

**AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF RELIGIOUS
REASONING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR DEMOCRACY**

by

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IMPLICATIONS FOR DEMOCRACY**

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ABSTRACT

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In the near future, Middle Eastern democracy will be shaped by conflicts over the status of religion in the public sphere as well as by conflicts driven by the relationship between religion and the state. While political liberal viewpoints contend that in modern political and social life comprehensive doctrines do not accord well with the demands of pluralism, it does seem that, in their day-to-day practices, some Muslims in Turkey do manage to adequately reconcile their comprehensive doctrines with pluralism's many demands. Based on fieldwork undertaken in nine cities across Turkey, this thesis is a study of individuals' modes of religious reasoning. This work analyzes the ways in which Muslim citizens' religious reasoning styles enable them to either reject or to adjust to the demands of modern social and political life. It identifies four modes of religious reasoning: (i) the communitarian; (ii) the utilitarian; (iii) principled; (iv) the deconstructive. Pluralism goes hand in hand with an acknowledgement that there are multiple worlds, realities and truths; the data presented here demonstrate that pluralism is, in fact, a potentiality possessed by every individual. Pluralism emerges or retreats as part of a process of interactions with other individuals, within a context. This thesis demonstrates that this flux, this dynamism, is strongly associated with individuals' changes between different modes of religious reasoning.

ÖZET

DİNİ AKIL YÜRÜTME BİÇİMLERİNİN DEMOKRASİYE ETKİSİ ÜZERİNE AMPİRİK BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Anahtar sözcükler: Dini akıl yürütme, demokrasi, toplumsal cinsiyet, ekonomi, çoğulculuk

Ortadoğu'da yakın gelecekte ortaya çıkacak demokrasi biçimleri, dinin devletle ilişkisi ile ilgili olduğu kadar onun kamusal alandaki statüsünü ilgilendiren çatışmalar tarafından da şekillenecek. Siyasal liberal görüşlerin, modern siyasal ve toplumsal yaşamda pluralizmin dinler gibi geniş kapsamlı doktrinler ile uyşamayacağı iddialarının aksine; Türkiye'deki bazı Müslümanların günlük yaşamlarında kendi dini yaklaşımları ile pluralizmin taleplerini uzlaştırmayı becerdikleri görülüyor. Bu tez, Türkiye'nin dokuz şehrinde yapılmış bir alan araştırmasına dayanarak bireysel düzeydeki dini akıl yürütme biçimlerine odaklanıyor. Müslüman vatandaşların modern toplumsal ve siyasal hayatın taleplerine baş kaldırmalarını ya da ona uyum sağlamalarını mümkün kılan dini akıl yürütme biçimlerini analiz ediyor. Çalışma bu çerçevede (i) komüniteryan, (ii) faydacı (iii) ilkesel ve (iv) yapıbozumcu olmak üzere dört dini akıl yürütme biçimine odaklanıyor.

Pluralizm farklı dünyaların, farklı gerçekliklerin ve farklı doğruların olduğunun kabûlü ve benimsenmesi ile oluşur. Araştırmada elde edilen veri pluralizmin her bireyin sahip olduğu bir potansiyel olduğunu; ancak, bunun belirli bir bağlamda başkalarıyla karşılıklı ilişkide ortaya çıktığını ya da geri çekildiğini gösteriyor. Pluralizmin bu salınımı ise bireyin farklı dini akıl yürütme biçimleri arasında duruma göre geçişler yapması ile yakından ilişkili görünüyor.

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Finally, I acknowledge that I alone am responsible for any kind of omissions and possible errors of this work.

I dedicate this thesis to my son, Ilir, who was born in the same year with this thesis; he brought joy to our lives.

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Introduction

Despite the contention of political liberal views that comprehensive doctrines and demands of pluralism in modern political and social life do not fair along, it seems that some Muslims in Turkey manage to reconcile their comprehensive doctrines with the demands of pluralism in their day-to-day practices. This raises the crucial question of how this reconciliation takes place. Some Muslims in Turkey are undergoing a process of conversion by which they begin to question their religious stances and doctrines in light of the demands of the plurality of life styles (differing gender roles and family relations), of market economy and of constitutional liberal democracy. However, there are other Muslims who oppose any dilution of the doctrine (literary sense) and articulate their opposition to such demands. The questions then become: (i) how do these two groups differ from one another? And more importantly (ii) how do they articulate their opposing outlooks?

In this thesis I reflect on micro/individual level religious reasoning patterns that I observed during a TUBITAK¹ sponsored field research in which I participated from 2008 to 2011. I will analyze the ways in which the religious reasoning styles of Muslims enable them to either reject or adjust to the demands of modern social and political life.² In investigating individuals' ways of reasoning my analysis inquires into whether and how religious actors relieve the tension between the dictates of their comprehensive doctrines and the demands of, at times opposing, modern political and social life.

This dissertation thus aims to contribute to the infamous discussion "whether Islam is compatible with democracy" with the help of a qualitative research. The dissertation addresses this issue by focusing on individual level religious reasoning and sentiments and their impact on individual's aptitude to embrace pluralism in his or her daily life. In so doing, the dissertation seeks to offer a sound descriptive knowledge of individual level religiosity and its relation to ones willingness to uphold pluralism.

¹ TUBITAK refers to The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey. The project was supervised by Prof. Dr. Bahattin Akşit, Department of Sociology, Maltepe University.

² Reasoning is a process that can modify intentions and beliefs. Alfred R. Mele and Piers Rawling, eds. "Introduction: Aspects of Rationality," in *The Oxford Handbook of Rationality*, 3- 15 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5.

From a more broad perspective, this thesis essentially endeavors to answer the question of how one's commitment to certain kinds of knowledge is shaped and negotiated in everyday life situations. The existing scholarship on religion and its effects on social life has focused predominantly on either the theological aspects of religion or its reflection on the individual behavior. But how can we bridge these two realms? Do doctrines play a role in shaping the behavior of individuals? How the fundamentals of religion are negotiated and applied in concrete life situations of daily relations? By specifically focusing on self-proclaimed "pious Muslims," I hope to achieve an insight on the tensions in the ways in which these Muslims negotiate the fundamentals of religion when making everyday life choices.

In particular I investigate whether Muslims in Turkey perceive a contradiction between (i) their self-claimed commitment to the comprehensive doctrine³ to which they subscribe and (ii) the demands of pluralist society, and how – if they perceive such a contradiction – they manage to reconcile it.⁴

³ Throughout the thesis I will employ Rawls's definition of the comprehensive doctrine. Rawls regarded a moral theory to be comprehensive when it fulfilled the following requirements: first, it must be relevant to a wide range of subjects (including how best to lead one's life, what sort of virtues to aspire to, what sort of relationships to have, and so on). This is what renders it general. It becomes comprehensive "when it includes conceptions of what is of value in human life, as well as ideals of personal virtue and character, that are to inform much of our nonpolitical conduct...." For him in liberal democratic society public reason excludes person's commitment to any deeper comprehensive theory or doctrines. See John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 175. Islam by virtue of being a religion qualifies as a comprehensive doctrine in a Rawlsian sense. Besides Muslims share the belief that Islam is universal and it is God's message, and for them it has claims for regulating not only this-worldly affairs but after life, that is why I approach Islam as a comprehensive doctrine. However, I am critical of essentialized categories like "Islam" or even "religion." The object of my study is not "Islam" but "different interpretations of Islam." I concentrate on the actual practices and self-stated beliefs of Muslims and on the tensions which arise from whether or not these practices and beliefs negotiate their way with the ideal. I don't deny the existence of a faith called "Islam" but I try to put a distance to studies of Islam, as much of the debate over what "Islam" deals with is theology. I am concerned with how people self-identify and represent the comprehensive doctrine of Islam (the thesis hopefully will add to the related discussions by bringing in insights of actual observations of behavior and oral discussions, not simple textual representation). Succinctly put: what makes the practices and beliefs into a comprehensive doctrine is the way they are narrated. While striving for consistency in their narrative, the Muslims I talk to tend to portray Islam in such a manner that it is easily identifiable as one of Rawls's comprehensive doctrines.

⁴ During my initial contemplations about the meaning of pluralism I first approached pluralism not as a condition of society but as a deliberately chosen attitude which sees society in terms of the co-existence of many, possibly conflicting, truths. I thought this attitude is a response to the demands of modern political and social life. Similarly, in the literature it is defined as the acceptance of diversity not only as an important feature of socio-cultural reality (which it obviously is), but in a subjective sense as a willingness to accept (if not necessarily adopt) diverse perspectives. In the thesis, however, I refrain from defining the content of this attitude, but instead I want to retain the part of the definition which underlines the attitudinal aspect towards the demands of modern political and social life. I deliberately refrain from describing the content of this attitude; because I want the Muslims define their own ways of responding the demands of modern political and social life. Otherwise, if I formulate specific definition, it will be necessary for me to distinguish "pluralists" from those "anti-pluralists" this would most probably result in my blindness to assess in between situations and various forms within which

I will consider these questions in relation to Muslims' different, sometimes contradictory, and novel ways of reconciling in the following three major social domains: (a) gender, (b) economy and (c) politics. These three domains together provide a basis for the interpretation of the research data. So our basic questions are: Firstly, how, do reflective Muslims formulate religious comprehensive doctrines, and secondly, how do their religious reasoning styles proceed from these fundamental claims to concrete decisions, especially concerning questions of gender, economy, and politics. And finally, how does this process of reflection shape the strategies of re-interpretation of doctrines and the attitudes towards modern social and political life?

The chapters of this thesis are organized as follows:

The first chapter aims to explore the relation between religion and pluralism. This chapter revisits the question "Is Islam compatible with democracy" and points out the limitations of this way of formulating the question. I argue that in the literature both the conception of Islam and that of democracy are rather vague: scholars providing negative as well as positive answers to this question tend to fall into the fallacy of essentialism when the issue is Islam, and they tend to stretch the concept of democracy. This chapter starts from the macro level and steers the reader to the indispensability of micro perspectives. I here explain why we need to focus on individual level patterns of religious reasoning and sentiments and their relationship with everyday life choices.

The second chapter concerns religious reasoning as such. In order to elucidate what I mean by "reasoning" I first discuss the literature on reasoning and rationality. I focus here on four categories of rationality upheld in the literature. I review these categories in the light of the findings of my field research. Instead of treating these categories as mutually exclusive, I argue that they constitute modes or patterns of reasoning. Each individual is capable of employing more than one mode of reasoning, depending on the issue that he or she is thinking through.

The third chapter deals with qualitative methodology and the methods I employ in this thesis. The chapter exposes my own journey within different schools of qualitative methods and the epistemological bases of my position with regard to field research.

individuals come to terms with the demands of modern and political life. That is why I eventually end up analyzing "attitudes towards plurality in modern social and political life." Specific issues concerning economics, politics and gender relations will be the major domains within which Muslims' responses will be analyzed.

The subsequent four chapters focus on the types of religious reasoning I have found in my data. In these chapters I provide a thick description of each pattern of reasoning and I analyze individuals' responses to the questions of gender, economy and politics. I have identified the following four types of religious reasoning: (i) the communitarian, (ii) the utilitarian, (iii) principled and (iv) the deconstructive modes of religious reasoning. The communitarian reasoning centers on norm compliance. Such reasoning provides simplifying shortcuts and cues that lead to the enactment of particular roles within community. Rather than well articulated 'reasoned' argumentations, this mode of reasoning is mostly exhibited through performances. The utilitarian reasoning involves strategic calculations of rewards and punishments in religious terms. The principled reasoning becomes manifest when individuals present arguments to persuade their interlocutors through reasoned communication. The participants employ a particular form of reasoning derived from "universal" assumptions of their comprehensive worldviews paving the way towards a conservative outlook regarding gender, politics and economy. Finally, the deconstructivist reasoning consists in more changeable and undetermined attitudes. Acknowledging the impossibility of reaching a universal common ground with regard to the Islamic doctrine channels the deconstructivist individuals to be open to pluralist attitudes with regard to politics and the economy.

Clearly religious reasoning is not limited to issues of personal piety but extends to address such matters as the proper form of government, economic relations, family life, and gender relations in the public sphere. The three spheres of everyday life contribute as case studies, and they will enable me to show how each reasoning style is articulated in different spheres of life. In the last chapter, instead of reaching a general conclusion for all modes of religious reasoning I discuss the implications of each of these styles of reasoning for pluralism. To illustrate: When the issue is politics or economy, I find that many participants put arguments along the lines of deconstructivist reasoning that lead to doctrinal flexibility. However, when the issue is gender most of the participants resort to the communitarian reasoning, that is, it is hardly possible to hear well thought, well-reasoned argumentations on the place of women in the public sphere. The more articulate interviewees adopt the third type of rationality, i.e. principled reasoning. Their arguments legitimize the current status of women in society through literal readings of the Koran and are not open to new

reinterpretations. It was mostly women who voiced the most “emancipated” views regarding their own conditions, and asked for diversity in religious interpretations.

Chapter 1

1. Rethinking the Debate on the Compatibility of Islam and Democracy

This chapter is an attempt to dispute the premises of the question “Is Islam compatible with democracy” and offer a modest alternative to it. The principal questions that guide the analytical narrative in this essay are the following: Are the Islamists able to work within a pluralist arrangement? Is it possible to consider “Islamism” as a personal attribute? If not, what religious interpretation is necessary for devout Muslims to act in a democratic way? Can liberal pluralism accommodate religiously framed comprehensive doctrines? In other words can democracies engage with religious argumentations? If yes, how can it be done?

1.1. The Islam and Democracy Debate

The literature discussing the compatibility and non-compatibility of Islam with democracy falls into two groups. The authors in the first group, to whom I will refer as the essentialists, focus on enduring aspects of Islam which make it, effectively, a fixed religion. The second group of authors place Islam in its historical context and challenge the existence of an obstinate, fixed category of Islam; the latter group of authors subscribe to a flexible, institutionalist interpretation of Islam that is compatible with the institutions of the liberal democratic state. The first group treats history as destiny and culture as the explanatory variable, and the second group underlines the social and historical construction of the religion of Islam and thus political and social circumstances of the emergence of undemocratic tendencies in that religion.

The essentialist group is further divided into two camps: Huntington, Gellner and Lewis deny the compatibility of Islam with liberal democracy, whereas Fazlur Rahman, Rached Ghannouchi, Ahmad Moussalli, Abdolkarim Soroush, and Tariq Ramadan examine how pro-democratic reformist and democratic views can be found within Islamic doctrine. In the historicist, institutionalist camp I will consider Stepan’s, Kuru’s and Hashemi’s arguments for how religion can be seen as compatible with democracy from an institutionalist paradigm. They reject the notion of religion as an unyielding doctrine, instead they think of religion as a product of history and certain interpretation by some groups or institutions. Thus, their study can be seen as a

proposal to form an institutionally congruent arrangement that harbor both religion and democracy. Hashemi's and Stepan's insights are crucial for the possibility of the formulation of religious democracy; however, they don't pay attention to the actor's own perceptions and his strategies for either flourishing or hindrance of democracy. Hence, in this dissertation, I focus on the Islamist's own strategies and distinguish four reasoning patterns to discuss the compatibility problem from the individual perspective.

The question whether Islam is compatible with democracy literally invites the assumption that Islam is essentially fixed and given, as if it is exempt from historical and contextual variations. Some scholars treat Islam merely in reference to its doctrines as found in the Koran, *sunnah*, *hadith* or ulema's interpretations and ask whether the Islam as they define it is compatible with democracy.¹ The overwhelming bulk of the discussions regarding the compatibility of Islam and democracy can be considered in this realm. However, before getting into the details of this discussion I should briefly consider what democracy means, and the inherent limitations of the concept of democracy in conducting field research that focus on individuals' actual beliefs.

Dahl suggests an institutionalist explanation of democracy and he suggests that to call a regime democratic eight institutional guarantees are required: 1) freedom to form and to join organizations; 2) freedom of expression; 3) the right to vote; 4) eligibility for public office; 5) the right of political leaders to compete for support and votes; 6) alternative sources of information; 7) free and fair elections; and 8) institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference.² In contrast, Stepan points out that Dahl's eight guarantees are a necessary but not a sufficient condition of democracy. He writes "they are insufficient because no matter how free and fair the elections and no matter how large the government's majority, democracy must also have a constitution that itself is democratic in that it respects fundamental liberties and offers considerable protections for minority rights. Furthermore, the democratically elected government must rule within the confines of its constitution and be bound by the law and by a

¹ Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

² Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 1-3.

complex set of vertical and horizontal institutions that help to ensure accountability.”³
Note that both accounts focus only on the institutional requirements of democracy.

What about the people’s attitudes? If the members of a society are hesitant to respect the institutional requirements of democracy, how can we talk about a democratic regime? Inglehart and Welzel argue that liberal democracy is the game of the “people who are motivated by emancipative values that emphasize human self-expression. Self-expression values in turn emerge naturally when diminishing existential constraints nourish a sense of human autonomy. ...And it makes people intrinsically supportive of the idea of democracy.”⁴ In this paper I will not deal with the relationship between economic well-being and adoption of democracy, but rather will pay attention to the complex relationship between individuals’ attitudes (shaped by religion) and their commitment to democracy. People’s attitudes and values become more important when the question is whether Islam and democracy are compatible. As well as being a political, social, and institutional phenomenon, religion, more importantly, provides individuals with distinct identities and shapes their way of reasoning and values. Then our question becomes: Are the values adopted by Muslims in line with emancipative and self-expressive values which facilitate the adoption of democracy? Relatedly, does Islam inhibit the flourishing of such values?

1.2. Democracy and Islam: The Impossible Marriage

In their conception of Islam in the Middle East, scholars like Huntington, Gellner and Lewis are committed to an essentialist conception of Islamic politics and history and have argued that Muslim societies, far different from other religious traditions and civilizations, are uniquely resistant to secularism and liberal democracy due to an inherent anti-modern, religious-cultural dynamic. For instance, extensively studying the doctrines of major religions Huntington argues that unlike Confucianism (which is said to be a contradiction in terms with democracy), some of the features of Islam are compatible with democracy. However, Islam is not devoid of grave problems. As a limitation, he recalls the place of Shari’a in Islam as a basic law and the ulema’s position in ratifying and reviving the government’s policies to ensure compliance with

³ Alfred Stepan, "Religion, Democracy, and the "Twin Tolerations"." *Journal of Democracy* 11.4 (2000): 39.

⁴ Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 166.

the fundamentals of Islam.⁵ He observes that there is a general tendency that governments within the Muslim world are typically undemocratic. For Huntington, democracy is the reserve of Western culture, because it has combined secularism and liberal values in its civilization from the beginning. “God and Caesar, church and state, spiritual and temporal authority, have been a prevailing dualism in Western culture.”⁶ He then seeks out the doctrinal aspects of other religions to contrast them with the West precisely on this point. Accordingly he says “In Islam, God is Caesar, in China and Japan, Caesar is God; in Orthodoxy, God is Caesar’s junior partner.”⁷ It seems that Huntington does not see Islamic fundamentalism or the Islamist as a serious challenge to western civilization but Islam. In *Clash of Civilizations* he overtly claims that “the underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam.”⁸

Focusing on this problematic of the Muslim world Gellner argues that unlike secularized states that are suited to the premises of modernity, Islam constitutes the only one remaining resistant.⁹ In his theory that he devised to answer the question that “Why has secularization not occurred in Islam in general?” he considers “Islam” as an obstacle to democratization¹⁰. For Gellner the central and perhaps most important, feature of Islam is that it is internally divided into a High Islam of scholars and Low Islam (folk Islam) of the people. As Islamic countries have modernized there has been an enormous shift in balance from folk Islam to High Islam. The social basis of High Islam is strengthened by urbanization, political concentration, incorporation in a wider market, and labor migrants. Then High Islam comes to be considered the only ‘correct’ version and it becomes dominant, leaving almost no room for other versions of Islam. Consequently high Islam begins to provide the sole basis for national identity. Gellner thinks that the modern Muslim ‘nation’ is often simply the sum total of Muslims in a given territory.¹¹

⁵ Samuel Huntington, “Democracy’s Third Wave”, in *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, eds. Larry Diamond and Mark Plattner. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 19.

⁶ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the Modern World*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 70.

⁷ Ibid., 70.

⁸ Ibid., 151.

⁹ Ernest Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 14.

¹⁰ Ernest Gellner, “The Turkish Option in Comparative Perspective,” in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey* eds. Sibel Bozdoğan and Resat Kasaba. (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1997), 234.

¹¹ Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty*, 21-29.

For Gellner Islamic societies fail to establish a nation that is based on ethnicity as understood in modern European societies. In a secularized and industrialized society the nation building process is accomplished by the penetration of certain high culture into the rest of the society and lastly its appropriation by the masses. But, according to Gellner, in Muslim societies Islamic faith inhibits this appropriation process, because Muslims are anchored by their faith and are not able to mobilize other sources of identity such as ethnicity.

Lewis directly deals with the question of whether or not liberal democracy is compatible with Islam. Like Gellner, he tried to find the answer in the Islamic doctrine, as if it bears the sole responsibility in shaping the history of the Islamic States. He argues that, according to Muslim doctrine, there are no legislative functions in the Islamic State, and therefore no need for legislative institutions. He says “Liberal democracy ... is in its origins a product of the west – shaped by a thousand years of European history, and beyond that by Europeans double heritage: Judeo-Christian religion and ethics; Greco-Roman statecraft and law. No such system originated in any other cultural tradition, it remains to be seen whether such a system transplanted and adapted in another culture can long survive.”¹² He further argues that from Classical Antiquity onwards governments in the west have usually included some form of council or assembly that enables the members of the polity to participate in its governance.

What then, for Lewis, are the underlying causes of the systematic absence of representative bodies in Islamic States? Firstly for him Islamic states do not legally recognize individual as accountable in front of law. Unlike Islamic law, Roman law treated legal persons as individuals able to own, buy or sell property, enter into contract and obligations personally in both civil and criminal proceedings. He maintains that although there are evidences that such bodies existed in pre-Islamic Arabia, they disappeared with the advent of Islam. From the time of the Prophet, until the first introduction of western institutions in the Islamic world there was no equivalent among the Muslim peoples of the Athenian *boule*, the Roman senate, or the Jewish *sanhedrin*. Lewis sought the answer in Islamic doctrine. He says for Muslim believers legitimate authority comes from God alone, and the ruler derives his power not from people but from God and holy law. Rulers made the rules but the rules are

¹² Bernard Lewis, “Islam and Liberal Democracy,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, (1993): 93.

theoretically considered as the elaborations or interpretations of God's law as promulgated through revelation. Thus, Lewis insists, without legislative or any similar sort of institutional bodies, Islam denies the necessity of principle of representation or any procedure for selection of representatives. The Islamic principles make occasions for collective decision and any devised procedure for achieving and expressing it null and void; in Islamic terms only the consensus is being treated as the sole procedure for collective decision.¹³ Lewis, similarly in his later book *The Crisis of Islam*, contrasts Protestantism and Islam, and points to a crucial difference between the two: Islam lacks both liberal theology and the equivalent of biblical criticism. He reminds that liberal theology has been an issue among Muslims in the past but it is not an issue at the present time. He says "the literal divinity and inerrancy of the Koran is a basic dogma of Islam, and although some may doubt it, none challenge it".¹⁴

Looking at modern Iran and Pakistan, Arjomand compares the historical background of the two radically distinct legal traditions of Western Christianity and Islam, and argues that the jurisprudence of former is characterized by "law making" and that of the later by "law finding." In the 'western world,' he argues, Thomas Aquinas is responsible for the shift from law finding to law making. Arjomand further observes that in Aquinas thought, the eternal law, the natural, and the human law are continuous with one another.¹⁵ In his legal understanding he incorporated the Stoic idea of natural law, which for him was accessible to human reason. The acceptance of Aquinas' ideas by the Church paved the way for the celebration of human reason in determination of transcendental justice in political and secular matters.¹⁶ Arjomand argues the emphasis upon human reason not only accelerated the transition from law finding to law-making but also gave rise to revolutionary constitutions of eighteenth century Europe. According to Arjomand, we cannot observe a similar trend in the medieval Islamic world or today's Islamic states such as Iran and Pakistan. Despite the secular elite's struggle in Pakistan, articles were incorporated into the constitution underlining that all legal enactments should be in conformity with the standards of the sacred law. Besides, in Pakistan and Iran the legal authority recognizes the ulema's

¹³ Ibid., 92-95.

¹⁴ Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam, Holy War and Unholy Terror*. (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), 112.

¹⁵ Said Amir Arjomand, "Religion and Constitutionalism in Western History and in Modern Iran and Pakistan" in *Political Dimensions of Religion*, ed. Said Amir Arjomand. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993), 69-99. 73.

¹⁶ Ibid., 74.

power to determine whether juridical laws comply with divine law.¹⁷ Here, the main controversy is posed by the idea of sovereignty, because Islam, as it is understood by the Islamist groups in Pakistan, necessitates the assimilation of national sovereignty to the sovereignty of god. This resembles the case in Iran, because of the high public attachment to Islam, the pressures of the fundamentalists through the ulema, and the conformity of law to the Islamic sacred law as stated in the preamble of the constitution. Arjomand argues that there are deep tensions among the three components of Iran's constitution, i.e. the sovereignty of god, the founding of the state, and the will of the people as represented by the Constituent Assembly.¹⁸ However, Arjomand underlines that Islam appears mainly and solely as a bounding and limiting concept in law making; nevertheless, the highest authorities of state in Pakistan fail to understand this limitation as posing a serious challenge to the idea of constitution and democratic governance.¹⁹

1.3. Islamic Doctrines embrace Democracy

Contrary to the above position, some scholars and reformist activists such as Nurcholish Madjid, Fazlur Rahman, Amina Wadud, Mohammed Arkoun, Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Tariq Ramadan and Rached *Ghannouchi* claim that Islam in its doctrines is compatible with democracy and propose alternative ways to interpret the “divine text”, Koran and other sources of Islam such as sunna, hadis and *kiyas (ijtihat)*. For these scholars (and most are reformist activists as well) the ideas of democracy, human rights are in line with the essence of Islam; so that those who think otherwise are fundamentalists. The only thing that must be done is to re-interpret Koran according to the necessities of the modern world. Contemporary scholars who promote a more open interpretation of divine texts are very much influenced by the 13th century thinker Ibn Taymiyya who advocated reconciliation between reason, tradition and free will, endorsing individual reasoning (*ijtihat*) as an aid to understand the consensus of believers.²⁰

These thinkers attempt to devise a theoretical formula to show that Islam is compatible with democracy. We should pay special attention to their position because

¹⁷ Ibid., 94.

¹⁸ Ibid., 89.

¹⁹ Arjomand, “Religion and Constitutionalism”.

²⁰ Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From Prophet to Present*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001), 154.

Islamic polities that tend to uphold democracy seem to be entangled in a paradox which is hard to overcome. Liberal democracy necessitates a form of secularism to sustain itself, while the main political, cultural, and intellectual resources at the disposal of Muslim democrats today are theological.²¹ On the one hand modern politics locates the individual at the center of the polity and legislation and requires governments and rulers to be responsive to the people, while on the other hand devout Muslims recognize divine commandment as the source of all law, arguing that according to Islamic cosmology sovereignty does not belong to people but god, so that for Muslims the political regime should somehow accommodate this underlying belief. In the following part I will consider some reformist scholars main ideas.

Fazlur Rahman, declines to defend certain practices (that are against human rights in today's standards) in the Koran, arguing that they could only be achieved in a fully realized Islamic society. For Rahman, the practices mentioned in Koran, in fact, reflect social customs at the time of the prophet, and they are no longer relevant today. He argues that Islam began to decline when the Koranic text was taken as something absolute, fixed and detached from historical context. But along with this argument he also rejects totally abandoning the Koran in search of the universal truth, and thus he proposes a method of hermeneutical interpretation of Koran what he called "double movement theory," which turns on the interaction between "divine revelation" and history. His double movement theory suggests moving from the historically particular to the general and from the general back to the particular. The first movement is to study both the micro, i.e. the individual, and the macro, i.e. the collective, context in which the Koran was first revealed. This would establish the original meaning of the "revelation" within the moral and social context of the prophetic society as well as the broader picture of the world at large at that time. Scrutiny of the specific historical situations to understand the context in which the verses of the Koran were revealed, Rahman argues, will also yield a Koranic narrative of the general and systematic principles and values and underlying transcendental and universal aspects of the divine laws. The second movement entails an attempt to apply these general and systematic values and principles to the context of the contemporary reader of the Koran. For Rahman, making sense of the second movement relies on the methods of modern social sciences and humanities in reaching a comprehensive understanding of

²¹ Nadir Hashemi. *Islam, Secularism and Liberal Democracy*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1.

modern society.²² He notes that in the end it will be the individual Muslim scholar or Muslim community which will decide what constitutes an acceptable regime complying with the requests of their faith. But, he advocates the adaptation of a general democratic culture, parliamentary democracy, and modern educational institutions as most compatible with the general principles of Islam. He thinks it is the Koranic imperatives that must find efficacy and application in the new context in which Muslims live.²³

Rachid Ghannouchi is another thinker who argues that Islamic doctrines harbor democracy. He supposes that in Islam God's rule presupposes and requires people's rule. There is an abundance of spheres in Islamic society where context-bound judgments (*ijtihad*) must be made by individuals and/or their representatives. He considers that the literal application of the Koran in daily life has serious limitations and this necessitates employment of reason in decision making. Besides, open consultation between governors and the governed (*shura*) is also encouraged and prominent in Islamic jurisdiction. Referring to the religious sources Ghannouchi claims that the "dignity of citizens is best nurtured by institutionalizing the democratic principle of popular sovereignty through such mechanisms as periodic elections, the separation of powers, equality before the law, a multi party system, freedom of expression, and the right of the majority to rule and the minority publicly to oppose that rule."²⁴

Abdolkarim Soroush, an Iranian exile and reformist living in United States favors the secularization of rights to formulate a new attitude towards democracy and to reconcile Islamic values and Western culture. To do this he first believes in separating religion and knowledge about religion. The latter is the work of human beings and is thus subject to change and criticism. He rejects the ideological use of Islam and he is against the reduction of Islam to a political tool. For him the ideological use of religion comes to supplant true Islam, that is, the Islam of faith and values. Soroush advocates democratic rule, which he thinks is the only form of government and ethical system compatible with the principles of Islam. He denies

²² Rahman, Fazlur, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of Intellectual Tradition*. (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1982), 13-22.

²³ Ebrahim Moosa, introduction to *Revival and Reform in Islam: A Study of Islamic Fundamentalism* by Fazlur Rahman, ed. Ebrahim Moosa. (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006), 15-16.

²⁴ Ghannouchi cited in John Keane, *Civil society: Old images, new visions*. (Oxford: Polity Press, 1998), 29-30

using faith and religion as the basis of citizenship of political right.²⁵ With this theoretical formulation it seems that Soroush attempts to reserve a separate and purified domain for the religion he believes in, and deliberately separates religion from its social, cultural and political construction. Interestingly, his argument that democracy is the only regime that suits Islamic principles reminds us of his contention that the religious dogma that is found in the essence of Islam inherently possesses all the necessary principles that make it suitable for democracy. But it should be acknowledged that in Soroush's thought it is not democracy, but Islam that comes first.

Tariq Ramadan, a student of Islamic studies and an activist in introducing Islam in non-Muslim countries, discusses the legal conditions of Muslims minorities in Europe and United States. Their existence as believers in non-Muslim democratic countries becomes a test case for Ramadan to show that how Islam is compatible with democracy. Ramadan rejects the necessity of having minority rights law for Muslims. Instead, he insists that Europe and the United States constitute part of Muslim world and it is indeed possible to live there according to Islamic principles. He further argues that non-Muslim governments in which Muslims are able to participate democratically are more Islamic than authoritarian governments run by Muslims. For him the electoral structures and freedom of thought that form the basis of the democratic process are Islamic principles as well.²⁶

We can enumerate many more examples that derive arguments for the compatibility or incompatibility of Islam and democracy from Islamic sources both in Islamist and non-Islamist scholarship. Claiming a fixed essence for any social phenomenon would require from a social theorist to remain insensitive to the historical, cultural and social forces that constitute it. "History has shown that nations and religious traditions are capable of having multiple and major ideological interpretations or reorientations."²⁷ Moreover, such approaches downplay the importance of institutional dynamics. Ahmad Moussalli's approach attempts to overcome this problem. He tries to bridge the institutional side of Islam and its "divine" aspect. For him, it is possible to distinguish between Islam as a divine belief

²⁵ Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and democracy meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 167.

²⁶ Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and Future of Islam*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 158-159.

²⁷ John Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 219

system and the Islamic state as a humanly developed political system. Such a distinction between human and divine opens up the possibility of the interpretation and reinterpretation of Islam and renders the question of whether Islam is compatible with democracy null and void: because as a belief system one cannot assess its compatibility with democracy, which one can only do when one treats Islam as a political phenomenon. But when it comes to the analysis of the state as a political phenomenon, it does not have a divine characteristic; since the Muslim society produces the Islamic State but not vice versa. He thinks Islam started as a polity, and Muslims, including the prophet, never thought that they were setting up God's kingdom on earth.²⁸ Therefore, Islam's social and political formation and its embodiment by a state structure render it an open category for construction and deconstruction, and this makes Islam as a politically open to democracy not less than any other system of belief. This new approach necessitates shifting our attention from the doctrinal aspect of Islam to the institutional requirements of democracy.

1.4. Does the Solution reside in an Institutional Approach?

Essentialist analyses of the compatibility or incompatibility of religion and democracy trivialize the complex power relations and institutional dynamics behind this phenomenon, and also conceal the political forces behind its constitution. Furthermore, Gellner's, Huntington's and Lewis's essentialist approaches serve to legitimize the treatment of Muslim societies as essentially "backward", "primitive" or "archaic" and "naturally" incongruent with the development of civil society and democracy. This approach is incapable of recognizing the possible articulations and connections of various distinct forms. For instance, deriving from a fixed understanding of Islam, Gellner has to treat Turkey, the flourishing of civil society and its democracy as an exceptional case.²⁹ I think he is far-off in grasping the specific articulation of Islam and democracy in Turkey. Solely addressing Islamic doctrines to answer the important question of whether Islam is compatible with democracy would mean remaining blind to institutional, social, historical and cultural dynamics of the country in which Islam is differently interpreted by the relevant actors.

²⁸ Ahmad S. Moussali, *The Islamist Quest for Democracy, Pluralism and Human Rights*. (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001), 6-10

²⁹ Ernest Gellner, "The Turkish Option"

Rejecting Huntington's contention that Islam is doctrinally incompatible with democracy, Stepan approaches the issue from an institutionalist perspective and argues that the greatest obstacle to democracy is posed by not Islam but the particular interpretation of secularism rooted in the overall historical peculiarities of countries related to their socio-political, military, ethnic, economic context. For him these contextual peculiarities somehow inhibited the foundation of the so-called twin toleration³⁰ which is necessary for democracy. He defined "twin tolerations" as "the minimal boundaries of freedom of action that must somehow be crafted for political institutions vis-à-vis religious authorities, and for religious individuals and groups vis-à-vis political institutions."³¹ He observes that "democracy is the system of conflict regulation that allows open competition over the values and goals that citizens want to advance."³² As long as the citizens do not use violence, respect the rights of other citizens and remain within the rules of democratic game, all groups have the privilege to enjoy the rights to advance their interests, not only in civil society but also in political society. He denies that the religious groups have constitutional prerogatives that allow them to mandate public policy to elected governments. Both individuals and religious communities should have complete freedom to worship privately. Furthermore, religious individuals and groups must be able to advance their values publicly in civil and political society³³. Stepan's point is that it is not religion that inhibits the establishment of democracy but institutional intolerance, the problematic interpretations of secularism, and embedded authoritarianism. For him, Islam can be a basis for democratic governance if the Muslim majority societies and their states can somehow establish this minimum requirement of twin tolerations. He maintains that "from the viewpoint of empirical democratic practice, however, the concept of secularism must be radically rethought,"³⁴ and proposes that "serious analysts must acknowledge that secularism and the separation of church and state have no inherent affinity with democracy, and indeed can be closely related to non-democratic forms that systematically violate the twin tolerations."³⁵ Stepan concludes that "the 'lesson' from Western Europe, therefore, lies *not* in the need for a 'wall of separation' between

³⁰ Stepan, "Twin toleration," 52

³¹ *Ibid.*, 37

³² *Ibid.*, 39

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 43

³⁵ *Ibid.*

church and state but in the constant political construction and reconstruction of the ‘twin tolerations.’”³⁶

Stepan denies the essentialist stance that sees the inherent characteristics of Islam as a barrier to democracy. Instead, his approach underlines the institutional dimension of democratic consolidation and helps to shift our focus from an ahistorical understanding of religion and its supposedly fixed nature to contextual and sociological formations within power relations and hence its social and political constitution. It would not be wrong to argue that Stepan’s analysis introduces a new outlook to the approaches that take political culture as an unchanging category and treat history as destiny and delineate political culture as a prime cause for all societal predicaments. His way of approaching the concept invites an open space for re-interpretation. Islam, as it is formulated in the civilization approach is not any more a fixed entity and thus, it is open to mould and be molded in turn. In line with this, Hashemi on the subject of democratization in the Arab world notes that political culture

...should not be seen as the prime or overriding variable in any process of regional democratization. Cultural attitudes . . . not only influence political realities but are also themselves influenced by political context. According to this view, political culture is not anymore a fixed variable but it is subject to multiple influences. No nation’s political psyche, on this assumption, is rigidly fixed in either a pro- or antidemocratic direction. To assert this would be a-historical. In this context, Larry Diamond has written that “there is considerable historical evidence to suggest that democratic culture is as much the product as the cause of effectively functioning democracy.”³⁷

However, although Stepan successfully overcomes the essentialist fallacy in Huntington, Gellner and Lewis, he does not adequately dwell upon how the so-called “twin tolerations” can be crafted. Is it possible to ensure twin tolerations will exist the day after all the necessary institutional arrangements and constitutional amendments are enacted? If necessary institutional designs are completed, can we still talk about

³⁶ Ibid., 42

³⁷ Hashemi, *Islam*, 13

consolidated democracy? Similarly, how should we treat Ahmet Kuru's bold proposal that Turkey should adapt Anglo-American type "passive secularism" to further consolidate her democracy? ³⁸ How will these arrangements overcome conflicts regarding secularism in different segments of society? In both Stepan and Kuru's proposals it is hardly possible to see solutions for how these re-arrangements should be done democratically. What will be the actors' reactions and their willingness to establish the toleration vis-à-vis religion? And more importantly, how can we ensure that religious actors will espouse democracy, and not use religion to destroy it? Hashemi attempts to overcome this problem, by favoring a bottom-up establishment of secularism. He writes:

Religious traditions do not emerge in human society with an inherent pro-democratic and secular predisposition. These ideas must be socially constructed by members of the host community before they take root. How secularism becomes indigenized in an emerging democracy is an important part of this debate that has yet to receive sufficient scholarly attention. Secular consensus often emerges and is intimately tied to an engagement with, and a transformation of, religious ideas toward politics. As noted, normatively, in a religious society, the long-term prospects for political secularism are better when it is not imposed top-down but rather when it emerges bottom-up, based on a democratic consensus over the proper role of religion in government. In other words, in order for religious groups to reconcile themselves to a conception of politics that separates religion from state, a religion-based theory of political secularism is required.³⁹

Even in the West, he argues, "democratic negotiation and bargaining over the normative role of religion in government were an inherent part of the transition to, and consolidation of, liberal democracy."⁴⁰ For Hashemi, "in societies where religion is the principal marker of identity, the road to liberal democracy... cannot avoid passing through the gates of religious politics."⁴¹ He does not reject the idea that liberal democracy requires a form of secularism, but he underlines that secularism must be socially created: it should not be taken for granted, but rather earned. He rejects the idea that political development requires the privatization or marginalization of religion from the public sphere. Instead, he suggests "in order for religious groups to make a

³⁸ Ahmet T. Kuru, "Passive and assertive secularism: Historical conditions, ideological struggles, and state policies toward religion." *World Politics* 59 (2007): 568-594.

³⁹ Hashemi, *Islam*, 11.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 171.

lasting contribution to democratic consolidation, a reinterpretation of religious ideas with respect to individual rights and the moral bases of legitimate political authority is needed.”⁴² For him religious groups can contribute to the development of democracy, but it is possible only insofar as they are able to undertake some form of doctrinal reformulation in this direction.

Hashemi illuminates the inner dynamics of the process of secularization and he takes Stepan’s analysis one step further, arguing that the ideas that cultivate liberal and democratic orientation must be socially constructed by the Muslims in religious terms. Hashemi overcomes the inherent problem in crafting twin tolerations by simply including religion within the debate. He thinks it is the Islamic theology that should formulate the necessary ground to ensure minimal boundaries of freedom and action of religious individuals and groups vis-à-vis political institutions. And it should be attempted from the bottom upwards.

Although he accurately locates the problem, he does not inquire into the further problem, namely how to make the religious individual tolerant towards democratic institutions. What are the mechanisms that ensure bottom-up change? What sort of deliberative processes are required to build foundations? How can individuals experience their religion in practice so it will be compatible with the secularism which is needed for the consolidation of liberal democracy? Hashemi is cognizant about the limitation of his study, as he concedes that “how secularism is earned and then indigenized as part of the political culture in an emerging democracy is a critical and often ignored part of the debate that deserves greater attention and research focus.”⁴³

While Hashemi points to this gap in the literature, he does not directly tackle this issue. This is the point upon which I want to focus in this dissertation. If in the religious society political secularization and further consolidation of democracy necessitates a bottom-up democratic consensus on the proper role of religion in government, and if it does require religious groups’ own formulation of a religious-based theory of political secularism, we should look into their discourses and way of reasoning and opinions regarding the place of religion and the way they articulate everyday life problems and politics in religious terms. I disagree with the proposal of pro-democratic essentialist reformers that a coherent doctrinal democracy should be

⁴² Ibid., 173.

⁴³ Ibid., 172.

devised in order to reform Islam to make it compatible with democracy. Many wise theories have already been formulated by many scholars to show how Koran is respectful to human rights and contains all the necessary founding principles for democratic governance, as I have shown above. Nonetheless many Islamic societies persistently fail to further democratize. Therefore, the problem does not stem from abstract doctrines but from the Muslims who are in need to reach reconciliation with religion in their conception of politics. Therefore, with respect to our problem of whether Islam is compatible with democracy, it is possible to locate it in the Muslims' ability to uphold doctrines that comply with liberal democracy. Rather than "Islam" as such I will focus on the actual individual's religious reasoning patterns and its impact on one's aptitude to embrace pluralism in his/her daily life. The aim is to gain an understanding of individual-level religiosity, and its relation to one's willingness to uphold pluralism.

1.5. Political Culture

The problem I concentrate on can be restated as follows: Is it possible to relate the institutional level problem, in our case democratization of Muslim societies, to the individual level, that is, can we discern the mass politics from people's attitudes? This is by no means a new question. The behavioral approach in the 1950s attempted to put up a bridge between culture and structure. The political culture school, for instance, extensively highlighted the impact of individuals' attitudes on politics in general and the flourishing of democratic institutions in particular. Inglehart and Welzel, in their discussion of political culture school, underline that the question "are pro-democratic attitudes at the individual level conducive to democratic institutions at societal level"⁴⁴ makes up the major question in this approach. They made use of mass survey data, and they downplayed the relevance of factors such as characteristics of institutions, leaders, policy making mechanisms and other political processes or historical and social events. The behavioral approach in the 1950s in social science in general and political science in particular, focused on individual behavior and trivialized political institutions and governments, not because they thought that institutions are unimportant but because of their methodological concerns. They equated institutions and government with black boxes. These scientists looked only at observable inputs

⁴⁴ Ronald Inglehart, and Christian Welzel, "Political Culture and Democracy", in Howard J. Wiarda ed. *New directions in comparative politics*. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1985), 147.

and outputs; hence they refused to deal with what they call the "black box". They consulted surveys as providing appropriate data for such an analysis. Here the scientist was not interested in individual strategies or rationale behind behavior but it is the output obtained through mass surveys and an aggregate of the participants informs the systemic outcome, for instance the existence of a well functioning democracy.

