabled a different conceptualization of JDP. Defined as Muslimism by Yenigün (2016), the post-2011 JDP allows it to be classified as an Islamist identity movement.

The transformation of the public sphere in the 2000s, the existence of an Islamist thought compatible with capitalism, the increase in socio-economic inequality due to neoliberal policies, and the expression of Islam in a conservative, traditional and nationalist language also led to the emergence of an oppositional Islamist movement/idea. At the same time, it brought this movement closer to the left, which is not prejudiced against Islam/religion. In the 2000s, Islamists and leftists, who sought a common ground against capitalism, imperialism, neoliberal policies and the Islamization policies of the government, came together in formations such as the New Politics Initiative and the People's Voice Party. These two unsuccessful attempts also contributed to the emergence of the Anti-Capitalist Muslims and Labor and Justice Platform, which emerged in the early 2010s and still exists. Within the scope of this thesis, these movements are conceptualized as Muslim-Left.

The Muslim-Left conceptualization includes four basic signifiers. First, it refers to a political and strategic partnership between Islamists and leftists. The second involves the search for a theoretical ground that allows Islamists and leftists to come together on common ground. This common theoretical pursuit has been expressed as left politics of Islamism. Third, the Muslim-Left refers to the search that emerged in the 2000s and the movements that have emerged since the 2010s. Therefore, this concept is used in the

context of Turkey in the twenty-first century. Finally, since the Muslim-Left expresses a social movement, these movements are expressed in the context of the new social movements theory. To complete the conceptualization, left politics of Islamism and why it is discussed in the context of new social movements were explained. Left politics of Islamism includes:

1) Reading the history of humanity through class conflict,
2) The role of religion in this class conflict and the antagonism between religion of tawhid and religion of shirk,
3) Rejection of all discrimination on the basis of identities and genders with the understanding of taqwa

The evaluation of the Muslim-Left movements in the context of the new social movements theory is also attributed to the following reasons. First, they adopted a horizontal organizational structure rather than a hierarchical one. Second, they have different typologies of action. Third, they include members from different socio-economic classes. Fourth, they adopt a pro-Marxist political thought. Lastly, they do not subordinate identity politics and advocate gender equality.

As a result of all these, the Labor and Justice Platform as a Muslim-Left movement was subjected to a descriptive examination, and it was questioned whether it adopted a politics beyond identity politics. The Labor and Justice Platform is a platform that brings together Islamists and leftists and acts within the framework of the principles determined by its members. The discussions carried out by the members of the Platform, their statements on the agenda, the actions they organized or participated in, and their intellectual activities were examined and their attitude towards identity politics was revealed. Ultimately, it has been explained with its two main features that the Labor and Justice Platform pursues a policy beyond identity politics. First, the Platform, which adopts left politics of Islamism, prioritizes class politics, and its antagonisms and discourses differ from mainstream Islamist movements. First of all, the Platform criticizes Muslim elites, the understanding of Islam compatible with capitalism, and the instrumental use of Islam in a conservative/nationalist context. Therefore, one of the antagonisms he established is between religion of tawhid and religion of shirk. Then, the Platform establishes an antagonistic relationship as a determinist and principled in

Muslim identity and adopts a principled attitude. In addition, the antagonism that the Platform established due to its political struggle is not based on oppositions such as Muslim-non-Muslim, Alevi-Sunni, right-leftist, religious-secular, but between the oppressor and the oppressed. Therefore, as a Muslim-Left movement, the Labor and Justice Platform has been classified as an Emancipatory and Protest movement. The second is related to the Platform's attitude towards those who suffer injustice due to their identities and genders. Adopting the principle of *"the identity of the oppressed is not asked"*, the Platform prioritizes class politics, but is aware of the existence of relations of injustice and domination due to their identity and gender. Therefore, it adopts a policy of recognition for those marginalized due to their ethnic and religious identities and advocates gender equality with an Islamic feminist perspective. Within the framework of this principle, the attitude, actions, discourses and discussions of the Platform towards the Kurdish issue and gender equality were examined. As a result, it has been concluded that these two main features of the Labor and Justice Platform provide a political struggle beyond the politics of identity.

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