My attempt is different. I aim to make an inference about mass politics from an individual level, focusing on individuals' strategies and reasoning modes. This attempt is similar to Samuel Popkin's study on peasants' rationality in Vietnam. His study of political economy which derives from the analysis of individual choice and decision making, showed that individual interests of villagers shape and determine the nature and scope of village institutions, local behaviors and procedures.⁴⁵ My attempt will derive from micro/individual level religious reasoning patterns. I will look into various ways in which the religious reasoning modes of Muslims enable them to either reject or accommodate themselves to the demands of modern social and political life. So far I discussed the limitations of the Islam and democracy debate and the reasons for why we need to look in to individual level reasoning.

In the next section I will discuss the concept of religion aiming to look into the possibilities of obtaining a handy concept to be employed in the field research.

1.6. Conceiving Religion in terms of Tensions

The social, cultural and economical impact of religion in the Middle East is a widely studied topic, yet the current literature is not devoid of some systematic biases and fallacies. The problems I would like to pinpoint are: 1- the essentialization of religion; 2- a discussion of religion that avoids referring to religion's content (reductionism). Scholarly studies that consider religion as an explanatory variable tend to essentialize it, in that they treat religion as an ahistorical phenomenon and miss its contextual and social constitution. Ascribing a fixed essence to any social phenomenon makes social theories to be inattentive to the historical, cultural and social forces that constitute it.⁴⁶ We also need to bear in mind that in the case of Islam, the essentialist approaches served as a tool to legitimize theoreticians' treatment of Muslim societies as

⁴⁵ Samuel Popkin, "The rational peasant: The political economy of peasant society. *Theory and Society*, 9 (1980): 411–471.

⁴⁶ A problem exemplified in Huntigton, "Third Wave," 19 and Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty*, 14.

necessarily “backward, primitive or archaic” and “naturally” incongruent with the development of civil society and democracy.

In the Turkish case, a second group of scholars,⁴⁷ who considered religion as a crucial element to understand Turkey, concentrated on the effects of religion without even mentioning religion. Scholars like Toprak, Narlı, Öniş and Gülalp mainly consider economic, political and social factors, and they refuse to treat religion as an independent variable. For instance Narlı writes "Islamism has grown as a response to social, economic, and political discontent in Turkey, including foreign influences, urbanization, modernization, and secularization."⁴⁸ Religion is treated as secondary; it is not the cause but the result of other factors. This omission stems, I believe, from the treatment of religion through the modernization prism; this approach to religion is overshadowed by *telos*, that is, by a contention that modernization had its own purpose and inherent final result and religion has no role, other than an adverse one, in the achievement of the final purpose.⁴⁹ The assumption held that the domination of secular forms of knowledge will eventually result in removal of transcendental knowledge from everyday judgments of individuals. But religions' persistence in everyday life and its re-appropriation by the modern forms simply confuses scholars in their attempt to understand the relationship between modernity and religion.

How can we study religion without falling into these biases? How can we handle the issue of religion and locate it in its historical and social context in Turkey? The work of Talal Asad provides a good beginning in search for answers to these questions. Due to the multi-faced appearance of religion, Asad rejects any attempt to offer a universally valid definition of religion. He argues that “we cannot consider only one way through which religious institutions were created and worked, only one kind of self which religion shaped or responded to and, only one category of religious

⁴⁷ Ali Çarkoğlu and Binnaz Toprak, *Değişen Türkiye’de Din, Toplum ve Siyaset*. (Istanbul: Tesev, 2006); Binnaz Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey*. (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1981); Tapper, Richard. *Islam in modern Turkey: religion, politics, and literature in a secular state*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1994); Ziya Onis, “Political Islam at the Crossroads: From Hegemony to Co-existence.” *Contemporary Politics*, 7 (2001): 281-298. Nilufer Narli, “The Rise of the Islamist Movement in Turkey,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 3 (1999): 38-48; Haldun Gülalp, Globalization and Political Islam: The Social Bases of Turkey's Welfare Party, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 33 (2001): 433-448.

⁴⁸ Narli, “Islamist Movement,” 40

⁴⁹ Seminal works of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Gökalp and Berkes that focus on the impact of religion are in this sphere. Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, (Montreal: McGill Univ. Press, 1964); Marx, Karl. "Towards a critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction". *Karl Marx: selected writings*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 63-74; Durkheim, Emile, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Gökalp, Ziya. *Hars ve Medeniyet* (İstanbul, Balkanoğlu Matbaacılık Şti., 1964),

knowledge that is made available and authorized.”⁵⁰ He claims that religion should be understood in a dynamic process that inevitably makes it “historically produced, reproduced and transformed.”

Asad proposes that scholars should begin by scrutinizing historical conditions (movements, classes, institutions, ideologies) tied to certain religious practices and discourses. Inspired by Foucault, he suggests we need to ask how power creates religion. “To ask this question is to seek an answer in terms of the social disciplines and social forces which come together at particular historical moments, to make particular religious discourses, practices and spaces possible.”⁵¹

The scholarly work on religion in Turkey fulfills only the first part of Asad’s proposal, i.e., it centers on movements, class, institutions and ideologies, while the study of religious practices and discourses has not been as prolific. This thesis takes practices and discourses seriously. Its operating definition of religion is derived from a recent work of Akşit and colleagues.⁵²

According to this definition, religion is composed of embedded tensions. It is neither the word of God nor an artifact of men, but rather the result of the human interpretation of what is thought to be the word of God. There are five basic tensions that define religion in Turkey. These tensions take the following forms: (i) sacred versus profane, (ii) traditional versus modern, (iii) public versus private space, (iv) text versus praxis, (elite versus public), and (v) religious versus scientific knowledge. They are major constitutive elements of religion in Turkey and they become manifest in the way individuals think in terms of religion. They constitute contextual and historical dynamics that shape religion; and contrary to those who attempt to imagine a purified Islam, I think these tensions are internal to religion. Religion, in our case Islam, is under constant construction along these tensions that are shaped by power relations. The dichotomous presentation serves an analytical purpose and helps to stress the coexistence in tension of the sides, a tension which defines contours of religious perceptions and practices.

Each side constructs the other. For instance as we cannot conceive modernity without tradition we cannot understand Islam in Turkey by putting aside

⁵⁰ Talal Asad. "Anthropological conceptions of religion: reflections on Geertz." *Man* (1983): 237-259. 238.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 252

⁵² Bahattin Akşit et al., *Türkiye’de Dindarlık: Sosyal Gerilimler Ekseninde İnanç ve Yaşam Biçimleri*. (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012),

secularization efforts. I employ the word “tension” in order to underline that this construction does not take place in a peaceful setting, they are under constant contestation and de-contestation process. They are interrelated and significantly overlap in some respects. Despite the extensive over-laps in some of them, I preferred to maintain each tension because they inform us about distinct aspects of religion *a la* Turkey.

1.6.1. Tension I: Transcendental versus Mundane

The major theoreticians that focused upon this dichotomy were Durkheim, Eliade, Jaspers, and Eisenstadt. Durkheim suggested the temporal and spatial separation of sacred and profane and he discussed the conversion of the worldly or mundane into the sacred from the perspective of believers. This separation is closely related to our forms of consciousness, and perception of the world. The very possibility of social existence among human beings owes a lot to our ability to imagine sacred forms.

Eisenstadt points out that in all religious traditions, transcendental order has been perceived as different, if not superior, higher, and stronger, than the mundane order.⁵³ For Weber, in the individual level the tension manifests itself in the search for salvation, to judge the compatibility of this-worldly affairs with the transcendental order.⁵⁴ The tension emerges in a genuine judgment: “Am I leading a good life?” The reply to this question is phrased in religious terms for many of our interviewees in the preliminary field study.

Islamic ritualization practices can be seen as an instance for the boundary setting struggle between sacred and profane. By this process, motivated by transforming all aspects of everyday life, behaviors formerly thought as profane are under the pressure of being converted into sacred. Examples can be wedding ceremonies or instant prayers in formerly defined non-religious spheres such as women’s gatherings (*kadın günleri*) or football matches.

However, this tension is not only confined the “religious sphere.” As authors such as Ilter Turan, Cristopher Houston, Nancy and Richard Tapper, Esra Özyürek,

⁵³ I discuss Eisenstadt’s approach in more detail in the beginning of the next chapter. His analysis also informs my understanding of reasoning

⁵⁴ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, (London: Routledge, 1992)

and Thomas Smith suggest Kemalism also went through a similar process.⁵⁵ Quite a similar tension is also prevalent in the secularization attempts and related ceremonies of Turkey as well. But this time it is manifested as Kemalism's ritualization and its appropriation of some sacred features. For instance, images, sculptures or anything that reminds us of Atatürk and other symbols of the republic are continuously being sanctified in the city centers, schools, army and many other spaces. It is strictly expected everybody to behave properly during the national anthem or similar ceremonies.

1.6.2. Tension II: Traditional versus Modern

Similar to the other tensions, the crucial point regarding the tension between the modern and the traditional is the very fact that the constitutive elements of this tension are being treated as if they are radically separated. In other words they are treated as a binary opposition. Religion is equated with tradition and it is positioned to the parochial corner. It is the place of dogmas, backwardness and ignorance. Modernity, on the other hand, is perceived as tantamount to science, progress, active and virtuous citizenship, activity in political life, and it is taken to be devoid of religious dogmas. In the cultural sphere religious and modern values should be separated; noting the incompatibility of two values Kemalists asserted that religion, as the remnants of the traditional should be kept outside of the modernized everyday public life.

But is it possible to treat it as a binary opposition? The Turkish secularization efforts staged at a tense co-existence between modernity and traditionality. Regarding the way religion is experienced in Turkey today, it is possible to argue that religion is not anymore the anti-thesis of modernity, but it is in a sort of symbiotic relationship with it. Scholars such as Jenny White and Nilüfer Göle shows that the religious symbol, turban, enabled women to participate in political and business life in the metropolitan settings; emancipating women in public sphere, the Islamic veil allows her to be in tune with the demands of modernity.⁵⁶ Furthermore Dirlik suggests that

⁵⁵ Turan, İltar (1991) "Religion and Political Culture in Turkey", in Richard Tapper (ed.), *Islam in Modern Turkey*, 31-55; Christopher Houston, "Civilizing Islam, Islamist Civilizing? Turkey's Islamist Movement and the Problem of Ethnic Difference," *Thesis Eleven*, 58 (1999): 83-98; Thomas W. Smith, "Between Allah And Atatürk: Liberal Islam In Turkey," *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 9 (2005): 307-325; Richard Tapper and Nancy Tapper, "Thank's God we are Secular! Aspects of Fundamentalism in Turkish Town," in *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism*, ed. Lionel Caplan (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1987); Esra Özyürek, "Miniaturizing Atatürk privatization of state imagery and ideology in Turkey." *American Ethnologist* 31 (2004): 374-391.

⁵⁶ Nilüfer Göle, *Modern mahrem: medeniyet ve örtünme*. (Istanbul:Metis Yayınları, 1992); Jenny B White, "The Islamist Paradox," in *Fragments of culture: The everyday of modern Turkey*. Deniz Kandiyoti and Ayşe Saktanber, eds. (London: I.B.Tauris, 2002), 191-217.

religion plays crucial role in social movements and popular protest in poor neighborhoods.⁵⁷ It does not inbreed parochialism among the masses, but since it has become a crucial denominator in determining social and political mobilization, religion is appearing as one of the modern ideologies like nationalism. It has its own separate agenda motivated by its peculiar image of good society, and contrary to the general contention, it does not aim to preserve the past, but actually tries to shape the future.

Islam as it is experienced in Turkey cannot be seen as external to modernity but it is internal to it. It exists in tension with modernity and it can be argued that we cannot think of modernity *a la* Turkey without the effect of Islam. In turns Islam is also being shaped by its correspondence with modernity.

1.6.3. Tension III: Public versus Private Space

Another tension that characterizes Turkish religion derives from the contested place of religion in public and private domains. The tension actually has its roots in the Turkish state's concern with religion in its modernization attempts. The crucial question that underlines the main motivation behind the tension is "What will be the religion's role in the secular state?" Will religion be entirely erased and banned from the public sphere, or will the state recognize a proper domain for religion, albeit in public sphere? Or will the state control religion but imposing its own interpretation of religious texts?⁵⁸

Similar to other tensions, the tension between the public and the private sphere is mostly motivated by the place and appearance of women in public. The place of the headscarf in hegemonic interpretations of Islam and the bans on it by the Constitutional Court in the Turkish case can be seen as the epitome of the tension. The distinction underlines the permitted and prohibited domains in the Islamic universe in which the interaction between men and women are controlled. This duality in Islamic culture is referred to as *mahrem* (secret, allowed) and *muharrem* (prohibited). The separated domains control the women's relationship especially with strangers. No matter how the grand ideologies treat the relationship between public and private, in line with the other tensions, we do not observe a duality but a tense co-existence

⁵⁷ Arif Dirlik, "Modernity in Question?: Culture and Religion in an Age of Global Modernity." *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 12 (2003): 147-168.159.

⁵⁸ For details see Andrew Davison, *Secularism and Revivalism in Turkey*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), Chapter 4.

between the two in society. İlyasoğlu similarly questions the duality between the two and suggests that women wearing the veil create a space at the intersection of the public and private that is “neutralized” and is out of the subjective “reach” of men.⁵⁹

1.6.4. Tension IV: Text versus Praxis

The tension arises from the gap between the different interpretations of religion among various social groups. But more specifically the gap between the form of Islam that is formulated by the *ulema* (teacher or learned man of the sacred Islamic law, Muslim scholar interpreter of the doctrines of Islam) and the form of Islam experienced by the people (shrine pilgrimage, tomb veneration and oblation and sacrifices to God are some of the instances) constitutes the gist of the tension. This division is tantamount to Gellner’s understanding of Islam as divided into high Islam and low Islam; while the former refers to the beliefs of religious scholars, the later is that of people (folk Islam)⁶⁰. Ordained students of religion, i.e. *ulema*, consider as the “real” sources of Islam not only the Koran, hadith and Sunnah but also the interpretations of these sources by religious scholars. However, the religious doctrines are also disseminated by mouth to mouth interaction, in this case they are articulated by non-ordained versions of religion (heretic, mystic, theistic or pagan) and ritual practices as well. The tension best manifests itself by purification endeavors of *ulema*, emphasizing certain beliefs and practices as within Islam, while ostracizing others as un-Islamic. It should be acknowledged that the *ulema* version of Islam is not monolithic; it is also open to contestation. The Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey was established essentially to contain such contestation. Still, there is an ongoing battle between the Presidency of Religious Affairs’ version of Islam and those of Sufi orders and of other religious groups about the “correct” definition of Islam in Turkey. Tuğal in his study of Sultanbeyli showed an instance of this contestation among traditionalists, Secularists and Islamists.⁶¹ The clashes, tensions and endless negotiations among them give the shape of religion in that particular setting and as a result a hybrid forms of religious discourse emerges.

⁵⁹ Aynur İlyasoğlu, “Islamist Women in Turkey: Their Identity and Self-Image,” in *Deconstructing Images*. Zehra Arat, ed. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998. 256.

⁶⁰ Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty*.

⁶¹ Cihan Z. Tuğal, “The Appeal of Islamic Politics: Ritual and Dialogue in a Poor District of Turkey.” *The Sociological Quarterly*, 47 (2006): 245-273, 252

1.6.5. Tension V: Religious versus Scientific Knowledge

This tension derives from the individuals' dilemma in choosing between the religious form of knowledge and the scientific knowledge in their daily lives.

Some people prefer to find remedies for their everyday life problems from religious institutions. For instance "fatwā-hotlines" (*Alo fetva hatları*) managed by provincial religious directorates (Müftülük) are available for anyone who has questions about the requirements of Islam. The questions asked to the directorate ranges from appropriateness of dressing styles to family consulting. Some women even dare to ask about the appropriateness of their husbands' extra marital relationships according to Islam.⁶² However, this tension manifests itself more seriously in individuals' doubts as to whether they should abide by the secular laws of republic or the laws of Sharia.

Despite that a considerable number of people contend that religion should have more say in governing their lives and providing knowledge for their daily conduct, most people also don't see Islamic knowledge as a substitute for scientific knowledge. We know that most people in Turkey hope to educate their children in secular schools and they make long lines in the front doors of hospitals in Turkey.

In his definition of secularism, Kahraman suggests that secularism involves people's explanation of the world by the sole reference to the objective and concrete knowledge of the world. This secularism denies any reference to transcendental knowledge. For him secular people should singularly abide by the contention that the illnesses are not caused by God but by microbes.⁶³ However, most of the people uphold a synthesis of different forms knowledge in the way they conceive of the world. However, synthesis does not manifest itself as a peaceful existence.

⁶² Günün sözü, # 532 "Kocam cumaya gidiyor ama zina da yapıyor. Arkadaşı kandırdı. Kendisine neden böyle yapıyorsun, dediğimde, 'Evli erkek için günah değilmiş' diyor. Doğru mu?" *Radikal* (daily), August, 17 2007.

⁶³ H. B. Kahraman, "Laiklik Dindarlar Laikliği", *Sabah* (daily) January, 08 2008.

Chapter 2

2. Rationality and Religious Reasoning

2. 1. Religious Reasoning

In the previous chapter I characterized religion as what gets manifested in the human endeavor to understand and apply the set of principles of thought and conduct, which are taken to be of divine origin. I also argued that the religion of Islam as discursive enterprise is primarily concerned with and addresses the following tensions in the context of modern Turkey: (i) sacred versus profane, (ii) traditional versus modern, (iii) public versus private space, (iv) text versus praxis, (elite versus public), and (v) religious versus scientific knowledge. When faced with any of these five tensions, the individual experiences strong feelings of unease as a result of which he/she seeks to alleviate them. In that sense, each of these tensions exemplifies a kind of a crisis that demands or calls for resolution. Eisenstadt, who originally discussed the tension between the transcendental and the mundane, focuses on the level of civilization and was interested in the resolution of tensions at the institutional level. However, he has little to say about what happens at the individual level. In this thesis I leave the macro level analysis aside, and reformulate Eisenstadt's tension at the individual level. I adopt his concept of the tension between the transcendental and the mundane to the society of Turkey and added other tensions which I observed in the course of my fieldwork. The other four tensions I observed are derivatives of the tension initially identified by Eisenstadt.¹

I shall call 'religious reasoning' the way in which individuals relieve the feelings of unease that is generated by any one of, or a combination of, the above mentioned tensions. In order to determine the religious aspect of the reasoning modes used by the participants in my study I have developed guidelines based on the works of Fritz Oser (1991)² and James Fowler (1981)³. These are my points of reference that make reasoning religious:

¹ Shmuel Eisenstadt, "The Axial Age: The Emergence of Transcendental Visions and the Rise of Clerics", *European Journal of Sociology* 23 (1982): 294–314.

² Fritz K. Oser, "The Development of Religious Judgment," in *Religious development in childhood and adolescence. New Directions for child Development*, 52. Fritz K Oser and George W. Scarlett eds. (San Francisco: Jossey – Bass, 1991).

- Explicitly stated inferences or conclusions deduced from some article of faith, which determines what good, right or beautiful requires in a concrete situation;
- Utterances and verbal expressions derived from religious teachings which presumably support certain social norms or practices;
- Statements of emotions and items of imagination which help the individual involved to feel close to the holy;
- Emotional experiences related to prayer, study of religious texts and participation in communal religious life.

It is essential to state at the outset that in determining the religious aspect of participants' reasoning I focus on not only verbal statements but also on non-verbal performances, such as rituals and gestures that symbolize religious norms or principles. Non-verbal communication deserves particular attention because rituals are components of religion which express meaning, "albeit embedded pre-reflectively in social imaginaries or systems of symbols."⁴

There are four religious reasoning modes used by believers to relieve the tension(s). These are communitarian religious reasoning, utilitarian religious reasoning, principled religious reasoning, and deconstructivist religious reasoning. Let us look at the following examples:

Newly arrived in Erzurum, a young man with the luggage at his feet, takes out a cigarette and begins to smoke during Ramadan. An old man walks by, stares and goes "Tsk, tsk, tsk... estağfurullah!" Here, there is an expectation of unquestioned compliance to the rules and norms of the community, which dictates that fasting is compulsory in the month of Ramadan, including avoidance of smoking. Not fasting creates a tension between the sacred and the profane. Perceived challenges to the existing moral order established by religious rules create discomfort and the person reacts by trying to put the transgressor to shame through looks, gestures, or curt utterances rather than arguments. Hence the reproof in the form "tsk, tsk tsk!" I argue that the reasoning behind such behavior is communitarian religious reasoning.

³ James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981).

⁴ Talal Asad, "Thinking about religion, belief and politics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*. Edited by Robert A. Orsi, 36-57. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). 40.

In a second case, a small businessman needs to get a credit from the bank to expand his business. None of the *ulema* he has asked for advice have sanctioned this act because it involves borrowing from the bank and paying with interest. He keeps talking to more religious leaders till he finds someone who will issue a *fetva* that says it is acceptable to get a bank loan. This is a kind of religious reasoning that helps to solve the tension between the transcendental and the mundane by employing a utilitarian religious reasoning that aims to maximize otherworldly benefits, (*sevap*), or minimize their sins (*günah*).

The third case is someone who claims that women should stay at home and look after the children because this is how gender roles or duties are defined in the Koran. I take this person to be employing what I call the “principled reasoning” i.e., reasoning conforming to a determinate principle of religion, to relieve the tension between the public and the private.

The fourth case is a participant who says that he believes that the truths about the physical world are to be reached through scientific knowledge and the truths about our souls are to be reached through religious learning. In saying this he is rejecting one single source of truth for everything and bridging the tension between religious and scientific knowledge by treating them as separate spheres. He is employing deconstructivist reasoning by allowing for the possibility of multiple truths and multiple realms of knowledge.

In the following chapters I will be discussing each of these reasoning modes in detail. It is, however, important to bear in mind that a person can and does resort to more than one reasoning mode. Which mode will be employed depends on the context of the tension and the subject that is being discussed.

Why is religious reasoning an attempt to ease tension? My interlocutors endeavor to bridge the tension between the sacred and the profane by giving serious thought to the issue of salvation. Religious reasoning involves individuals choosing among alternative conceptions of social and cultural order while thoughts of afterlife serve as a constant background. During interviews as well as religious conversations (*dini sohbetler*) many of my interlocutors were preoccupied with actively constructing the world according to some transcendent vision to which they attribute divine origins. The vision they pursue inevitably clashes with the experiences of this world, and this produces the five tensions I have identified. These tensions are solved through the four religious reasoning modes I have identified.

2.2. Rationality and Reasoning

Let us now turn to the “reasoning” part of “religious reasoning.” Throughout the thesis I use ‘rationality’ and ‘reasoning’ interchangeably. In this section I will discuss them independently of the connection with religion.

In order to analyze the data, I have created a fourfold classification that systemizes the ways in which the people I interviewed think about religion. The formulation of this scheme was shaped by my reading of the theories of rationality. Throughout the whole course of data analysis I have gone back on forth between three points in my attempt to understand the data and to interpret it in the larger theoretical context. Firstly, there was the input from the field work; a second point was the input from the already existing body of work on rationality; and a third point was my own thoughts, contemplations, perceptions and intuitions of my own experience with decision-making and also what the field work and the literature were telling me. These three points form the basis of my interpretative circle and I have been going through each point over and over again. The fourfold categorization was the product of this continuous looping.

I began with the question how do people decide on important issues they face in their daily life. How do they deal with their perceived tension between what they hold dear and the practical action they must take? I began by looking at my own ways of relieving the tension between thinking and acting.⁵ I realized that at times I think instrumentally while at other times I stuck by my principles. During this time I was also reading the literature and talking to the participants in my research. I asked my interlocutors to walk with me through their reasoning path (first order thinking) and also to evaluate their own way of thinking (a meta-level of thinking about thinking). I voice recorded all interviews and they were later transcribed. I examined, defined and classified their answers using Atlas Ti. This also was a repetitive process that involved continuous reading and rethinking of definitions and categories I had created. My goal was to create a system that was comprehensive but also rigorous and parsimonious.

In this section I will present the literature that has helped me shape my categorization of the modes of rationality. As I was trying to interpret the data, I kept noticing the similarities between the information coming from my interlocutors and

⁵ I will return to my hermeneutic approach in more detail in the chapter on the research method.

the different notions of rationality in the literature. There is no one to one correspondence between the two, but the similarities cannot be dismissed either. I do not draw parallels between the already existing classifications in the literature, nor do I try to resolve the problems in the reasoning literature. I only aim to make explicit how the already existing notions of rationality have contributed to my formulation. My reading on rationality was not confined to a particular academic field, so the literature ranged from philosophy to sociology and anthropology. I divided the approaches I noticed in the literature into four groups. This grouping is simply an analytical device to focus discussion. These are: (i) the universalist rationality; (ii) rational choice, or the economic approach; (iii) social rationality; and (iv) relativist rationality.

In discussing the main differentiations in the literature my aim is to expose the scope of the concept through its internal differentiation. What these four approaches have in common is that they are attempts to shed light on how actual human beings reason in concrete life situations.

Social science scholars from diverse fields have asked questions very similar to my concerns in this thesis. If we look further we see that this question appears in numerous forms and shapes. Here are some examples:

- "How does an organism make inferences about unknown aspects of the environment?"⁶
- How people really make decisions?
- What are the basic modes of orientation of social action?⁷
- "Whether the mentalities and modes of thought of men and women everywhere are the same or different"; "How do we understand and represent the modes of thought and action of other societies, other cultures?" and "What are general analytical categories" for "understanding of modes of thought and action"⁸

⁶ Gerd Gigerenzer and Daniel G. Goldstein. "Reasoning the fast and frugal way: models of bounded rationality." *Psychological review* 103 (1996): 650 – 669, 650.

⁷ Max Weber. *Economy and Society: An outline of interpretive sociology*, eds. Guenther Roth and Claud Wittich. (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1978). 26.

⁸ Stanley J. Tambiah, *Magic, science and religion and the scope of rationality*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990). 2-3.

- According to Elias, “different modes of thinking and producing knowledge imply different ways of relating to the world.”⁹
- “We examine how mundane reasoners use their beliefs about reality to make inferences, raise and resolve puzzles and exercise tact and ingenuity.”¹⁰
- “Why people hold on doggedly to their convictions?”¹¹
- “Why we come to know what we know or believe?”¹²
- What is the relation between a reason and an action when the reason explains the action by giving the agent's reason for doing what he did? We may call such explanations rationalizations, and say that the reason rationalizes the action.¹³
- “Beliefs and desires that form the reasons for action whose rationality we are assessing”¹⁴
- “What are principles for? Why do we hold principles, why do we put them forth, why do we adhere to them? We could instead simply act on whim or the passion of the moment, or we could maximize our own self-interest and recommend that others do the same. Are principles then a constraint upon whim and self-interest, or is adherence to principles a way of advancing self-interest? What functions do principles serve?”¹⁵

The common question of the different approaches to rationality is what can account for human action; however in each case the operating definition of what constitutes rationality changes. Each approach claims that it is the best at reflecting human rationality.

My argument throughout this thesis is that real agents, i.e., Muslims, also adopt similar kinds of rationalities. But the crucial difference is any of them cannot solely explain the real motive. I will argue that each individual resorts to more than one kind of rationality in his actual life. It is as if they shift gears in the way they

⁹ Elias cited in Clarice Monteiro Machado Rios, “Rationality Revisited: Religion and science within spiritism in Brazil,” (PhD.diss., University of California in Los Angeles, 2010). ix.

¹⁰ Melvin Pollner, *Mundane reason: Reality in everyday and sociological discourse*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987). xi.

¹¹ David L. d'Avray, *Rationalities in history: A Weberian essay in comparison*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). 1.

¹² Russell Hardin, *How do you know?: The economics of ordinary knowledge*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

¹³ Donald Davison, *Essays on Actions and Events*. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980). 3.

¹⁴ Jon Elster, *Sour grapes: Studies in the subversion of rationality*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985). 1.

¹⁵ Robert Nozick, *The nature of rationality*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994). 3.

think. This is something that has become obvious during my fieldwork. However, the most of the scholarly views of rationality resemble the statements of blind men in a room with an elephant, each of them claiming perfect knowledge of the creature they are touching. Taking into account all the criticisms that different views of rationality make of each other I have developed an approach to rationality that shares some characteristics with most of the approaches I have found in the academic literature. My approach is not normative but is entirely data-driven. More specifically, I have found in my fieldwork that individuals do not exclusively adopt a single mode of rationality, but rather several ways of reasoning at once depending on the context they are faced with. I have identified four distinct modes of reasoning adopted by the individuals I have come into contacts during my fieldwork. These are: (i) instrumental or utilitarian reasoning (ii) communitarian reasoning, (iii) principled reasoning and (iv) deconstructivist reasoning.

In what follows I spell out and define these modes or reasoning by drawing on the existing academic literature on rationality and in so doing construct the framework of my empirical analysis of the mentalities of Muslims in my fieldwork.

My empirical analysis is based entirely on my observations and conversations with individuals who think themselves as Muslims; conversations that got started when asked them to walk me through the way in which they deliberate on the dilemmas they face while living their everyday lives. Their verbal and non-verbal communication constitutes the content of a “reasoning mode.” Each of the religious reasoning modes I have identified (i.e. instrumental or utilitarian reasoning, communitarian reasoning, principled reasoning and deconstructivist reasoning) gives us a sense of the actual ways in which the Muslims of Turkey interpret politics, economics and gender through the lenses of religion.

2.2.1. Universalist Rationality and Principled Religious Reasoning

The discussions of rationality have been primarily discussions of normative standards for rationality and what counts and does not count as rational behavior.¹⁶ In its widest, and perhaps most complex, usage rationality is a quality of an entire person. But rationality also “applies to actions, beliefs, desires, and many other elements in human

¹⁶ Renée Elio, ed. *Common sense, reasoning, and rationality*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 14-5.

life.”¹⁷ So we read about “rational societies, rational plans, rational views, rational reactions, and rational emotions.”¹⁸

Rationality here denotes the meaning it gains when it is used to define the distinctiveness of human beings; as Greeks once said “man is a rational animal.” The ability to be rational differentiates humans from other animals.¹⁹ What determines the scope of the “thing” that supposedly only humans possess? This approach struggles to find an answer to this question however there is no single answer. It has been a topic of a very deep debate, with a lot of propositions revolving around agreements and disagreements.²⁰ But here I will briefly consider some of the characteristics of universalist rationality, which tacitly glosses over enlightenment’s internal diversity, which in turn is extremely divergent on the question of the nature of rationality. The assumption here is that “we are theorizing beings seeking a true picture of our world” (universal rationality),²¹ while we are also “practical beings seeking to do things, in particular to satisfy our needs and desires.”²²

The discussions under the heading of universalist rationality endeavor to understand and describe the universal aspects of reason or rationality. However, thinkers in this category differ on what exactly constitutes the universal aspects of rationality. Some take the procedure of human reasoning as universal, while others submit that rationality is defined primarily by a commitment to some certain propositions or beliefs, i.e. to some content.²³ Still others focus on the general structure of rationality, i.e. whether and how rationally held beliefs relate one another. Some theorists of rationality suppose that rationally held beliefs make up a coherent

¹⁷ Robert Audi, "Theoretical Rationality: Its Sources, Structure, and Scope," in *The Oxford Handbook of Rationality*, eds. Alfred R. Mele and Piers Rawling. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 17- 44, 17.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Nozick, *Rationality*, xi

²⁰ See Audi, “Theoretical Rationality”; Alfred R. Mele, “Motivated Irrationality,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Rationality*, eds. Alfred R. Mele and Piers Rawling. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 240-56; Nozick, *Rationality*; Jonathan E., Adler and Lance J. Rips, eds. *Reasoning: Studies of human inference and its foundations*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

²¹ More on theoretical rationality (rationality of beliefs): “beliefs that, when true and appropriately grounded, constitute knowledge. Knowledge, in turn, is taken uncontroversially to be a "goal" of theoretical reason. Although representing theoretical reason as "seeking" a goal is metaphorical, the achievement of knowledge is widely viewed as a case of success in the exercise of theoretical reason.” (Audi, "Theoretical Rationality," 18). In this normative understanding knowledge means justified true belief.

²² Aristotle’s distinction between theoretical and practical rationality: the former is about rationality of cognition, such as beliefs, the later is about rationality of actions (Ibid., 17).

²³ Brad Hooker and Bart Streumer. "Procedural and substantive practical rationality," in *The Oxford Handbook of Rationality*, eds. Alfred R. Mele and Piers Rawling. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 57-74. 58.

whole, while others argue that what matters for human rationality is not coherence of beliefs, but that they are based on a common foundation.

Universalist conceptions of rationality are typically in line with prevailing notions of ‘science’ in that such conceptions take the scientific search for truth as integral to rationality generally. Furthermore, such conceptions endorse the norms that govern science, such as consistency, coherency, probability, experientialism, and the principle of non-contradiction.²⁴ This is the nature of rationality, it is often claimed, that distinguishes human beings from animals and which establishes a yardstick for measuring people even within society, because ‘all great minds think alike.’

Universalist rationality attempts to define human rationality by concentrating on the principles through which the human mind works. Its claim is that these principles are universal. This understanding became hegemonic in the Western hemisphere and has spread to the rest of the world as well. To this day when we access the convincing power of an argument we look at its coherence or look for proof established by science. In other words, we approach arguments “rationally.”

Let us look at the similarities between universalist rationality and what I call “principled reasoning.” When my interlocutors adopt principled religious reasoning they use the tools of the universalist rationality. In their arguments we can see coherency, consistency, and experimentalism. When they discuss religion rationally and make claims about the relation between the natural world and the texts in the Koran they adopt evidentialism and coherentism. Furthermore, my interlocutors state that “truth is one and absolute” or talk about the dictates of reason, they are using the elements of universalist rationality that have made this rationality notorious. There is, however, a crucial difference between the conceptions of universal rationality found in the academic literature and the “principled reasoning” I observe in my fieldwork. My interlocutors, when they think in terms of principled religious reasoning, believe that they are arguing consistently and ignore the leaps of reasoning they are making and the inconsistencies these leaps provokes. This is particularly the case when they are endeavoring to rationalize their religious beliefs. Nonetheless they are fully committed to the universalist attitude, in the sense that they consider the principles they believe in to be basic, universal and all-binding.

²⁴ Audi, "Theoretical Rationality."

2.2.2. Rational Choice and Utilitarian Religious Reasoning

In the academic literature on rationality, we find not only universalist perspectives on rationality, but also theories that focus on the actual, concrete situations within which actual persons choose their specific beliefs and courses of actions. In contrast to abstract or philosophical theorists of rationality, the latter group of theorists takes seriously the real-life constraints that human beings experience in choosing their beliefs and courses of action. And when they concentrate on such real-life constraints, theorists of rationality often claim that actual persons resort to “instrumental” rationality, i.e. a type of rationality that seeks to identify the best means or instruments for a given end or goal. The idea here is that individuals think both instrumentally and pragmatically in order to maximize their benefits and to minimize their costs. In the literature instrumental rationality is often referred as “economic” rationality for the reason that the thoughts and actions of actual agents are governed primarily by costs and benefits concern rather than by abstract questions about the demands or truth or coherence.

Rational Choice Theory (RCT), or a theory of instrumental rationality is “the attempt to explain human behavior by two variables: first, preferences, and second, estimates of the probability of a given action realizing a given preference. Such estimates are called 'beliefs' in the rational choice world. A textbook of Rational Choice Theory deriving from a course in the Harvard core curriculum defines a belief as 'a probability statement relating the effectiveness of a specific action (or instrument) for various outcomes.’²⁵

Hence, the biggest difference of rational choice theories from universalist theories of rationality, is that while latter characterize rationality in terms of certain universal notions of truth, correct procedure and coherence, the former argue that calculations of concrete benefit. So, for example, Hardin argued that even though people may not know or care about the truth-value of a piece of information, they may and after do recognize the use-value of that particular knowledge, i.e. how it can be put to use or how they can benefit from it.²⁶

Instrumental rationality, known also as means and ends rationality, is theorized by Weber, who traced the means and ends rationality to different forms of rationalities and social action. He finds it both the formulation of practical and formal rationalities. On this point Kalberg says “practical rationality always indicates a diffuse tendency to

²⁵ d’Avray, *Rationalities in history*, 30.

²⁶ Hardin, *How do you know?*, 24-25.

calculate and to solve routine problems by means-end rational patterns of action in reference to pragmatic self interests, formal rationality ultimately legitimates a similar means-end rational calculation by reference back to universally applied rules, laws, or regulations.”²⁷ For Weber, means and end rationality is one the basic mechanisms behind human rationality. It also manifests itself in the rationalization of society, while its most advanced form is observed in modern industrial society.²⁸ Most significantly for Weber, we see it in the economic, legal, and scientific spheres and in the bureaucratic form of domination. This rationality for Weber involves the mating of causes and effects. “Ends-means rationality includes the weighing up of different ends against each other in terms of their power to satisfy needs that do not necessarily have anything to do with values.”²⁹ The claim is that even when an action or behavior is motivated by some value or norm, the real mechanism behind it is that of a calculation of costs and benefits, or means and ends. In other words, even when someone follows tradition, he or she is doing it because they are profiting, in a way that makes sense to them, from being loyal to tradition. This why D’Avray compares instrumental rationality to a chameleon: “instrumental rationality is a chameleon that takes the color of the values in its mental milieu. These changes of coloring make it harder to realize that it is still the same animal.”³⁰

As it will be seen in the following chapters, such rationality can be observed in the ways in which Muslims in Turkey sometimes ponder the demands of modern society.

In the analysis of utilitarian religious reasoning I deal only with the cases where the utilitarian calculation is explicit with religious references to punishments and rewards. To illustrate with an example, a participant will justify giving alms (*zekat*) in terms of the number of rewards (*sevap*) he expects to collect in the other

²⁷ Stephen Kalberg “Max Weber's Types of Rationality: Cornerstones for the Analysis of Rationalization Processes in History,” *The American Journal of Sociology*, 85 (1980): 1145-1179, 1158. A detailed analysis of rationality in Weber can be found in this study. As the author suggests Weber’s own writings are highly convoluted to understand his position regarding rationality. Most of the time it is not clear whether Weber is considers individuals or societies at large. But it should be borne in mind that Weber underlines polymorphous character of "rationality."He also iteratively suggests that very different patterns of action and ways of life may be "rational" in Weber. But what is more important for our purpose here is that by rationality Weber discusses predominantly means and ends rationality.

²⁸ Weber thinks that means and ends rationality is only one disposition that belongs to human being, even within the industrial era other forms of action like affectual, traditional, value rational action can also be observed. *Ibid.*, 1147-1150.

²⁹ d’Avray, *Rationalities in history*, 63.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 59.

world. To be sure, terms like *sevap*, *haram*, and *helal* can be found in all the modes of religious reasoning. But in utilitarian reasoning these terms figure in statements based on explicit calculations of benefit and harm, often personal, rather than in statements concerning an absolutely inviolable code of the holy text or the community, or as a categorical requirement of faith, or of the enrichment of the soul.

2.2.3. Social Rationality and Communitarian Religious Reasoning

In the literature on rationality, universalism and instrumentalism are not the only ways to understand the nature of human rationality. Some argue that the beliefs, preferences and courses of actions of human beings are in fact shaped by the values of the society in which they live. In other words, when human beings say that something is rational or beneficial, they sometimes implicitly or explicitly make reference to values or traditions that are upheld in the community in which they grow up and live.

The claim of social rationality is that the choices of individuals are not always based on calculations of desired outcomes; sometimes they stem from principles or values set by the social environment.³¹ This form of reasoning is guided by what is “appropriate” to do in certain social settings. Social rationality is a response to the procedural attitude adopted by universalist rationality which assumes the existence of universal standards of rationality. Moreover, according to D’Avray, such rationality underlies and makes possible instrumental rationality in that it has the ability to mobilize people into action to the point of deciding to die for their values.³²

However, social rationality focusing on communal values also differs markedly from instrumental rationality as defined by rational choice theorists: The basic difference between rational choice and social rationality is reflected in their different views of what constrains or constitutes the content of rationality. Rational choice theorists believe that people are guided by their individual calculations of benefit, whereas social rationality theorists argue that people are guided by certain commonly held values whatever their immediate personal gain or benefit may be. Rational choice or instrumental rationality claims that we can understand people’s behavior by looking at how they calculate costs and benefits no matter the costs or benefits derive from religion or individual’s calculation of personal or material

³¹ Bryan D. Jones, "Bounded rationality." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 297-321.

³² d'Avray, *Rationalities in history*, 51.

advantage such as health, social peace or wealth. d'Avray proposes a rule of thumb for differentiating individual preferences from social values as follows:

...values involve a casuistry, in the sense of the application of general principles to concrete cases whose relation to the principle is not immediately self-evident.... if you think it is wrong to work on the Sabbath, casuistry comes into deciding whether it is wrong to turn on the oven, to turn on the TV, or to take a taxi to the synagogue. If you believe intoxicating liquor is wrong, does that apply to low-alcohol beer? Could a patient undergoing amputation without anesthetic drink to deaden the pain? Is morphine an intoxicant or a painkiller? If all people are equal, is it wrong to know the age of an applicant? Such decision-making is a long way from the pursuit of preferences.³³

Phrasing his argument in terms of preferences, Jon Elster argued in *Sour Grapes* that actors' preferences for sub-optimal outcome were due to "adaptive preference formation."³⁴ Elster sustained that people re-adjust their reasons for action to their perception of the social environment in which they live; hence his allusion to Aesop's tale of the fox and the sour grapes. Elster's notions of "adaptive" rationality can be seen as a good example of what has been called bounded rationality, because of the claim that the limits on reasoning are set by the demands of the surroundings in which the individual finds himself or herself. By focusing on the bounds or subversions that are in action in shaping preference formation of individuals, Elster view offers a middle ground between rational choice theories and social rationality.

What are the implications of social rationality for religious reasoning? The shape that social rationality takes in the context of religious reasoning, it becomes communitarian reasoning. In my research I define communitarian religious reasoning through its appearance as mostly non-discursive and performative; it consists of rule following, as rules and norms are thought to stem from a supposed community of Muslims.

Both my communitarian reasoning and social rationality emphasize the importance of social values, tradition, and identity in shaping the way people reason.

³³ d'Avray, *Rationalities in history*, 44.

³⁴ Elster, *Sour grapes*.

But there is also a difference. During my field work I noticed that social rationality can be argumentational or non-argumentational, depending on whether it rests on a clear line of argument. What I have called communitarian religious reasoning is just an instance of non-argumentational social rationality. This reasoning becomes accessible predominantly through performative acts or curt statements rather than long verbal expressions. The community values become embedded in the individual and are communicated through mimics and gestures, blushing, and heavy pauses during a talk or curt utterances. Someone who adopts communitarian reasoning attempts to steer the person he or she is addressing by acts that prevent verbal articulation and leave no doubt that he or she is behaving in agreement with the community values. The dominant attitude is “you should already know this, because this is how things are done around here.” The argumentational aspect of social rationality surfaces in my principled reasoning, where the people who are conversing exchange arguments back and forth. The person who engages in principled reasoning believes in guiding principles and the power of words so in this case we see the combination of universalist rationality, whose devices this person employs, with social rationality, which provides the content by referring to the “perennial” values and traditions of society.

2.2.4. Relativist Rationality and Deconstructivist Religious Reasoning

Relativist notion to rationality arises as critique of universalist rationality. There were debates on the relation between rationality and relativism that date back to the 1970s when the data coming from anthropology and ethnography was challenging the universal rationality that dominated in the Western philosophy. The central issue was whether it was possible for universal rational understanding to survive in the context of cultural difference; or was the universal rationality of philosophy and social sciences itself the expression of a particular culture.³⁵

According to Tambiah, modern philosophy exemplified in the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, Peter Winch, Donald Davison, Bernard Williams, Charles Taylor and Stephen Lukes makes reference to logical rules and the limits imposed by consistency, coherence and non-contradiction because they theorize in abstract terms. Their claim is that they are adopting a disengaged perspective whether they are

³⁵ Andrew Vincent, *The Nature of Political Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 220.

clarifying propositions, or stipulating the rules of inference, or judging the appropriateness of means used to arrive stated objectives. But can we use this conception of rationality which has been formalized and systemized in the West as a universal yardstick to understand social and religious phenomena in the rest of world?³⁶

A body of work on cultural relativism and rationality has developed under the influence of the philosophical work of Wittgenstein, Barnes, Hacking, and Winch. One of the central figures was Peter Winch, who argued that rationalities are like languages each with their own grammar, therefore we cannot use one set of rules to criticize those of another language. Like Wittgenstein, who used games as an analogy to explain language, Winch employed language-games as a paradigm of the rationalities in societies. This also meant that there could be no set of rules that fit all societies.³⁷ The subsequent implication of this position is that no rationality can be used to judge the rationality of other societies. According to Tambiah:

There can be multiple “rationalities,” “different forms of life” (Wittgenstein) or “modes of reasoning” (Hacking) and some of these can be incommensurable activities. It is therefore necessary to postpone, and to hold back as long as possible from too hasty an application of rationality criteria that may not be appropriate. Transcultural judgments of greater or lesser rationality are difficult to apply between cultures, and between earlier and later historical periods. There are the ever-present dangers of making “category mistakes” (Winch) and misplaced comparisons, and of the misapplication of rational canons to phenomena that are poetic, aesthetic and affectively charged, and therefore not amenable to judgments of rationality.³⁸

In my view, relativist approaches to rationality often lead to what I call the “deconstructivist” view of rationality, because rationality is understood as something essentially historical, contextual, and therefore contingent and transient. Accordingly, all forms rationality lose their authoritative status, for all forms of rationality become

³⁶ Tambiah, *Magic*, 115.

³⁷ d’Avray, *Rationalities in history*, 52.

³⁸ Tambiah, *Magic*, 115-6.

as essentially contestable, i.e., open to debunking. Indeed, deconstructivist theories of rationality not only contest all existing forms of rationality, but also argue that existing forms of rationality cannot be understood independently of the social, economic and, more crucially, political mechanisms that make them possible.

Similarly to the relativist rationality, deconstructivist religious rationality emerges as a critique and a response towards principled reasoning; it strives to distance itself from universalizing certainties of the latter. This reasoning attempts to embrace life with its complexity and hence it emerges with full suspicion towards the supposed dictates of reason. It incorporates concepts like heart (*gönül*), and this is where the anthropological insights became more important.

Relativist rationality strives to find room in human action and language that is beyond the subject-centered, self-reflexive consciousness. This understanding not only allows us to go beyond the universalist claims and the emphasis on a single truth, but also enables us to put reasoning in a dialogical process. In addition, it incorporates the argument that each society has its own rationality and also brings in the individual level. By this I do not claim that each individual has his or her own set of language-game but rather that the difference between individuals should be taken as a given and we need to proceed from there and follow the patterns that may and do emerge.

Through encounters with people in the my fieldwork it soon became clear that all these forms of rationality mentioned so far are present in one form or another within the same individual and they are articulated through the religious discourse found within the society in which they live. So while I agree that each community has its own rationality, I am more interested in the reasoning process of the individuals. As a result I study the justifications that individuals offer in their interaction with others, in the dialogue they have with themselves, and also with me. The context has an important part to play in the arguments that will be produced. However, I do not agree with the relativist claim that rationality is an enigma we can never know or that it is an incommensurable phenomenon. Instead I propose a four-fold categorization and analyze the guises under which rationality appears in it. I agree with the proponents of relativist rationality that neither the universalist approach, nor value or instrumental rationality on their own can help us understand individual's rationality, but they do inform us about actual reasoning modes of individuals. But unlike the relativists I do not propose to dismiss the precise character of the reasoning that individuals take on to make sense of their own lives and to determine their actions. In

any event, relativist rationality on my account is only one of the four alternative modes of reasoning that Muslims adopt in responding to the challenges or tensions that define for them the “modern society.”

Chapter 3

3. Method and Methodological Concerns

The research activity from the moment the first research question is stated until the articulation of its results in a doctoral thesis or report is a process of self-reflection.¹ By this I do not mean that self-reflection is a method, but rather that it underlies every step of my doctoral research. After all, research does not simply amount to analyzing various objects in the outer world; it is also a means of the researcher's self-understanding. The findings in this research result from an interaction between the inquirer and the inquired. It is for this reason that in this thesis I have chosen a method of narration that allows me to analyze myself as well.

Besides self-reflexivity, the process of research and knowledge production in its every phase contains many ontological,² epistemological³ and methodological⁴ questions. To illustrate: in my fieldwork trips I also take a baggage full with questions which include, but are not limited to, the following: does my own gaze, as a researcher, contain a certain degree of error factor? If this error exists and it contributes to what I observe and hear, how can I eliminate its effects from what I

¹ This dissertation concerns the ways of knowing and believing in everyday life. A 'thesis' is an argument; in my case is an argument about argumentation, justification and reasoning. While I will argue on arguing, I cannot take this reflexive moment, if not problematic issue, for granted. Therefore in this chapter I will attempt a self-reflexive examination of my argument, my own way of arguing, and my own presumptions about the knowledge I produce. In this part I will talk about the way I approach the knowledge during the course of this dissertation.

² Ontology: "The worldviews and assumptions in which researchers operate in their search for new knowledge" (Schwandt, Thomas A., ed. *The Sage dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (London: Sage Publications, Inc. 2011), 190 quoted in Yvonna S. Lincoln, Susan A. Lynham, and Egon. G. Guba. "Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited," in *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 97-128 (London: Sage Publications, Inc. 2011), 102.

³ Epistemology: "The process of thinking. The relationship between what we know and what we see. The truths we seek and believe as researchers (Dolores Delgado Bernal, "Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge." *Qualitative inquiry* 8 (2002): 105-126; Egon Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Paradigmatic Controversies, and Emerging Confluences," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna. S. Lincoln, 3rd ed., 191-216 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005); Aaron M. Pallas, "Preparing education doctoral students for epistemological diversity." *Educational Researcher* (2001): 6-11.) For a detailed exploration of what is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched see John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).

⁴ Methodology: "The process of how we seek out new knowledge. The principles of our inquiry and how inquiry should proceed" (Schwandt, *The Sage Dictionary*, 190 quoted in Lincoln et al., "Paradigmatic controversies," 104).

observe or hear? Is it possible to make such a correction or even eliminate the error completely? Does my viewpoint, do the questions I ask shape the content of the information that I will be able to gather? Do my interlocutors tailor their answers based on how they perceive me? Supposing that they will sincerely share their experiences and their thoughts, how will the baggage that I have brought with me here influence the way I understand what they are saying? Again, supposing that people share with utmost honesty, do they analyze the world they are in when they give their answers? Are they perhaps in a false consciousness, or maybe do they parrot hegemonic ideas? If this is the case how is it possible to understand the social through this collection of information? Let us suppose that individuals are openly (consciously) knowledgeable about their lives. Will there be a loss or a gap from what they relate to what I translate and interpret in my world? Does my experience of understanding, the process of sieving my perceptions during the process of understanding lead to a loss, or the very opposite is the process of knowledge production the result of my interpretations and experiences? Which questions will be raised and addressed has to do with the methodological approach.

The method I employ in this research is an instance of the constructivist and participatory approaches. This chapter is a detailed account of the methodology used in my field research and the data collection process. I also discuss the methodological concerns that the research process entails.

3.1. “The Social Structure and Religion in Turkey”

I began the preliminary work on my doctoral thesis proposal in 2007, while taking a course on the revitalization of Islam from Professor Serif Mardin and one on rationality from Professor Nedim Nomer. As I mentioned in chapter 2, the theoretical background of “the tensions” was originally shaped during Mardin’s course while my preliminary understanding of rationality and reasoning were shaped in Nomer’s course. My proposal was incorporated in the research conducted during the TUBITAK⁵ sponsored project “The Social Structure and Religion in Turkey.” As part of this project, the research team conducted participant observations in Erzurum, Denizli, and Kayseri, as well as in-depth interviews with elites and ordinary people in

⁵ The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey.

nine cities: Erzurum, Denizli, Kayseri, Adana, Diyarbakir, Izmir, Çorum, Trabzon, İstanbul. The participant observations and local and national elite interviews suggested that there are striking variations in individuals' ways of reasoning in their formulation of religious beliefs and attitudes towards gender, politics and economy. What I came across very strongly was that there are serious discrepancies between the theoretical narratives of what constitutes the doctrine and the daily practices and implementations of the same doctrine.

This has been the first field research in which I have participated focusing exclusively on religion. In Turkey, the idea that religion is not based on thinking but rather obedience is very widespread. While doing fieldwork for the project on "Well-being and Religiosity" directed by Asli Carkoglu and Ali Carkoglu I had the opportunity to witness the highly intellectual debates in which some people engage with reference to religion. This fieldwork also made me realize how little I had worked on the sophisticated forms that religious arguments can take among common people. To illustrate, I was talking about the relation between reason and revelation with a 30-year-old man in Erzurum. He had a beard, was wearing baggy trousers (*şalvar*), a white skullcap (*takke*) and worked as repairmen of electronic articles. We talked for three hours on how can we know religious knowledge, and how can interpret religious texts. He was well-versed, articulate and shied away from common clichés thus transforming completely my stereotype of not-capable-of-thought-but-obediently-devote Muslim. It also brought to me the realization that a research focusing on religion in Turkey has to begin from scratch, with new exploratory eyes if it aims to be able to eventually ask the right questions. To me this meant designing a research in which each next step was flexible enough to accommodate the information gathered from the previous one. In qualitative research methods this design is called Participatory Action Research.

3.1.1. Participatory Technique

In this research I was inspired by participatory action research approach developed by Robin McTaggart. Omitting the 'action' part, which denotes understanding the world while trying to change it; I borrowed the participatory principle of this approach. Accordingly research aims to create transparency, openness, and flexibility in addition to its inclination towards active participant interaction through an embedded

reciprocity of interpretation.⁶ The research proceeds in a spiral of steps; consecutive steps are interlinked and each step builds upon the previous in terms of planning, acting, observing and evaluating the result of the action. It is important to underline the spiral like approach, because it means taking seriously the possibilities opened up by such a feedback loop. Hence, in this participatory technique the researcher should at all times be aware of backward and forward linkages in the research design, be respondent to the problems, and actively pursue a self-reflexive anthropological stance. Some of my questions, my involvement and my presence in this approach become the very substance of the data itself. In other methodologies they would be considered “distortions.”

As the participatory research evolves, the questions are re-problematized in the light of critical reflection and dialogue between and among participating actors. It is by actively engaging in critical dialogue and collective reflection that the participants recognize that they have a stake in the overall project. Thus, the research becomes a living dialectical process, changing the researcher, the participants, and the situations in which they act.⁷

The data gathered for my dissertation comes from the feedback loops as explained by McTaggart. In fact, it was the flexibility that this method provides which made me recognize the different reasoning patterns and decide to study them. Reasoning modes do not only change radically among individuals but also vary depending on the subject they are analyzing. Also, it seems that it is not the content of religious thought that shapes decisions made in everyday life, but rather reasoning modes make a difference on how something will be analyzed. Coming to realize this through observations and preliminary interviews created the basis for the in-depth interviews I conducted with the elite. The researcher learns through each step of the research process, and consequently can ask new questions and more detailed questions. The research spiral is made up of stations in the loops. For me some of the significant stations were the courses by professor Mardin and Nomer in 2007 and 2008, participating in the “Well-being and Religiosity” research in 2008, and qualitative field research.

⁶ Robin McTaggart, "Principles for participatory action research." *Adult Education Quarterly* 41 (1991): 168-187.

⁷ Ibid.

3.2. The Fieldwork

In this section I will discuss the two stages of the qualitative fieldwork: observations and in-depth interviews.

3.2.1. Observations

For the observation stage I went to three Anatolian cities. The first city was Denizli, where I stayed a month in the summer of 2008. Most of this month coincided with the fasting month of Ramadan, therefore in the evenings I attended the *teravih* prayer. My first contact persons in the city were two master students who worked as assistants in the department of sociology at Pamukkale University. Through them I had a good opportunity to explore different social milieus in Denizli. I was also introduced to the active religious communities of Denizli and talked to their members. The second city was Kayseri. I spent two fortnights on two separate occasions during the winter of 2008. In Kayseri, a member of the research team had already established a good network because he was collecting data for his own doctoral thesis. I made observations in workplaces, associations and leisure centers. I participated in the evening gatherings that are typical to Kayseri and attended in-depth interviews, which focused on Islam and economy, conducted by my friend. These observations were conducted in places frequented by very different strata of society. The third city was Erzurum, where I lived for a month in the winter of 2009. I contacted people I had met during a previous research and they facilitated my access to the city. I met again with the young man who wears baggy trousers and skullcap as well his group of friends. I participated in the Baltahane conversations, which are religiously edifying talks attended by the elder people in Erzurum, as well as religious talks organized for and by the local tradesmen and artisans.

What does participant observation entail? Despite what the name initially suggests, observations in the field are not in the form of observing the people and settings holding a checklist at hand, taking notes and making ticks. Rather it takes the shape of interaction in local settings, like in coffee houses, mosques, the streets, houses of my interlocutors, bookshops, even the hotel I was staying. Based on the advice and recommendations of my initial contacts I set out to discover the city on my own. To give an example, in Denizli during a religious congregation meeting someone will mention a place where they distribute food to the poor, or a school dorm, a

mosque, a meeting place to eat *iftar*, or even a shopping mall. I made notes of the things I saw in the evening, upon returning to the hotel where I stayed. At times, if I was on my own I would make a voice recording note of something I noticed right away. I returned to these notes on observations while preparing the questions to be used in the semi-structured interviews. These notes were particularly valuable in relation to communitarian reasoning and performativity.

Although there is in the fieldwork a particular stage that can be identified as “participant observation,” observing does not stop at it but continues even during the stage of in-depth interviews. The difference between this distinct stage and the rest is that when I first started observations I had very limited knowledge about what I suppose to observe. This phase aimed at “discovering from scratch” so we deliberately avoided strict planning in the observation phase. The guide I had at hand was only our theoretical framework I had written with the discussion of our team members in the proposal preparation phase. The theoretical framework is composed of five tensions, mainly drawn from the literature on sociology of religion, hence in the observation phase I mainly focused on these tensions. In the subsequent phase (in-depth interviews) a stricter planning is involved. The number of people to contact as well as the content of the semi-structured in-depth interviews is set in advance. The participant observations in the three cities were directed towards exploration and defining the content of the in-depth interviews and the successive steps of the research.

The participant observations helped me to become familiar with the subject matter. I learned how to behave and speak in religious milieus. I noticed the drastic changes in people’s way of language use, vocabulary selection and the manner they adopt when talking religion. It is only now that I look at the field notes and listen to the recorded conversations that I realize how essential and yet limited are the insights I gained about the practice of religion. When I look back I can see how my insights on religion have evolved in the course of this three year research, and make me realize the indispensability of the participant observation stage. If I had jumped directly into the in-depth interviews, despite my experience with conducting in-depth interviews in Anatolian cities, I would have faced serious obstacles in the study of religion. It would have been difficult to establish genuine and friendly relations with the participants, since the observation stage explicitly showed my initial lack of knowledge on the subject matter. After spending time in Denizli and Kayseri, I began to feel much more

comfortable in religious settings of Erzurum, which was the most conservative and religious city compared to Kayseri and Denizli.

However, I do not want to give the impression that religious milieus are hidden and it is difficult to enter and communicate with religious people. On the contrary, the devout Muslims of Anatolia I met were very welcoming and felt comfortable in interacting with people very different from themselves in terms of lifemode. Some might dispute but, the secular behavior codes are hegemonic in Turkish society. We become well acquainted with them through all the major TV channels, bill boards, magazines and newspapers. Therefore, I think, my first encounter with the young man in baggy trousers and white skullcap must have been more dramatic and difficult for me rather than for him. He has more experience in meeting and talking to people like me. I imagine that it would have been much more difficult for him to feel welcome and accepted in a secular milieu than it was for me to get acceptance in a religious and conservative one.

3.2.2. In-depth Interviews

A total of 239 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in nine cities between January 2009 and July 2011, including the elite interviews in Istanbul.⁸ The cities were Denizli, Kayseri, Erzurum, Trabzon, Izmir, Adana, Diyarbakir, Çorum, and İstanbul. The plan was to conduct 24 in-depth interviews in each city. The number of men and women interviewed was equal, and all interviews came from three different socio-economic strata (SES). We defined SES in each city according to the neighborhoods. Besides, where possible, we also conducted in-depth interviews in villages, one Sunni and one Alevi in selected cities with exception of Trabzon where we talked only people in a Sunni village.

For the scope of this thesis, the most of data comes from 68 in-depth interviews I conducted in 9 cities. My reason for this decision was my methodological concern of adopting the interpretive, participatory approach. However, I also had access to the data collected by other team members as all interviews were voice-recorded, transcribed and entered into Qualitative Data Analysis Software program called ATLAS TI.

⁸ Please see Appendix 1 for a full list of the participants and Appendix 2 for the in-depth interview guide.

Most of the in-depth interviews were conducted with the participation of two interviewers; the location was either the interviewee's home or workplace. Besides gender and SES I also took into consideration the degree to which the person is well-versed on religious issues. In this sense what I have called elite interviews are also known in the literature as key informant interviews.⁹ In order to identify the elite interviewees we contacted the sociology departments of the universities in each city as well as NGOs and they put us in touch with the interviewees. The reasoning behind the strict observation of variables such as SES and gender is to obtain information from different strata of society and their views on religion, thus allowing us to include a maximum variation in perspectives.

The main indicator of the right size for the number of participants in qualitative research "is often the point at which redundancy, or theoretical saturation of the data, is achieved."¹⁰ This was the case with our fieldwork as well. However, when we approach the issue with participatory technique and feedback loops in mind, I noticed I had already formed the rough lines of the categorization of religious reasoning before beginning the interviews with the elite. These further interviews were a very good opportunity for me to test whether my categorization worked and to explore it further by discussing it with my interlocutors.

For each interview a previous appointment was made by phone and we were referred to each interviewee. The referees were either the contact persons in each city or other interviewees. Each interviewee was introduced to the title and topic of the research project, the name of the project coordinators and universities which were undertaking it. Each participant acknowledged their willingness to be interviewed and for the interview to be recorded. The full anonymity of the participants was ensured. Each interview lasted approximately an hour and a half. Interviews with key informants lasted longer, with an average of three hours. In one case, an interview with a key informant went on for nine hours. In some cases, key informants were interviewed more than once in order to cover points that I thought had not been explored enough.

Interviews with key informants were conducted during the spring and summer of 2011. Most of the participants in this group are from Istanbul, but there are

⁹ L. Letts, S. Wilkins, M. Law, D. Stewart, J. Bosch, and M. Westmorland. "Guidelines for critical review form: qualitative studies (version 2.0)." Retrieved from http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/Portals/20/pdf/ebp/qualguidelines_version2.0.pdf (2007), (August, 28 2014).

¹⁰ Ibid., 7.

participants from other cities as well. The key informants were selected among those who are deemed influential in the formation of religious opinions. The criteria for inclusion are:

- Imams, sheiks and *mollas* who promulgate their version of Islam through community preaching.
- Muslims intellectuals who have written and published a book or at least one essay or an article about Islam in a journal or newspaper.
- Muslims who appear on radio or TV to give speeches about religious issues, or who give seminars in schools, to NGOs or to think-tanks.
- People who are locally recognized as religious authorities, and whose names have been mentioned in this context by at least three different individuals.

The interviews with key informants are rich in terms of detailed religious reasoning. They are particularly invaluable for my third and fourth religious reasoning, principled and deconstructive reasoning, respectively.

Although in the scope of the project the number of women interviewees was equal to that of men, I have personally participated in few of these. I participated in all key informant interviews with women interviewees. There are several reasons for small number of women participants I interviewed. Firstly, in Anatolian cities having a man guest at day time while the man of the house is at work is considered reprehensible. Taking this in consideration women interviewees talked to women interviewers. To circumvent this problem whenever possible interviews were conducted in association's buildings, recreational centers, or workplaces such as municipalities. My participation as a man did not present a problem for women of higher SES, which in itself is valuable data given that subject of investigation is religious practices in society. Even though I spoke to fewer women participants when compared to men, the topic of gender was discussed at length with each participant.

3.3. Methodological reflections

The methodological approach I have adopted in the design of this research is an interpretative approach, but it also bears traces of other qualitative research schools including the feminist, constructivist and ethnographic ones. In this section I will address the methodological concerns that accompany my approach. I also hope to lay

the reasons for adopting the interpretative approach based both on my personal experience with field research as well as the literature on the subject. In the following section I discuss my own journey among different schools of qualitative research hoping to make it clear the main motivations behind my approach. The knowledge produced in this dissertation is positional and perspectival, hence with this discussion I aim to expose my ontological and epistemological assumptions and their origins in my journey to qualitative research.

3.3.1. The positivist paradigm¹¹

My undergraduate studies were dominated by the positivist paradigm, which has left a long lasting imprint in my research. My university education began in a psychology department, where research methods formed the backbone of the program. Heavily influenced by the American tradition of psychology, the positivist approach was the only acceptable paradigm in the department and it was emphasized not only in research method courses but in all other courses as well. The main focus of these positivist concerns are validity and reliability in research. The grip of the positivist paradigm persisted during my graduate studies both in sociology and later in political science.

The positivist paradigm can be identified by its ontological claim on a single, identifiable reality. "Truth" transcends opinion and personal bias.¹² The basic assumption underlying research inspired by this paradigm is the notion of a single, objective reality that we can observe, know and measure.¹³ Inspired by August Comte, and later by Vienna circle of 1920s, the positivist paradigm in social sciences assumes that "the scientific research is a "hypothetical-deductive" process that builds knowledge by systematically testing hypothesis and eliminating those that are found false."¹⁴

¹¹ There are a variety of positions within positivist paradigm and also other paradigms that I will discuss in the next sections. I discuss each paradigm the way they were introduced to me during my early years of university education. Hence the narrative here is highly reductionist. My aim is to expose my take on of each approach.

¹² James W. Carey, *Communication as culture: Essays on media and society* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 99.

¹³ Lincoln et al., "Paradigmatic controversies," 102.

¹⁴ Packer, Martin. *The Science of qualitative research* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011). 20

The positivist world view aims to achieve a “value free objectivist-science.”¹⁵ Any disclosure or attempt to self-critique of researcher’s own moral and political commitments in their own work is out of concern. “People and their behaviors become objects for study, with the researcher maintaining as much distant from the researched as is possible, so as to remain objective.”¹⁶ Minimizing the role of the researcher, scholars who adopt this approach defined research as “the use of scientific, standardized procedures in search for knowledge.”¹⁷

“Observations should be self-evidently true, incorrigible, that is to say, requiring no interpretation or prior knowledge.”¹⁸ In order to ensure unbiased empirical data, unambiguous language is needed for observation. Concepts should be defined operationally in terms of procedures of observation and measurement.¹⁹ The gist of this methodology is to achieve interpretation-free observations and logical inferences. Accordingly, there is one science, whose principles for inquiry need to proceed according to the same methods to achieve greatest clarity and reach at truth.²⁰ The contention of the positivist paradigm is that scientific knowledge is objective and general, impersonal and detached. The subjectivity of the researcher is not denied, but it is treated as a potential problem. The opposite is true in qualitative research methods, which is what I predominantly use in this dissertation.

What attracted me to the positivist paradigm initially was the rigorous effort to reach the truth. The possibility of reaching the truth is matter of debate, but my strongest motivation in doing research is the belief and expectation that we can know. Even though the positivist paradigm approaches the issue of the subjectivity of the researcher as an “error,” it endeavors to compensate for it by demanding that the researcher take it into account. In other words this paradigm asks the researcher to question the effects his or her perspective may have on the research process, thus

¹⁵ Carey, *Communication as culture*, 104.

¹⁶ Sharan B Merriam. “How research produces knowledge,” in *Adult Education: Evolution and achievements in a developing field of study*, ed. John M Peters, 42-65 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991). 45.

¹⁷ Edmund D. Brunner, David Wilder, Corinne Kirchner, and John S. Newberry Jr. *An overview of adult education research* (Chicago: Adult Education Association, 1959). 1.

¹⁸ Packer, *The Science*, 24.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Despite that early version of positivist approach ontologically uphold the view that the reality is apprehensible and scientist can grasp it objectively, with Popper’s contribution, most of its supporters changed their views, according to the newly emerged post-positivist paradigm the reality can be imperfectly and probabilistically apprehensible, Lincoln et al., “Paradigmatic controversies,” 98. The verified hypotheses sought to establish facts and laws. However, with the Popper’s contribution post-positivists believe that “non-falsified hypothesis are considered as *probable* facts or laws” *Ibid.*, emphasis is added.

making the researcher self-reflexive and preparing the grounds for the interpretative approaches that come out of the positivist paradigm.

During all the steps of my research, I have internalized reflexivity to the point of being obsessed with it and I think this is due to the thought exercises of the positivist paradigm which focus on reliability, validity and different forms of biases. The question I asked above concerning the effect of myself – this particular researcher – on the data collection process is basically a positivist question. The fact that we deal with questions like this makes the reporting process different from an artistic endeavor like novel writing. Deciding to do research and traveling to do it, designing a specific research program, and conducting this research systematically are all the effect of the positivist approach. The purpose of the research activity is to produce knowledge. The motivation for producing knowledge may vary, but the effect of positivism on knowledge production process is undeniable.

Lastly, the positivist approach provides us with the most important tools we use in factual data analysis. When we are looking for answers to questions like: what is the percentage of people in Turkey who pray five times a day? Or have these percentages increased or decreased over time? The answers come from employing a positivist methodology. However, when we are researching content and meaning, especially in topics that have not been explored enough, we need to take into consideration the “attitudinal” positions of the participants. This is where the positivist approach faces its biggest challenge. More importantly, it has serious limitations in “measuring” the meaning of behaviors and discourses.

3.3.2. Critical Theory School

I was introduced to paradigms other than the positivist one through the courses I took in sociology as part of my double major program in sociology. Courses on contemporary sociology, sociology of change and transition and also the two semester research methods course from Ankara University on epistemology and ontology made me aware of the alternative methodologies to be adopted while doing research. In the course of these studies I became familiar with post-structuralist theories, Marxist and feminist schools of thought that have a very different epistemological, ontological and methodological approach to research.

There was a second venue where I came across feminism and Marxism. In the 1990s the crisis of the Left was felt in my university as well. METU had always been

considered the fortress of the leftist ideology in Turkey, but by the late 1990s while I was a student there the ideological fervor had waned. This was not the case with our university's mountaineering club. Students there were still very passionate in discussing Marxists theories and how they would apply in our society. Something similar was also going on among in the social circles frequented by the students of Ankara University. As a sociologist, I found it very exciting to explore the theoretical implications of my studies, more specifically the relation between "knowledge" and "action." In this sense the questions concerning knowledge production, the proofs through which we gather and interpret information became all the more pertinent.

In particular, my encounter with Critical Theory was very significant and has left a long lasting impact. It led to think at length on the following questions: Is reality something that we perceive with our senses? Is it something we experience, or is it shaped by structural limitations which shape what we perceive? Are the new theoretical tools that would allow us to see reality in all its nakedness? What can these tools be? How do production relations and patriarchy influence how we interpret events that take place in the world? In these days I was convinced that what we call the research activity should engage with these questions, and its methods should have epistemological and ontological positions on these questions, as well as the tools to deal with them methodologically.

Contrary to the positivist paradigms' contention that reality is single, identifiable and that it can be measured and studied objectively, critical theory assumes that reality is historically constructed. Historically constituted social structures determine the way we see the world and this determination is not immune to power relations and interests. Harding argued that in order to achieve a strong objectivity the researcher does not need to become one with the people she is researching. Instead we need to think carefully about the location of a particular culture from a critical distance.²¹ Critical theorists "justify their claims of producing less distorted, and preferable, accounts of social reality though recourse to Hegelian, and subsequently Marxian, theorization that material life sets limits on human understanding. Because of this, one cannot simply claim to know the truth of

²¹ Sandra G. Harding, *Whose science? Whose knowledge?: Thinking from women's lives* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

experience. Knowledge only emerges through the struggles that the oppressed wage against their oppressors.’²²

For critical theory, reality is a virtual reality which is “shaped by social, political, cultural, economic ethnic, and gender values.”²³ There is an inherent suspicion about reality which is often translated in the belief that there is “real” reality beyond the one we experience. To illustrate, as the most prominent figures of critical theory, Marxists claimed that class relations and inherent domination distort our understanding of history and reality. A clear vision can be achieved only if we grasp the class struggle and look into the social reality through the lenses of domination. Similarly, some factions in feminism (e.g. Hartstock, 1997) believe, it is patriarchy that conceals “real” reality.²⁴

Claims to *privileged* access to “truth” with the help of theory (positivists claim was that truth can be grasped via method) bring the following problems: i- formulations of too strong theory; ii- non-verifiable truth claims; and iii- attribution of false consciousness charge to other forms of explanations. But these are only a few of the shortcomings.

Despite its limitations, critical theory proved to be very influential in the way I look at the process of constitution and production of knowledge. First of all, this paradigm encourages researchers to reflect critically upon society and the conception of reality as a construction. The idea of historical contingency creates opportunities to ask original questions about the “social.” Like Skeggs²⁵ I came to the position that “there is no such thing as a disinterested knower and that the positions from which we speak (and how we speak) are a product of our positioning vis-à-vis forms of capital and that this informs what we decide is worthy of study.” This realization, to which I came during my sociology undergraduate years, had a profound, almost emancipatory, impact both in my personality and the way I look at research and life in general. By the aid of Critical Theory I learned the benefits of exercise of “thinking through theory,” I also learned to appreciate more the fact that in the social world things are not necessarily what they seem and that we need to make certain abstractions in order

²² Sandra G.Harding, ed. *Feminism and methodology: Social science issues* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987), quoted in Christina Hughes, *Key concepts in feminist theory and research* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2002), 160.

²³ Lincoln et al., “Paradigmatic controversies,” 100.

²⁴ For an example of this kind of feminist thinking see Nancy Hartsock, "Comment on Hekman's" Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited": Truth or Justice?." *Signs* (1997): 367-374.

²⁵ Beverley Skeggs, *Formations of Class and Gender: Becoming Respectable* (London: Sage, 1997). 26-7.

to understand the social. I began to realize that the deep effects that “normalization” and “reification” have on us. So what lies behind normalization in my current research? This is not a question that can be answered by the positivist approach; rather the critical paradigm may help us to think it through.

My current research centers on the religious reasoning modes, a topic that would not have been possible to research without the critical thinking I acquired from the critical theory school. The modernization approach takes religion for granted, as if it were only a question of the holy books. This unfortunately has been the dominant approach to religion in Turkey therefore studying religion outside the field of theology in Turkey is a relatively new phenomenon.²⁶ Critical theory allows me to question the tenets of the modernization paradigm and a study religious thinking in fresh way.

Critical theory, however, does have its own shortcoming. There is a mistake in which the orthodox Marxist and feminist approaches I described above fall. They assume to know the cause and effect relation behind social constructions and the purpose these constructions serve. But can the theoretical tools and abstractions at hand help us to understand what lies behind social constructions? Yes, the social is historically constructed and it is contingent on context, however, are we capable of fully grasping the conditions and mechanisms within which the construction is taking place?

During my years in Ankara (1996-2006) I had the chance to come across researchers who claimed that they had solved the “ciphers” behind social structures, when in fact they didn’t seem to care much about the social but rather walked around with their theoretical stencils looking only to verify what they already knew to be the truth. This standpoint eventually becomes so pervasive and consistent that no matter where they looked they saw the same patterns and the same social agents. Often enough they reach the conclusion that they know all there is to know about society and what is needed is change. However, as Walby succinctly put it: “those theorists who have given up on science and systematic knowledge accumulation are left merely with moral and ethical exhortation.”²⁷

²⁶ By now there are many scholars like Nilüfer Göle, Esra Özyürek, Cihan Tuğal, Jenny White and Yeşim Arat whose research on Turkey does not subscribe to the modernization theory. Currently the dominant paradigm is no longer modernization theory. Culture sensitive and anthropological studies begin to enrich our understanding of religion in Turkey.

²⁷ Sylvia Walby, “Beyond the Politics of Location,” *Feminist Theory* 1 (2000): 189-206, 202.

My research experience obtains both through books and firsthand has lead me to the conclusion that the belief in one sole, possible and valid interpretation of the truth can be debilitating independently of the methodological tools used. Such an interpretation is closely related to what in this thesis I have called principled reasoning. Among my interlocutors, some religious scholars claimed that they are very certain about their religious knowledge. Their comprehensive religious thinking encapsulated all life spheres, consequently leading them to hold very rigid interpretations about the common world. I will discuss this point in further detail in the chapter on principled reasoning.

3.3.3. Interpretive Approaches

I participated in several qualitative research projects in the last years of my undergraduate studies and also while I was pursuing the master degree in sociology at METU. I was involved in the stages of the research from its design to the writing of the final reports. The topics varied from old age, entrepreneurial culture, masculinity, to civil society and citizenship and youth's attitudes towards the European Union. Due to these research projects, I have been in many cities in Turkey and I have conducted approximately one thousand interviews and focus groups which lasted from two to three hours each between 2001 and 2006. In the scope of these research projects I took part in participant observations that in many locations which reflect the complexity of everyday life, including mosques, game halls, market places, betting shops, different civil society organizations, schools, working places, municipalities, and stadiums.

What I have come to realize through talking in depth to people from very different backgrounds in various places throughout Turkey I realized something that I believe both positivist and critical paradigms miss. The sociology of everyday life, the way in which my interlocutors make sense of the world through their words and behaviors and my involvement for the purpose of understanding is a very complex process. My experience on the field has shown me that the questions I asked initially are impossible to answer through a single paradigm. Serious difficulties can arise when you describe the words that come out of the interlocutor's mouth as false consciousness or when you locate on an attitudinal scale the dispositions of people you know very little about. The same is true for the content analysis done with objectivity concerns, where by qualitative data analysis methods you count how many times certain words are used. Understanding everyday life sociology becomes

impossible when we either try to evaluate the attitudes of individuals based on a normative standpoint provided by a certain ideology as well as when we claim that we hold no ideology at all and are measuring behaviors objectively.

Differently from both these positions but at the same time acknowledging their points of strength, in what follows I will discuss briefly what has come to be known among the qualitative research community as interpretive and participatory approach. My discussion will be based on my experience gathered from fieldwork in the course of years as well as my experience with reading the body of literature on the subject. I will begin with the note on the ontological, epistemological and methodological grounds of this qualitative approach.

It was during in-depth interviews and hours of discussion with the research team that I started to think more seriously about researcher's role as knower and inquirer. That is, the possibility of reaching at truth through social research and the relationship between reality and experience. Initially, during my earlier years of in-depth interviewing I was more cautious to ask standard questions to all my interlocutors with the hope of collecting data that will give a chance of comparison.

However, while conducting interviews I realized that every person has a distinct life story; no matter how hard you try to steer the course of conversation, the participant's stories tend to determine the content of the interviews. There are certain events in a person's life that affect him or her very deeply. In other cases there are individuals who may be very sensitive to something that is going in the national agenda right at the time of the research. It may simply be something that you as an interviewer did not see coming. There are also cases when I, the interviewer, fail to establish the expected rapport with my interlocutor; or maybe the interviewee does not feel like talking of that particular point in time; or maybe the question is too sensitive for the interviewee and he or she may give socially acceptable answers thus exhibiting the social desirability bias. These situations are pitfalls that influence the quality of data and their interpretation. As a result, the following questions are raised persistently: If the activity we call interviewing is based on the combination of so many variables, how reliable is the information gathered this way? If individuals in different interviews are subject to different stimuli, how can the responses they give be comparable? A comparison on these grounds from the beginning resembles comparing apples and oranges; will it not by itself create serious problems? Initially, while heavily under the influence of the positivist paradigm, these were the kind of

questions that I kept raising. In the course of the fieldwork, I came to realize that what were posed as limitations by the positivist paradigm were actually the strengths and richness of interpretative sociology. The questions above show once again the relevance of context and the embeddedness of the individual lives in it. Interviews and participant observations reflect the complexity of the “real” social world and the fact that it is shaped by time and space. The result is that the information that will come from such a source will by default be situated and perspectival; hence, the need for a qualitatively different approach to epistemological and ontological problems of knowledge. What does the literature say on this subject?

In qualitative research where “researchers generally work from under the interpretive umbrella”²⁸ it is accepted that the “inquirer and inquired are fused into a single entity.”²⁹ That is, researcher’s input in the inquiry render the nature of the produced knowledge situated and perspectival. The research design and the very involvement of the researcher dictate that knowledge is socially situated and is always partial.³⁰ “The epistemological issue at hand here “is not whether we can naively discover the world by looking hard, but rather ... that our knowledge is inevitably constructed through a socially mediated process.”³¹ Lincoln, Lynman and Guba provide a very detailed depiction of the epistemological features of the “constructivist” approach, covering substantively what I have been discussing as the interpretive approach.³² In the interpretive approach the nature of knowledge produced is intrinsically “relativist.” The meaning is constructed based on researcher’s interactions with his or her surroundings.

In this research method self-reflexivity defines the most significant trait the research must possess in order to produce knowledge. Reflexivity means being aware that the continuous production of knowledge is perspectival. Therefore, putting the researcher into the research, through, say, autobiographical notes or the use of ‘I’, signals how the knowledge produced is located in the perspectives of the researcher. This is why I am writing this thesis, the way actually I am doing now. It also gives a

²⁸ Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy, *The practice of qualitative research*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2006), 11.

²⁹ Egon G. Guba ed. *The paradigm dialog*. (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications Inc., 1990). 27

³⁰ Donna Haraway, "Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective." *Feminist studies* (1988): 575-599, 583.

³¹ Walby, “Beyond the politics,” 191.

³² Lincoln et al., “Paradigmatic controversies.”

warning about the objectivity of the account by indicating the role of subjectively located knowledge.

The research conducted using this approach focuses more on the communicative experience among individuals in a certain situation and the language that makes possible the communicative experience. The data obtained in the in-depth interviews and participatory practices is the product of the interaction between interviewer and interviewee (or observer and observed), therefore the crucial medium data is the experience of the researcher in an interactive milieu. However, as this paradigm brings in a different outlook about the status of knowledge; the way it interprets 'experience' is also different. According to constructivists "rather than fully constituted experiencing subject to whom experiences happen, experience is the site of subject formation."³³ "Experience is at once always already an interpretation and is in need of interpretation,"³⁴ hence the focus is on language as constructing rather than describing reality. "Experience is not something which language reflects. In so far as it is meaningful, experience is constituted in language."³⁵

The validity of what is said derives from the temporary consensus between interlocutors. That is, even a single word uttered by an individual or a simple gesture is a reflection of a repertoire that exists in society, even if it is for a fleeting moment. Individual through their words express dispositions that are embedded in the social conscience of society, even when the individual is unaware of doing this. This is the reason why I claim that anything said or done by an individual about what is the good, the right and the beautiful gives us clues about understanding these concepts in that society.

It is very important to bear in mind that the kind of research undertaken in the course of this thesis requires a self reflexive standpoint, and that the information gathered is both situated and perspectival. The interpretative method makes possible for the interviewer to notice the situations in which the conversation becomes stilted, or what and when the interlocutor blushes, or makes a very direct eye contact which would otherwise be considered impolite. These are not points that have to be ignored, but rather constitute very important data, of which we can make sense through

³³ Goodman, Joyce, and Jane Martin, eds., introduction to *Gender, colonialism and education: the politics of experience* (London: Routledge, 2002); Joan W. Scott, "Experience," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, eds. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, 22-40 (New York: Routledge, 1992), 37.

³⁴ Scott, *ibid.*

³⁵ Chris Weedon, *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory* (Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell, 1996), 81.

discourse analysis. This is all the more so when discussing modes of religious reasoning. My interlocutors do not solely rely on words to convey their point. I push them to think and question their position, things that they have usually taken for granted. Their frustration, exasperation or enthusiasm is as revealing as are their words. To illustrate, what I have called communitarian rationality I mostly based on signs and gestures rather than words. I was able to capture and analyze this pattern of thinking because methodology I adopted, where communicative meaning transcends language.

Chapter 4

4. Communitarian Religious Reasoning

During the first days of field research in Kayseri a fellow researcher and I, together with our contact person for Kayseri were walking down what looked like a very popular street. At some point I turned to the contact person as asked him about the “non-touristy” restaurants where local people go for good food and drinks in the city. To my surprise, he first looked perplexed, then blushed slightly and said: “Would you really want to have restaurants where you take your wife and your daughter in your city that serve drinks?”

Throughout the field research I have come across similar situations where my interlocutor unwittingly expected that I would think the same as he does on topics that he considered to be common sense. When I, unwittingly as well, disobliged the results were more often than not feelings of uneasiness and awkwardness. It is exchanges like the one that I just mentioned that have induced me to think and try to analyze these uncomfortable situations.

How is it that when discussing religion I can talk about everything without feeling gauche with certain people I have just met; while others behave as if there is a unwritten code which specifies what not to say aloud in public, and which is supposed to be known by strangers as well? I call communitarian reasoning the type of reasoning that appears in situations where the individual is “supposed to know what to do” and “not to say aloud” certain things. In this chapter I focus on communitarian reasoning by discussing the situations, as well as individual behaviors and reactions that bring it about. I believe that we are dealing with a very different kind of reasoning in these situations where words fail us, not in wonder or awe but in awkwardness. When individuals adopt the communitarian reasoning style, they are in fact referring to life in their own communities that is governed by religious rules. Yet this is not a simple matter of referencing something else. They are perpetuating and reproducing that particular life and those particular rules. In Pierre Bourdieu’s terms they perpetuate certain “dispositions” that incline agents to act in a certain fashion.¹ Their purpose is to adopt the right behavior, sensibility, and attitude in the “neighborhood.”

¹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

I think that in order to understand the religiosity of the great “silent” masses in Turkey we have to analyze the communitarian reasoning that comes about through non-verbal, performative attitudes and behaviors. If we also consider that a person can internalize more than one reasoning pattern at the time, communitarian reasoning can also help us understand better the situations where even the articulate, “well-read” Muslims, lack the words and become stuck in awkwardness.

So what is communitarian reasoning? It is the reasoning characterized by the following four traits: (i) becomes visible mostly through performance; (ii) it consists in rule following; (iii) the “us and them” distinction is bolstered, as rules and norms are thought to stem from a supposed community of Muslims; (iv) it is based on tradition that guides the individual without appearing to encourage cognitive engagement. In what follows, I will discuss in detail each aspect of communitarian reasoning by taking into account the already existing literature on the subject as well as examples from my field research. Afterwards, I will trace this type of reasoning in the topics of gender, politics and economy.

This is not reasoning in the usual sense of the term in that here we are referring to patterns of expression and behavior that carry beliefs, emotions, and judgments without being explicitly articulated and defended in a public argument. Still I would count such patterns of expression and behavior as reasoning. Consider someone who witnesses something not to their liking and says “tövbe tövbe.” This reproach is “culturally mediated.” This person is articulating “community's standards of value.” Following Charles Taylor,² Paul Lauritzen,³ and Richard Miller⁴ I approach emotions through a cognitive and interpretive account. Taylor argues that emotions are expressions of agency shaped by norms, which articulate “goods toward which persons order their commitments and from which they derive their bases of self-interpretation.”⁵ Miller argues that “emotions cannot occur outside of a horizon of expectations, a moral world in which our conduct is indexed against a hierarchy of values and social norms.”⁶ Viewing emotions as cognitive activities enables us to understand them as intentional. The process involves an evaluation, an awareness of

² Charles Taylor, *Human Agency and Language* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

³ Paul Lauritzen, “Emotions and Religious Ethics” *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 16 (1988): 307-324.

⁴ Richard B. Miller “On Making a Cultural Turn in Religious Ethics” *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 33 (2005): 409-443.

⁵ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 4.

⁶ Miller, “Cultural turn,” 425.

the self and measuring against a hierarchy of values, and as such it is cognitive. They are also culturally constructed because one's culture is the source of the hierarchy of values. We need to think of emotions as rule-governed cultural artifacts.⁷ The person who says "tövbe tövbe" is making a judgment, stating aloud his commitment to the norms of the society and also teaching those around him "to gain a sense of how to respond to life's contingencies."⁸

4.1. Communitarian reasoning and performativity

The communitarian style of reasoning makes its appearance through performativity and body language. Mere attention to discursive forms is inadequate to grasp this reasoning. And this is what makes this form of reasoning unconventional when compared to the other styles. It consists in gestures, looks, facial expressions and at times curt verbal reproves. Communitarian religious reasoning is mostly expressed through non-verbal clues. It gets the form we identify as reasoning when I ask explicitly for a justification. The answer is laconic and references the customs and traditions of the community. In order to understand this we have to look at its performative aspect.

For a theoretical discussion of performativity I turn to the work of Judith Butler, in which we find an analysis of the "matrix of gender relations that institutes and sustains the subject" through performative practices. The insight offered by replacing "sex" and "sexuality" with the terms "religion" and "religiosity" is astounding.

Butler employs the terms "matter" and "materialization" to explain the constitution of gendered subject instead of using concept of "construction." Materialization refers to a process of stabilization, which "over time produces the effect of boundary, fixity and surface" she calls matter.⁹ The process of materialization manifests itself in the roles that occur through ritualized repetition of norms. Butler turns to the concept of performativity to account for iterated practices in the process of materialization. For her the existing relations and constructs are both produced and destabilized in the course of reiteration, as the affect of reiterative or ritual practices,

⁷ Lauritzen, "Emotions," 308.

⁸ Miller, "Cultural turn," 426.

⁹ Judith Butler, *Bodies that matter: on the discourse limits of "sex"* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), 9.

the existing representations and corresponding institutions acquire their naturalized affect. Butler understands performativity in a process of iterability “a regularized and constrained repetition of norms.” Butler says “this repetition is not performed *by* a subject; this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal condition for the subject. This iterability implies that “performance” is not a singular “act” or event, but a ritualized production, a ritual reiterated under and through constraint, under and through the force of prohibition and taboo, with the threat of ostracism and even death controlling and compelling the shape of the production, but not, I will insist, determining it fully in advance.”¹⁰ Butler’s analysis helps us to understand the effect of religion in everyday life and its manifestation in daily practices. She takes the discussion away from merely discursive and argumentational sphere and she proposes to locate it in performance and culture. In actual practice, religion besides arguments, discourses, and text, also manifests itself outside utterances and discourses in performances. Her analysis enables us to accommodate the material reality of religion in performances, gestures and rituals.

How does Butler’s logic of process of materialization take place when we deal with the regulatory norms and iterative practices of the communitarian religious rationality? What are the regulatory norms that materialize and fixate the boundaries of the relationships between religious and non-religious, sacred and mundane? And in the spheres of gender relations, economy, and politics what are the regulatory performative religious acts that shape and have imprint on these spheres? The boundaries of the relations are fixated through lived experiences of differentiation, which does not take place in a vacuum. It compels with the requests of the sedimented identity differentiations. Communitarian reasoning shows us how these differentiations are actually taking place through performances, iterations within religiously patriarchal relations.

Let me illustrate with some initial examples. The way people salute each other upon a casual encounter, their dressing style, the walking style and even the way they laugh can all be analyzed through the lens of religious performance. We look at how acts are iterated and how the iteration contributes to the creation of a normative plane. There are certain spaces and places where religious people and religious communities dominate, such as certain neighborhoods of Erzurum or the Çarşamba neighborhood

¹⁰ Ibid., 95.

in Fatih, Istanbul. In the libraries, mosques and shrines found in these locations it is possible to distinguish between religious and secular people. I have observed particular symbolic gestures and body postures associated with a particular religious habitus. In these spaces the religious individuals, when compared to their secular counterparts, hold their heads down; when they stand or sit they try to take up less space; when they speak they do so in lower voices and do not laugh aloud. This humility which becomes embedded in the body and appears performatively is a general non-verbal expression of communitarian reasoning. So in broad terms rationalization here does not take place through the cognitive engagement of the individual, but by observing and internalizing the behaviors and attitudes of the elders and of the community.

Saba Mahmood's insights are valuable in formulating the connection between religious reasoning and performativity. Mahmood's book *Politics of Piety* (2005) is an ethnographic account of an urban women's mosque movement, which is part of the bigger Islamic Revival in Cairo, Egypt. Mahmood discusses how pious women acquire their identity of being pious by appropriating socially authorized forms of performativity. Acts, attitudes, and gestures become constitutive of Muslim women and Mahmood gives us food for thought in her depiction of intriguing relationship between piety, performance and her method of study.

Similarly, Hirschkind in *The Ethical Soundscapes* (2001) approaches behaviors and performance as constitutive of special type of "da'wa" reasoning, which in turn informs a specific way of religiosity. Hirschkind asserts that "the Islamic sensibilities in this reasoning is cultivated and practiced within daily life tend to be understood behaviorally, as disciplined ways of being and acting, ways for which the body's performances and expressions constitute an integral part."¹¹ His claim is that Islamic sensibilities "are cultivated gradually through disciplinary practices, such as prayer, Koranic recitation and memorization, hadith study, and listening to sermons, as well as by undertaking the practice of da'wa itself."¹²

Let us look at the use of Arabic and the long speeches in the case of communitarian reasoning. The person who does the monologue does not necessarily know Arabic, but he will quote verses from the Koran making all the appropriate

¹¹ Charles Hirschkind, "Civic virtue and religious reason: An Islamic counterpublic," *Cultural Anthropology* 16 (2001): 3-34, 19.

¹² *Ibid.*, 20.

sounds associated with speaking Arabic. Sometimes the reciter will close his eyes, others recite by using a particular *makam*, or even emulating famous performers. This is more frequently done when there is a wide audience, thus signaling to the others that the reciter is in a spiritual state. Neither the performer nor the audience knows Arabic and both parties are aware of this. Nonetheless this does not stop the reciter from performing or the public from attending. Reciting from the Koran is part of this performance. Upon witnessing the performance there are people in the public that experience trembling, others button their jackets to show respect. Very uncommonly it is possible to see someone who is sitting cross-legged. Very quickly that person will be warned by others next to him to sit straight. It is the voice and the postures of the reciter that transmits the audience the need to sit in respect. Therefore whenever possible, depending on the place and the surroundings, a religious person will try to trigger these kinds of religious feelings.

These examples are all from my observations during the field work. These performative acts are less common during interviews because then my interlocutors try to verbally articulate their opinions. During one to one conversations I rarely come across recitations in Arabic of the Koranic verses. My interlocutors argue with words rather than citing the Koran in the original when they are talking to me. However, the very same person will engage in the recitation of the Koran in front of a community of believers. So while he will not adopt communitarian religious reasoning when talking about religion, politics or economics to me, he will nonetheless revert to communitarian reasoning when we were discussing a sensitive subject, such as gender issues. On sensitive topics, eloquence fails them and they revert to silence and even send angry looks my way. This form of reasoning appears in moments when we shy away from asking questions, conversation stops, and silence dominates. We come to realize that we have reached certain borders.

To illustrate, in some cases it is possible to discuss with religious people the existence of God. However, when the interlocutor shifts to communitarian reasoning such a subject is completely unapproachable. Any topic has the potential of turning into a taboo when the other party in the conversation switches to communitarian reasoning, but the strongest trigger topics are religiously sanctioned issue areas such as eating pork, sexual relations before marriage, gay and lesbian relations, alcohol consumption, and the marriage of a Muslim woman to an uncircumcised man. I have noticed that these topics made my interlocutors immediately intolerant. They are

considered topics that cannot be rationalized. There is a silenced and tacit agreement on the right course of behavior, despite the fact that there is no intelligible argument to justify it in our day and age. It seems that one of the reasons this kind of reasoning persists is that it keeps away from scrutiny by turning the tables on the scrutinizer.

Even though it is possible to identify this reasoning as a very distinct form of religious reasoning, it should also be mentioned that consistency is not one of its characteristics. When confronted with religious taboos people either hide behind communitarian reasoning and they try their hand at explanations that become convoluted and are self-identified as bordering on the absurd. To illustrate with some claims that have come up during my interviews: that all Westerners are bastards, that it is wrong to eat pork because pigs menstruate or because pigs are not jealous of their partner, or that women who have sex before marriage are whores.

When their common sense is challenged, the first reaction of the people engaging in communitarian reasoning is to blush, feel shame, and become silent. Their way of dealing with the person who brought up the forbidden topic is an attitude that can be best described as “how dare you.” Hence, the other person is made to feel, to notice and remember shame, (*racon*) – what is permissible in this community, and sin. By triggering these feelings and memories this type of reasoning is active and effective in many non-verbal communications. Looks, reactions, going red in the face, increasing one’s voice and the similar are all elements of communitarian reasoning. However, communitarian reasoning appears in its clearest form on set in front of topics considered sensitive. When subjects that are considered to be shameful and against conventions are brought up talking and arguments end and the person shows his or her reactions performatively, in gestures.

Charles Tilly is one of the scholars who discuss the embedded communitarian aspect of reason giving. He says “whatever else they are doing when they give reasons people are clearly negotiating their social lives. They are saying something about relations between themselves and those who hear their reason givers and receivers confirming, negotiating, or repairing their proper connections.”¹³

Tilly identifies four types of reason giving, namely: conventions, stories, codes and technical accounts. Tilly’s analysis of conventions as a source of reason giving echoes my understanding of communitarian reasoning. He defines conventions as

¹³ Charles Tilly, "Reasons why," *Sociological Theory* 22 (2004): 445-454, 447.

“conventionally accepted reasons for dereliction, deviation, distinction, or good fortune.” In this reason giving, a person “does not pretend to provide adequate causal account. If one starts explaining in detail why s/he spilled coffee on your newspaper, [going into details of] how I had a bad night’s sleep, have been worrying about my job, or recently develop a tremor it is hard to control- you may well become impatient . You say rather “oops, I’m such a klutz! Or you can say sorry I tripped on the rug”) conventions claim, confirm, repair, or even deny social relations.”¹⁴ Tilly here focuses on the redundancies within speech.

My concern is slightly different from Tilly’s. Tilly affirms that the content of reasoning based on conventions is purposefully filled with redundant words because the purpose of this reasoning is to sustain and perpetuate social relations. My field work shows that besides the function identified by Tilly, the purpose of communitarian reasoning is to transmit and teach to the other that a particular style is the good, the right and the beautiful. The words they use may be superfluous, but what matters is that “estafurullah”, “maşallah,” and “inşallah” are accompanied by certain expressions, sometimes showing even anger or shame, by a raised voice or a certain look. These performative accompaniments communicate that specific good, right and beautiful that is constituted and consolidated in that specific community. I agree with Tilly that giving reasons in this way, they are indeed, negotiating their social lives, they establish the form of relation between themselves and those who hear their reasons. Besides, on top of all these they channel others to proper behavior.

In some cases during the in–depth interviews I directly asked my interlocutors about their “performative reactions” so they tried to express with words the performative aspect of their belief and concomitant religious reasoning. One of my interviewees from Trabzon wore a frock and Islamic beard, I asked him about them and his explanation was that this dressing channels him to behave a particular religious way. He said: “Now you take this frock and start walking around the bazaar with it and see what will happen, how you will feel.” A performative act functions like a self–fulfilling prophecy. The more you display a particular performance, the more it is expected of you to perform it. It is important to note the communal element in performativity. You do not just expect things from yourself; others have expectations of you as well. By behaving in ways that are applauded by the community in which

¹⁴ Charles Tilly, *Why? What happens when people give reasons ... and why?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). 15-6.

you live you begin to feel in a certain way but you also begin to spread that feeling in the community. Therefore, as this example shows, going out dressed in a particular way becomes fully meaningful when you ‘go out.’ Again this is one of those things that escape notice during oral communications. As we will see in the other forms of reasoning, during in–depth interviews ‘the mind’ plays a central role; my interlocutors are capable of thinking beyond their own individual identities and in certain cases argue as if they are ‘unencumbered selves.’ What features in the performative aspect of communitarian reasoning is the exact opposite.

The following example will serve to illustrate the manner in which ethical behavior is guided through non-verbal means.

If I didn’t have the beard, my coffeehouse life would continue. This attire makes you feel ashamed. And after a certain point, when you realize the truth, you feel glad for not doing it. A process of maturation takes place, however that maturation doesn’t happen right away. You feel like looking at women. Who wouldn’t, as a natural disposition? Who wouldn’t feel like looking at women? But you can’t look, while everyone else is looking. A glance, maybe walking down the street... Your nefs (carnal soul) wants it, but the beard doesn’t let you look. There is the matter of ‘what everyone will say.’ And at the same time you say to yourself “oh nefs, aren’t you ashamed? You talk about ‘the sunna of the Prophet’, and at the same time you follow your desire”. (No: 117, Shopkeeper, 27 years old, male, Erzurum)¹⁵

Growing a beard becomes an act that controls the person. At the same time the person himself attributes to the beard the ability to control the reactions of the society. In the literature these people are commonly referred to as fanatics and fundamentalists. A good question to be posed at this point is how do these ‘fanatic’ people react and interact with others who do not agree or even reject the performative choices made by ‘the fanatic.’ I will be exploring this question when I discuss in details the implications of this particular type of religious reasoning for the economy, politics and gender relations. In terms of content, this form of communication is seriously limited when compared to the others but it would be a mistake to think that it is any less effective. This form of reasoning is very effective in dictating to other what the good, the right and the beautiful is. It allows the most difficult conventions to be established because it does not directly reflect the thought behind it. People get to these

¹⁵ Sakal olmasaydı kahve hayatım devam ederdi. Bu kisve size utandırıyor. Bir saatten sonra da farkına varınca iyi ki yapmadım diyorsun. Bir olgunlaşma süreci de başlıyor, yalnız bu olgunlaşma süreci hemen olmuyor. İnsanın canı kadına bakmak istiyor. Fıtraten kim istemez. Kimin canı kadına bakmak istemez. Ama herkes bakarken sen bakamıyorsun. Bir bakış belki caddede giderken. Ama nefsin istiyor, ama sakal baktırtmaz. Etraf ne der meselesi var. Bir yandan kendi kendine “Utandırmıyorsun ey nefis. Peygamber sünnetinden bahsediyorsun nefsin isteklerine uyuyorsun” diyorsun”. (No.117, Küçük dükkan sahibi, 27 yaşında, erkek, Erzurum)

conventions and accept them without questioning and they don't see anything wrong in imposing them on other people as well. I will discuss this point in further detail in my account on tradition and communitarian reasoning.

4.2. Norm compliance and rule following

Individuals, who adopt communitarian reasoning, tend to accept the dominant discourse proposed by the leading figures in the community. The views of the religious leaders are accepted without reasoned argumentation. Questioning the religious authority's interpretations is perceived as improper, and the devout Muslim should show full obedience and respect to the religiously articulated rules and norms. When there is confusion or failure to find the right course of action from the available religious knowledge [mostly available in *İlmi Hal*¹⁶] individuals ask for officially binding interpretation [*fetva*] from the religious leaders of the community. I think we can also interpret the behavior of attending the Friday prayer in a village community, where the close community sentiment is strong. One of my interlocutors, the imam of a village, clearly stated to me that the people in his village do not have the option of not attending the Friday prayer. However, he thinks that this is a result of the need to comply with the rules in one's environment.

To give you an example, no one can say I won't go to the Friday prayer. That's just an example. Why doesn't he? The community is small. Nobody stays home. Even if he decided to stay home, his mother or wife will tell him to go to the mosque. It is impossible for him to go anywhere else but the mosque. After all this is a village, there is nowhere else to go. So of course he will have to come here. But the city is not like that. Anyone can go [to the mosque] if he wishes to do so, nobody will ask why you did not go, for example. (No:132, Village imam, 40 years old, male Erzurum).

This village imam also thinks that religion is lived more honestly in cities, because the individuals can choose consciously among their options. Their choices in turn shape who they are. The imam complains that because the villagers are not honest about their religious feelings, they have to rely on rule following and compliance. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the compliance characteristic of communitarian reasoning appears only in small, close-knit, communities like villages. During the field work I noticed similar compliant style of reasoning in certain religious

¹⁶ In the *İlmi Hal* by Türk Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları (2007), it is possible to find, for instance, an extensive account of physical cleaning (*necâset*) and the cleaning of the soul (*hades*). The ordering of the *İlmi Hal* and the way the knowledge is presented is crucial to understand the particular religious logic. The detailed account of every aspect of daily life reminds the fact that it tries to leave almost no room for individual reasoning, it simply attempts to define acceptable course of all possible action, therefore it seems that within Islamic cosmology it is possible for a devout Muslim to live the entire life by remaining completely within the logic of appropriateness.

communities and groups located in cities as well. When I talked to people about religion there were a significant number of them who identified religion with turning people into sheep, and identified compliance as the one and unifying characteristic. Through my examples I am trying to show even though this bias is not without ground, it is only one of the aspects of religion and religious reasoning. I will give a few more examples to make my point.

Why I asked my interviewees about the greatest motivation in deciding to go to a *dergah*, join a religious community or any religious society, they state that they want to learn religious manners (*adap ve edep*). A lot of people stress that religion basically channels them to rule and norm compliance. They state that religion teaches them how to “behave” without having to think very much about what they are doing.

In Erzurum I was talking to a thirty-three years old, electronics repairman about why he decided to go to a *dergah*. He had been going for past two years. He says: “I began going because of my friends, that is, my friends were the main factor in my decision to go. Now I don’t go any longer, but it was nice and pleasant when I used to. That is when the big change in me began. I began recognizing the right of others (*insan hakkı*). Mysticism is about good manners and appreciating the value of others. Each person has his own nature. I know it is difficult [to show respect] and to be honest about one’s feelings but this is the *dergah* taught me. I mean I learned good manners (*adap*) there.” Upon this I asked: “So if I ask you what is the most important thing you learned in the *dergah*, what would you say?” And he replied: “It is good manners.” (No:132, Elektronik Technician, 33 years old, male, Erzurum)

These stories become very frequent when people talk about the first time they covered their hair or their first prayer (*namaz*). It is very common for these stories to begin with people around me were doing it; so I began to do it as well. But the number of people who say that later on they became more conscious about what they were doing is also in significant numbers. To illustrate:

-How did things change in your life when you started wearing a veil?

-Well, actually, when you look at it from where I am standing now I can’t really say that it was a conscious decision at the time. It was the spiritual environment surrounding me at the time that pushed me in that direction. Now I see that I made

the decision because others were doing it, because I began wearing a veil even before I began praying regularly.¹⁷

It should be pointed out that this attitude is acknowledged and approved of by learned religious scholars as well. According to an Islamic law professor, for a Muslim to study deep religious matters it is not important for him or her to be able to interpret. He states that in most cases this is not possible anyway. But what really matters, he claims, is to be able to follow an Islamic law interpreter (*müçtehit*). The close community and leadership socialize the members to “true” practices and beliefs within Islam. By following the established rules they ensure that a certain practice is not innovation (*bid’at*) in Islam. I will quote an Islamic law professor’s comment on fostering rule following and the need to follow a law interpreter:

In order to obey God you have to know what he requests of you. This is obedience. You learn what you need through an interpreter of Islamic law [*müçtehit*]. You say to yourself ‘Haa! This is what God wants of me’ and you go on and do it. Even if the interpreter is wrong, your servitude to God is valid. Why? Because he [the interpreter] was wrong. You don’t say “It is wrong but I will do it anyway.” You say “This is the right.” Or you say “This is pleasing to God. This is his command” (No:230, Islamic law professor, male, 77 years old, Istanbul).¹⁸

As we clearly see in the words of the Islamic law professor, certain people believe that it is impossible for people to rationally know by themselves what God wants from them. In this case following a leader becomes strongly recommended. I consider this logic of norm compliance and rule following to be important because it unveils and explains the foundations of the rationality that governs communitarian reasoning. This kind of advice makes it easy for people to conform strictly to the ways of their community. It is a rationality that fosters imitation or sharing of patterns of behavior. And therefore it becomes almost unrealistic to expect a justification of this form of rationality vocally.

4.3. Creating ‘us’ and ‘them’

Communitarian reasoning also emphasizes what the members of a community have in common. That is, emphasizes not simply rule following but that also the importance

¹⁷ This quotation is taken from an interview with a veiled stylist, in Istanbul, the full interview is in the link: <http://www.sabah.com.tr/Cumartesi/2013/01/19/moda-bizim-icin-bir-ihdiyacti>

¹⁸ İtaat bu demek. Ne istediğinizi müctehid yolu ile biliyorsunuz. Öğreniyorsunuz, haa Allah bunu istiyor benden diyorsunuz ve uyguluyorsunuz. Şimdi o müctehid hata etsede sizin kulluğunuz muteber. Niye çünkü hata etmiş yanlış ama ben bunu uygulayım demiyorsunuz diyorsunuz ki doğru olan budur ya da diyorsunuz ki Allah buna razıdır. Allahın benden istediği budur (No.230, Fıkıh Profesörü, Erkek, yaş 77, İstanbul).

of following common rules or norms. This is done behaviorally or performatively or with a remonstrating talk. When asked for an explanation the phrase that I most often came across was “this is the way the things are done in our community.” What matters here, once again, is behavioral or performative submission to the presumed shared values of the community rather than having a reasoned argumentation.

I will illustrate how communitarian reasoning contributes and bolsters the creation of a community of “we the righteous” through an entry in Ekşi Sözlük which dates January 19th, 2013. Later the incident narrated in the entry also became a newspaper article.¹⁹ The author of the entry is nicknamed Nixolidia and is also the main character in the episode. He lives abroad and came back to Turkey for short business trip. The events take place at 4 am in the airport when he is about to fly back to the country where he lives. Nixolidia states that he had a few drinks in Taksim before going to the airport. Upon arriving he notices that the airport is full of people who are going on the holy pilgrimage. While waiting in the passport control line he hears the pilgrims mentioning him saying things like “what on earth is he wearing?”, “do you think he has drunk alcohol?”, “and he isn’t a foreigner, look he is holding a book in Turkish”, “a Muslim Turkish man does not wear an earring.” Nixolidia walks away from the group after passing the passport control, but one of the pilgrims comes near him and links arms with Nixolidia and invites him to join his friends because they would like to ask him a few questions. He finds himself amidst twenty people he doesn’t know and one of them asks him: “Aren’t you a Turkish Muslim?” Others join in to say “aren’t you ashamed of making us sin?”

Someone else from the crowd explains in further detail: “My son, you smelled of alcohol while you were in the line. You are wearing an earring. After you entered the airport someone saw you drinking alcohol. There are people here, who are going on holy pilgrimage, aren’t you ashamed of doing these things near them?” The crowd keeps asking rhetorical questions about his sense of shame and his good manners, thus thinking that they can make Nixolidia behave. Nixolidia replies by saying that he does not have a faith and that the crowd has no right to talk to him like that. Some of the younger people in the crowd come forward upon hearing Nixolidia’s words and begin

¹⁹ For the details of the event in Turkish see: “Havalimanında yaşanan çarpıcı bir gericiilik hikayesi...,” *Sol Portal*, January 29, 2013, accessed October 24, 2013 <http://haber.sol.org.tr/kent-gundemleri/havalimaninda-yasanan-carpici-bir-gericilik-hikayesi-haberi-67142>

to push him around while saying “what is it you’re saying?” It seems that they are about to beat him up with the blessing of the whole group. Nixolidia feels as if he is about to be lynched so he runs away and manages to save himself.

In this episode the phrases like “aren’t you a Muslim and a Turk?” and “aren’t you ashamed of yourself?” reflect communitarian reasoning. These are rhetorical questions which confirm a situation and transmit a message which issues a warning to the interlocutor. Upon receiving a comeback reply, the remonstrating person answers with clichés like “Look, he even answers back” and “Look, he dares to speak up.” These clichés reinforce the original purpose of the remonstrating. The rule of the game is that when someone is told “are you not ashamed of your behavior?” the reproved person is not supposed to reply back. The purpose of this communication is to transmit to the other person that he or she is in the wrong, and by preventing a verbal exchange it tries to dictate what the reproving person thinks is right. As I will be discussing in the third and fourth rationality, the moment the subject becomes open to arguments from both parties the grounds for dictating “the right course of behavior and belief” become volatile. Everyone knows that “you cannot force anyone to be a Muslim” and that moreover it would be wrong to try to insist by force. But as in the episode above, we see in action a group dynamic that brings forth a different way of thinking, which suppresses common knowledge. At the same time, the episode illustrates the discursive form that communitarian religious reasoning takes. Here becomes legitimate to remonstrate with and even harass a person who does not abide by religious rules by reference to these same religious rules. In particular, if the rule breaker is someone from the same community, from the same neighborhood or even looks like someone would share the same values, it becomes “normal” to pressure them into compliance. In Eksi Sozluk, the entries following the incident I reported above are comments of other people confirming that they have been through a similar experience. Eksi Sozluk is a website where people narrate first hand experiences that cannot be verified. However if we take into consideration the number of entries from different persons who confirm having lived through comparable situations, it is difficult to deny that these behaviors enacted in name of religion have a place in our society. Indeed we do not need to explore it in far places. Lynching mobs are another example where we see behavior legitimized by communitarian religious reasoning. During the Sivas massacre in 1993 thirty-seven people, most of whom were Alevi intellectuals, were killed. The gathering was organized against Aziz Nesin, who

translated and published Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and who openly criticized Islam. Nesin was among the Alevi intellectuals when the crowd turned violent and set fire to the Madimak Hotel.

Communitarian religious reasoning appeared during interviews when my interlocutors and I were talking about gender. If the milieu is already conservative, as is the case in Erzurum or Kayseri, this approach provides an environment conducive to intolerance towards difference. For instance in Kayseri the religious leader during a Friday sermon while giving advice to parents about the right age to start their children's religious education, overtly condemned those who sent their daughters to ballet training at the age of 4-5 instead of sending them to Koran reciting courses.

4.4. Tradition and lack cognitive engagement

The fourth trait of communitarian religious reasoning is that it is based in tradition. Tradition provides guides for appropriate behavior and morals. It does this not only through customs and norms but also through cues that are intelligible to the members of the community. As such, behaving in expected ways and doing as one is told is not conducive to cognitive engagement with one's actions. Tradition ensures that individuals behave in a certain way without creating awareness of what they are doing. Religion's importance and potency become all the stronger due to the lack to engagement at the cognitive level. People engaged in communitarian religious reasoning, often behave in certain ways out of habit; they do things because this is how it is done. This is particularly the case with religious behaviors when people are discovering their religiosity. I will illustrate with the words of a twenty-four years old female, university student from Denizli whom I asked to free associate and tell me the first thing that she could think of when someone says "sin".

It is a word from which I have steered clear in the past two years. It is a very broad concept. The simplest form of sin would be adultery through looking. As I mentioned earlier there are seeds that have been planted since childhood. They come upon you like lightening when you hear the word. Now I don't question them very much, to tell you the truth. Adultery through looking is a sin, that's it. Backbiting is sin. Another example, to lie is sin. I categorize things under "sin" and so I am in control of myself. But I think it is not a word I am very close to right now. I don't pay much attention to the word "sin". That too, just like the word "helal", is now in the background, honestly. (No:74, Student, 24 years old, female, Denizli).²⁰

²⁰ Son iki senedir uzaklaştığım bir kelime ki. Çok geniş bi kavram. Yani en basitinden göz zinası günah. Benim dediğim gibi çocukluktan beri kafada atılan tohumlar var, şimşek gibi açılıyor bu terimleri duyduğum zaman. Şimdi çok sorgulamıyorum açıcısı. Ama bundan iki senen önce çok sorguluyordum. İşte göz zinası günahtır. Gıybet günahtır. İşte başka bi şey yalan söylemek günahtır.

Phrases like “there are seeds that have been planted since childhood” or “they come upon you like lightening when you hear the word” express a type of religious reasoning that is at work while we are not aware of it. Habit guides a person’s behavior without the person becoming aware of it. Dücane Cündioğlu claims that a big part of religion has been “traditionalized” and that religion can become more influential through habit. He states that the areas in religion which have become codified surpass in influence those that have not been codified. During a talk he gave in Cemal Reşit Rey, Cündüoğlu referred to the disproportionate importance that is given to the fact of whether the man you are going to marry is circumcised compared to whether he prays five times a day or not. Being circumcised means following the *sunnah*, as such it is not mandatory. Praying five times a day is, however, compulsory in Islam. Nonetheless, the society is ready to accept Muslims that don’t pray at all, but it is impossible for an uncircumcised man to be accepted in the same society. What is at work here is internalizing things without having thought them through. Certain requirements of the *sunnah* have become internalized without creating awareness. A similar example given by Cündüoğlu is the Muslim practice of kissing mothers’ hand. Kissing a mother’s hand and holding it to one’s forehead is done automatically, it is so forceful because it is not rationalized, it is done automatically without much thought. This lack of critical stance toward communal norms, taking them as valid simply because one was raised by them, and non-critical endorsement of such norms nonetheless leads to daily behaviors is what I am referring to in the fourth trait of communitarian religion reasoning. Washing yourself after using the toilet, showing respect to one’s parents and relatives, taking off shoes when you enter a house, stopping whatever you are doing when you hear the call to prayer are only some of the practices that are widely accepted in the society. They are derived from religion and are implemented unconsciously. During an interview one participant talked about a person’s conscience and choosing between good and evil as established through religion while the person is unaware of it.

-Look, you live in a Muslim society. It is impossible to keep away from Islamic references. Even atheists who live in this society have adopted behaviors that have references in Islam.

-Is this a reference to conscience?

Sürekli böyle günah adı altında sınıflandırıp kendimi dizginliyordum. Ama zannedersen şimdi bağlı olduğum bir kelime değil. Çok dikkat etmiyorum günah kelimesine. O da helal kelimesi gibi geri planda kalıyor açıkcası (No.74, öğrenci, yaş 24, Denizli).

-That's it, you take the values that make up your conscience from Islam and from within the society. Even if you can't help it, you are within society.
-But what can I do about it, shall I say I don't think this is right, it is not honest?
-Your references about what is fair and just also come from the society. You cannot get out of it. I don't know if I am making myself clear. This is not your characteristic that you bring from outside, you take this characteristic from society, which in turn takes the reference from Islam (No:227, Factory Owner, 51 years old, male Istanbul).²¹

In the next section I will look at how the form that religious reasoning takes when it operates in the spheres of politics, gender and economy. Although I will bring examples from all these three spheres, communitarian religious reasoning appears more clearly in the case of gender. Gender is sphere where the least discussion takes place and where often individuals are required to perform as expected.

4.5. Politics

The reflection of communitarian reasoning in politics appears more commonly in the distinction between 'us' and 'them', where the former refers to the religious people and the latter to secular sections of society. However, with people operating within this rationality in the political realm the distinction is created symbolically and through behavior, such as gestures. The expectation of how a religious person has to look and behave in the political sphere makes up communitarian religious reasoning in this case. To illustrate: there are expectations about how a political candidate wears his moustache, his beard, how he dresses, how he talks, the words he chooses to represent the religious worldview. The words through which politicians greet each other encourage the distinction between 'us' and 'them', thus creating the impression that these politicians give great importance to the values. For example, while a religious person use a lot of "God willing" (*inşallah*) when he talks, a secularist will say "I hope" (*umarım*); or where a religious person will greet someone else by using "selâmün aleyküm", a secularist will opt of "selam" or "merhaba". In this sense, the

²¹ -Bakın siz Müslüman bir toplumun içinde yaşıyorsunuz İslam'ın referanslarından uzak durmanız mümkün değil. Şu toplumun içerisinde yaşayan ateistler dahi İslam referanslı davranışlar biçimi oluşturmuşlardır.

-Hani bu vicdan referansı ya da?

-İşte vicdanınızı oluşturan değerler İslam kökenli ve toplumun içerisinde alıyorsunuz bunu.

İşte bende tam başka bir şey söylemeye çalışıyorum ama evet.

-Yok, ama değil yani bu toplumun içindediniz.

-Ama bana göre doğru gelmiyor dürüstçe gelmiyor diyeyim?

-Neden işte referansınız oradan geldiği için hak adalet kavramından geliyor yani onun içinden çıkamazsınız. Anlatabildim mi o sizin dışarıdan getirdiğiniz bir özellik değil bu toplumdaki aldığımız bir özellik öbür toplumda referanslarını İslam'dan alıyor (No.227, Fabrika Sahibi, 51 yaşında, erkek, İstanbul).

Friday prayer becomes an opportunity for the religious politician to put an appearance in a public prayer and act performatively, also contributing to taking sides and showing with whom you belong. Among small shop owners the performative act of the Friday prayer begins by holding the prayer rug beneath one's arm while walking through the bazaar to show to anyone who is looking that he is going to the Friday prayer. The fasting month of Ramadan also is a time where religious performance is more intense. Going each night to a different mosque for the *teravi* prayer, eating together in different houses, restaurants, or *iftar* tents turns the act of breaking the fast into a religious show not so much in terms of content as in terms of the form they take. These settings and occasions become opportunities for politicians to join the religious conservative milieus and to compete with each other for support. So is also the case with religious holidays or the holy nights. Certain behaviors are expected to be performed during the important religious days. No matter what the content of these behaviors is, acquiescing or declining to perform them puts people into camps and sustains the separation between the religious people and the secularists in symbolic realm.

Among the politicians the performativity of religious practice takes the form of carrying the Muslim rosaries, often saying "*bismillah*," citing quotes from the Koran in Arabic, and referring to religion when giving a speech. Prime Minister Erdoğan makes a point of beginning the opening ceremonies with "*Ya bismillah*." The shape communitarian religious reasoning takes gives us important clues to understand the political dynamics at the local level, not through content but rather through form, that is, through gestures and performance. Communitarian reasoning, different from principled reasoning and deconstructive rationality, is not expressed through long conversations that strive to establish straight parallels based on rational thought between religious doctrine and politics. When religious politicians adopt principled reasoning in their speeches they elaborate both the good sides and the bad sides of being governed by Sharia law. These religious politicians are ready and willing to defend and justify their position on the role that religion can play in law-making. However, what matters in terms of communitarian reasoning is not the argumentational aspect but how politicians interpret and interact through religious behavior and ritual. This reasoning puts forth in the most honest form religious politicians' preferences in politics. These preference materialize when the politician makes claims that end with "of course it has to be like that" without feeling the need

to elaborate further. It is possible to argue that the performativity of these practices suppresses the political. Making the content negligible and focusing only on form by the attitude of “of course it is like that” prevents contested issues from becoming political. Questioning religion, eating pork, drinking alcoholic beverages, not fasting during Ramadan, expressing ideas that contradict what is generally accepted by the majority, making cartoons about the prophet Mohammed are all considered valid reasons to be perceived as an outsider to the community. Referring to topics outside community values is considered to be engaging in futile discussions. To give and example, in 2012 Sevan Nisanyan commented on the movie about the prophet Mohammed in terms of freedom of expression. The director of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*) labeled that Nisanyan a lunatic. This example shows that people, who operate within communitarian reasoning on particular topic, do not engage with arguments directly. Communitarian religious reasoning creates the grounds to declare arguments that are different null and void. These arguments cannot be voiced within the community; the moment they are vocalized they are suppressed by addressing the person who brings them up with a simple “how dare you.”

There are parallels between communitarian religious reasoning and the principled rationality in terms of what is considered appropriate and within limits of discussion, however in the former instead of engaging in discussion a look that says “aren’t you ashamed of what is coming out of your mouth” is enough to make the other party understand that they are in the wrong. By refusing to rationalize, to openly discuss and by silencing the interlocutor the feeling of in-group belonging is reinforced and the political is suppressed. While principled religious reasoning has its own ways of stifling the political, but we also need to pay attention to the ways communitarian religious reasoning operates to create the distinction in terms of “us” and “them.” Performativity and appearances are used as tools to create camps and put people in them. By preventing the discussion of certain topics what in fact are being prevented is their deliberation and their entrance in the political sphere. Communitarian reasoning delegitimizes its opponent by saying “Look, and he still talks!” or “How dare you!” It establishes hegemony over the space in which it takes place and turns that space into something that has no room for deliberation. The exclusion of the opponent is automatic, thus leading to homogeneous “us” and “them” where the “them” are pushed outside the political sphere. This reasoning represents the victory of the traditional and religiously charismatic. Weber’s charismatic

authority reveals the political sphere that is created by communitarian reasoning. Citing the Koran during a talk creates such a feeling in the audience that any objections to it become social suicide. Citing the Koran sets an atmosphere and attitude that suppresses questioning.²²

4.6. Gender

Gender is the sphere where communitarian religious reasoning becomes most strongly visible. The subject of gender, with a particular emphasis on women and family issues, is considered a delicate topic and as such in certain cases it becomes impossible to ask questions to the participants. The expectations concerning the place of woman in social life is tacitly assumed and agreed upon by the community. Inquiries and viewpoints that question this agreement result in the total breakdown of the warm rapport that is established previously with interlocutors.

As mentioned, a person can vacillate through all four forms of reasoning depending on the topic that is being discussed. Many of my interlocutors adopted the third and the fourth type of rationality when they were discussing economy and even politics. However, I also noticed that the same people who were very capable of sophisticated argumentation in other spheres reverted to communitarian reasoning when the subject turned to gender. Let me illustrate by an incident during an interview with the director of a human rights association which specializes in religious rights advocacy. The director was also a human rights activist. First he told me in a friendly manner that I could ask him any question on any topic. He assured me that we could talk at width and length on any subject. His sociable attitude continued throughout most of the interview. His general stance was reflective and he usually operated in principled and deconstructive reasoning. On the gender issue, I asked him what he thought about the fact that in Islam a man can be married to four wives at the same time. His reply was relatively standard citing the condition at the time when this practice was first adopted and how a husband needs to treat each wife in exactly the

²² Talal Asad cites Maurice Bloch on this issue, his insights are crucial for this discussion he says "Maurice Bloch took linguistic performances itself as a paradigm of symbolic action. Bloch argued the very "formality" of oratory (as in the formality of polite manners) was a crucial means of social control and political domination. Formal communication – including religious ritual and political oratory – was to be seen as *denial of choice* and therefore as submission to traditional authority" Maurice Bloch, "Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation Is religion an extreme form of traditional authority?," *European Journal of Sociology* 15 (1974): 54-81, quoted in Asad, "Thinking about religion," 41.

same manner. He further rationalized his reply by saying that even though this is not against the doctrine, in practice it is almost impossible. My next question to this interlocutor was the following:

Let us look at it from this angle and I ask this with the purpose of forcing the argument: you state that doctrinally speaking it is alright for a man to have four wives but in practice this is not possible. Do you see a fetva sanctioning the opposite possible? Would it possible for a woman to have four husbands?

Upon my finishing the question, the interlocutor looked me in the eye and didn't speak at all for some time. After the pause I noticed that he was blushing, and finally he answered:

No, I think that is quite impossible (No:233, Director of a human rights association, 41 years old, male, Istanbul).

At this point I also learned that I had committed the ultimate *faux pas*. A return to the previous warm relationship with my interlocutor had become impossible.

The boundaries of what be discussed on the gender issue are so remarkably clear in communitarian reasoning that when tensions arise in these interviews they spread throughout immediately. I also noticed that when I spoke with reflective individuals who belong to the Muslim intellectual elite, they may verge into communitarian reasoning on gender issues but eventually recuperate and move back to the third and forth rationality, thus trying to rationalize their answers. For instance, one of the Muslim intellectuals answered my hypothetical question above by saying that it would be impossible for a woman to have four husbands due to the inherent nature (*fitrat*) of both men and women. Others referred to the "universal difference" between men and women or to the protection of future generations, hence attempting to justify their answers through the doctrine.

The awkward pause and the attempts at silencing any discussions on what are perceived to be taboo topics constitutes the clearest examples of communitarian religious reasoning. I experienced the following situation during a conjoint interview with six male interlocutors in the Bismil town of Diyarbakır. Towards the end of the conversation I asked: why are there no women among us today?

If the woman is educated, if she is a teacher or something similar, she would attend. But a regular woman would not attend. Even if you invited her she wouldn't come. It's because she is not used to this.

Another interlocutor said:

She would be afraid. She would think "what if something happens to me [in that room]?"

And yet another replied by saying:

I don't know. We talked about lifestyles before. This is our lifestyle. That is what we are used to, isn't it? A woman, a woman that is not educated, you invite her and she won't come. Only a teacher or a nurse would come and sit together with men. (No: 95, 96, 97, conjoint interview in Bismil, Diyarbakır)

A regular woman would not come to sit with men “anyway” (*zaten*) or “she is not used to it” are expressions used to explain a situation that is unintelligible. That is how it is. That's it. There is no other explanation possible for the situation. Only an outsider, who is not from “their community,” can join a group of talking men. The automatic exclusion of women who are members of the community is readily accepted without the need for further thought or argumentation. Regarding the gender issue, the general tendency to say “this is how women are meant to be” or “they wouldn't sit together with men, anyway” type of responses are typical examples. Treating veil as an unquestioned appropriate clothing of women can be another example. In all these cases I did not come across any argumentation. I witnessed a very controversial, if not uneasy, situation during my stay in Kayseri as I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. By just one statement he communicates the following: “We, the devout Muslims, don't allow such decadence in our hometown.”

Here is another example of the pressure that unveiled women feel and which illustrates communitarian religious reasoning. The episode took place in Denizli.

I don't think it bothers me. I can wear a headscarf and smoke there... but they would judge me. They would say look at that girl, she is wearing a veil. As if I really care about what they say. But they don't state their opinions aloud to me. But if I were to sit here wearing a miniskirt they would make rude remarks. So what is this? They are trying to make me uncomfortable either through their reactions or their looks. They immediately reflect what they are thinking through their looks. You are aware of it but there is no alternative. If you wear a miniskirt or low-neck blouse, a man passing by will make a pass at you and if you reply by saying how rude of you to make a pass at me, he may address you with swear words rather than an apology. But you have no right to say anything to that person. And let alone the person who was harassing you, if there are other people around, they will begin to do the same. I wear a veil, so if anyone harasses me verbally the other people around will say to the harasser “aren't you ashamed of yourself?” So why do they protect a veiled girl but not an unveiled one? She is a human being too. This has nothing to do with being veiled or unveiled, being religious or irreligious, being beautiful or ugly. They don't look at you as a human being. As a society we think that a woman wearing a veil is honourable and an unveiled woman is not. This is unfair. There are lots of people who don't wear a veil and are honourable and have a good character. And there are a lot of people who are veiled and are bad people. I give example from the women because I am a woman. I could say the same about men. As a man, if you make a pass at a woman you are applauded as a big guy (*delikanlısın*). And what if a woman makes a pass at a man? They'll say have you no shame and honor? Why shouldn't a woman make a pass to a man? She likes him she makes a pass. They call the man big guy, even though he is committing adultery, he is a man. But a woman, she cannot. If you consider that they are both human beings, they are both in the wrong. So what should you do? You should criticize both. But we don't react the same way. We

praise one and shame the other. Where is humanity in this (No:74, clothing store owner, 34 years old, female, Denizli)?²³

In the detailed self-reflective analysis of my interlocutor above we can see the parallels between her examples and those of the young man at the airport who was submitted to the treatment of “Aren’t you a Muslim and a Turk?” Like him, a woman making a pass at a man is remonstrated by the words “have you no shame and no honor?” In both case we see a tacit agreement of the community on what is right. Both examples illustrate how communitarian reasoning inflicts homogeneity and suppress the other through tacit agreement.

Communitarian religious reasoning can, however, also be employed subversively. Alyson Neel, a journalist residing in Istanbul, narrates in an interview how she learned to use the word shame (*ayıp*) to remonstrate with men who harass her in the city. Men waiting in a queue say *maşallah* as she passes every morning on her way to go to work. She becomes tired of the ritual and asks a friend for advice. The next morning when she is greeted with the all too familiar *maşallah*, in response she scolds them with what she learned from a friend. She says: “You are taking the name of God in vain. Aren’t you ashamed of yourselves?!” In this case we see someone who would normally suffer from oppression of communitarian reasoning hoisting the majority with their own petard.²⁴

²³ Beni en azından rahatsız etmiyor. Başım eşarplyken orada sigara da içsem... Ama onlar yadırgıyorlar, kıza bak yaz günü kafasını örtmüş, sanki çok lazım düşüncesi var onlarda. Ama o düşüncelerini bana yansıtmıyorlar. Ama burada mini etekle otursam laf atma, bu ne demek, insanların tepkisi ya da bakışlarıyla rahatsız ediyorlar. Zaten içinden geçen fikirler otomatikman şöyle bir bakışta yansıyor. Onun farkındasın, ama seni rahatsız edecek ikinci bir alternatif yok. Burada düşün; mini etekle dekolte bir kıyafet giysen, oğlan laf atsa, ne laf atıyorsun, terbiyesiz desen üstüne bile laf yersin. Bırakın laf yemeyi, bir de çevrede insan varsa onlar bile sana utanmadan laf söyler. Ama o bayanı ya da erkeği kısıtlamaya senin hakkın yok. Mesela ben kapalıyım, bana laf attıkları zaman hemen utanmıyor musun diye çöker insanlar. Peki onda niye çökmüyorsunuz? O da bir insan. Bu kapalılık-açıklık, dinlilik-dinsizlik, ya da güzellik-çirkinlikle bir alakası yok. İnsan gözüyle görmüyorlar. Toplum olarak kapalı bayan namuslu, açık bayan namussuz gözüyle görülüyor. Bu haksızlık. Çok açık olup çok namuslu, kişiliğine düşkün insanlar da var, ama çok kapalı olup da çok kötü insanlar da var. Ben bayan olduğum için bayanlardan gidiyorum. Erkekler için de yargılayabilirim. Biliyorsun bir kıza laf attı mı, delikanlıdır, hadi kız bir laf atsin bakayım. Hiç senin arın, namusun yok mu derler. Bir bayan erkeğe neden laf atmasın? Çok hoşlanmıştı, atar. Delikanlısın diyebiliyorsun da, zina yapıyor, ona erkektir diyorsun da, bayana neden? Her ikisine de insan gözüyle bakınca ikisi de yanlış. Bunu ne yapacaksın? İkisine de asla diyeceksin. Tepki göster, ama bizler ne yapıyoruz? Tepki göstermiyoruz. Birini tasdikliyoruz, birine de ayıptırı günahtır diyoruz. İnsanlık nerede kaldı (No.74, konfeksiyon dükkanı sahibi, yaş 34, kadın, Denizli)?

²⁴ Türkçe karşılık vermeye dair komik bir hikâyem var. İngiltere Konsoloslugu'nun hemen arkasında oturuyorum ve yaklaşık üç ay boyunca her sabah Today's Zaman'a gitmek için yola çıkıyordum. Dolayısıyla, işe göre giyiniyordum. Yol üzerinde bir kahve var ve her sabah oradaki erkekler baştan aşağı beni yavaşça süzüyorlar ve "maşallah, maşallah" diyorlardı. O kadar bunaldım ki dindar bir kadın arkadaşşıma "Durmalarını sağlayacak ne söyleyebilirim" diye sordum. O da bana bir cümle söyledi. Öğrenip söylemeye cesaret etmem bir ayımı aldı. Bir ayın sonunda önlerinden geçerken yine "maşallah" dediler. Ben de adama dönüp "Bu kelimenin içinde Allah var. Neden kötü şekilde

4.7. Economy

Communitarian religious reasoning appears in the economic sphere when individuals refer to concerns like shame (*ayıp*), sin (*günah*) and the livelihoods (*rızık*) in their attempt to find right course of economic behavior. This reasoning is observed in the individuals' motivations to resolve the tension they experience between the dictates of their beliefs and the demands of modern economy. In this case we see automatic responses, as they are quickly accessed in their repertoires. Religious knowledge as imparted through tradition channels individuals towards the right religious course of behavior in economic relations. Complying with the norms and customs of the community produces the internal piece of knowing that one has refrained from outright religious wrongs.

This religious reasoning can be observed in the local markets (*çarşı ve pazar*) where small tradesmen are keen to observe fairness in trade (*hak*). They are very careful when they weight their produce and when they return change to their customers. Their performative acts are accompanied by habitual phrases of religious origin, like "*hak geçmesin*" or "*hakkını helal et.*" In such occasions the shopkeeper demands to hear the words "*Helal olsun!*" in response, so that he will be relieved from any possible sin committed during the exchange. Shopkeepers start work with "*bismillah.*" Customers approach the shopkeeper with the greeting "*hayırlı işler*" and when they leave he says "*Allah bereket versin,*" "*bereketini gör,*" or "*kesene bereket.*" These acts and phrases occur in a habitual manner, they are reiterated performatively. It is also very common to see shops adorned with religious symbols such as calligraphies in Arabic. These all serve the purpose of strengthening the feeling of belonging to the community during economic transactions.

In Butler's terms, religion is being materialized thorough these repetitive performances. They are uttered and performed hundreds of times daily, keeping the religious community and the existence of religion alive even within a market atmosphere. One comes across all these especially in the local producer bazaars, small

kullanıyorsun" dedim. Adam dondu, çevresindekiler de şaşırıldı. Ertesi gün tek kelime etmediler. Çünkü adamı utandırdım, kontrolü elime aldım, Türkçe konuştum, dinî argüman kullandım. Birkaç kez de taciz edenlere vurdum. Hazal Özvarış, "Tacize karşı yardım istediğim polislerden çıkma teklif edenler oldu' Alyson Neel ile söyleşi," *T24*, January 21, 2013, accessed December 20, 2013, <http://t24.com.tr/haber/tacize-karsi-yardim-istedigim-poliste-gece-cikma-teklif-eden-oldu/221978>

grocery shops (*bakkal*)²⁵ in small neighborhoods. It seems that the existence of religious symbols, words and gestures assures both sellers and customers about the Islamic credentials of the economic transactions.

The visibility of religion in the gestures, performances and symbols within the market place can be seen as instances of communitarian religious reasoning when they owe their existence to habit and communal practice rather than conscious deliberate choice.

During my discussion of banking interest (*faiz*) in the in-depth interviews communitarian reasoning appears in my interlocutor's responses, upon hearing the word *faiz* some of my interlocutors responded by saying "God forbid!" or "Heavens no!" (Allah korusun! or Allah göstermesin!)"

God forbid, abi! I neither borrow and nor lend. (No:11 Shopkeeper, 34 years old male, Adana)²⁶

Another similar one:

Till today we have neither borrowed nor lent. May God make it so that we don't have to borrow or to lend from now also! (No:4, Shopkeeper, 23 years old male, Adana)²⁷

And:

It makes you go astray, of course it does! The rich sometimes lend money on interest. Is there any money lending with interest in Islam?! (No: 8, Genitor, 65 years old male, Adana)²⁸

By formulating the answer as a question redirected to the person who asked initially, the person requires you to ratify the shared norm. Typical communitarian reasoning in response to banking interested is conveyed through sayings like "*Günah, Almam da vermem de* (it is sinful, I neither lend, nor borrow)."

Another participant said:

We never reach out for the forbidden (haram) by using the money we make through good (helal) means (No: 200, Housewife, 42 years old, female, Trabzon).²⁹

Attempts to question further why they are using phrases like these are rarely fruitful because probing is censured by other performative acts like stares or utterances like 'tsk, tsk tsk.' The individuals who adopt communitarian religious reasoning do not extend the concept of banking interest into all banking operations. They specifically

²⁵ In Turkish context we don't hear much these words and see the gestures and performances in the new shopping malls in the big cities. They are more common in old bazaars in conservative milieus.

²⁶ Allah korusun abi. Almam da vermem de (No. 11, dükkan sahibi, 34 yaşında, erkek, Adana).

²⁷ Bugüne kadar almadık, vermedik de. Allah bundan sonra da aldırmasın da verdirmesin de (No. 4, Tezgahtar, yaş 21, erkek, Adana).

²⁸ Bozar, nasıl bozar! Zengin bazen faiz yiyor. İslam'da faiz var mı?! (No. 8 Apartman Görevlisi, yaş 65 erkek, Adana)

²⁹ "Helalinden kazandığın, harama el uzatamayız biz asla (No. 200, Trabzon, Ev hanımı Kadın, yaş 42).

mean usury, earning money through lending money. This definition excludes banks, thus allowing these people to borrow from banks with a clear conscience.

Upon asking about their main motivation behind work, trade and any kind of economic activity we see that there are frequent references to livelihood as granted by God (*rızık*).

The livelihood (*rızık*) comes from God, we believe that; the livelihood comes from God. God gives the livelihood; now I don't say I will earn this much or I will sell so many pairs of shoes, let's say ten pairs of shoes, I can't decide that. So if I have livelihood, it comes from my luck, it comes from God, definitely. We can't create our livelihood; God the Supreme Being says 'you look for your livelihood, you do your work, I will give you your livelihood.' Isn't that so, I won't throw you neither money nor bread from the sky. You will work. If you don't get education, if you don't get an occupation, if you don't look for your livelihood, or your occupation, where will your money, your livelihood come from? That's what we see, people don't work and ask from God where is the livelihood. You should trust in God (No: 194, Trabzon, shoe seller, male, age 50).³⁰

In communitarian reasoning it seems that all economic endeavor is perceived as "partaking from God's blessings" (*Allah'ın lütfundan nasip aramak*) and to earn one's *rızık* (livelihood). In this simple understanding each person's *rızık* is defined at birth. It does not augment or diminish. Thus it is commonplace to hear that: no one can consume other person's *rızık* (*kimse kimsenin rızıkını yiyemez*); no one dies before they consume their *rızık* (*kimse kendi rızıkını yemeden, bitirmeden ölmez*); or *rızık* has nothing to do with wages and wealth (*rızık, maaşa, mala, çalışmaya bağlı değildir*). But despite this fatalist approach to earning money, it is also believed that working to earn *rızık* is also a religious duty (*rızık için çalışmak dinimizin emridir*). Talking about *rızık* is not conducive to long talks. It is used as a word that is self-explanatory therefore it inhibits and discourages further explorations of the topic while at the same time implicitly teaching about the duty to accept one's destiny.

Everyone should be happy with the share allotted to them by God; they should not object to it, should find it sufficing, and should thank God for it. (No:130, Pharmacist, 54 years old male, Erzurum)³¹

³⁰ Ha rızık Allah'tandır şimdi biz ona inanıyoruz rızık Allah'tandır. Rızıkı Allah verir şimdi ben şu kadar kazanacağım demem ya bugün kaç çift ayakkabı satacağım diyelim ki 10 çift ayakkabı buna ben karar veremem. Cenab-ı Allah şuradan eğer benim rızıkım varsa şansımдан gelir yani o Allah'tan gelen bir şey yani rızık illa şeyi kendi rızıkımızı yaratamayız sen rızıkını ara diyor Cenabı Allah sen çalış ben senin rızıkını veririm. Değil mi yoksa gökten aşağı ne ben sana para atarım ne ekmek atarım. Sen çalışacaksın okumazsan bir meslek sahibi olmazsan para rızıkını aramazsan mesleğini aramazsan nereden para rızıkın gelecek ki. İşte o görüyoruz işte insanlar çalışmaz Allah'tan işte rızık nerede işte tevekkül edeceksin ya (No. 194, Trabzon, ayakkabı satıcısı, erkek, yaş 50).

³¹ Herkes kendi rızıkından memnun olmalı, bu konuda isyan etmemeli, olan ile yetinmeli Allah'a şükretmelidir. (No.130, Erzurum, eczacı, erkek, 54 yas).

It entails a circular logic, whereby human beings earn their *rızık* by hard work, and at the same time it is believed that it is God that provides the *rızık*. Communitarian religious reasoning seems untroubled by such ambiguities. I will discuss conundrums as this one in deconstructive religious reasoning. At this point suffice to say that my interlocutors argue that the contradiction is external, a question of appearances, not necessarily internal. However, in the communitarian religious reasoning it is not possible to receive a verbal explanation that addresses the issue rather than the communal values.

Chapter 5

5. Utilitarian Religious Reasoning

One evening in Erzurum I was sitting in a tea shop with people I had interviewed and had helped me make new contacts in the city. The atmosphere was very jovial and at some point someone began to tell a story he had heard recently. The house of a pilgrim, *hacı*, burned down. When the firefighters were clearing away the debris they noticed that there were two water supplying pipes in the house. One of them had a fully functional water meter attached to it and the other did not. So they ask the *hacı* why there were two different water supplies. He replied to say that the one with the water meter attached he used for his ablutions and the other one was used to meet the needs of the house. That is, the water for his ablutions was *helal*, while the other water supply line was illegal. Everyone in the tea shop laughed as expected. Obviously the *hacı* had divided the water pipes into the transcendental and the mundane. What I found fascinating was the body language of the people present: there was a degree of complacency in their attitude as if they knew what it was all about they had been behaving in a similar way as well.

During the fieldwork many of my interlocutors talked about *helal* and *haram* in terms of costs and benefits. They talked of rewards or punishments in this world and the next and these were the criteria that they used in making judgments regarding what is right, good and beautiful. This is a very specific way of thinking and I have called it utilitarian religious reasoning. It involves strategic calculations of rewards and punishments. The actor chooses a course of action because he or she thinks it is the most efficient means to realize his or her ends. The underlying logic of the actions is the pragmatic maximization of utility, however defined.¹ I talked about the basic features of such rationality along with those of other types of rationality in the second chapter. Here I will not repeat what I already said in the second chapter, on the utilitarian reasoning except to emphasize that I do not consider any type of reasoning as exclusively defining the way individuals make decisions. Rather, individuals often adopt different types of reasoning patterns while taking positions on different issues.

¹ Jon Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 23.

In this chapter I will concentrate on how utilitarian rationality manifests itself in religious terms. I will trace its appearance first in the way individuals formulate their beliefs and doctrinal position and then I will move on to individual's ways of reasoning and decision making and preferences concerning gender, politics and economy.

5.1. The utilitarian approach and religion

As I noted in the second chapter there are different patterns of reasoning that can be found in one individual's discourse on contemporary society. The content of reasoning is based on religious beliefs and is used to formulate the notions of good, right and beautiful in concrete situations. Tensions arise when the commands derived from religious beliefs clash with everyday life concerns. How does the content of religious reasoning manifest itself? Firstly, there are the verbal expressions, which are derived from religious teachings and which support certain rules and practices. Secondly, we observe them in emotional and experiential motivations behind activities of prayer, study of religious texts and participation in communal religious life. The act of bridging is used to reduce the tension between I-ought-to-do and I-do; its study sheds light on appropriation of a certain form of religious interpretation.

For a religious person, who resorts to utilitarian reasoning the incentives or threats are perceived in relation to the core principles of religion. The religious subjects who adopt the utilitarian approach tend to assess the divine consequences of this-worldly actions and behave accordingly. Increasing the rewards (*helal*) and avoiding the punishments (*haram*) is reported as the main reason for staying on the correct religious path. My interlocutors stated that strict obedience and observance of "right" course of behavior will maximize eternal happiness and minimize the torments of the grave (*kabir azabi*). For some, individual behavior is either beneficial or harmful for this world as well.

However, thinking in terms of *helal* and *haram* is not enough to qualify a reasoning mode as utilitarian because references to the permissible and the forbidden feature in other modes of reasoning as well. What is peculiar to utilitarian reasoning is that the subjects clearly calculate the pros and cons of particular courses and actions given their ends. They consider both this-worldly and other-worldly "gains" and "losses." Their justification for acting in a certain way is based on these clearly stated calculations.

The benefits and losses are perceived in two levels. On the one hand individuals consider gains for the self or for the community; on the other hand, they think that religion brings about this-worldly and other-worldly gains. Phrases like “believing brings you peace” (*inanmak insanı rahatlatır*) and “I can see the many benefits of praying and fasting” (*namazın orucun çok faydasını görüyorum*) echoes concerns for the self; while phrases such as “religion reduces suicides among the elderly” (*din yaşlı intiharlarını azaltıyor*), “religion keeps in check crimes” (*suçu kontrol ediyor*), and “how can you stop someone who does not fear God from committing sins?” (*Allah korkusu olmayan adamı nasıl günahattan alıkoyabilirsiniz?*) refer the community. The other-worldly concerns are expressed with phrases such as “fear the fires of hell” (*cehennemin ateşinden korkmak*), “to suffer the torments of the grave” (*kabir azabı çekmek*), and “accounting for your deeds after death” (*öldükten sonra hesap vermemek*). Conversely, this-worldly calculations behind religious observance are expressed by phrases like “when you believe you solve many problems” (*inandığında bir çok sorunu çözersin*) and “if I don’t pray I have bad luck in the things that I do” (*namaz kılmazsam işlerim ters gidiyor*).

Utilitarian reasoning often does not rely on thorough research, rumination, deliberation, or contemplation, as is the case with principled reasoning and deconstructivist reasoning. Rather the cost-benefit analysis is conducted as quickly as one can calculate two plus two and is based on shortcut formulations. Utilitarian reasoning in this sense is closer to communitarian reasoning; they both consist in learned, simple and effective responses to the circumstances of the contemporary world.

Let us consider the following two examples that illustrate utilitarian reasoning at work:

-So do you think, religion could play a role in the establishment of these relationships?

-Yes absolutely, if people practice religion, they will see its great effects in their lives.

-Do you personally see that kind of effect?

-I certainly see an effect. For instance I tried to teach Islam to my children at the time; I sent them to courses in summer. Now I look at them and realize they don’t cost me much financially. They don’t consider going out a lot, going to the cinema etc., to waste money; because they know the [financial] situation of their father. If a person has got a good upbringing, he can be selective about films. He doesn’t randomly choose films and goes to the cinema once a month, rather than 2 or 3 times.

- So what does this have to do with Islam?
- What it has to do with Islam, is the awareness. For instance, avoiding sin. Let's say, there is a new movie at the theatre. He hears from his friends or reads about it, and sees that it is obscene. So what does he do? He says 'this movie is not appropriate for my life style. Let me not get into sin by watching it. I will pass on this one'. This is just an example. The kid avoids hanging around to kill time; he thinks of making good use of his time. (No.5, Salesman, 48 year old, Adana).²

My interlocutor emphasizes how religion ensures that his children will have good morals and avoid squandering. He openly states that religion brings him this-worldly gains. In another interview again from Adana, my interlocutor talks about praying as paying the debt he owes to God and states that being a good person is only possible if you believe in God. What motivates a person to behave righteously is only the fear he feels at knowing that he is being observed by an all-knowing powerful God. Statements like "God is watching me all the time, so I fear" and "I make calculations for the next world" are very good illustrations of self-regarding utilitarian reasoning. Considered from this perspective, we see a very different source of motivation for religion when compared to the three other forms of reasoning. Based on the formulations regarding utilitarianism we find in the literature, we would expect it to take the form: "What if there is a God, you can't know. Let me do what is behooves me now so that I may prevent future trouble." However this phrasing would be politically incorrect when it comes to faith and belief. It also would be ethically and religiously unacceptable. Therefore utilitarian religious reasoning takes subtler forms, as the second example from Adana shows:

- Do you think it is a good thing that she prays?
- It is a good thing, she is paying her debts.

² -Peki bu tür ilişkilerin kurulması dinin de bir etkisi olabilir mi?

-Olur tabi mutlaka olur eğer insanlar dini yaşarsa bunun büyük etkisini görürler

-Siz görüyor musunuz mesela bizzat?

-Ben bizzat ailemde tabi mesela görüyorum şimdi çocuklarım zamanında İslamiyet'i öğretmeye çalışmışım yazın kurslara göndermişim o çocuklar şimdi mesela bakıyorum yani en azından, En azından nedir maddi açıdan bana fazla zararları olmuyor. Nasıl bir hafta sonra gezmeye gidiyim işte sinemaya gidiyim şuraya gidiyim buraya gidiyim işte har vurup harman savururum düşüncesinde değil babasının durumunu biliyor. Bir insan terbiye de almış işte nedir ben sinemaya gidiyim ama işte seçici filmlere gidiyim her rastgele filmlere gitmeyeyim öyle olunca ne olacak gene seçici film ayda 2 sefer 3 sefer olacak bir sefer gidecek

-Bunun İslamiyet'le ne alakası var mesela?

-İslamiyet'le ne alakası var o bilinç mesela diyelim ki günah günden kaçınmak örneğin mesela diyelim ki film geldi ben bu filme işte arkadaşlarımdan duyuyor arkadaşlarımdan duyuyor veya konusu okuyor bakıyor müstehcen ne yapıyor. Yani benim yaşantıma uygun değil o sebepten seyretmeyince günaha girmeyim bir filme eksik gidiyim mesela sinemadan örnek verdimde yani işte arkadaşlarla gidiyim geziyim tozuyum zamanımı öldürebilirim nasıl faydalanabilirim onu düşünüyor çocuk (No.5, Salesman, 48 year old, Adana).

-What debt?

-Her debt to God.

-So you say there is a kind of keeping score here.

-Of course there is. You'll have a settlement. For instance she (her wife) reads the Koran and I never say leave that Koran and look after the baby. I could say leave the baby and read the Koran, but of course I can't say it, strange thing.

-The fact that she reads the Koran, I mean that she knows these things, does it have a positive effect on your family life?

- Of course it has, what do you think?!

- Like what?

- Now all in is balance, her reading the Koran and praying. But if she does not wear a veil and goes out, that would be troublesome, wouldn't it? What are you doing, are you crazy? But you would never say 'what are you doing, you are performing a prayer, are you crazy?' would you?

-Why is that?

-My friend, first you should have modesty. Someone without modesty... modesty, modesty...

-Someone with modesty.

-You have to have modesty, you should be afraid of God.

-So that is God, I mean the fear of God.

-Of course it is the fear of God.

-We were talking with friends, for instance Mehmet said something like this, let's say I am an honest person and honesty has nothing to with fear of God, it comes from your heart.

-But that is God.

-Why?

-He does it because of his fear of God. Now if I wasn't afraid of God I could speak any word, I would do anything, but there is the fear of God.

-Do you not think he can find anything on his own, he can't tell right from wrong without the fear of God?

-Can a man live without the fear of God?

-No I mean in the context of telling right from wrong...

-You do that because of fear of God.

-The most important thing is the fear of God.

-Of course, he watches you and you know that he watches you.

-For instance, do you know, do you feel it every moment that you are being watched?

-Of course I feel it, what do you think? He is in every breath I take, he gives it to me, he makes my heart beat; it is not possible not to feel it or to forget about it for a moment. You need to stop breathing to forget.

-So your faith is so serious that you feel him every moment.

-Why, of course I feel him every moment. Come on now God doesn't see me, let me go there, let me just take that or do this... how could He not see me? (No.11, Employee at a gas station, 34 year old male, Adana)³

The emphasis on “shame” (*haya*) in the episode above is remindful of communitarian reasoning; however the difference is that in utilitarian reasoning the truth is found through fear of God and its consequences rather than communitarian convention. This logic can also be found in theological narratives; nonetheless the calculations there are less obvious. This is the case in principled reasoning. The quote below concerns calculations costs and benefits in afterlife.

³ -Namaz kılması iyi bir şey mi sence?

-İyi bir şey yani borcunu ödüyor.

-Ne borcu?

-Allaha olan borcu.

-Bir hesap durumu var diyorsunuz.

-Var tabi var orada hesaplaşmayacak mısın o [eşi] kuran okur mesela niye kuran okursun demem mesela bırak şu kuranı da çocuğa bak da demem bırak çocuğu kuran oku diyebilirim ama yapar mısın yapamıyorum tuhaf bir şeyler

-Peki onun kuran okuması yani bu işleri biliyor olması sizin aile yaşantınızda olumlu etkisi oluyor mu?

-Olmaz mı ya! Niye?

-Ne gibi?

-Ya şimdi kuran okuyor da namaz kılıyor diye bir dengesizlik olmaz ama böyle üstünü başını açsa da sokağa çıksa bir rahatsızlık verir değil mi? Ne yapıyorsun deli misin değil mi? Ama sen ne yapıyorsun namaz kılıyorsun deli misin denir mi? denmez ama aklına yatıyor mu?

-Niye öyle?

-Ya arkadaşım insan önce hayadan... haya olmalı insanda... hayası olmayan... haya,haya...

-Hayası olan.

-Hayası olmazsa olur mu insan Allah'tan korkma olur mu?

-Allah'tır yani Allah korkusu.

-Tabi Allah korkusu.

-Mesela şöyle konuşuyorduk arkadaşlarla Mehmet mesela şöyle bir şeyden bahsettiler mesela ben dürüst bir insanım dürüstlüğün Allah korkusuyla hiçbir alakası yok sen kendin içinden geliyor.

-Ama işte o Allah.

-Niye?

-Allah korkusundan yapıyor onu Allah, Allah şimdi ben Allah'tan korkmasan her lafi derim her şeyi de yaparım ama Allah korkusu var.

-Her şeyi bulamaz mı kendisi Allah korkusu olmadan güzeli doğruyu nasıl ayırt edemez mi?

-Allah korkusu olmadan insan yaşar mı?

-Hayır mesela iyiyi doğruyu ayırt etmek konusunda.

-İyi doğru Allah korkusundan yapıyorsun zaten.

-En önemli şey Allah korkusu?

-Tabi o seni gözetliyor sen onu senin gözetlendiğini biliyor.

-Biliyor musun mesela sen her an hissediyor musun onu her an gözetlendiğini?

-Tabi hissedirim hissetmez olur muyum ya sürekli her aldığım nefeste o veriyor o her atılan kalbimi o attırıyor duymama ya da biran unutmama bir an unutmak mümkün değil unutmam için nefes almaman lazım

-O kadar ciddi bir inancın var yani her an hissediyorsun onu

-Hissetmez miyim her an hadi Allah beni görmüyor ben şurada gidiyim şunu alıvereyim şunu yapıvereyim nasıl görmüyor ya nasıl (No.11, petrol İstasyonunda pompa görevlisi, yaş 34, erkek, Adana)

Now we are talking about the Day of Judgment, the final assessment. Fatiha which we recite forty times a day includes ‘maliki yevmiddin’, the owner of the universe. So on the punishment day, when people will come for settlement, they will see that their whole life from birth or from puberty to the day they died, everything is recorded. We call them the ‘angels on our shoulders’, they record every deed of a person. For instance when Salih performs a good deed, the angel on the right records it down. When he commits a bad sin, even the organs and limbs will witness. The person will try to deny but the leg will say “he walked with me to eat the ill-gotten” and the eye will say “he saw the ill-gotten food with me”, so there is this testimony. And if we mentioned this a hundred years ago they wouldn’t believe us but now there is something called videorecording. The man steals something from the supermarket and says “No, I didn’t steal it”. They show him the video right away. So all the deeds performed by the guy since his mind reaches puberty until his death will be revealed. Our good deeds which we call ‘hasenat’, is placed on the ‘trial balance’ (*mizan*) which is a pair of scales -only God knows what kind of thing it is, it measures something spiritual, in the end. If the *hasenat* side is heavier... Or if the sin side is heavier, God will send him to hell, but it is very important that the person recites the *şahadet* on his last breath verbally or silently, that he passes away as a faithful. If he breaths his last faithfully, and let’s say his sins were heavier, he will go to heaven after he takes his punishment; however if dies without faith, although he lived like a Muslim -but he is not really Muslim- will not. Or we can say, a guy who did so many things that were banned by God, can be saved in his last breath (No.122, Computer seller, 33 year old, male, Erzurum).⁴

The basic purpose for believing and worshiping according to utilitarian reasoning is to avoid costs and punishment. This is done by a continuous focus on doing good (*sevap*

⁴ Şimdi mizandan ahret gününden din gününden bahsediyoruz. Günde kırk kere okuduğumuz Fatiha’da maliki yevmiddin var bu evrenin sahibi var. İşte ceza günü o günde insanlar hesaba çekileceği zaman doğduğundan veya büyü çağından öldüğü güne kadar ki hayatı yaşantısı her şeyi kayıtlı. Hatta biz omuzlardaki melekleri diyoruz bunlar insanın her amelini kaydediyor. İşte Salih bir amel iyi bir amel işlediği zaman sağ taraftaki melek kaydediyor. Kötü günaha gittiği zaman hatta uzuvlar kıyamet gününde şahitlik edecek insan inkar etmeye çalışacak ama bacak diyecek ki haram yemeğe benimle gitti göz diyecek ki haram yemeği benimle gördü bu şahadet var artı bundan yüzyıl önce bunu deseydik ya inanmazlardı ama video diye bir şey var. Adam marketten bir şey alıyor yok ben çalmadım diyor hemen görüntüleri izletiyorlar böyle bir şey var orda akıl bali olduktan sonra ki ölene kadar ki işlediği ameller ortaya konulacak. Hasenet dediğimiz iyi amellerimiz mizan dediğimiz bir terazi var mahiyetini Allah bilir nasıldır yani manevi bir şeyi ölçüyor sonuçta. Hasenat tarafı ağır basarsa seiyat tarafı günah dediğimiz ağır basarsa rabbülalemin o cehenneme ama kişinin son nefesinde içinden ya da dışından kelime-i şaadet getirmesi yani imanlı gitmesi çok önemli eğer imanlı bir şekilde son nefesini vermişse diyelim ki günah tarafı ağır bastı ise günahını çektiikten sonra cennete gidecek ama iman etmeden ölen yani Müslüman bir şekilde yaşamış ama adı Müslüman veyahut öyle şeyler yapmış ki çok böyle Allahutaalanın yasakladığı şeyler böyle insanın son nefeste bile (No.122, bilgisayar satıcısı, yaş 33, erkek, Erzurum)

işlemek) and being rewarded with a place in paradise. Individuals driven by this motivation unremittingly keep an account of the self (*nefsini hesaba çekmek*).

-For example, I never go to bed without saying the evening prayers. It is like an obsession to me. It is impossible. It is as if a part of the house is burning and I just sit and watch without doing anything. That is how I feel, so I can't go to bed. This is the degree to which the evening prayer has become a part of me.

- And when you say your prayers?

- Peace and contentment. Oh, everything is just fine. I have paid my dues (No.21, textile worker, 30 years old, male, Adana).⁵

5.2. Engaging with the others through utilitarian reasoning

Expressing one's religiosity through pragmatic concerns by overt manifestation of cost benefit calculations is an act despised by "true" believers. Such calculations are commonly seen as "religiously incorrect" for the reason that the love of God cannot be reduced to calculations of benefit; rather it must have an absolute foundation. Especially self-claimed pious individuals or informed believers refrain from resorting to pragmatic tones or uttering any words echoing utilitarian concerns in their own way of believing. Utilitarian or pragmatic concerns are usually attributed to others and are taken to be grounds for blaming others. This becomes obvious when the topic of discussion turns to membership in a particular religious order or sect. None of the individuals, who are members of a sect, stated that he or she joined the sect because of material benefit, networking or any other this-worldly gains. Such a statement would not be acceptable in the eyes of others. This does not stop my interlocutors from attributing these unacceptable intentions to other people and to question the honesty of their acts. This is one of the occasions where utilitarian reasoning appears most. In this sense utilitarian reasoning is considered insincere.

Some people say 'we are hadji, we are hodja' (like we are very religious), however when it comes to commerce, 'that's quite another story.' I am unable to get it. Of course, each person definitely has flaws. It is even worse when they correlate that flaw with the

⁵ -Neler hissettiniz yani neler...

- Yani huzurlu olur insan ya. Mesela ben yatsı namazını kılmadan yatamam, öyle bir hastalık var bende artık. İmkani yok. Yani sanki hani evin bir tarafını yakıp gel hiçbir şey yokmuş gibi yapmaya benziyor. Bende öyle bir his oluyor, yatamıyorum. Bu kadar benimsemişim artık yani.

- Yaptığınızda peki?

- Rahatlık. Ooo hiçbir şey yokmuş gibi tamam. Hesabı kitabı gördük (No.21, tekstil işçisi, erkek, yaş:30, Adana).

religion. Let's say you are a retailer and you attend a few (more than one) religious orders. Why? Because you get customers. That's the frame of mind of yours, to go to the order. What could you expect from a person like that? I would even doubt his prayer (*namaz*) if it wasn't obligatory. They call it an opinion, it is not an opinion, they do it on purpose. It's the same everywhere, not just in Denizli (No.64, Shopowner, 34 year old woman, Denizli).⁶

Therefore many people who claim to be genuine and true believers do not shy from accusing others of being "pragmatic" and acting for show. The words of a sheikh of a *tarikati* as related by one of my interlocutors imply that this practice is widespread:

My friends, we are here for God's sake. Those who come for benefit or interest should not come. There is sacrifice, hard work, service here. Those who love should continue to come; but those who come for benefit, for profit, for customers, to be seen to the community, shouldn't come at all (No.134, Masseur, 39 year old, male, Erzurum).⁷

It is common to hear complaints that religion is being used pragmatically or that others are insincere. These complaints serve as a background against which my interlocutors emphasize their own religiousness. They also seem to have to do with a low tolerance of the actions of others and also reflect the resentment of those who have not been able to access these profitable networks. The resentment takes the form: "others behave in solidarity, we are being discriminated."

Another way in which utilitarian reasoning is employed is by the leaders of religious communities who adopt it as a strategy to convince their members. For instance, imams utilize the strategy of pointing out the rewards, by praising paradise, or announcing the punishments of hell by citing the appropriate verses in the Koran during the Friday sermons (*vaaz*). Imams giving sermons in the mosques in Kayseri and Erzurum can quite easily provoke fear among the community by conveying their message through binary oppositions of *haram* and *helal*, heaven and hell, good and

⁶ İnsanlar hacıyız, hocayız diyorlar, ama ticarete o ayrı, o ayrı. Benim buna kafam yatmıyor. İnsanların mutlaka bir yerlerinde kusur vardır. O kusuru dine endekslemeleri daha kötü bir şey. Esnafsın, bir kaç tarikata girebiliyorsun. Neden? Müşteri geliyor. O zihniyetle gidiyorsun tarikata. Sen o insandan ne bekleyebilirsin? Farz olmasa kıldığı namazdan bile şüphe ederim. Bu görüş diyorlar, bu görüş değil, bunu bile yapıyorlar. Bu sadece Denizli'de değil, her yerde böyle (No.64, dükkan sahibi, yaş 34, kadın, Denizli).

⁷ "Arkadaşlar, burada Allah rızası var, menfaat ve çıkar için gelen gelmesin. Burada fedakarlık var, burada çalışmak var, burada hizmet var. Seven gelsin, ama mefaat için, kar edeyim, işte müşterim gelsin, cemaat beni görsün, böyle gelen gelmesin" (No.134, Masör, yaş 39, erkek, Erzurum).

evil, and us and them. The utilitarian reasoning associates religion with fear and threat. It over-emphasizes the incentives of other-worldly and this-worldly perils as the underlying motivation to comply with the core principles of the religion. Subsequent rewards and fear motivates the attachment to religious community and its rules.⁸ A 49 year old lawyer said “If people feared the fire of hell as they fear the fire of a matchstick they would all behave like angels” (No.46).⁹ In utilitarian reasoning the stress is on consequences.

So while utilitarian reasoners see no problem whatever in calculating the personal benefits they will presumably get in the “other world,” they do not as easily make utilitarian calculations about the world they presently live in. While they often shy away from talking about the personal gains they may derive from being or acting religious, they do not mind disclosing that they think of the benefits of religion for the society in which they live.

Up to this point I have discussed the shape that religious arguments take when they are based on utilitarian reasoning. Let us now look at three spheres where this utilitarian thinking which is based on religion meets every day issues. The main question is how religious actors come to bridge, or fail to bridge, the tension between the dictates of their comprehensive doctrines and the demands of (sometimes opposing) modern political and social life. In my analysis I trace the individual’s own religious responses to the demands of modern political and social life through their reflections and responses on the issues of politics, gender and economy.

5.3. Politics

Looking at political attitudes it is possible to see traces of utilitarian religious reasoning. This is because for many in Turkey religion is a determining factor that informs political choices. The way of thinking becomes utilitarian when perceptions are based on rewards and punishments. I will develop this point by looking at three cases to show utilitarian reasoning at work in politics.

⁸İmam Gazali’s short poem “nefsi hesaba çek” is a good example of this logic. While promoting the basic idea that one should be in total control of his/her *nefs*, he calculates the entire sins one is able to commit in one’s life time. The gist of the argument is that one should be always cognizant of his/her right and wrong doings and carefully refrain from the sinful actions that *nefs* always desires.

⁹ Şimdi bir şeyin bir alimin şeyi vardı diyor insanlar cehennem ateşinin yakıcılığına inandıkları kadar şey bu dünyadaki bir kibrit alevinin yakıcılığına inandıkları kadar eğer cehennem ateşinin diyor yakıtına inansalar diyor hepsi melek gibi olurdu (No.46, Lawyer, 49 year old male, Çorum).

First of all, people who adopt the utilitarian religious thinking believe that laws should be based on Islam. They claim that the human mind is incapable of understanding the Shari'a properly and this is part of God's wisdom (*hikmet*). This concession helps to justify quick, shallow and perhaps common sense calculations of the benefits of religion for human life. So even though we do not fully understand the teachings of Islam, we are allowed resort to such calculations because they are in the interests of believers. Laws established only by human reason are bound to be faulty because human reason is limited. But if believers apply the word of God, and make their laws accordingly they will benefit in the long run.

A participant who is a utilitarian reasoner pointed out that fear of punishment was more effective in bringing about results among people. Therefore Shari'a and religion are more effective than secular law. Summarized in one sentence, this reasoning states that "the finger cut by the Shari'a does not hurt." The utilitarian reasoners argue that the problem with the secular parliament is that it is not effective in law enforcement, while Shari'a laws have greater deterrence power. Religion is precise and the word of God is omnipotent and it can only produce good results. Similar to principled reasoning, utilitarian religious reasoning is more interested in establishing and implementing order, which are derived from religious teachings.

You know the saying 'the finger cut off but the Shari'a doesn't hurt.' We do need a little Shari'a. Because people fear the Shari'a. For example in Iran crime rate is very low, but in Turkey is higher. I support a certain degree of Shari'a. Let there be Shari'a [in Turkey.] Because, begging your pardon, there are people who do serious wrongs. They would be punished under the Shari'a but parliamentary laws do nothing. Begging you pardon, I hear of such dreadful crimes I get goose bumps... really awful crimes. The Shar'ia would prevent such crimes. First there should be Sharia (No.194, Craftsman, 50 years old male, Trabzon).¹⁰

In another example we see the claim that if a politician is religious, someone who fears God, than he or she cannot possibly cause harm to people. Thus we see religion perceived as the guide that steers people in the right path and keeps them from going astray; ultimately a politician can only be honest if he or she is religious. A God

¹⁰ Şeriat hani derler ya şeriatın kestiği parmak acımaz diye aslında birazda şeriat olması lazım. Çünkü şeriatın korkacak insanlar mesela İran'da suç işleme oranları düşüktür Türkiye'de daha fazladır. Bende bazı şeriatı savunuyorum şeriat gelsin diyorum. Çok affedersin çok yanlış yapanlar odlumu o şeriatın o kanunlarını görür veya şüandaki bizim meclis kanunlarında hiç bir şey yok Adama çok affedersin öyle suçlar duyuyorum ki kendi tüylerim diken diken oluyor yani çok adi suçlar işte şeriat o suçlarını engeller şeriat olacak en önce (No.194, Trabzonlu esnaf, erkek yaş 50).

fearing person does not bring harm to others and works to the best of his or her abilities. It is common to hear people who hold politicians accountable by saying: “You are a believer, are you not afraid of God?”

-In general I believe that a person who really fears God will not harm others.

That’s I was going to ask you, is religious politician more trustable?

-A religious politician is more trustable. It is indeed so. He does things so as to please God. As long as he acts so he is trustable, of course.

-And by more trustable we mean not corruptible, honest?

-As in the case of Caliph Omar, who one day was sitting on the river shore and was crying. Why are you crying, a passerby asked. Omar replied: ‘If a sheep dies on the shores of river Tigris, God is going to ask me I did I let it happen. How can I reply to that?’ Thus is the nature of such thoughts.

5.4. Gender

Let us now look at gender, one of the sites where tensions are most visible. Participants adopt utilitarian religious reasoning when taking a stance on issues such as motherhood, the participation of women in the public sphere, and on whether women should work. The issue of woman in utilitarian religious reasoning is typically settled in favor of the seclusion of woman.

Some of the claims made by utilitarian reasoners are:

Religion suggests that women should be veiled because men’s nature is a threat, it is necessary for her own benefit (No.173, Mechanical engineer, 32 year old, male, Kayseri).¹¹

Or

Women should not work outside the household, because it would ruin family life (No.39, ev hanımı kadın, yaş 50, Çorum).¹²

And,

Women should stay at home because they are good parents and raise healthy children.

Overall, on the issue of gender roles utilitarian reasoners refrained from giving elaborate argumentations and are adamant that women must wear the veil. However, when they justify their positions the claims that they make are: it is beneficial for the

¹¹ Dine göre kadın kapanmalı, bu kadının işine geliyor aslında, çünkü erkek doğası gereği kadın için tehlikeli olabilir (No.173, Makina mühendisi, yaş 32, erkek, Kayseri).

¹² Kadın evin dışında çalışamaz, aile hayatı biter o zaman (No. 39, ev hanımı kadın, yaş 50, Çorum).

family as a whole if the woman stays at home; women are better parents than men because children need them more; women need protection and so they are safer when they are at home. We can clearly see the pragmatic attitude in these claims.

Wearing the veil is justified pragmatically as a means to prevent women from being harassed in public. To illustrate:

Now I think that, under the conditions of the time, women, baby girls are unwanted creatures, they are buried, unwanted. They are not even wanted to exist; thus in such an atmosphere, there are too many rapes too. Now when He orders women to veil themselves up, I believe He considers the desperation and inadequacies of the society on this matter. Veil yourself up you, so that people won't molest you. Look, when I was young, you of course don't know it, verbal harassment and such were so common that you couldn't cross the street without being harassed. There was constant verbal harassment, so molestation existed even then. (No.1, Adana, Housewife, age 55).¹³

In an interview I did in a village of Bismil (in Diyarbakır), the local imam who was 26 years old argued in a similar fashion as to why women should wear full hijab (*çarşaf*):

-In my opinion chador (*burqa/çarşaf*) is not a result of reactionism or oppression. I read an interview from Pakistan. A deputy from Pakistan is talking. So this woman says, we go out shopping, everyone does, men and women. We wear our chador and go out, and when we are out, it is impossible for a man to give us an evil eye. The journalist asks, why can't they give you an evil eye? She says because his mother might be under that chador, or his daughter or sister. And thus, she says, it is not an imposition, we feel ourselves freer in the chador. It is not fair to look down on them or despise them.

-Alright, I am sure you don't despise them, but for instance, if you ask the woman, do you think she feels herself free in the chador?

-Well it was herself who said that, in the given interview, she is a deputy

-So she said she felt herself freer.

-And she is a deputy. (No.95, local imam, 26 years old, male, Diyarbakır)¹⁴

¹³ Şimdi şunu düşünüyorum günün koşullarında bu devrin koşullarında zaten kadınlar istenmeyen kız çocuklar istenmeyen varlıklar gömülüyor istenmiyor. Olması bile istenmiyor böyle bir ortamda tecavüzde çok tabi kadınlara yönelik şimdi kadınlara kapanmayı emrederken toplumun o konudaki çaresizliğini ve yetersizliğini görerek emrediyor bence. Kapanın yani insanlar sizi taciz etmesinler bakın benim gençlik dönemimde siz tabiki bilmezsiniz yani laf atmalar bilmemneler yok hakikaten karşı kaldırımdan geçemezsiniz karşı kaldırıma sürekli laf atılırdı. Sürekli laf atılırdı yani taciz o dönemde bile vardı. (No.1, Adana 1, Ev hanımı, 55 yaş.)

¹⁴ -Dediğin çarşaf olayı bu gericilik veyahut şey baskı sonucu değildir bence. Pakistan'da bir şey vardı yazı vardı. Okudum. Pakistan'ın milletvekili anlatıyor. Orda bir bayan diyor ki biz çarşıya çıkıyoruz kadınlı erkekli herkes çıkıyor. Biz çarşafımızı giyip çıkıyoruz o sokaktayken diyor kesinlikle bir erkeğin bize kötü gözle bakması imkânsız. Muhabir soruyor niye neden kötü gözle

Utilitarian reasoners also refer to the inherent nature of creatures (*fitrat*) as described in the Koran. However, they use this point to indicate the benefits it creates. “Women are created to be mothers because this is beneficial for society and for the family.”

What spoiled our society? Because when the society is spoiled, everything is spoiled. Islam gets spoiled too. Muslimism gets spoiled, and people get spoiled. First we should fix that base. We have to start from the base. You know now mothers leave their children and hire baby sitters for the child. And we see that the babysitters beat the children up. The love given by a babysitter can never be the same with the love given by parents. And thus the child feels herself totally empty. And sometimes that child lives in depression, she is depressed. Because the mother is such a need. The mother comes in the evening and kisses her head and that is it, they go to bed (No.117, Worker at a domestic appliance store, from Erzurum, male, age 27).¹⁵

As we will see in the next chapter, *fitrat* is also mentioned by principled reasoners, but for them the fact that this is stated in the Koran is more important than the advantages such an arrangement brings to family and society.

The participation of women in the social life on equal terms with men is also rejected on utilitarian grounds. I asked a village imam and a landowner why men and women do not sit together to chat in groups? The imam replied:

If there was a woman among us, it would distract my concentration, I wouldn't be able to concentrate on what I am saying; it would be sinful not just for me but also for entire *cemaat* (No.95).

bakılmaz diyor ki çünkü o çarsafın altından anası da çıkabilir; kızı da çıkarabilir; kardeşi de çıkabilir, o yüzden diyor bu bir dayatma değil. Biz bunun içinde kendimizi daha hür hissediyoruz. Kalkıp da küçük görüyoruz hakir görüyoruz değildir yani.

-Tamam, sen küçük görmüyorsun eminim de ama mesela kadına sorsan o da kendini onun içinde özgür hissediyor mudur?

-Kadın kendi diyordu oradaki röportajda kendisi milletvekili

-Ben kendimi daha özgür hissediyordum diyordu yani

-Milletvekili yani (No. 95, Fahri imam, yaş 26, erkek, Diyarbakır).

¹⁵ Bizim toplumumuzu ne bozdu. Çünkü toplum bozuldu mu herşey bozuluyor. İslam da bozuluyor. Müslümanlık da bozuluyor. İnsanlar da bozuluyor. En önce bizim o tabanı düzeltmemiz lazım. O tabandan başlamak lazım. Yoksa şimdi hani anne bırakıyor çocuğunu işte çocuğa bakıcı tutuyor. Görüyoruz bakıcılar dövüyor. Bir annenin babanın verdiği sevgiyle bir bakıcının verdiği sevgi mümkün değil aynı olmaz. Onun için çocuk tamamen boşlukta kendini hissediyor. Yeri geliyor çocuk o bunalımla yaşıyor. Bunalım içerisinde. Çünkü anne de öyle bişey. Anne akşam geliyor başını öptüyor ve olay bitiyor..haydi yallah yatıyorlar (No. 117 Beyaz eşya bayii'nde çalışan, Erzurumlu, 27 yaşında erkek).

While the landowner said:

This is a talk among men. We reveal secrets about ourselves. We talk about the money I lend or borrow from my brother or from my close friends. Or we sometimes go to western Turkey for vacation. If my wife was to know I believe it would ruin peace in my family (Not in the list, 41 years old, large land owner).¹⁶

In the second answer we see a tacit agreement among men that works exclusively to their benefit. Women's presence would disturb men's indulgence that they enjoy together. The world constructed by men there is a code of conduct which is to their advantage. We see that religion is interpreted in such a way as to favor the established order.

However, with utilitarian reasoners the argument can swing the other way as well. Some participants argued for a greater participation of women in utilitarian terms. They stated that if women participated in the workforce and had better education they would make better mothers and wives.

As we will see in the other forms of religious reasoning, the gender issue tends to be discussed in terms of protecting and conserving societal values. Therefore, while politics and economy is more open flexible interpretations, this is not the case with gender. Rather women's rights are restricted as much as possible. Unfortunately women who oppose this order within the Islamic framework are very few. Most of them take a similar position to that of men and count their blessings.

5.5. Economy

The utilitarian reasoning mode dominated other styles of reasoning where economic decisions are concerned. At its simplest expression, this pattern of thinking takes the form: a job that is begun with the pronunciation of the names of God (*besmele*) goes well.

-Do you think religion has an effect on the success at work? Would a religious person be more successful?

-Of course.

¹⁶ This interview took place in a village room, there were 6 people, I didn't include all of the participants in the list. This person was called as 'ağa' (landowner), it seems that he owns the largest land in the village.

-How does that happen?

-The person who says Allah is allowed to succeed by God. The job that is started with a basmala (No.54. craftsman, 37 year old male, Denizli).¹⁷

It is believed that to observe religious rules increases abundance. According to utilitarian reasoning religion is beneficial because it educates people and makes them better human beings. The claim is that when you begin thinking in terms of the permissible and the forbidden, you stir away from sin and the temptations of wealth and also have internal peace. To illustrate:

Helal is of course [important]. We believe that honesty never loses; *helal* never breaks. I mean maybe it is not too much, but it is enough. People with *helal* income have really modest lives. Because they are abstinent. The biggest reason for a man to be restless is that he isn't satisfied. For instance if you live in a rented house you say 'I wish I owned a room'. When you get the room, you wish a better door or parquet floor, or you complain about the size, "the kids have grown up, I wish I had two rooms and a lounge", when you have the two rooms and one lounge, you start wishing for a more spacious place, etc. Well the neighborhood is not desirable, the kids are affected, etc...

-So you always want more...

-So you can never be happy. Do you know what I mean, you can't be happy. But the conservative people with *helal* earnings are happy because they are contented. They don't want the more luxurious version. If they have a car, Doğan or Şahin, it doesn't matter, "thank God, we don't have to walk" ...Think of the ones who get the ill-gotten, those people are always unsettled, those who are engaged in mafia matters. Think about it, they have the fear of death every moment, they don't know what will happen next moment. But the man who has *helal* earnings always has a clear head/mind (No.139, Education advisor, 25 years old female, Erzurum).¹⁸

¹⁷ -Peki işteki başarının ardında dinin etkisi var mıdır sizce? Dindar olan bir kişi daha başarılı olur mu?

-Tabi.

-Nasıl oluyor?

-Allah diyen insanın işlerini cenabı Allah rast getirir. Besmeleyle başlanan iş (No.54. esnaf, yaş 37, erkek Denizli).

¹⁸ Helal tabi ki hani derler bizde, doğruya duvar uçmaz diye, ama helal hiçbir zaman kırılmıyor. Ya belki uzamasa bile şey olmuyor da, eksilmiyor da. Kısalmıyor da yani. Böyle helal kazançlı insanların hayatı çok mütevazı geçiyor bence. Çünkü şeyler, kanaatkarlar. Çok yani bir insanın huzursuz olmasının en büyük sebebi de kanaat etmiyoruz. En basitinden mesela insan hep şey der kirada otururken ya bir tane odam olsun der. Hani olsun da küçücük bir odam olsun der. O oda olur ya işte bunun kapısı, döşemesi parke olsa ya da sığmamaya başladık, çocuklar büyüdü ya işte bir tane olsa da 2 oda 1 salon olsa. 2 oda 1 salon olur ya 3. katlar daha havadar falan olur. Ya işte bu semtin komşuluğu biraz daha şey, çocuklar işte çevreye uyuyor falan...

-Hep daha fazlasını istiyorsun yani...

-Mutlu olamıyorsun yani. Anlatabildim mi, yani mutlu olamıyorsun. Ama böyle helal kazanan, muhafazakar insanlar mutlular çünkü hallerinden memnunlar yani. Daha lüksünü istemiyorlar. Bir tane

As we see in the quote that money that is gained in permissible ways is more bountiful. Another participant, a 29 year old manager from Izmir said: “I say money that comes to you through *helal* means is the *rizik* of the house, it is always bountiful” (No.152, female). These clichés express the shared common utilitarian understanding among people.

Another participant said:

Well actually, it depends a lot on the other person. I mean if the other person is objective and responsible. And if he is religious but truly so. I mean if he does business by following rules and regulations, as I mentioned. I think these are reasons for preference and it is an advantage. I mean he is a Muslim merchant and he won't lie. Well I mean we culturally trust this person not to rip us off (No.13, shopkeeper at clothing store, 38 years old, male, Adana).¹⁹

Here the participant is saying that the advantage of doing business in the Islamic way is that his business will grow because more people who are like him will choose him over someone who is not overtly Muslim. However as I discussed above most often the individuals tend to think that being pragmatic about religion in the economic sphere can be a detriment. I spoke to several participants felt excluded from religious circles and were critical of those who use religion and the religious networks for their economic advantage. They complained of other people who join religious congregations for economic profit.

arabaları varsa hani Doğan, Şahin hiç fark etmez, ayağımızı yerden kesiyor çok şükür. ...Haram kazananları düşünün de o insanlar hep tedirgin yani o mafya falan işiyle uğraşanlar. Hep düşünsene bir an ölüm korkusu, her an ne olacak diye. Ama helal kazanan adamın başı ya da hep (No.139, Education advisor, 25 years old female, Erzurum)

¹⁹ Aslında karşı tarafında burada şeyi çok önemli yani eğer karşı taraf objektif ve şeyse sağduyuluysa dindar da hakiki bir dindarsa yani biraz önce anlattığım işte kanunlara kurallara uyarak ticaret yapıyorsa bence tercih sebebidir ve avantajdır yani bu Müslüman tüccardır bu yalan söylemez. Efendime söyleyeyim bu bizi işte kazıklamaz mantığı bizde vardır aslında kültürümüzde (No.13, konfeksiyoncu, yaş:38, erkek, Adana).

Chapter 6

6. Principled Religious Reasoning

In the summer of 2008 I was taking a ferry from Anadolu Kavağı to Sarıyer. I took a seat and pulled a book to read. There was a middle aged man sitting across from me. He began staring at the book and then at me. Finally after a few minutes he spoke, as if he could no longer refrain from speaking. He said: “Why do you bother with books? All you need is the Koran. There you find all you need to know about heaven and earth. Why read anything else? What’s the point?!” I did not feel like chatting so I simply smiled without prolonging the talk. But the episode has stayed with me because in the course of the fieldwork as I have often come across people who shared the same attitude with my fellow traveler. The attitude I am referring to is the following: devout people turn religion into a compass for their daily life. They often use religious arguments to convince other people. While talking about religion, these devout Muslim assume an attitude of ‘revealing a truth’ and act as if they are referencing a truth that remains unseen by the rest of the society. Hence, they do not feel any reluctance to interfere in the lives of people whose behaviors they consider ‘improper.’ They take for granted their ‘right’ to tell the ‘truth’ to anyone being improper.

I have called the reasoning behind this type of behavior principled reasoning. I use it to describe logic that governs the behavior of people who assume a self-appointed interventionist role in the daily life of society, and who believe that there is only one truth to be seen and accepted by all and only one way in which this truth can be interpreted. Although this mode of reasoning is by no means exclusive to religious people or discussions of religion,¹ in this chapter I focus exclusively on the form it takes when we consider it against the backdrop of religious reasoning.

¹ In a lecture at Sabancı University, Serif Mardin relayed the following observation about academia in Turkey: “Whenever I write something, it automatically takes the status of ‘conventional wisdom’ in the field. Unfortunately it is not seen as a thesis or argument so I was unable to take satisfactory feedback and criticism about my articles. This leads to lack of meaningful polemics in this country.” This example illustrates the same pattern of understanding of knowledge as ‘revealing a truth’ and ‘something to be learned’ without a need for a critical eye. Principled reasoning persists even when it is in opposing to the spirit of environment from which the arguments spring.

Rawls,² Habermas,³ Audi⁴ and Wolterstorff⁵ and Weithman⁶ debated at length about religious reasoning and the role of religion in the public sphere. The kind of religious reasoning that they were addressing was what I have called principled reasoning. The main question of this political philosophy debate was on whether religious actors should frame their religious convictions in terms of secular reason, or should they be allowed to introduce religiously grounded beliefs into public political argument without any constraints. Philosophers in this debate have treated religious reasoning as religiously grounded beliefs which make their way to the public sphere only via comprehensive doctrines, i.e. “reasons given solely by comprehensive doctrines, reasons that are not accessible by everyone due to their ‘religious’ content”.⁷ Loobuyck and Rummens contributed to this debate by their reference to ‘monoglot religious citizens,’ namely citizens who are “unable to translate their own religious contributions into secular language.”⁸ These scholars generalized this inability of the ‘monoglot’ religious citizens to use more than one form of religious reasoning, but this generalization disregards different modes of religious reasonings.

In this chapter I will explain three semi-overlapping traits of principled reasoning often used by monoglot religious citizens in the light of cases I examined during my research and the related literature. The first trait is about the conception of knowledge and justification in relation to the idea that ‘there is only one universal truth.’ I will underline this epistemological approach to ‘the truth’ in Islam and explain how the individuals understand Islam as the source of ‘the truth’ while using religions as their compass for daily life. The second trait can be seen in the forms principled reasoning takes. It is elaborative, argumentational, if not deliberative, yet it makes dialogue possible only when both parties use and/ or agree upon the same formulation of ‘universal truth.’ The last trait is about how religious reasoning *de*

² Rawls, *Political liberalism*.

³ Habermas, “Religion in.”

⁴ Audi, Robert. *Religious commitment and secular reason*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁵ Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Why we should reject what liberalism tells us about speaking and acting in public for religious reasons.” in *Religion and contemporary liberalism*, ed. Paul, J. Weithman, 162-181 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997).

⁶ Paul J. Weithman, *Religion and the Obligations of Citizenship* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Paul J. Weithman, *Religion and Contemporary Liberalism* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997).

⁷ Rawls, John. *Political liberalism*, 217

⁸ Patrick Loobuyck and Stefan, M.E. Rummens, “Religious arguments in the public sphere: comparing Habermas with Rawls,” in *Religion in the public sphere*, ed. Niek Brunsveld, 237-249 (Utrecht : Ars Disputandi, 2011), 245.

facto positions itself against ‘the other’ views in the social world. This reasoning, affirms itself in the face of dissent and is critical of different interpretations, therefore it echoes authoritarian tones in the way it approaches religion and other spheres of life.

6.1. ‘There is only one truth’

The principled reasoning employed by the Muslim participants is derived from universal assumptions of their own comprehensive doctrines. When individuals resort to such reasoning, they tend to approach particular issues by appealing to universal principles to be found in Islam, which they take to be the one and only truth. Examining the epistemological background of the subject is essential for understanding the form it takes among the Muslims. Individuals’ choice of reasoning goes hand in hand with their beliefs about ‘knowledge’. Individuals who adopt principled reasoning typically treat beliefs either as true or false. The same understanding of a single truth sees ‘knowledge’ as a tool for ‘guiding’ people to what is true, what is right or good, and what is beautiful. The existence of alternative ideas is often viewed here as attempts to destroy the unity of society by various interest groups, who for various reasons seek to mislead devout Muslims. This is because according to this way of thinking, ‘real knowledge’ is immutable: it is something to be transmitted from one source to the other and ‘learned’ as a guide to the truth, goodness and beauty. Truth in Muslim principled reasoning is grounded in the Koran, believed to be the word of God, and the Sunnah - the deeds and sayings of the Prophet Mohammed. Also, appreciating or grasping the truth of Islam requires proper training and practice; it’s a matter of “wisdom” which is attained by certain people. I came across instances of this attitude during the fieldwork. For example, one of the participants said “Human reason is indeed capable of discovering the one true path. Disagreements about the way of Islam only make us weaker.” I also had the following conversation with the same person:

-What comes to your mind when I say ‘faith’ (iman)..

-Doing something good, as you know, is important for believers. They check their manners and spirituality as a choice between heaven and hell, ‘halal’ and ‘haram’. At this point, religiosity of the society is important. So what is the problem? The problem is lack of knowledge of and submission to Koran. The problem is our unawareness about Islam, I mean the Prophet’s Islam. Nowadays, everyone is interpreting a different, wrong

Islam according to their own ideas.... We can not say “according to me”, we have to look at what the Koran is saying” (No.99, Lawyer, president of an association, 43 years old male, Diyarbakır).⁹

My interlocutor believed that the Koran reveals the truth that cannot vary from person to person. In his view, different interpretations of the Koran can only lead to the fragmentation of Muslim unity. When he states that “we have to look at what the Koran is saying,” he implies that some Muslims purposefully do not refer to the Koran in order to confuse others and disseminate dissent among believers. This way of thinking, as I explained above, stems from taking the Koran as revealing the one and only truth, thus from ignoring or denying the interpretative role that the human mind plays while reading any text. To be sure, the individuals who subscribe to this type of reasoning take their own view of the Koran not as an “interpretation” but somehow as a reiteration of the ultimate truth about it. Hence, such individuals tend to be unaware of their own interpretative capabilities. A participant from Erzurum reveals his ideas about the un-interpretable nature of Islamic truth with these words:

So they do not know the concepts. They do not know what to understand but rather made an irrational legitimation fit for his desires. When you ask why he did something in a particular way he says things like “because this or that people did so” or “I saw a Hodja doing the same”. These are trivial. We are responsible to the religion itself, not to other people’s actions. People can do wrong but nothing can be wrong with Islam. Our Prophet has a relevant prayer that becomes even more important in these times of destructive trends. Our Master’s prayer say ‘O God, make us capable to distinguish between God’s ways and superstitions so we can follow God’s ways and avoid false knowledge’. We are living in such times that our taken for granted knowledge can be superstitions, so we have to check through science and wisdom. For example, divisive sects (*zararlı akımlar*) and all think that they know the truth (No. 126, Computer salesman and shop owner, 33 years old male, Erzurum).¹⁰

⁹ - İman Etmek deyince...

- İyi bir şey yapmak, her şeyde biliyorsun ki bu böyledir, o derecede yani bu şekilde inanan insanlar yani ahrette cennet ve cehennem ona göre helal ve haram noktasında kendine çeki düzen verecektir manevi açıdan gerçekten önemlidir yani toplumun dindarlaşması önemlidir... Peki sorun nedir? sorun biz Kur’an’a teslim olup da Kur’an’ı bilmememizden dolayıdır. Kur’an’daki İslam’ı peygamberin İslam’ını bilmediğimizden dolayıdır. Şu anda nedir herkes kendine göre İslam’ı yanlış ortaya atıyor; farklı, farklı fikir karmaşası var, biri diyor ki bence şöyledir, öteki öyle değil Kur’an’a göre asıl böyle. Bence değil Kur’an’a göre asıl Kur’an ne diyor ona bakmak lazım (No.99, Diyarbakır, 43 yaş, erkek, avukat, dernek başkanı).

¹⁰Olur mu yani o kavramları bilmiyor. Derken ne anlaşılması gerekiyor bilmiyor o kendisine çok saçma bir kılıf hazırlamış. Tamamen nefesine uygun hazırlamış. Bazıları öyle yapar niye böyle yaptın ya falan

Let us take a brief look at the literature on what I have called principled reasoning. Gambetta directly deals with the issue of ‘single truth’ and his analysis informs us about the internal mechanisms of reasoning that proceeds from such conception of truth. While analyzing the link between beliefs, the status of knowledge and prospects for deliberation, he states that the religious perspective approaches knowledge as quintessentially holistic: “Everything worth knowing is in one book - the Gospel, the Bible, the Koran. Truth is found in dogma rather than in doubt. Discovery comes, if at all, from reinterpretation rather than from research; knowledge is not a human construct but a gift bestowed upon us by revelation.”¹¹ Notice that here “reinterpretation” amounts to a single, authoritative understanding of a text rather than an open-ended and disputable attribution of meaning to it.

Gambetta’s depiction of “*claro* culture” gives further clues for elucidating such reasoning and its epistemological stance. Gambetta considers “indexical knowledge” to account for the way individuals think in *claro* cultures. His empirical research focused on Italy, whereby he tries to shed light on cultures in which people are unlikely to listen to one another's arguments. He says in these societies “knowledge is assumed to be holistic: knowledge or ignorance about x is taken as a sign of knowledge or ignorance of the whole.”¹² Gambetta points out two features of the *claro* culture: firstly, the dominance of strong opinions on everything, from the outset of the discussion; secondly, opinions are expressed with the purpose of impressing the audience and silence it, rather than further the conversation. Moreover, he argues that “expression of doubt, signals fragility of knowledge.”¹³

In the interviews I made, principled reasoning shared these two features of the *claro* culture. Some of the participants were so devoted to the idea of ‘religion reveals the truth’ that their own religious interpretation had become the only basis of their

hocada da gördüm bunu böyle yaptı falan elin kızı da böyle yaptı. Ya bizi **bağlayan insanlar değil dinin kendidir. İnsanlar yanlış yapabilir ama İslam da yanlış olmaz.** ... efendimizin burada önemli bir duası var. Bu zararlı akımların ortaya çıktığı bu dönemlerde bu duanın ehemmiyetini çokça anlıyoruz. Efendimizin duası Rabbim bize Hakkı hak olarak gösterip ona itibar etmeyi batılı batıl olarak gösterip ondan kaçınmayı nasib eyle. Çünkü öyle bir devirdeyiz ki sen onu hak olarak kabul ediyorsun ama bu batıl olabilir bunu araştırmadan ilim, bilim sahibi olmadan ... şeyler mesela zararlı akımlar kendilerini en doğru yolda olduğunu zannediyorlar (No.126, bilgisayarçı, dükkan sahibi, yaş 33, erkek, Erzurum).

¹¹ Gambetta, D. 1998. “Claro! An essay on discursive machismo”. In J.Elster (ed.), *Deliberative Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 19–43, p. 26

¹² Ibid, p. 25

¹³ Ibid, p. 29.

perspective on life. For, in their mind, there can be no place for doubt in this devotion and submission. The core value here is ‘certainty’ which is underlined via lengthy tirades and didactic speeches on all subjects. Especially for people using this type of reasoning, religion is giving concrete directives to individuals about all aspects of life. The excerpt below illustrates the perception of religion of principled reasoning:

We can apply religion to all aspects of our lives. I am trading right now and there is a trade law in Islam. Or, for example, I am going to the toilet, there are suggestions made by our Master about it. Such as, use your left foot first when entering to the bathroom. Our problem is some of our friends ignoring some hadis’ unreasonably. For example, saying Bismillahirrahmanirrahim while drinking water is Sunnah. Koran suggests we say it before doing anything but doing it while drinking water is specifically our Prophet’s sunnah. I am giving examples to illustrate how we can apply religion to daily life. (No.117, Engineer, owner of a technical service shop, 27 years old male, Erzurum)¹⁴

Furthermore, according to this mode of thinking “there is no question that cannot be answered by the Koran” (No. 05).¹⁵ Further, all answers and issues are concrete. A participant from Erzurum, using what Gambetta called a ‘strong opinion’, says that religion can be applied to all areas of life and he expresses his intolerance to different interpretations of religion:

For example, you wake up for the Morning Prayer, but the other person does not. You think one way and he thinks the other way. Everyone has their distinct opinions. We cannot unite; as a result we cannot stand united in the social arena. Religion is the foundation of everything, all can be resolved by religion. From family life to state issues, religion is the only solution, there is no other way (No. 131, Computer technician and medresa student, 30 years old male, Erzurum).¹⁶

¹⁴ **Hayatımızın her alanında dini tatbik edebiliriz.** Şu anda ticaret yapıyorum, İslam’da ticaret hukuku var mesela. Atıyorum lavaboya gidiyorum efendimizin tavsiyeleri var. Girerken sol ayakla girin diyor. Şimdi bunlar mesela bazı hadisleri inkar eden arkadaşlar var, sıkıntımız bu, mesela körikörüne inkar ediliyor bazı hadisler. Mesela su içerken besmele çekmek sünnettir. Kur’an-ı Kerim’de her işe başlamadan besmele çekin diyor o ayrı da, bu mesela peygamber efendimizin sünnetidir. Hayatın her alanından bahsettik ya örnekler veriyorum. (No.117, Mühendis, teknik servis sahibi, yaş27, Erkek, Erzurum.)

¹⁵ “Kur’an da cevapsız hiç birşey yoktur” (No.5, Salesman, 48 years old, Adana)

¹⁶ Bir bakıyorsunuz atıyorum, siz namaza kalkıyorsunuz, öbürü namaza kalkmıyor, öbürü başka düşünüyor, öbürü diyor ki bence öyle değil, herkesin bir bencesi var, yani biz daha hiç birşeyde birleşemiyoruz ki, yani sosyal meselelerde de birleşemiyoruz. Çünkü herşeyin kaynağı din, dinle çözülür hocam. Ailenin yaşama tarzından sizin devlet meselenize kadar herşeyi din çözer hocam, başka hiç bunun yolu yok ki (No. 131, Erzurum, Bilgisayarcı, Medrese talebesi, yaş 30, erkek).

Hazleton's analysis of certain reasoning is very much in line with what I referred as principled reasoning.

You are certain that you possess the truth, this certainty quickly detours into dogmatism and righteousness demonstrative of an overweening pride in being so very right, in short the arrogance of fundamentalism....Like fundamentalism of all religious stripes they have no questions, only answers, they found the perfect antidote to thought, ideal refuge hard demand of real faith. They don't have to struggle for the truth... They know everything there is to know and that they, they are alone are right.¹⁷

It is crucial to add that principled reasoning as manifested in religious mentality does not rule out revelation. Rather, the human reason is considered as the vehicle of divine truth. Surely, this approach to reason casts doubt on the presumption that 'reason' is a secular faculty and it 'replaces' revelation. One of the participants explained the relation between reason and revelation as follows:

-If you ask me who the wisest person is, I would say that it is the person who is aware of the capacity of his or her own mind. A person who is aware of what can be done with the human mind and to where its capacity extends.

-So which one is superior, in your opinion; your own mind or submission to revelation?

-They go hand in hand. But submission is prior because I believe that mind has its limits.

(No.117, Engineer, owner of a technical service shop, 27 years old male, Erzurum)¹⁸

The distrust towards reason shapes individual's approach to revelation. This approach is characterized by submission to the word of the sacred text rather than its spirit. Therefore even though theoretically interpretations of the Koran are considered acceptable, in practice they believe that the Koran can only be read and understood in one way.

Another participant in our research, who happens to be an academic theologian, defends a similar view of the relation of reason and revelation:

¹⁷ Lesley Hazleton, "The doubt essential to faith" *Ted Talks*, June 2013, accessed August, 21 2013. http://www.ted.com/talks/lesley_hazleton_the_doubt_essential_to_faith?language=en

¹⁸ "Şimdi en akıllı insan kimdir diye sorsanız bana, ben en akıllı insan aklımın kapasitesini farkedem, aklımın nelere kadir olabileceğini fark eden insandır derim. Yani bana verilen akılla ben ne yapabilirim, maximum ne anlayabilirim.

-Peki akıl mı itaat mi hangisi önce gelir?

-İkisi de birliktedir ama aklın sınırlı olduğuna inandığım için itaat." (No.117, Mühendis, Teknik servis sahibi, yaş 27, erkek, Erzurum,)

But we cannot overlook a revelation (vahiy). We have to understand it correctly. We have two basic rules that God has set in front of us. First he has not commanded that a revelation must be obeyed no matter what the circumstances. Second, he has left it up to us to pave stones for the pavements. He has just pointed us in a direction; go in this direction he has said. This is how you have to think of this subject. (No.230, Islamic law professor, 77 years old male, Istanbul)¹⁹

Notice that this participant leaves some room for freedom of thought, but the scope of this free thought is well defined: A believer cannot move away from the true path of a standard or principle. In relation to the religious framework determining what is ‘true and false’, reasoning is reduced to the confirmation and application of ‘the truth’.

As will be discussed in detail later in this chapter, this understanding does not tolerate alternative thinking or opposition. Its priority is the removing different opinions or interpretations of Islam. In the following example, the participant states that under suitable conditions, that have to be provided via struggle, the true Islam will reveal itself:

If there wasn't poverty, people wouldn't be using their stomachs but their heads; as they wouldn't have to think about their stomachs, they would be using their heads. And if they use their heads, they will choose Islam and they will know their God. But there is ignorance... ignorance leads to all sorts of crimes, stealing leads to other things. But if there was no ignorance, people would recognize their God through reason. And that person would choose Islam so as not to be lacking in spirituality. If such a person has disagreements that lead to ignorance, it leads to poverty. Poverty and ignorance lead to disagreement. This is what we are trying to do; we are trying to remove conflict. A society that doesn't have poverty and ignorance, doesn't have conflicts and lives in unity (No.99, Lawyer, 43 years old male, Diyarbakır).²⁰

¹⁹ Ama beyandan sarfı nazar edemeyiz beyanı doğru anlamak durumundayız. Fakat önümüzde Allahü tealanın bu dini rahatlıkla uygulayabilmemiz için koyduğu iki temel kural var. Ta başa dönüyorum şimdi, bir bu beyan durum şartlar ne olursa olsun uygulanacak dememiş, iki uygulama alanımızda kaldırım taşlarını döşeme işini bize bırakmış, sadece yönü göstermiş yani şu yöne doğru döşeyin demiş mesela böyle düşüneceksiniz (No.230, Fıkıh Profesörü, Erkek, yaş 77, İstanbul).

²⁰ ...fakirlik olmazsa insanlar midesini değil aklını kullanır çünkü midesini düşünmek zorunda kalmayacak kafasını kullanacak aklını kullanan da bize göre İslam'ı tercih edecektir rabbini tanıyacaktır.Cehalet olduğu müddetçe, cehalette her türlü suçtur hırsızlık her türlü şey olur ama eğer cehalet yoksa, cehaleti yenebilirsen bilgili akıllı insanlar bize göre ister istemez rabbini tanıyacaktır ve o insan yine İslam'a yönelecektir maneviyattan yoksun olmayacaktır yani bu insanın şeyi varsa ihtilaflar cehaleti getirir fakirliği getirir fakirlik ve cehalet ihtilafları getirir. Bununla mücadele ediyoruz bunu bertaraf etmeye çalışıyoruz ve bunları yapabilirsek toplumun temel sorunu ve ihtilafların olmadığı şeyde de toplum birlik ve beraberlik içerisinde olur (No.99, avukat, yaş 43, erkek, Diyarbakır).

According to this understanding, Islamic knowledge can only be interpreted by the interpreters of Islamic law (*müçtehit*) and the Islamic law reformists (*mücedid*). However, all interpretations and reforms must conform to the Koran itself. The academic participant I quoted above put it as follows:

The holy God accepts various jurisprudences as a path to servitude. Thus when you apply any of them, you behave in ways that please him. This is the crucial point. You have to know what God wants in order to behave accordingly. This is submission. *Müçtehit*'s guide you to the right way, you learn and say 'this is what the God wants me to do!' and apply it. Even if that *müçtehit* makes a mistake, you would have no mistake as a vassal. Why? Because it is his mistake and you applied it believing it to be true, rather than saying 'it is wrong so I may not do that'. You act according to the guidance thinking that 'it is true, this is the God's consent, it is what the God wants from me (No.230, Theology Professor, 77 years old, male, Istanbul).²¹

6.2. Providing arguments

Unlike communitarian and utilitarian reasoning, principled reasoning is highly verbal and individuals aim at cognitively persuading their interlocutor by sophisticated religious arguments. I had an opportunity to experience this first hand during the in-depth interviews. Through long narratives the interviewees liked to point out the similarities between the real life and passages from the Koran; or how the Koran makes accurate predictions about the future; or how we are better equipped to understand the world from the religious perspective rather than the secular one. This is their attempt to surprise and fascinate me with the depths that are to be found in the Koran and of which, they assume, I have never heard before. Therefore from time to time the interviews switch from cognitive persuasion to proselytizing. Very often, the interviewees wear a little smile and enchantingly tell stories about the "miracles" of Islam.

²¹ "Cenabı Hak bu farklı içtihatların hepsini birden onlarla kulluk yapmak bakımından meşru kabul ediyor. Dolayısıyla siz şimdi onların herhangi birini uyguladığınızda O'nun rızasına uygun davranmış oluyorsunuz. Önemli olan da bu. Yani Allah' a itaat etmek için O'nun ne istediğini bilmeniz gerekir. İtaat bu demek. Ne istediğinizi müçtehit yolu ile biliyorsunuz, öğreniyorsunuz. "Haa! Allah bunu istiyor benden" diyorsunuz ve uyguluyorsunuz. Şimdi o müçtehit hata etse de sizin kulluğunuz muteber. Niye? Çünkü hata etmiş. "Yanlış ama ben bunu uygulayım demiyorsunuz". Diyorsunuz ki: "Doğru olan budur" ya da diyorsunuz ki "Allah buna razıdır. Allahın benden istediği budur" (No.230, Fıkıh Profesörü, yaş 77, erkek, İstanbul).

Now the Koran addresses human beings, and the way of life, their emotions, and their mentality. Human beings are unknown creatures. They are called *insan-ı meçhul* (unknown beings), there is a book with this title. It is true that humans are unsolvable and they are largely unknown creatures. The Creator is knows best their cipher. In a simplest analogy, similar to a producer of a mechanical device, whose minute details are known best by its inventor, the inventor gives you the operation manual, and it advises you to use it accordingly. It says by following instructions the product endures long and you get the best results. But if you don't follow the instructions, if you go trial and error, the chances of breaking down the device are high. By this way, you may even make it completely dysfunctional and broken. According to our belief, there is a creator, and the life is so complex and it is so perfect that it is not possible to understand it by mere coincidences. Perfection is everywhere, in the structure of human beings, in the universe, in the world. This perfection cannot be explained by luck. There is a strong need for a creator for this to happen. And the creator didn't give free rein to humans. God sent prophets throughout the history, as an observer, especially in the instances of mischief and deviation, in order to show the right path. God sent books and prophets. This is our belief. Human beings don't change. Emotions don't change; emotions existed thousand years ago and are probably the same even today. Jealousy existed then, we have it today. Love existed back then, we have it today as well. Sexual desires existed that day; we have them today as well. These are the things that come from very nature of humanity, they don't change. The Koran addresses humanity; it strives for human perfection and flourishing. It advocates mutual respect and friendship, it bans theft and it prohibits perversion. Only among criminals these acts are acceptable, other than that everywhere in the world these act are treated as crimes, that is, if there is a law and order, and if there exists a state these acts are seen as crimes. Islam is the same, it dictates a law (No.44, academic in theology faculty also an activist, 42 years old, male, Çorum).²²

²² ... şimdi kuran insana hitab ediyor insanın yaşantısına muhatabı insandır kişidir insanın ihtiyaçları duygu ve düşünce duyguları hani var insan biraz daha meçhuldür insan-ı meçhul diye bir kitap da var, gerçekten insan tamamıyla çözülemeyen bir meçhuldür ve onu yaratıcı, yaratıcı insanın şifresini en iyi bilendir yani bir makineyi imal eden en güzel şekilde onu bilir ve sana kullanma kılavuzu verir ve buna göre bunu kullanırsanız bunu bozmazsın kırmazsın dökmezsin en basit şekliyle yani izah edersek bunu uzun süre kullanabilirsiniz kullanma talimatına göre gidersen ama gitmezseniz deneme yanılma yaparsanız bunu kırma ihtimaliniz var bozma ihtimaliniz var tamamen işlevsiz duruma getirme ihtimaliniz var. Bizim inancımızda bir yaratıcı vardır ve hayat tesadüfi olmayacak derecede karmaşıktır tesadüflerle izah edilemeyecek kadar mükemmeldir insanın yapısından tutun dünya kainatın her şeyde yani mükemmellik vardır ve bu mükemmellik tesadüflerle izah edilemez, illa bir yaratıcıya ihtiyaç duyuyor ve yaratıcı da insanı başı boş bırakmamıştır insana zaman zaman Peygamberler vasıtasıyla uyarıcı gönderilmiştir sapma olunca tekrar yoldan ayrılma varsa tekrar yola düzene koymak için kitap ve Peygamber göndermiştir. İnancımız budur bizim. Bir de insan değişmiyor insandaki duygular değişmiyor 1000 sene önceki insanda olan belki insandaki duygular neyse bugün de aynıdır. Kıskançlık o zamanda vardı bugün de vardır. Sevgi o gün de vardı bugün de vardır. Cinsel ihtiyaç o gün de vardı bugün de vardır ... yani bunlar insanın yapısından gelen şeylerdir bunlar değişmiyor Kur'an da insana hitab ediyor ve bu duygularını insan-ı kamil noktasında mükemmel bir insan noktasında topluma çevresine faydalı olma noktasında onu getiriyor yani bugün insanlık işte hırsızlık yapma bütün o sapıklıklarda her dönemde bu böyle bir eşkıyalar hırsızlık mubahtır suç değildir onun dışında her yerde

In this reasoning the actor aims at shaping other's opinions, beliefs and practices through persuasion, exhortation, and deliberation. We can think of it essentially as a political practice. In utilitarian and communitarian reasoning, the ways in which individuals state or express their views are not open to deliberation or conversation. Rather, these views surface without deliberate intentions and they are often not well grounded and articulated. Utilitarian and communitarian views sometimes appear during the conversations performatively and not always verbally. However, principled reasoners seek to state their stance clearly; this is probably because they feel under the duty to convey the message of Islam to others. Hence, many times participants proselytize (*tebliğ*) to me. When they do so, they often seem to feel good about themselves, happy about having the chance to fulfill their religious duty of spreading the message of Islam. This resembles what Hirschkind observed in the Egyptian society. Actors in the *Dawa* movement of the Muslim Brotherhood uphold a certain kind of ethical speech, "one imbued with the language of the Koran and the teachings of the Sunnah to move the sensitive heart toward correct practice."²³ However, the scope of my interview is pluralism, so when my questions shift from the more theoretical aspect of Islam to the practice of living in a plural society, my questions push interviewees to talk about situations where harmony and order are not self-evident. This leads them to think that I may not be sharing their worldview; as such they feel the need to bring forth arguments to convince me, to invite me to the "true" belief and practice of Islam. This is how Hirschkind relates the motivation behind the practice of argumentational and deliberative talk.

Within this arena, speech is deployed in order to construct moral selves, to reshape character, attitude, and will in accord with contemporary standards of pious behavior. The efficacy of an argument here devolves not solely on its power to gain cognitive assent on the basis of its superior reasoning, as would be the case in some versions of a liberal public sphere, but also on its ability to move the moral self toward correct modes of being and acting.²⁴

çalma çırpma suçtur yani devlet olan hukuk olan her yerde ki İslam'da hukuktur yani hukuk varsa her yerde bu suçtur (No.44, İlahiyatçı, yaş 42, erkek, Çorum).

²³ Hirschkind, "Religious reason," 13.

²⁴ Ibid., 14.

It is crucial to notice the individual here adopts the deliberative mode not because he is willing to re-asses his stance and to have a genuinely open-ended conversation about it; rather, he does so for a disciplinary purpose, in that he wishes to convince the listener of the one truth, that he or she herself have presumably mastered. The argumentational attitude usually appears when the interviewee is trying to prove that they possess a good knowledge of religion. The topics that will most easily bring forth these speeches are: true Islamic faith, required Islamic practices such as avoidance of pork and alcohol; veiling; the benefits of praying five times a day; or the meaning of Islam for today. Also, unlike the utilitarian reasoning, principled reasoning typically relies on inductive and deductive pseudo-scientific arguments that aim for the universality of the “one truth.” I will discuss this in detail in through the concrete examples regarding politics, gender and economy, but for a brief illustration consider the following example:

Let’s say that you say *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim* before drinking water. So if I tell you that this will bring you healing because you said to it the name of the Creator, you’d understand it in the spiritual sense. I have been researching it recently on the internet. There some Japanese scientists. I can’t pronounce their names but they have discovered the language of water. So they say if you say nice things to water, the water molecules take nicer forms and the water benefits you more. But, they say, if you make the water listen to heavy metal music, if you expose it to harsh music, the shape of the water molecules becomes warped and they take a shape that may harm you. There are books written on this subject (No. 127, Engineer, owner of a technical service, 27 years old male, Erzurum).²⁵

This is good example of penchant for consistency and deductive reasoning. It may be useful to draw a parallel between what I call principled reasoning and Tilly’s description of the way “codes” work. These codes govern actions such as legal judgments, religious penance, or awarding of medals.²⁶

²⁵ Hani hayatın her alanından bahsettik ya örnekler verdik şimdi bismillahirrahmanirrahim diyip su içtiniz. Ben size desem ki yani o su size şifa olabilir. Çünkü Yaradanın adını ona söylediniz siz bunun birazını bende daha doğrusu manevi olarak algılarım şimdi bunun birkaç gün ruhunu inceliyorum internetten Japon bilim adamları ismini telaffuz etmiyorum da şu anda suyun dilini keşfetmişler suyun mesela diyor ki suya güzel şeyler söylediğiniz zaman suyun o moleküler yapısı çok hoş şekillere giriyor ve gerçekten size faydalı oluyor ama mesela size diyor ki örnek veriyorum bir nevi metal dinlettiğiniz zaman mesela diyor yani sert bir şey dinlettiğiniz zaman diyor su molekülleri çok bozuk şekiller alıyorlar belki size de zarar verebilecek buruma geliyor kitaplar yazılmış (No.127, Mühendis, Erkek, yaş 27, Erzurum).

²⁶ Tilly *Why? What Happens*, 15.

No reason but a rule is given. Religious prescriptions, law codes, and prestigious systems of honors overflow with reasons, but those reasons describe how what happened conforms to the code at hand rather than what actually caused the outcome. Priests, judges, award committees figure extensively in the giving of reasons according to the codes.²⁷

Tilly further adds that “for those who play the game, codes have an air of inevitability, even of sanctity.”²⁸ In principled reasoning individuals endeavor to relate a strong and sophisticated theory. Religion is turned into a theory, a source of knowledge that gives direction to life. The most striking element of this theory is its internal consistency. As with ideologies, everything becomes explainable within the framework of the religious explanation; all instances serve to prove it. The interviewees build this explanation by reading the same texts over and over again as well as by talking to similar minded people. Their position is further reinforced when religious authorities in the country make similar pronouncements. They rehearse and repeat this explanation on countless social occasions and this explains its articulate verbalization. The individuals believe completely in these theories and are able to lecture others about them for hours.

6.3. The unacceptability of conflict and dissent

To talk to someone who adopts principled rationality about interpreting Islamic knowledge becomes possible only as long as you accept their basic premises. The common ground here is at the level of doctrine and arguments, rather than merely on practices or performances, which typically is the case for communitarian reasoning. New arguments are accepted and taken seriously only as long as they support the accepted “truth,” that is, they are articulated in accord with Islamic normative grounds. In the case of a group talk, any of the participants can talk only to the extent he stays within the normative ground; otherwise he is silenced by the rest of the group.

The people who engage in principled reasoning view the truth as one and universal. Accordingly the world is divided in two kinds of people: the good ones who obey to this truth and strive to understand it further and the bad people who refuse to accept it. People are either ignorant and cannot understand the word of God, or they

²⁷ Ibid, 17.

²⁸ Ibid., 18.

are clever and refuse God's word even if they understand it. The latter ones have ulterior motives, their purpose is to distort the truth of Islam and lead society astray. In principled reasoning debating, exchanging ideas or attempting to understand different positions is a futile endeavor, because debate is equaled to a noisy fight.

The two most common explanations I received for the reaction towards the difference of opinions is that (i) it is essentially provocation and mischief; and (ii) its only purpose is to weaken Muslims. The conversation involves frequent references to us-and-them type distinctions, which in turn are the basic dynamic that keeps this reasoning alive. Deliberation or coming to terms with a different idea is unacceptable. In principled reasoning, truth is not negotiable, it can only be transferred and people have to learn and accept it as it is. Islam is considered to be the embodiment of this truth. This emphasis was evident in the examples I gave about the single truth above. Other phrases that exemplify this kind of reasoning are: "disagreement leads to ignorance and poverty;" "if everyone insists on ideas according to him we can never agree on anything;" "we need unity and togetherness;" and "we need to watch out for dangerous currents of ideas." Although people who engage in principled reasoning attempt to employ a politically correct discourse, they have no tolerance for the different schools of thought in Islam, especially the different practices of the Alevis, or for the people who change their religion or do not comply with the teachings of Islam. The following is an example of a participant reacting against someone who does not comply with the rules of Islam. Such people are called apostates (*mürted*).

-When you say *la ilahi ilallah* and become a Muslim sign a contract stating you will keep to certain commitments. You can't change your mind about them afterward and say you won't do it. When you break the rules there are sanctions, penalties that have to be applied to you. Let me give you an example. When you say *la ilahi ilallah, muhamedin resululah*, when you say that there is god but God and that Mohammed is his prophet you are actually saying I believe in God, I believe in his book and his commands, I believe in the prophet of God, and as a result I believe in the book that he brought and all his judgments. Once you believe, if you begin shirking your duties, or saying things like: "I'm bored [of these duties]," "do I have to pray all the time", "why should drinking be forbidden," "I can't control myself I have to be able to look at women; who is there to stop me," "why should anyone try to stop me;" in fact what you are doing is going against the maker of religion. Of course there will be sanctions for that. What you are doing has to be judged somehow. I don't know, do you think I am wrong?

-No, *estafurullah*. Is this someone you would call an apostate?

- An apostate is someone who rejects religion. They are also called atheists.

-What is the penalty for that?

-First you warn him. You tell him look, if you keep going like this the penalty is death by killing. This is how it was done in the days of the Caliph Abu Bakr. After the Prophet died, there were some people who did not adopt Islam properly and they embark on things like this. So he [the Caliph] applies the penalty (No. 126, electronics repairman, 33 years old male, Erzurum).²⁹

It is important to note that principled reasoning and its strong belief in one possible truth establishes itself by creating its own other. The combination of one universal truth that rests on a radical, insurmountable binary opposition means that the person adopting this rationality is prone to refer to conspiracy, plotting foreign forces, and internal enemies, all of whom collude to weak “us;” hence they emphasize the need for unity and solidarity for the in-group. As it is clearly seen in the above quotation, this stance may even go as far as to see violence and killing of an apostate as legitimate.

In what follows I will show how this way of thinking is reflected in politics, gender and economics. This is an attempt to understand how the tension is bridged between the transcendental and the mundane, how the rights of the ethereal world meet the practices of this world, and what kind of rationalization the person employs when he or she deals with the resulting strain between these worlds.

6.4. Politics

The intolerance towards other opinions that characterizes principled reasoning is not only reflected when discussing religion but also politics. Indeed it becomes stronger in political debates, because politics is seen as a tool for implementing the one truth. Politics is not a process through which different ideas and groups come together, but

²⁹ ...sen lailahe illallahmuhammeden resulullah dediğin zaman inandığın Allahtan başka Allah yoktur Muhammed onun elçisidir dediğin zaman Allaha inandım dolayısıyla onun bütün emellerine kitabına inandım. Dolayısıyla hepsine inandın inandıktan sonra yan çizme yani sıkıldım ben bu namazı her zaman mı kılıcam? Niye içkim olsun efendim benim nefsim çok iyi ben zina etmeliyim buna kim engel olabilir gibi itirazlarda bulunduğun zaman, inandığın dinin sahibine karşı gelmiş oluyorsun. Dolayısıyla bununda bir yaptırımını var. Bunu bu şekilde değerlendirmek lazım. Bilmiyorum yanlış mı?

- Yok estafurrullah. Peki mürtet mi deniyor?

- Çıkana Mürtet ve ya zındık deniyor.

- Nedir zındık ve cezası.

- Yani onu tekrar uyarıyorsun böyle böyle devam ediyorsa bunun öldürülme cezası var.Bu da Hz. Ebubekir döneminde efendimiz öldükten sonra dünyasını değiştirdikten sonra bazı insanlar islami olarak benimsememişler böyle bir harekete kalkışıyorlar.Böyle bir yaptırımda uygulanıyor (No. 126, elektronik tamircisi, 33 year old male, Erzurum).

rather a struggle that has to be won despite differences. Preferably it will crush these differences which it sees as the cause of dissent. Annihilating the other, or at least making them ineffective to act is considered the essence of politics. Principled rationality does not see a difference between politics and administration, where administration is defined as the embodiment of the one truth. One of my interlocutors explicitly said that politics consists of lies and hypocrisy. It is not a job any honest man would take up, but politics also means leading society in a certain direction. As a lawyer in Diyarbakır put it:

Politics is everywhere in our lives. That is, now everything we do is political. What we are doing in our association is politics. You don't have to have a political party for that. To reduce politics to party politics is very wrong. Fruitlessness in politics is a direct result of this. Politics as a word has its origins in Latin, but there is a difference between politics [*siyaset*] and politics [*politika*]. These two concepts are ontologically different. *Siyaset* is a tool for education, as a concept it derives from 'seyis' which in Arabic means horse breeding and training. Politics has to do with having multiple faces, with being plural, with demagoguery, which are concepts that define hypocrisy. In our times politics and *siyaset* are used interchangeably. But in my opinion politics is a narrower concept. It refers to relations and relationships between political parties. *Siyaset* involves all our lives. It involves the society, the country we live in, the political system we live in, the way we think and presents itself in the way we present our thoughts. If I think something and share it with society, if I lead society in a certain direction or if I try to present a certain vision to society, all this is what *siyaset* is about, I think (No. 100, lawyer, 36 years old male, Diyarbakır).³⁰

When this individual explains that the word *siyaset* derives from the training of horses and therefore amounts to the art of steering masses in certain direction, he in fact is providing us with a clear sense of the implications of principled reasoning for politics.

³⁰ Siyaset yani yaşamın tamamı yani şu anda yaptığımız şey tamamen bir siyaset yani biz aslında dernekte siyaset yapıyoruz bunun için parti kurmaya gerek yok siyaseti partisel şeye çabaya indirgemek partisele indirgemek zaten son derece yanlış ve kısırlık da buradan kaynaklanıyor. Politika her ne kadar siyasetin Latince karşılığı olarak karşımıza çıksa da aslında siyasetle politika arasında fark var. Yani kavramın ontolojik yapısı itibariyle fark var. Siyaset bir eğitim amaçlı kavram itibariyle seyislikten gelir, at yetiştiriciliğidir. Politika ise işte meselelere biraz çoğul bakmayı ama aynı zamanda demagojiyi aynı zamanda çok yüzlülüğü ifade eden bir kavramdır. Bugün itibariyle baktığımız zaman ikisi birbirinin yerine kullanılan kavramlar ama politika bana göre biraz daha dar şey gibi geliyor kavram gibi geliyor. Yani daha çok partilerin içerisinde buldukları iş ve ilişkilere politika deniyor. Siyaset bütün yaşadığımız çağla ilgili, toplumla ilgili, yaşadığımız ülkeyle ilgili, içinde yaşadığımız sistemle ilgili, sizin düşünüş biçiminizle ilgili, ve bunu sunuş biçiminizi ifade eder yani ben eğer bu konularla ilgili bir şeyler düşünüyorum ve sunuyorsam topluma, toplumu bu alanda bir yere yönlendiriyorsam veya topluma bir şey, bir vizyon sunmaya çalışıyorsam bütün bu yaptığımız şeyin bir siyaset olduğunu düşünüyorum (No.100, avukat, erkek, yaş:36, Diyarbakır).

In this person's view politics has nothing to do with plurality, because plurality is considered to be the root of all societal problems. Plurality breeds hypocrisy and invites demagoguery. Seymour Martin Lipset used the phrase "Weltanschauung model of politics" to describe a group which seeks to "make the world conform to their basic philosophy or world-view (Weltanschauung)." In other words, the group that adopts this position do not see themselves as one of the competing groups in the political arena but rather as the possessors of either historical or religious truth while anyone who is not on their side is in the absolute wrong.³¹ In line with Lipset's definition, the lawyer from the quote above states that Islam is the only source of truth, that the citizens of the Republic of Turkey have not reached the maturity to understand the message of Islam and have drifted away from their true selves because of the false consciousness they have gained through the nation-state building process and modernity. He insisted that if Islam was explained properly to the people, they would eventually want to be ruled by Sharia law because they would see that it is the best possible way of government.

Principled reasoning in politics appears mainly in the form of the claim that Islam has only one interpretation and that this understanding of Islam should govern society. Politics does not need plurality because the word of God on earth is enough to solve any and all issues. In another interview in Diyarbakır, I talked with the director of a human rights association about the relation between law and religion, and from there we discussed the republican revolutions and Sharia law in Turkey. To my question of what should be the source of law, his reply was the following:

I used to live there [in Europe] and what you see is that the people and the state are at peace with each other because the state does not make laws that are against the faith of the people or their life modes. They did not do it. This is how laws are technically done in Europe: first there is customs and tradition on a particular topic. It can be anything, trade, family relations, anything. First those traditions turn into customs and are spread to society in time; after they have spread then all of society obeys them because that becomes their responsibility. The state notices this and turns it into a law. It takes a social phenomenon and grants it legal security by tying it to sanctions. But what did we do? We took laws as they were in Europe, and not from one country, but from five of them. We

³¹ Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 1 (1959): 69-105, 92-94.

translated these laws and began implementing and imposing them on our society (No. 99, director of an association, 43 years old male, Diyarbakır).³²

The same idea is widely shared by people who are unhappy with the republican revolutions. In the rest of the interview, the director criticizes the reforms of the Kemalist revolutions because they are impositions from above and do not reflect the consensus among the people. By making references to Europe, the participant first attempts to show how his truth is different from that of the others. In the second step of reasoning, his claim is that his truth is legitimate because it comes from his own people. This, however, is not the kind of legitimacy that is produced through democratic participation, because the whole question of how is legitimacy produced is bypassed in this reasoning. It is assumed that Islam means the same thing to everyone in society, therefore being governed by Islamic law in an Islamic state makes perfect sense. The assumption is that consensus already exists in society, hence the claim that laws need to reflect these societal values. The important thing is to unite around the one truth, and for the sake of this unity it is acceptable to ignore potential conflict or dissenting voice.

-What do you think should be the source of law, reason or revelation?

-There is no need to pose dilemmas to Muslims. I mean, people in general are Muslim, we live in a Muslim society. So why bring in a dilemma? What's the point? So today I... I think that drinking is *haram* and forbidden. So buying and selling it should also be forbidden. Who wants to drink, should do so in their homes. I think this is what Islam brings. But you cannot do it in the open according to Islam. It forbids that a Muslim drink, but if you are a sinner you can drink. As long as you don't show it, there is no problem, because in Islam you can't pry into someone's home. You cannot keep track of people continuously by spying. Someone can even commit adultery in their own homes. If the people outside don't see it, don't know of it then this is between that person and God. He'll answer to God.

- Yes, but let's say...

³²Yani orada da kaldım yani bakıyorsun oradaki devlet toplumuyla barışıktır, halkı da devletiyle barışık çünkü halkının düşüncesine inancına, halkının yaşantısına muhalif kanuni bir yasası bir şeyi yok. Onu yapmamış. Avrupa'da kanun tekniği şudur: önce örf ve adet oluşuyor; bir konuda ticaretle olsun, toplumda aile gelenek göreneklerde olsun, bir şey oluşuyor ve sonra bu zamanla topluma yaygınlaşıyor. O gelenek, görenek, örf ve adet haline geliyor ve toplumun geneli artık ona uymayı bir yükümlülük sayıyor, ona uymaya başlıyor ve yasada devlette bunu tespit ediyor ve bunu alıp kanunlaştırıyor. Halkın içerisinde gelişen bu olguyu yasal güvenceye ve müeyyideye bağlıyor. Onu biz de yapmışız biz olduğu gibi yasaları almışız. Avrupa'nın beş... tek bir ülkenin değil farklı, farklı ülkeden kanunları almışız; tercüme etmişiz ve o tercüme yasaları getirmişiz topluma buna göre uygulayacaksınız [demişiz] (No.99, Dernek Başkanı, Avukat, yaş 43, erkek, Diyarbakır).

-This is the difference. The people in general are Muslims. When you do things like this, when the system does things like this society becomes hypocritical. So instead of creating a Muslim society, you are creating a hypocrite (*münafık*) society. On the one side man has to be Muslim on the other he has to be secular. On the one hand you say you can't have an Islamic state. Why can't the state have a religion? On the other hand you are saying the state is secular. But then the state can't be secular. If anyone can be secular, then the individual has to be secular. Because the individual is religious. The state can't impose secularism. Can't impose secularism on society (No. 99, director of an association, 43 years old male, Diyarbakır).³³

The position that you can have an ideal society where order and politics are established through Islam and people are not confused by being exposed to different voices is the product of principled rationality. The quote above illustrates the three characteristics of principled reasoning as applied to politics. Giving examples from Europe and elaborating the argument in a long speech is part of the argumentational mode. Criticizing lawmaking under the Republic and talking about hypocrisy is part of the attempt to construct the "us" by clearly identifying "them." And last, but not least, there is the emphasis on Islam being the only truth, "there is no need to divide society," because the truth is something that is accepted universally by consensus. Islam is considered the only cement you need to tie people to each other:

-It looks like you neither a Turkish nor a Kurdish nationalist...

-No, for us it is all about religion. I'd rather live in a state that has Islamic elements in it or has respect for Islam rather than live under a Kurdish Marxist state. I'd live in an Arab state, that is. What matters is that I can live my religion. It is important that I can fulfill

³³ - Kanunun kaynağı sizce ne olmalı, akıl mı, vahiy mi?

-Müslümanları ikileme bırakmaya gerek yok. Yani şimdi halkın geneli Müslüman, Müslüman bir toplumda yaşıyoruz insanları niye ikileme içinde bırakalım ki, niye bırakalım yani. Yani bugün ben..., bana göre içki haramsa benim yaşam sistemimde de içkinin haram ve yasak, alım ve satımının yasak olması lazım. İçen, isteyen evinde içebilir. Bak İslam'ın getirdiği şey de bu ama bunu açıktan yapmak İslam'a uygun gelmiyor. Bir Müslüman'ın içmesine de yasak getirmiş. "Bir Müslüman'san içemezsin" diyor, ama günahkârsan içiyorsun. Kimseye göstermedikten yaptıktan sonra sorun yok. Çünkü İslam'da evlerin içini gözetlemek yoktur. Casusluk süreciyle sürekli onun ne yapıyor ne ediyor diye şey yapmak yoktur. Bir insan evinin içerisinde zina da edebilir. Dışarıdaki insan bunu bilmiyorsa görmüyorsa bu onunla rabbi arasında, hesabımı Allah'a hesap verecektir.

-Peki mesela...

-Aradaki şey o yani toplumun geneli Müslüman şimdi bunu böyle yapmakla sistem bunu böyle yapmakla toplumu iki yüzlü bir toplum haline getiriyor. Yani İslami değil de münafık bir toplum oluşturmaya çalışıyor. Bir insan bir yerden Müslüman olacak bir yerden laik olacak, bir yandan siz diyorsunuz ki devlet İslam devleti olmaz. Niye devletin dini olmaz deniyor? Bir yandan getiriyorsunuz devlet laikdir [diyorsunuz]. Devletin laikliği de olmaz. Olacaksa laik olan bireydir. Dindar olan bireydir. Devlet laikliği dayatmayacak. Laikliği topluma dayatmayacak. (No.99, Dernek Yöneticisi, Avukat, yaş 43, erkek, Diyarbakır)

my religious duties, and maybe that is the problem with the Turkish state right now. That is, when people look at the state from the religious lens, they can't see any element of it. There is no shared ground. There is no shared ground in terms of ethnicity either. How can you live together then, how can you... (No. 99, director of an association, 43 years old male, Diyarbakır).³⁴

Here there is a demand for the establishment of a state and legal system based on Islam, but this also a request to have a monist law and administration. So that society, individuals and the state can gather around this monist ideal. Instead of the pluralist political regime which accommodates difference as liberal democracies are designed to do, this is the ideal of a political regime based on Islam and there is a general consent on the direction, the intention as well as the law. In this monist understanding pluralism and diversity are to be tolerated with patience till the time is right.

In another interview, one of the former directors of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*) made a self-critique on this exact topic. He also mentioned that he had been reflecting on this matter while writing his memoirs. His claim is that religious functionaries in Turkey don't know the real meaning of secularism, but rather they are taught that it is something which they do not choose but must live by. The secularism that these functionaries describe to others is one that clashes with Islam, where a good Muslim cannot really live his faith in a secular environment. In this narrative a true Muslim can only live in a true Islamic state. So the Muslims who live in a modern nation state and have no means of changing the system, then they should consent to it. Thus the conditions in Turkey are seen as a state of necessity. Hayrettin Karaman, write in the newspaper *Yeni Şafak* in a similar vein:

The worst kind of secularism changes the unchangeable things in Islam. It is the secularism of the creed, of the idea, of the understanding. The evil that follows is the withdrawal of Islam from certain spheres and the making of this [abandonment] legitimate. Another problem that follows is the impossibility, difficulty and poorness of the application of Islam. This poor application is naturalized, normalized and it produces

³⁴-Öyle görünüyor ki siz ne Kürt milliyetçisisiniz ne de Türk milliyetçisisiniz ...

-Yok biz yani inanç .. ben inançsız bir Kürt Marksist bir Kürt devletinde yaşamaktansa İslami esaslara veyahut da İslam'a saygı gösteren bir devlette yaşamayı tercih ederim. Ya da bir Arap devletinde tercih ederim yani. İnancımı yaşayabilmem önemlidir. Burada inancımın gereğini yerine getirebilmem önemlidir ya da ona göre biz şuan yani Türkiye devletiyle belki sıkıntı da beklide oradan kaynaklanıyor. Yani buradaki insanlar şimdi inanç noktasında devlete baktığında bir payda bulamıyor. Baktığında paylaşılır bir nokta bulamıyor. Etnik kimlik yönünden baktığında ondada bir payda bulamıyor. Orada bir payda yok. Bu insan nasıl bir arada yaşayacak, nasıl yaşayacaksınız ...(No.99, Dernek Yöneticisi, Avukat, yaş 43, erkek, Diyarbakır).

disorientation. The religious leaders that want to preserve the truth in the life of the faithful face difficulties and produce temporary solutions. And they also have to try and keep them on the journey to the true path.³⁵

The individuals who adopt the single truth approach in reasoning do not internalize democracy. This becomes obvious as the conversation progresses. Initially there is a very positive attitude towards democracy as a concept; it is presented as an ideal that should be adopted universally. Soon enough it becomes clear that they consider democracy a mere tool for realizing the desired Islamic state. It is important to underline that the individuals who subscribe to principled reasoning do truly believe that all rational minds do or will eventually come to think like them. They also hold that the unity of faith cannot be imposed from above. Hence, they oppose the idea of doing away with democracy and imposing Shari'a by force. After all, they argue, their one truth is universal and everyone will, eventually come to see it like that. With good sense and God's help Islam will reign absolute in the world. Meanwhile they believe that they revitalize Islam through education and culture, that is with pedagogic means that function from bottom-up. The state will follow suit automatically. During the interviews some of the participants referred to the republican period as "the age of ignorance" or "*dar-ül harp*"³⁶ because they believe that a minority is ruling the Muslim majority. This is the reason why they see democracy as something they must consent to until the time is right.

And that is where the basic discrepancy begins. We are trying to impose an Islamic state on today's society. Yet our society today contains everything, right? In fact at the stage of the establishment of an Islamic state these differences should no longer exist and the Islamic state is established when there is a request for it. But with this combination, with this social combination you can't establish an Islamic state. What can you establish? You can have a state which is the product of coup d'estats, a state the product of a revolution. I mean, you can impose a state [structure] from the above, put four or five Islamist generals at the top, but then you cannot transform society according to your ideals unless you use modern oppressive totalitarian tools. I do not approve of such state. I believe this kind of state would damage Islam deeply, damage its own Islamic thought deeply. However, an Islamic state that is a societal demand... [that is something else]. To give

³⁵ Hayrettin Karaman, "Sekülerleşme ve Yozlaşma," *Yeni Şafak*, January 9, 2011, accessed October 16, 2012. <http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/HayrettinKaraman/sekulerlesme-ve-yozlasma/25625>

³⁶ İslâm'ın siyasî otoritesinin dışında kalan, yönetim tarzı ve yürürlükteki hukuku İslâmî olmayan bölgeler.

you an example, people who think like me have become an important force in this society and the structure, methods, conceptualization of the state have changed accordingly. This society has established a new state model. This society has already established a new state and it will run it. The groups that have been left out will continue to exist as well. If they wish they can join in, or they can continue with their own ideas. The majority of this society has already accepted this idea, anyway. Imagine a case where the majority of society does not accept this state anymore, then this state (structure) will cease existing. Imagine for a second the opposite case: democrats, liberal democrats establish a societal demand and transform the state. What will they do? They will establish a liberal democrat state and this liberal democrat state will begin to disseminate its own liberal economic ideas, its own liberal political ideas, and its own liberal society ideas. And they will not have to work hard at it because most of society would agree with them.

- Ok, but if we look at it this way. Let me put it this way, wouldn't you feel unhappy if this happened?

-No.

-Now let me rephrase it. You believe that the Koran should be at the center of life. You talk about this while at the same time the TV is on, there are movies playing at the cinema, there is the Western influence and the like. The co-existence of all this is incredible. Everything is out in the open, information is easily accessible. Under these conditions is it possible for this [societal demand for an Islamic state] to really happen?

- You know, I do not think that this is possible neither in the short nor medium run. I do not think that I will see this happening (in my lifetime). I do not think that the next generation will see it happening either. Yet, maybe they will see it. But I know this, or rather I believe in this: I will tell you a very basic principle. We are not in charge of achieving the victory but we are responsible for the journey. The duty assigned to us by Allah is not to establish an Islamic state. The Islamic state is a result. It is a grace. Our responsibility is to cherish and convey Allah's religion. To tell it to people. That's all. Our primary concern is to die as a Muslim, not to die by establishing the Islamic state. It is to die as a Muslim. To die as a Muslim requires us to live as a Muslim. And to live as a Muslim requires me to convey my religion. You know, what I do is not political in itself. Actually it is rooted in my faith, and this is why we think that faith cannot be separated from politics. Because your faith dictates this to you. It tells you to convey your knowledge if you are a Muslim. It tells us to warn people. You have to warn your relatives, the people in your neighborhood. Now this is the real worship. This is a religious lifestyle. And it is an order from Allah. Thus I follow it. After I do it, and if it reaches millions and society is transformed, it will return to me as God's grace (*lütuf*). If the system is transformed as a result, this will be the rule of Muslims. If it does not happen then I will be dying trying to perform my duty at the best of my capabilities. This is how I see things through my faith and because of it truthfully I do not feel any pessimism. I do not have criteria to measure success. I don't have something like I would

be successful if I reach this many people (No.100, lawyer, 36 year old male, Diyarbakır).³⁷

The argument that Sharia is the principle source of legislation raises many questions, including who has the right to interpret Islamic law. What happens if those interpretations conflict with the popular will? What if the interpretations contradict with other authoritative interpretations, who will say the last word? The point of tension is the limits the individuals tend to put on how much of the Sharia is open to

³⁷ Zaten en temel çelişki de oradan doğuyor. Biz bu günkü topluma bir İslam devleti giydirmeye çalışıyoruz. Çünkü bugünkü toplumumuzda her çeşit şey var, tamam mı? Aslında İslam devleti oluşum aşaması itibarıyla bu farklılıkların büyük oranda ortadan kalktığı ve genel İslam devleti talebine dönüştüğü noktada kurulur. Zaten yani bu kombinasyonla, toplumsal kombinasyonla bir İslam devleti çıkmaz zaten. Ne çıkar? Darbe devleti çıkar, ihtilal devleti çıkar. Yani siz yukardan bir devlet dayatırsınız üç beş tane İslamcı general mesela atıyorum ondan sonra bu toplumu kendi fikriyatımıza dönüştürmek için modern baskıcı totaliter yöntemler dışında sizin bir şansınız yok. Ben böyle bir devleti doğru bulmuyorum. Yani bu şekilde devletin İslam'a çok fazla zarar vereceğini, bunun kendi İslam düşüncesine zarar vereceğini düşünüyorum. Ama İslam devleti toplumsal bir talep olarak yani mesela benim düşüncem tarzındaki insanlar bu toplumda büyük bir güç haline geldiler ve doğal olarak devletin şekli, yöntemi, anlayışı buna göre değişti; yeni bir devlet modelini bu toplum kurdu. Zaten bu toplum bunu kurmuş o yönetecek. Onun dışındaki kalan guruplar da kendi varlıklarını devam ettirecekler. İsterlerse bu düşünceye geçerler isterlerse kendi düşüncelerini devam ettirirler, yani zaten toplumun çok önemli bir kısmı bunu kabullenmiş. Aynı toplumun büyük bir kısmının artık bunu kabullenmediğini düşünün zaten o zaman bu devletin varlığı ortadan kalkmış olacak. Tam tersini düşünün demokratlar, liberal demokratlar veya mesela toplumsal bir taleple devleti dönüştürdüler. Ne yapacaklar? Liberal demokrat bir devlet kurmuş olacaklar ve bu liberal demokrat devlet kendi liberal ekonomi anlayışını, kendi liberal siyaset anlayışını, kendi liberal toplumsal anlayışını yaygınlaştırmaya başlayacak. Yani çok da büyük zorluklarla karşılaşmayacak, toplumun çoğu zaten liberal olmuş olacak -Peki, ama şöyle baktığınız zaman siz peki şöyle söyleyeyim mesela mutsuz olmuyor musunuz yani -Yok

-Şimdi şöyle sorayım bir anlayışınız var hani Kur'an'ın hayatın temel merkezi haline gelmiş bir yaşam tarzından.. böyle bir şeyden bahsediyorsunuz şimdi ama diğer yandan da televizyonlar çalışıyor sinema orada, batı var, bilmem ne... hani inanılmaz bir durum var. Her şey olduğundan daha açık, bilgi çok kolay ulaşılabilen bir şey, böyle bir durumda öyle bir şey olma ihtimali var mı? Ya da öyle bir şey, o dediğiniz türden insanların çoğunlukta olabileceği bir şey, öyle bir dünya olabilir mi sizce?

-Yani ben kısa vadede orta vadede böyle bir şeyin olamayacağını düşünüyorum. Böyle bir şey görebileceğimi de zannetmiyorum. Benden sonraki neslin de görebileceğini zannetmiyorum. Yani belki görür bilemiyorum. Ama şunu biliyorum, daha doğrusu şuna inanıyorum, çok temel bir ilke söyleyeceğim biz zaferle değil seferle sorumluyuz. Yani Allahın bize yüklediği sorumluluk İslam devleti kurmak değil, İslam devleti bir sonuçtur. Bir lütuftur. Bize yüklediği şey Allahın dinini yaşamak ve tebliğ etmek ve insanlara anlatmaktır. Bu kadar. Çünkü en temel sorunumuz Müslüman olarak ölmektir; İslam devletini kurmuş olarak ölmek değil. Müslüman olarak ölmektir. Müslüman olarak ölmek, Müslüman olarak yaşamayı gerektirir. Müslüman olarak yaşamak da benim inancımı tebliğ etmemi gerektiriyor. Yani benim yaptığım şey tek başına politik siyasi bir şey değil. Aslında inancımın kaynaklanan bir şey, o yüzden biz zaten siyasetin inançtan ayrılmayacağını düşünüyorum. Çünkü inancınız size bunu emrediyor. Yani Müslüman'san bildiğinizi anlatacaksınız diyor. Uyar diyor. Mesela yakınlarını uyar, akrabalarını uyar, çevreni uyar, şimdi bu zaten bir ibadettir. Bu bir dini yaşayış tarzıdır. Yani Allah'ın da bir emridir dolayısıyla ben bunu yaparım. Ben bunu yaptıktan sonra, bu işte milyonlara ulaşmış, toplum dönüşmüşse bu bir lütuftur olarak karşına çıkar. Bunun sonucunda zaten sistem buna göre dönüşmesidir. Yani Müslümanların yönetimidir. Değilse ben bu görevimi işte ağır aksak, yanlış doğru bir şekilde yaparak bir şekilde ölmüş olacağım. Yani inanç olarak böyle bakıyorum olaya. Dolayısıyla açıkçası hiçbir karamsarlık falan şey yapmıyorum. Başarı diye de bir kriterim yok yani işte ben şu kadar insanla ulaşırsam başarılı olurum diye bir şey yok (No.100, Avukat, Erkek, yaş:36, Diyarbakır).

reinterpretation. The same is true of the main Islamic doctrines accumulated with the ‘consensus’ of *ulama* throughout history. Despite the claim that the scope for *ijtihad* is broad, they insist that their own references should provide the framework that defines the limits of interpretation. Principled reasoning stresses the need to adhere to only one truth and to the one true implementation of it, despite all these ambiguities.

6.5. Gender

The universalist stance on major life questions extends also to the respective roles of men and women in society, as well as in family. Let us recall some of the characteristics of principled reasoning: The tension between transcendental and mundane is constituted by the dictates of a person’s religious belief and the truth in the world. A person operating in the third rationality believes that the only resolution for this tension can be found in religion. Accordingly the claim is that religion prescribes certain attitudes and behaviors and anything that does not conform to this prescription is not welcome.

Differently from communitarian reasoning, someone who employs the one-truth approach is keen on supporting their position with arguments. The claim is these arguments essentially derive from the Koran, which justifies the complexity of the language and the higher moral ground that the person adopts when talking to others. The arguments are intended to be internally consistent, so the person who employs them scorns those who act contrary to general principles. There is an emphasis on “the other” which legitimizes making people feel fear in order to invite them to the “right way.” The paragraph below is a long talk from a conference which I attended and which illustrates the points I made.

I do not want to repeat the daily discourse about the marriage while talking about the relationships between men and women. As we all know, marriage is the order of Allah and sunna of our propher his highness (recites the related verse of Koran). Whoever is able to marry, but does not marry, is not amongst us (recites the related verse of Koran) whoever turns a cold shoulder to marriage is not with me (recites the related verse of Koran). ...Unfortunately, in the modern society, I can see no hierarchy, no division of duty amongst the families. I think, in this legal frame build upon the modern law, modern marriage and modern thoughts, **no hierarchy and division of duty is left between the couples, between the men and women. I believe this to be a source of chaos within the family.** *In our law*, on the other hand, man and woman can only be together through

the marital bond and cannot benefit from each other any other way. Parallel to this judgment, the relations between the family members, their authorities and responsibilities are also decided through judgments. I would like to underline another important but overlooked point as well. All our friends have to know it, especially our lady friends. **The Allah, who made these judgments, is neither male, nor female, neither child, nor parent. Thus the Allah does neither favors, nor opposes any of these parties; woman, man, child or parent. All the Allah's judgments are serving to justice and fairness.** The highest morals, the highest justice, the highest fairness, power and wisdom belongs to the Allah. (The audience applauds). My dear friends, Allah SWT structured a hierarchy in this verse of Koran (recites the related verse of Koran). Allah SWT gave the duty of presidency to the men and explained the reasons for this decision (reads the related verse of the Koran). In social means, our glossators, declared the meaning of this Koranic verse as giving the very important responsibilities such as Jihad, communication and (recites the verse) being the sole bread-winner of the family, only to the men. This is the duty of men. Elmalı Hamdi Efendi carefully underlines this point. Everyone who is to be married, has to be *racul*, has to be a decent man. I would like call on mothers once more to raise their sons as decent men (the audience applauds). While I was lecturing in my faculty, a group of students visited me. I asked the young lady: 'Will you work?' She answered 'Yes, sir'. I asked for the reason and she said 'our mothers want us to work'. I asked why their mothers want this. She replied; 'If our husbands turn out to be undutiful and unfaithful, and they usually end up turning undutiful and unfaithful (applauds), we would be able to stand on our own feet'. I sent my regards to their mothers and said they were wrong to prepare their daughters to be cheap workforce. They should rather raise their sons to be decent husbands instead. In family life there is a certain hierarchy according to which man is the head of the household. However, according to our law, our ethics, being the head of household, does not mean a ruling position of power. It is rather a position of liability and responsibility. Nowadays, the ladies oppose this idea mistaking it for a ruling position of power. They also want to use this power position. Whereas the Supreme Being protects its women subjects by giving the responsibility of decision making to its men subjects. They have to grovel (to the Allah) twice for that (applauds) (From a public lecture, professor of jurisprudence, 56 years old male, Istanbul).³⁸

³⁸ Kadın erkek ilişkilerinde nikah konusuna gelecek olursak her zaman söylenen şeyleri tekrar etmek istemiyorum. Nikahın Allahın emri ve peygamber efendimizin sünneti olduğu konusu herkesin malumudur (ilgili ayeti okuyor). Kim nikaha gücü yeter ve nikahlanmazsa **bizden değildir** (ilgili ayeti okuyor), kim evlenmekte yüz çevirirse **benden değildir** (ilgili ayeti okuyor). ...Maalesef modern toplumda aileler arasında herhangi bir hiyerarşi, herhangi bir vazife taksiminin olmadığını düşünüyorum. Modern hukukta, modern nikahta modern düşünceden kaynaklanarak inşa ve ikame edilen bu hukukta **eşler arasında kadın ve erkek arasında bir hiyerarşinin kalmadığını, bir vazife taksiminin bulunmadığını düşünüyorum. Bunun da ailede bir kasosa sebep olduğu kanaatindeyim. Bizim hukukumuzda** gelince nasıl kadın ve erkek sadece ve sadece nikah bağı ile biraraya gelebilir ve bundan başka şekilde birbirinden yararlanamaz hükmü konulmuşsa aynı şekilde aile içinde de aileyi oluşturan fertlerin birbirilerine nasıl davranmaları, yetki ve sorumluluklarının ne olması gerektiği de aynı şekilde hükme bağlanmıştır. Şunu da ifade edeyim bilinen bir husustur ama unutulmuş bir konu olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bütün dostlarımız bilsinler ki özellikle hanım kardeşlerimiz.

The category of the other is constituted in two ways. First it is with reference to the Koran and hadith, when the lecturer is stressing the command and duty to marry. He says those who do not marry when they can are not from among us. Secondly, he distinguishes between modern law and modern marriage and *our* laws and *our* marriages. By claiming the laws and in the name of Islam the lecturer is not only establishing boundaries of who is in and who is out of the community but is also establishing what is right and what is wrong. The speaker leaves no room for doubt that there is only one truth acceptable in Islam. Those who do not conform to this truth are to be considered outside Islam because the claims of the speaker are not considered as his interpretation of Islam but rather as only true Islam. This is presented to the public with a fluent, clear, and effective language. The theatrical aspect of the rhetoric includes passionate tones that arouse applause from the audience. The applause also shows the general agreement of the three hundred or so people present during this speech. Young women who live in the “modern society” tend to act differently from what is prescribed in the Islamic mode of life. The problem for the lecturer is that while this transformation is happening certain interpreters of Islam consider the adaptation to modernity correct and thus encourage it to take place among the believers. Therefore part of the aim of the speech is to remove doubt and the confusion that arises from different interpretation and practices. It does this by telling the audience what the ideal model of family and womanhood is

Bu hükümleri koyan Allah ne erkektir, ne kadındır, ne çocuktur ne ebeveynidir. Dolayısı ile ne kadının yanındadır, ne kadının karşısında, ne erkeğin yanında ne erkeğin karşısında, ne çocuğun yanında ne çocuğun karşısında ne de ebeveynin yanında ya da karşındadır. Söylediği bütün hükümler sadece hakkaniyet ve adalete mehbî şeylerdir. En üstün ahlak, en üstün adalet, en üstün hak, kudret, hikmet ona aittir (salon alkışlıyor). Değerli kardeşlerim Allahü teala bu ayeti kerimede bir hiyerarşi kurmuştur (ilgili ayeti okuyor). Allahü teale riyaset görevini erkeğe vermiştir ve bu görevi vermesinin de sebeplerini açıklamıştır (ilgili ayeti okuyor). Umumi anlamda müfessirlerimiz bu ayet-i kerimeyi cihat görevi gibi, tebliğ görevi gibi çok ciddi görevlerin erkeğe has olduğunu ve arkasından da (ayeti okuyor) derken ailenin bütün nafaka yükümlülüğünün erkeğe ait olduğunu beyan buyurmuştur. Erkeğin görevi budur. Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi bu konuya hassasiyetle eğilir. Evlenen herkes *racul* olmak, adam olmak zorundadır. Burada da yine annelere hitap etmek istiyorum. Oğullarını adam olarak yetiştirsinler (salon alkışlıyor). Bir ara fakültemde ders yaparken bir grup öğrenci ziyaretime geldi. Hanım kızıma sordum. Çalışacak mısın dedim. Evet Hocam dedi. Niye dedim. Annelerimiz öyle istiyor dedi. Peki anneniz niye öyle istiyor dedim. Kocalarımız hayırsız, vefasız çıkarsa, zaten hep kocalar hayırsız vefasız çıkar (alkışlar), işte ayaklarımızın üzerinde durabilelim. Buradan annelerinize selam söyleyin yanlış yapıyorlar dedim. Sizleri ucuz iş gücü olarak hazırlamak yerine oğullarını adam gibi koca aday olarak yetisitirsinler. Gönülleri rahat olsun (alkışlar). Bizim aile hayatımızda hiyerarşi vardır. Bu hiyerarşiye göre erkek ailenin reisidir. Ancak resilik de bizim hukukumuzda bizim ahlakımızda yetki kullanma makamı değil sorumluluk ve mesuliyet makamıdır. bunun için şimdi hanımlar karşı çıkıyorlar zannediyorlar ki reisilik yetki kullanma makamıdır. Biraz da bu yetkiyi biz kullanalım diyorlar. Halbuki cenab-ı hak bu yetkiyi erkek kullarına vermek suretiyle onları sorumluluk makamına koymuş; kadın kullarını bundan himaye buyurmuştur. Bundan dolayı iki kere secde etsinler (alkışlar) (Kamuya açık bir konuşmadan alınmıştır, fıkıh profesörü, yaş 56, erkek, İstanbul).

according to Islam. For the lecturer the problem with modernity-friendly interpretations is that they are trying to fit Islam to the modern conditions rather than the other way around. This is what leads to confusion in the minds of the believers, so his solution is to claim that there is only one right way in which the relations between men and women can be according to Islam and that the rest is wrong and misleading believers.

I discussed this case with a fellow doctoral student who defines himself as a Muslim activist. His explanation for the arguments used in the example above was the following:

Islam is not like religions in the West; it interferes in the relationship between women and men and does not leave it to the individual free will. There is something called “the private sphere” which is defined by matters that are left to the discretion of the individual in the West. The individual uses his or her own reason and acts according to it. The existence of the private sphere is the true reason of Western decadence. What we read in books and newspapers and watch in Hollywood films is the lifestyle we call “modern society lifestyle” and is the epitome of what happens when you let human reason rein free. The relations between men and women in the West are degenerated. The right thing is not to leave them to individual human reason. Human beings need a revelation, a guide to show them the way. Islam cares too much about the future generation and that is why it does not leave the relation of men and women to their initiative. Islam attributes great importance to this private sphere (*mahrem alan*) and therefore sets strict rules for intervention. The rules for this sphere have been set by God; they cannot change depending on individuals, societies or time. A good Muslim has to understand these rules and put them to practice in his life (field notes, student age 27, Istanbul).³⁹

During my fieldwork I found that the interpretation of the Muslim activist is widely shared. The discussion of gender relations seems to be intricately connected with ‘the Other’ personified in the imagined West and the Western lifestyle. The ‘Other’ is always denigrated. The Westerners do not obey the rules set by God; their freedom and arbitrariness is conducive to wrong lifestyle. In the words of a big textile company in Turkey:

This trend of equality of men and women is being lived in its peak in Holland. They have no family, no family life, and no future. Another example is the Americans where 64% of

³⁹ This was not a scheduled in-depth interview as a part of the project, so it was not recorded, I bring this persons comments from my field notes.

the children have no father. They do not know who their fathers are. If it is what you want as your future, you can imitate these tried and realized life practices. It is all relaxed. There are no redlines. Your future will be exactly like it. If this is what you are emulating, then there is no problem. It is already practiced, and you will be the same. The end result of freedom is this for sure; being as free as America with so many fatherless children (No. 226, businessman, owner of a textile firm, 49 years old male, Istanbul).⁴⁰

This discursive Occidentalism based on stereotypes conceives of gender relations and individual freedom with regard to gender as destructive forces. Differently from the concept of Occidentalism discussed by Buruma and Margalit⁴¹ here we see no attack on capitalism and liberalism; only secularism, as long as it pertains to gender relations, and freedom of lifestyles are perceived as threats.

A second argument used by people who employ principled reasoning to legitimize the inequality of genders in Islam has to do with the notion of *fitrat*, which refers to the ‘essence’ or ‘nature’ of a creature. This argument is almost as widespread as Occidentalism. My interlocutors frequently stated that *fitrat* is described in the Koran. Some of them quoted specific verses that underline the godly ordained mission of women in this world. The phrase “when you behave according to your nature you live in peace”⁴² recurred many times with very different interlocutors.

This argument is adopted by both men and women. During an interview a housewife stated the following:

-As humans, men and women are, of course, equal. However, they are not equal in terms of disposition. The work fit for men are different from work fit for women. This is because the Almighty Being prevents the women from being overwhelmed. It is not because Allah belittles or holds women on contempt and makes them sit at home. Women’s nature, their disposition is not fit for that, but our people misunderstand this.
-How about some women saying ‘no, we can also do it all’?

⁴⁰ Bunu en zirvede yaşayan, kadın erkek eşitliğini savunup da hayata koyan Hollandadır. Ne aile var ortada, ne ev hayatı var ortada, ne gelecek var ortada. Buna örnek yine Amerikadır, çocukların %64’ünün babası yok. Babası belli değil. Gelecekte arzu ettiğiniz nokta orasıysa.. uygulanmış, yaşanmış o hayata özenebilirsiniz. Her tarafı rahat hiç kırmızı çizgileriniz olmasın. Gelecek noktanız o. Özendiğinizi şey oysa problem yok. Bu yaşanmış, siz de öyle olacaksınız. Özgürlüğün sonunda geleceğiniz hayat belli. Geleceğiniz yer Amerika kadar özgür, ama babasız bir sürü çocuklar (No. 224, Tekstil firması sahibi iş adamı, yaş 49, erkek, İstanbul).

⁴¹ Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit. *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004).

⁴² Fıtrata uygun hareket ettiğin zaman huzur bulursun (No. 56, Halkla ilişkiler uzmanı, yaş 26, erkek, Denizli).

-If they can, if they are strong enough, let them do it. In my case, thanks to Allah, my husband brings [money] home. This way, maybe I spend more than I could otherwise. He brings money and feeds us]. Is there such another luxury in life? (No.29, housewife, 49 years old, Çorum).⁴³

The idea that any woman working outside her home is exploited and suppressed is attributed to her nature as created by God. Without regard for its economically disempowering effect on half of the population, this image is widely shared and found convincing. Women who share it do not necessarily do so because they believe that they benefit from it, as is the case with the housewife. Interestingly we can see working women who have a certain economic power agree with the notion of *fitrat* as well. Here is an example from Denizli:

-There is a word of our Prophet about women's place being at home, there is truth in it. We have been working for almost 12 years but we cannot care enough for our children. We fall short to educate and discipline our children properly. **A woman's place is her home. It is true. We can call ourselves as modern, we can say that we can work, do, and hold... however, there is our structure created by Allah.** The body structure and such. Women are not fit for work. Why? Because, she falls short to manage it all; work, home, husband and children. And what is the result? It overwhelms women. This is the reason for the high number of quarrels and separations. In the past there were not that many separations. It is increasing nowadays.

-I cannot believe what I hear. You gained your own economic freedom, but...

-Whatever you gain, you cannot change this reality. (No.64, ready-made seller, 34 years old female, Denizli)⁴⁴

⁴³ -**Kadın ve erkek insan olarak tabii ki insan olarak eşittir ama fitrat olarak eşit değildir.** Erkeğin yapacağı iş farklıdır kadının yapacağı iş farklıdır. Kadın ezilmesin diye Cenab-ı Allah onu getirmiştir yoksa kadın horlandığı için küçümsediği için eve kapanmış değildir. Kadının bünyesi fitratı onu kaldıramaz ama bizim insanlarımız yanlış anlıyor bunu.

-Hani bazı kadınlar diyor ya hayır işte bizde her şey yapabiliriz?

-Yapabiliyorsa gidip yapsın gücü yetiyorsa yapsın. Ben, Allah'a şükür evimde eşim getiriyor. Rahatça belki onu harcamadığından fazla harcıyorum ben. Getiriyor yediyor içiriyor. Bundan güzel bir şey var mı kadınların aslında yerine göre şeyi yok. (No.29, housewife, 49 years old, Çorum)

⁴⁴ -Peygamber Efendimizin bir şeyi var, hani kadınlar eve diyorlar ya; bunda bir gerçek var. Biz kaç senedir 12 senedir biz çalışıyoruz, ama çoluk çocukla ilgin kesiliyor. Çocuğun terbiyesini eğitimini tam veremiyoruz. **Bir kadının yeri evi. Bu bir gerçek.** Hani **biz ne kadar moderniz desek, biz çalışırız, ederiz, tuttarız desek de insanların yapı olarak Allahu Teala'nın bizi yaptığı bir yapı var.** Vucut yapısı olsun, şey olsun. Bayanlar çalışmaya çok elverişli değil. Çünkü neden? İş, ev, eş ve çocuk hepsini bir arada yürütemiyor. Ne oluyor bu? Bu bayanı eziyor. Onun için Türkiye'de kavgalar var, bu kadar ayrılıklar var. Eskiden bu kadar çok ayrılık var mıydı? Şimdi ayrılıklar çoğaldı.

-Ben kulaklarım inanmıyorum. Bir yandan siz kendi ekonomik özgürlüğünüzü elde etmişsiniz...

-Ne kadar elde edersen et, yine de bu gerçeği değiştiremiyorsun yani (No.34, Konfeksiyoncu dükkan sahibi, kadın, yaş 34, Denizli).

It should be noted that the argument for the place of woman at home is justified by referring to the word of God, that is, by reference to the ultimate truth according to the religious doctrine. We see that the the Islamic interpretation that the professor shared in the room has serious repercussions among many people. Similar arguments of that lecture are reiterated across society thus leading my interlocutors to claim that there is one universal truth which is based in Islam. The difference between man and woman is considered a natural and universal obstacle to her active participation in the economic and political life. But, differently from the communitarian and pragmatic approaches who also share this attitude towards the role of women, the principled reasoning approach legitimizes its claims by arguing on universal principles using justifications and abstractions. The principled reasoning approach is also adopted by personalities in the media. Here is a newspaper clip from the national daily *Milliyet* which complains about the unsuitability of empowering young women and long lasting marriages by referring to the Koran.

Women tell their daughters that they should have their own job; they should trust themselves, and so that they would not be dependent on their husbands. The marriages of those girls, who have been raised with such ideas does not work well. The marriages should work through belief, not through psychology. On that point, **women should accept men's superiority. The Koran says that it is man who is the head of the family. Women cannot be the authority.**⁴⁵

In this reasoning it is the family rather than the individual which is the target of the cultural project. Family and the family values are considered dominant feature of the Muslim society. Therefore individuals who adopt principled reasoning with regard to gender relations insist on controlling reproduction within the family and assign great responsibility to woman in keeping the family whole.

Surely, they should complement each other so that a community can be formed and generations will be begotten. We talked about protecting the new generation. There should be offspring but people should not reproduce like animals. Culture and civilization

⁴⁵ Kadınlar, okuyan kız çocuklarını bile elinde mesleğin olsun, kendine güven, eşine muhtaç olma diye yönlendiriyor. Bu bilinçle yetişen kızların ileride evlilikleri yürümüyor. Evliliklerin psikolojiden ziyade inançla yürütülmesi gerekir. Bu noktada, **kadınlar erkeklerin üstünlüğünü kabul etsin. Kuran-ı Kerim'de de evin reisi erkek olduğu bildirilir. Kadından otorite olmaz.** Gürkan Akgüneş, "Dizideki kadınlar gibi olmayın, teslim olun", *Milliyet*, January 10, 2012, accessed January 11, 2012. <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/dizideki-kadinlar-gibi-olmayin-teslim-olun/gundem/gundemdetay/10.01.2012/1486671/default.htm>

should be transmitted as well. If there is culture and civilization, you don't breed like animals. The children should know who are their mother and their father, and their relatives. If this is not the case, then you cannot transmit culture; you cannot transmit emotions and so on. Therefore, there has to be a reproduction, but it needs to be within a family. If this has to be, then there are certain things that people will need in the family and in the community. Some of these things are more appropriate for men than women (No.230, theology professor, 77 years old, male, Istanbul).⁴⁶

The women's place in the family is reflective of the divine design; it is only women who can take care of the family. Most of my interlocutors affirm women's equal position with respect to civil and political rights. However, when asked about culturally sensitive issues such as women's right to work, the duty of caretaking of children, right of abortion, the sexuality of the women compared to men, and women's liberty to travel on her own, there is a tendency to revert to principled reasoning. This is so even in cases where they show the capability to reason from a plurality of perspectives when it comes to economy, politics and even religious doctrine. I asked an interviewee how he would like his daughter's relations with her prospective husband to be. He said:

I think they should meet each other as needed by paying attention to privacy (*mahremiyet*) issues. I wouldn't want my son-in-law to come and stay at my house before they are married. There are certain issues; it can't be like that, I mean. Let's assume that they come to me with a demand. There is one month left to their marriage, and they say that they want to go out together. I would not allow that. Why? I would immediately go and look at the practice [of the Prophet]. What did our Prophet do? What did he say about that issue? I would open the Koran reviews and commentaries to see what has been said on these issues. Everything has been explained; no subject has been left unexplained (No.127, Engineer/shop-owner, 27 years old male, Erzurum).⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Hakkaten de bunlar birbirini tamamlasınlar, yani bir cemiyet oluşsun, bir nesil oluşsun. Neslin korunması demiştik orada, nesil oluşsun ama bu nesil hayvan üremesi gibi olmasın. Kültür ve medeniyetle birlikte olsun. Eğer kültür ve medeniyet söz konusuysa o zaman mutlaka hayvan gibi üreyemezsiniz. Ana, baba, akraba aidiyet belli olması icab eder. Olmadığında kültürü aktaramazsınız onu demek istiyorum. Duyguları aktaramazsınız vs. Bilahiri o bakımdan da üreme olsun, ama aynı zamanda bu üreme bir aile içersinde olsun murad edilmiş. Bunlar zorunlu ise şimdi zorunlu ise hem cemiyet içinde hem aile içersinde insanların ilelebet muhtaç olacakları bazı seyler var ki, ilelebet, daima yani onların bir kısmı için erkek daha uygun bir kısmı için kadın daha uygun. (No. 155, profesör, yas 77, erkek, İstanbul).

⁴⁷ Ben gerektiğince mahremiyet meselelere dikkat ederek görüşmelerini sağladım. Yani bu şöyle değil: çocuk gelip benim evimde kalmasın... Bazı şeyleri var, öyle değil yani. Bağıra çağıra şey değil, anlatarak bakım çocuklar şimdi böyle diyelim ki şöyle bi talep geldi. Ben evliliğe bir ay var biz bi gidip gezeceğiz mesela müsaade etmem mesela. Neden? Hemen gider uygulamaya bakarım mesela. Efendimiz yaptı? Ne dedi bu konuda? Mealleri açar incelerim, tefsirleri açarım bu konuda ne

In conservative milieu such as Erzurum, questions regarding one's attitude towards his daughter's affairs can only be raised in relation to marriage arrangements. As the above answer clearly suggests for my interlocutor the answer for his restrictive attitude is to be found in religion. This strict control with regard to relations between sexes extends to sons as well as daughters. I asked wealthy businessman how he would react to his son's friendships:

- Friendship?
- I do not recommend that. Allah tells us this very clearly with a verse in the Koran. He says: 'Do not get close to adultery.' The verse is clear. Do not go close to adultery. It all begins with an eye contact.
- You are saying that it says "do not go near," rather than "do not do?"
- It starts with an eye contact, and then continues with holding hands. Friendship and chatting continues, followed by "Oh, we trust each other", and "Oh, we will marry each other anyway." In my opinion, this is why verse that says "do not get near adultery," is stricter than the one that says "do not do it." That's why Koran limits friendship. My advice to both my son and daughter is this: I can't make you live somewhere where there will be no woman or man. Therefore, until you reach the age of marriage, or that you decide you will get married to this woman or man, you should treat all the women and men that you meet as your sisters and brothers. Make business with them, ask for advice or opinion, but do not develop emotions.
- But this is very contradictory. Aren't you recommending something very difficult? Will they just say, "Ok, father"?
- I am saying the most difficult thing. But what else can I do? If I tell them, don't go to high-school, how can I say that? At school the teacher will ask him [my son] to sit together with girls. If you don't send him, hinder his education. At this point, it is more about damage control. You cannot save the whole of it (No.226, Businessman, Age 46, male, Istanbul).⁴⁸

buyruluyor. Her şeyi belirtilmiş, hiç bi konu bırakılmamış eksik (No.127, mühendis, dükkan sahibi, yaş 27, erkek Erzurum).

⁴⁸ -Arkadaşlık?

-Ben tavsiye etmiyorum. Cenab-i Hak bunu bize net söylüyor. Ayetle söylüyor. Zinaya yaklaşmayın. Ayet net. Zinaya yaklaşmayın. Arka planında önce göz teması ile başlar.

-Yapmayın demiyor diyorsunuz. Yaklaşmayın diyor. diyorsunuz.

- Göz teması ile başlar, el teması ile devam eder. Arkadaşlık, sohbet devam eder. Sonra 'ya birbirimize güveniyoruz' muhabbeti gelişir. 'Yav nasıl olsa evleneceğiz' muhabbeti gelişir. İşte bunlar zina yapmayından ziyade yaklaşmayın ayeti, yapmayından daha keskin bana göre. Onun için bu arkadaşlığı sınırılıyor. Oğluma da kızıma da tembihatım şu: Sizi kızsız veya erkeksiz bir ortamda barındırmamın imkanı yok. Siz evlenmeyi düşünceğiniz yaşa kadar veyahutta bu kızla ya da oğlanla evlenmeyi

In the above conversation it is important to note how individual struggles to fit the dictates of his religion in his own everyday life. Close conformity to religion would resolve the tension in his way of thinking. Similarly, another participant claims that acceptance of universally accepted rules in Islam would bring happiness in the family:

Islam is a great piece of engineering, if you could just see it, it is wonderful. And it is of prime importance, it is a beauty. Islam is not something like other people say, that is, something closed, inward-oriented, colorless and that does not accept science, technology, engineering, working, thinking and mathematics. Everything has a frame of legitimacy. For instance, adultery is forbidden (*haram*), but family is your right (*helal*). That's it. That is what Allah wants, nothing else. He is not forbidding you from the fruit, but if you steal the fruit, then he forbids this. That is to say, you should eat what is allowed (*helal*); you should not gossip around (*gıybet*). You will try to earn your money in a rightful way (*helal kazanmak*); you should be good to your family. You should pay attention about your family is wearing the veil. For instance, you should be careful about the privacy (*mahremiyet*). (No.131, computer seller, student in a medrese, 30 years old male, Erzurum).⁴⁹

As noted before, individuals who operate with principled reasoning are keen on substantiating their claims with arguments. In order to support the inequality between the sexes their first source of reference is religion. Participants strive to give logical arguments in order to prove the reasonableness of the "Islamic truth" on issues such as the role of women in society, the laws of inheritance that favor men, and why a woman's testimony is not acceptable in court. They try to convince themselves as well as their interlocutors that the truth on such issues is one and only.

An individual can adopt more than one mode of religious reasoning. The question of which mode will dominate during a discussion seems to be determined by the topic being discussed. What is remarkable about the topic of gender is that it

düşüneceğiniz noktaya kadar hepsine sizin kardeşiniz, ablanız gözüyle bakın. İş alın iş verin, fikir sorun, fikir alın, arka plandaki duygularınızı geliştirmeyin.

-Ama bu çok çelişkili, zor birşey söylemiyor musunuz? Peki baba mı diyecekler?

-Zoru söylüyorum aksi halde desem ki, liseye gitme, nasıl gitme diyeceksiniz? Ee lisede kızla beraber oturuyor öğretmen. Eğitimine engel olacaksınız. Burada ne kadarını kurtarırsak meselesi var. Yoksa, tamamını kurtarma gibi bir şansınız yok da (No. 226, tekstil firması sahibi iş adamı, yaş 46, İstanbul).

⁴⁹ İslam bir mühendislik harikasıdır, bir görseniz, müthiş. Ve bu bir maslahattır, güzelliştir, yani. İslam, kapalı, öcü, bilimi kabul etmeyen, tekniği, mühendisliği, çalışmayı, matematiği kabul etmeyen, kafa yormayı kabullenmeyen, içe dönük, mat, birilerinin anlattığı gibi, herşeyi monoton birşey değildir yani. Herşeyin meşru bir çervesi vardır. İşte zina haramdır, ama ailen helaldir. Yani bu, Allah-ü teala bunu istiyor, başka hiçbirşey istemiyor. Meyveyi sana yasaklamıyor, ama meyveyi çalarsan yasaklar. Yani helal yiyeceksin, gıybet etmeyeceksin. Helal kazanmaya çalışacaksın, ailenle güzel geçineceksin. Ailenin örtünmesine dikkat edeceksin. Mahremlğe mesela dikkat edeceksin (No.131, Bilgisayar satıcısı ve tamircisi, medrese öğrencisi, yaş 30, erkek, Erzurum).

creates tensions between religious doctrine and the real life practice, and even the most flexible thinkers revert to principled, single-truth reasoning. An individual, who can think in utilitarian or even deconstructive terms, may adopt principled reasoning when discussing gender. It was not uncommon for my interlocutors to consider the rules on issues such as interest rates, consumption of pork, fasting and praying open to reinterpretation, while stressing the need to strictly comply with the Koran and *Sunnah* on the topic of gender, sexuality or sexual orientation. Some Islamist feminists were the only ones who willing to think more flexibly with regard to allowing sexual autonomy to the individual and women's liberation. I will consider their reasoning in the next chapter.

6.6. Economy

The third sphere that creates tension in thinking between what is perceived to be the right by religious cannon and the daily practice is the economy. Individuals, who operate within the third rationality, or principled thinking, talk about an ideal economic understanding that is a derivative of Islamic thought. The sources they cite for righteous Islamic behavior in economy is firstly the Koran and then examples from the life of the Prophet Mohammed. Principled thinking is the most rigid thinking mode. There were very few interviewees who adopt this mode when discussing the economy.

Several participants mentioned that economic relations are strictly regulated in Islam and that there is an ideal economic life prescribed by religion. However this reference to the ideal serves only as a background to express dissatisfaction with the current situation, which makes these Islamic requirements inapplicable. I will return to the problem of fitting Islamic teaching with the present economic life later in this section. I will begin with a discussion of how principled rationality works in economy.

As expected, principled rationality derives its economic principles from the Koran and the Sunnah, thus it involves helping the neighbors and relatives in need, emphasizes solidarity, and keeping away from banking interest. Individuals should not give their hearts to worldly possessions or become too greedy. This ideal Islamic economy has certain radical differences with the capitalist market economy. According to Bedri Gencer:

In many modern textbooks, economy is defined as the way of reconciling unlimited human needs and limited resources, to put it simply. **Whereas according to the concept of basic needs (*havaâic-i asliye*) in the traditional worldview of Islam human needs are limited.** The human being is the epitome of the earth and as such they are both created from the same essence. The simplest indicator of this association is the fact that both the earth and the human body consist of $\frac{3}{4}$ water and $\frac{1}{4}$ solid mass. So then, if the natural compounds are the same how can human needs be unlimited while resources are limited? Needs to sustain human life like eating, drinking, and shelter are limited; desires are unlimited.... **The modern capitalist economy encourages people always to ask for more than they need, to be wasteful, and dissatisfied. Its designated purpose is to increase human appetites and consume more....** In Turkish we traditionally say during meals “may it bring you health and welfare”; we have phrases like “little food makes for a pain-free head” which means that what you eat nourishes not only your body but also your soul and alleviates concerns. In English and in other Western languages they say “bon appétit” which contrary to our well wish refers to an increased appetite and dissatisfaction.⁵⁰

In the quote above we see a type of argumentational mode based on principled rationality. We see an attempt to draw parallels between the human body and the earth. This is the “scientific argument” that is commonly adopted by people operating in this rationality. We also see again traces of Occidentalism that disparages the West and Western cultures in order to make Islam and the East seem all the more praiseworthy. The claim is that Islamic economy, as described and practiced by the religious tradition is closer to human nature. An economy guided by Islamic principles makes for better Muslim and vice versa. The owner of a big company stated that there are verses in the Koran that define economic relation and trade activities. He argued his point in the following way:

-Now, the universe is not just this world. We are talking about Allah who created the whole universe. He created all the human beings. Since he created everything, when I look at the issue from the perspective of one who is created, I don't think that I have any difference from other human beings. I am also just a created being (*kul*). The rest is about the desires, wishes, and wants of human beings. We are trying to apply the rules of Islam in our businesses. What we learn from Islam also shows the institutional culture we have. For instance, now we are doing business with Migros, and with Carrefour regarding the food products. We make contracts. Normally, Islam also wants that from an Islamic point

⁵⁰ Bedri Gencer, 2008 “Politik İnsan’dan, Ekonomik İnsana İktisadi Kavramları Yeniden Tanımlamak” eds Recep Şentürk *Ekonomik Kalkınma ve Değerler*, UTESAV, p.55-56.

of view. You are supposed to make contracts both within local world criteria and also within legal criteria. For instance, the verse 298 of Bakara is the longest verse in the Koran which in one whole page talks about how contracts should be made.

-Bakara?

-Bakara, verse 298. It refers to witnesses and states that everything needs to be written down. It has everything, and that's why we call it the notary verse (No.224, businessman, 44 years old, male, Istanbul).⁵¹

My interlocutor is arguing that Islamic morality can govern all aspects of life, economic relations included. The answer to any question or dilemma that may rise is to be found in religious texts. It is our duty to discover and understand the system that God has ordained for our world because this is how we can overcome the problems that are due to the Western mentality and the economic system based on it. Islamic morality can fight corruption, make us sensitive to the environment and help us obtain sustainable development. Applying its principles means salvation in this world and the next. Therefore the claim is that there is an economic system envisaged in Islam, however its implementation has been impeded by forces that use interest rates in banking.

Now what the state dictates for us is not like Christianity. Islam has a dimension of social life, of law. The state considers it a threat if society becomes more Islamic. If the society starts to care about what is rightful and what is not (*helal* and *haram*) according to Islam, this becomes dangerous for the system. **Think about it, could the whole banking system work if this Muslim society were more sensitive about the interest issue. Can a bank that is built on the foundations of interest work differently? It cannot. And if there are not banks, there cannot be a capitalist system.** That's it. It all boils down to one point. What is it? There can be different versions of banking systems. It is not obligatory that the banks have to work with interest. For instance, there are these financial institutions that work without interest. So, it can be done, but this is a problem of the system. I mean, it cannot be divided into smaller pieces, it is a whole. So, what we

⁵¹ -Şimdi kâinat sadece dünya değil. Tüm kainatı yaratan Allah diyoruz. Kulları da yaratan o, her şeyi yaratan o olduğuna göre burada ben yaratılan olarak baktığım zaman diğer insanlardan bir farkım yok ki. Ben de bir kulum. Geriye kalan husus insanların kendi istekleri, arzuları, nefisleri doğrultusunda olan faaliyetleri var... İslam'ın kuralları kendi işlerimizde uygulamaya çalışıyoruz. Oradan öğrendiklerimiz kurumsal kültürü de gösterir. Mesela bugün biz Migros'la çalışıyoruz, Carrefour'la çalışıyoruz gıda ürünü olarak. Sözleşme yaparız. Normalde İslami olarak İslam da emrediyor bunu. Yerel dünya kriterleri de hukuk kriterlerinde de sözleşme yapman gerekiyor. Mesela Bakara suresinin 298. Ayeti en uzun ayettir komple bir sayfa sözleşmeyi nasıl yapacağınız yazıyor.

-Bakara?

-Bakara suresi 298. Ayet şahitleri, her şeyin yazılı yapılması gerektiği, hepsini böyle belirtiyor biz noter ayeti deriz ona (No.224, businessman, yaş 44, erkek, İstanbul).

have been saying is this: the state should make peace with the people. For all these years, it's getting close to 90 years now, which means since the founding of the Republic to this day, the state has been like an enemy of the people. (No.187, furniture maker and seller, 45 years old, male, Kayseri).⁵²

According to individuals who use principled reasoning to understand the economy the blame for the failure to implement an Islam economic system lies with the Turkish state and its modernization project. My interlocutors also mention that the modernization project is aided also by Jews, Americans and Europeans at the expense of the Turkish people. The conspiracy theories and prejudices against “the West” go hand in hand with the idealized Islamic society and Muslim people. The claim is that in Islam human being are inherently good and a good Muslim is not seduced by worldly goods and is in constant fight with his passions. This does not mean that he cannot be rich; it means that he has to live while thinking of the other world. One of my interlocutors from Erzurum said:

- How is earning money perceived?
- As long as the person is not filled with the love of goods and this world, it can be acceptable. The person might have a lot of things, but he should live with a very little (*bir lokma bir hurka*). For instance, İbrahim Ethem Hazretleri, one of the Sufi leaders, left the sultanate. He was a Sultan himself, but he leaves his position after an incident. He even gives away his sultan clothes to a shepherd, and he wears the clothes of the shepherd. He prefers a poor life, and wants to search for Allah, become closer to Allah. It is told that, he comes to a certain point that he lets the bucket to the water-well to have some water to take ablutions, and when he pulls the bucket, he pulls a bucket full of silver. He says: “God, I just want water.” So, he sends the bucket back into the well. He pulls it again, and this time, it is full of gold. He sends it back, and pulls again, and this time diamonds and jewels. He says: “God, I gave up this world. Let me just have water so that I can do my ablution...” So, he gave up the

⁵² Şimdi devletin dayattığı bizim, Hıristiyanlık gibi değildir. İslam'ın sosyal hayata dönük olan yüzü vardır, hukuk yönü vardır. Toplum İslamlaşırse bunu kendine tehlike görüyor. **Toplum helal harama dikkat etmeye başlarsa bu sistem için tehlikedir. Bırak onu faiz konusunda, toplumun genelde Müslüman gene bir duyarlılık olsa banka bu haliyle banka sistemi çalışabilir mi? Faiz temeli üzerine kuran bir banka işleyebilir mi? İşleyemez. Banka olmazsa kapitalist sistemde olmaz.** Bitti. Yani tek bir noktadan gidiyor bak. Tek bir noktadan. Ha nerde? Bu bankacılık çeşitleri olabiliyor. Faizsiz şekilde finans kurlmaları mesela yapmaya çalıştığı, yani banka illa faize dâhil olması gerekmiyor. Yapılabilir ama bu bir sistem sorunu, yani parçalanarak olmuyor bütünüyle o. Yani bizim söylediğimiz şudur: devlet halkıyla barışsın. **Yani şunca senedir 90 yıla yaklaşıyor, nerdeyse yani cumhuriyetin kuruluşundan bu güne halka düşmanlıkla bir yere kadar** (No.187, mobilyacı, yaş 45, erkek, Kayseri).

world, he gave up the sultanate, but Allah still shows him grace. Hasan-i Basri Hazretleri says: “Those who gave up this world for the world to come have enjoyed this world as well, but those who gave up the next world and ran after this world have lost the other world.” The Prophet says: “Every people (*ummah*) has a test; and the test of my people are material goods.” This hadith has affected them very deeply. Our Prophet has a very important prayer, and he advised us to repeat this prayer as well. It goes like this: “God, please save and protect us from a kind of richness that could make us go astray and a kind of poverty that could make us revolt.” This prayer has been repeated by Muslims all the time, both by the poor and the rich. We have been witnesses to that. Until recently, we also heard it from our elderly. Even if they didn’t have much, they considered it to be more appropriate to go to the other world without any goods. Because it is a fact that too much richness make you go astray (No.122,. Computer store owner, 32 years old, male, Erzurum).⁵³

Principled reasoning in economy shows itself in terms of advice against being allured by the wealth that the world has to offer. Therefore the participants who adhere to this position do not agree with *fetvas* that allow the application of interest rates in banking, strategies for rapid growth or economic policies that would help the economy to fit with the capitalist system. Success in this world should be considered against happiness in the next. Another participant also from Erzurum explained his understanding of an ideal economy based on Islam by referring to Koranic verses:

This verse addresses the wealthy. A wealthy Muslim cannot just give his alms and walk away. For example, if there is an unmarried man in his district, among his neighbors and relatives, he is responsible for him. He carries the responsibility of an unmarried girl or

⁵³ -Para kazanmaya nasıl bakılıyor?

-Eğer gönlünde zerre kadar bir mal, ya da dünya gönlünde yer etmedikten sonra olabilir. Çokça malı olabilir ama kendisi bir lokmayla bir hırka ile [yaşayacak]. Mesela İbrahim Ethem Hazretleri, tasavvufun büyüklerinden, ulularından sultanlığını bırakmış. Sultan kendisi, bir hadiseden sonra bırakıyor. Hatta padişah giysisini veriyor, saltanat elbisesini çıkarıyor, kavuğunu falan filan bir çobana veriyor. Çobanın elbisesini giyiyor. Yani Allahı aramaya, Allaha yakınlaşmaya... yoksulluğu tercih ediyor. Yani öyle anlatılır ki, öyle bir dereceye geliyor ki; kuyuya su için kovayı daldırıyor abdest alacak, bir çıkarıyor işte gümüş. Yarabbi ben su istiyorum. Tekrar bırakıyor. Daldırıyor, çıkarıyor altın. Bir daha, elmas, mücevher. Ya rab diyor ben dünyayı terk ettim. Beni bırak ben su istiyorum ki abdestimi alıp... Yani dünyalığı, saltanatı bıraktı ama Allah yine lütfediyor. Yani Hasan-i Basri Hazretlerinin bir sözü diyor ki “dünyayı bırakıp ahreti isteyenler dünyalığı da beraberinde buldular ama ahreti bırakıp dünyalığın peşinde koşanların ve ahreti isteyenlerin ahreti bulduğu hiç görülmedi. Her ümmetimin bir imtihanı vardır, benim ümmetimin imtihanı da mal ilemdir.” Bu hadis onları çok etkilemiş. Efendimizin çok önemli bir duası var, bize de bu duayı etmeyi tavsiye etmiş efendimiz. Diyor ki “yarabbi azdıracak zenginlikten, isyan ettirecek fakirlikten sana sığınırız.” Bu duayı Allah dostları devamlı yapmışlar, bir çok zengin olan da. Çok şahidiz, yakın zamana kadar yaşayan büyüklerden de duyduk. Az da olsa ellerindeki malları, malsız öteki dünyaya gitmeyi, tapusuz öteki dünyaya gitmeyi, göç etmeyi uygun görmüşler. Çünkü şu bir gerçek mal azdırır (No.122, Bilgisayar satıcısı, yaş 32, erkek, Erzurum).

orphaned child as well. He is responsible for a child who cannot go to school, someone who cannot earn enough for subsistence, anyone severely weak and helpless. In contrast, a poor man has no such responsibilities. His only obligation is to win his bread honestly. However, the wealthy has more obligations than earning honestly. Another reality is that; wealth creates ambition. In a way, wealth increases earthly desires. For example, you can buy a top model car. Without that car, you can make yourself comfortable here drinking tea. With a 300 thousand dollar car, you cannot relax but think if anything would happen to it; is someone following it? Did a child scratch it? ... Do not make us rely on others; honestly earned moderate subsistence is enough. Otherwise the examination gets harder, really. Those close to Allah, people involved in *tasavvuf*, some of these people actually lived on this world, preferred to be poor. Of course there are those who are in another realm. These are very few, but we still remember them. For example, Yunus Emre, these are cases of *marifet*. Allah declares in a verse ‘no not kill your children because of your anxieties about livelihood. This verse adds ‘we will secure your livelihood’. The verses do not create a dilemma for these people. We, on the other hand, feel fear thinking what to do if we suddenly lose our property. I am talking about myself. I would get frightened thinking what I would if I lost all my property. However, these people have such faith... (No.131, computer seller and student in a medrese, 30 years old male, Erzurum)⁵⁴

My interlocutors who refer to an ideal Islamic economy also mention that great difficulty involved in implementing it. Therefore most of them adopt a lifestyle that is more in harmony with the requirements of modern conditions. They set aside religious constraints and adhere to secular thinking when discussing the economy and their economic decisions. When talking about banking interest one of the participants quoted a hadith in relation to living under difficult conditions:

⁵⁴ Zenginlere muhattap bu ayet. Zengin Müslüman bir adam sadece zekatını vererek kurtulamıyor. Mesela çevresinde, komşusunda, akrabasında eğer evlenmeyen bir erkek varsa bundan sorumlu. Evlenemeyen bir kız varsa, yetim bir çocuk varsa bundan sorumlu. Okula gidemeyen ne bileyim, nafakasında bir problem olan, eksik olan, gerçekten aciz birisi varsa bundan sorumlu. Ama fakir bir adam bundan sorumlu değil. Helal kazandı mı kurtuluyor. Ama zengin helal kazansa da bir yere kadar kurtulamıyor. Bir de zenginlik hırs getiriyor bu bir gerçek. Zenginlik bir de dünyaya biraz daha tamahla itiriyor. Mesela son model bir araba alırsınız, araba yok iken, burada oturup rahat rahat çay içiyorduk. Araba çekiyorsun şuraya üçyüz milyarlık bir araba, iki dakika da bir kafan orada, biryandan birisi geldi mi, bir çocuk çizdi mi? Ele avuca düşürme, orta bir malla helal olmak şartıyla, kimseye muhtaç etme, bu şekilde, imtihan artıyor, bu bir gerçek. Allah dostları, tasavvufu ilgilenmiş, gerçek yaşamış insanlar bir çoğu fakirliği tercih etmişler. Zaten bir merhale var ki, hocam, bunlar tabii kopmuşlar. Bunlar tabii sayılı, halen adlarını unutmadığımız insanlar. Yunus Emreler gibi, yani bunları artık, ona fenafillah diyorlar, marifet diyorlar. Allah-ü teale ayette buyuruyor ki çocuklarınızı rızık korkusundan öldürmeyin. Ayet, diyor ki rızıkınızı biz veririz. Adamlar ayetle bizim gibi ikilemde kalmıyor ki. Biz böyle korkuyoruz malımız bak bugün giderse yarın ben ne yaparım diye. Ben kendimi anlatıyorum. Ben bugün malımın hepsini infak etsem doğrusu yarın ne yaparım korkarım. Ama onlar artık öyle iman etmişler ki (No. 131, bilgisayar satıcısı ve tamircisi ve medrese öğrencisi, yaş 30, Erzurum).

It reminds me of a hadith of our Prophet. He says to his companions, there will be a time in the future, even my *ummah* will earn from interests. A companion asks: ‘All of them? Even the believers?’ and he replies; ‘All of them, even the believers’. The companion then asks ‘How will this be?’ and our Prophet answers; ‘Even if they do not earn directly, the dust of interests will find them’. Can you understand? There is an establishment here. [Let’s say] we are dusting here. I am doing the dusting. You are sitting in the corner but the dusts will also find you. It is something like that. That’s it. It finds you. For example, your electricity bill comes but your boss can’t pay your wages on time. After a week or ten days, the amount to be paid raises from 5 to 6 TL. But it is 5? No, there is the delay penalty, the interest. It is said openly. And the interests find their way to your life as well. (No.21 worker, 30 years old male, Adana).⁵⁵

The usual pattern in thinking seems to be that while it is permissible to relax the religious requirements on the topic of economy, it is impermissible to do the same on gender issues. Why do people adopt principled reasoning, i.e. the single-truth approach, when talking about gender, not while discussing economy? In contemporary Turkey the relationships between men and women have changed radically, yet many people seem to adopt a very strict stance on such relations. During an interview with a female theologian, she brought up this very same issue. She stated that during a conference in which she participated, the *ulema* spent hours discussing topics such as banking interest and credit cards, being concerned to reinterpret the Koran so as to make it compatible with the current economic system. However in another session, the same learned men refused to reinterpret the Koran on woman’s issue. Their interpretation still relied on the old-fashioned concept of the *fitrat* and claimed that woman belong in the house. This is also what I found out during my fieldwork. The predominant rationality to interpret the economic conditions is capable of entertaining secular ideas and to demand the reinterpretation of the religious tradition. It does not insist on a single true interpretation of the cannon, indeed it accepts that the cannon has to be adapted to the present conditions. This attitude is typical for those with deconstructivist tendencies, which I will discuss in the next chapter. The principled

⁵⁵ Yani şimdi burada peygamberin bir hadisi aklıma geldi. Sahabelerine diyor ki bir zaman gelecek benim ümmetim bile faiz yiyecek. Sahabe diyor ki herkes mi? Herkes diyor. Ya nasıl diyor yani inanan insan da mı. İnanan insanlar da diyor. E nasıl oluyor peki diyor. Yani diyor yemese bile tozu bulaşacak diyor. Anlıyor musunuz? Yani burada mesela bir müessese var. Burayı süpürüyoruz. Süpüren benim. Ama köşede oturuyorsun, o toz sana da geliyor. Bu ona benziyor. Yani bu. Olan şey bulaşmıyor değil. Mesela elektrik faturan gelmiş. Patronun maaşını veremiyor. 1 hafta 10 gün geçiyor. Atıyorum 5 milyon geldiyse adam diyor ki 6 milyon. Abi 5 milyon. Kardeş işte gecikme zammı, faizi diyor bunun. Yani açık açık da söyleniyor yani. Böylece bulaşmış oluyor (No.21, işçi, yaş 30, erkek, Adana).

rationality in economics appears in fewer participants, who argue for an ideal Islamic economy. In many cases this is only something that is mentioned at the discursive level. Individuals do not employ very often the third rationality to solve the tension between religious demands and daily practice in the economic realm. Different from the subjects of politics and gender, people seem capable of and willing to put aside religious reasoning in order to negotiate the challenges of our times.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ For further details on this evaluation see Kurtuluş Cengiz, *'Yav İşte Fabrikalaşak' Anadolu sermayesinin oluşumu: Kayseri Hacılar örneği* (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2013).

Chapter 7

7. Deconstructivist Religious Reasoning

Deconstructive reasoning often appears as a critical response to authority of the principled reasoning. While principled reasoning claims that there is only one possible understanding of Islam and adopts an authoritarian stance vis-a-vis everyday life, deconstructive reasoning is aware of the tension between concrete life and what is taken to be true, valid or right from a transcendental viewpoint. Indeed, for deconstructive thinkers life is defined and constantly redefined by the tension between these two spheres, i.e. that of concrete life and that of the transcendent. Also, deconstructive thinkers do not subscribe to an ultimate truth, rather they accept the multiplicity of different interpretations and judgments of truth, which may or may not be consistent with one another. While principled reasoning seeks to impose some kind of order to social life and justifies it on the basis of reason and consistency derived from the religious canon, deconstructive reasoning is skeptical of the ability of human mind to fully comprehend and control human life and society, since different individuals and groups have their own notions of truth.

Skepticism about the capabilities of ‘rational’ thought does not, however, amount to complete denial of rationality (*akıl*). Rather deconstructive thought wants to hang on human rationality, but it does it without committing to rigid logocentrism, essentialist metaphysics, and the notion of single truth in morality or science. Hence deconstructive reasoning embraces value pluralism, i.e. incompatibility and contingency of values. Self-criticism is also a central aspect of this mode of thinking. Like principled reasoning, deconstructive reasoning relies heavily on arguments, propositions and discourses to explain or justify its various positions. However, the arguments supported by deconstructive reasoning often take the form of criticism or deconstruction of principled reasoning. In so doing, deconstructive reasoning emphasizes the openness of human mind, and calls to avoid rigid rationality, even when it is provided by religious authorities in their attempt to reach the “Islamic” truth. Deconstructive reasoning also does not necessarily reject ideals, and their imposition on society as a whole.

During the in-depth interviews, I have observed in some individuals a certain modesty, a tendency to think and act with humility, which help these individuals to

avoid the arrogance of principled reasoning. I take it that modesty and tolerance, so understood, are characteristic of deconstructive mode of thinking. Hence, deconstructive thinkers talk to everyone without insisting on the righteousness of their point of view. The individuals who adopt the three other modes of reasoning consider transgressors of Islam as freaks, in that they do not refrain from expressing their disgust with people who eat pork or drink alcohol. In contrast, deconstructive thinkers consider transgressions as part of life. Deconstructivist reasoners call for a non-universalist and non-essentialist approach to science and morality. Also, when pressed for more, some deconstructivist reasoners stress the emotions (*kalp*) over reason (*akul*).

All this makes it difficult to say something general about deconstructivist reasoning. Reporting on such reasoning requires some coherency, consistency and appeal to reason, and such reporting can turn into a fixed formula. But this is something deconstructivists oppose. They do not make propositions that can be imposed on others. The deconstructivists can and do engage in metaphysical speculations, but do not consider such speculations as absolutes. In this chapter I will bring together the pieces that form deconstructivist reasoning with all their ambivalence and contradictions and illustrate what I have encountered through examples. My purpose is to describe what sort of reasoning this is and also to discover the ways in which religious people through religion appreciate diversity and difference.

7.1. Skepticism towards “reason”

Participants who employ deconstructivist reasoning at times are unwilling to talk about their way of truth; whereas those who use principled reasoning are fascinated by the perfection, coherency and soundness of their own theories. This is so much so, that they would like to see their interpretation to be adopted by everyone.

A deconstructivist is characterized by a great suspicion of his or her presuppositions, knowledge and awareness. They are skeptic of the possibility of formulating a theory of rationality valid for everyone. They also take a distance towards universal prescriptions. In many cases, the deconstructivist formerly used to be convinced by and dedicated to a specific Islamic interpretation; a few even acted as

vanguards of that particular interpretation. They used to be members of a congregation (*cemaat*) or a *tarikât* of that interpretation, but faced with the complexity of life at some point in their lives they realized the unbridgeable gap between theory and practice. What follows is state of perpetual questioning of the theories and the interpretations to which they were devoted in the past.

The deconstructivists believe that God is outside the human sphere of perception. As a result, no religious tradition can claim rightfully to be in possession of the ultimate divine secret. For instance a 79 year old *melle*, a Kurdish *imam*, compares the impossibility of seeing the truth to an inescapable variation of vision in a distorted mirror.

[They] do it with their reason. Human reasoning is not enough for social life. You look around and see sculptures; I see creatures created by God. God, the life giver is one. We call him God. If you set several mirrors towards the sun, you see different things in each mirror, even though they are turned to the same sun. In each sculpture there is a mirror and that mirror is the soul... and that soul, that soul is the mirror to the sculpture. But all mirrors are different, some of them are broken, others are prettier. There are different faiths on earth. That is there are different ideologies. Everyone says mine is the true one, mine is the true one. They have the right to say it, but they cannot say what I say is the only truth. My opinion is true as long as it is not imposed onto others (No. 87, Melle-Kurdish unofficial imam, 79 years old male, Diyarbakır).¹

This interpretation, which is pluralist about truth, brings to mind Hick's assertions that channel him to religious pluralism. According to Hick all knowledge is based on experience, human categories of conception are derived from perceptions and interpretations. Love and justice are manifestations of God's characteristics within human experience. We can experience God only in partial, finite and inadequate ways, and this is what the history of religions tells us.² How does the awareness of the fallibility of the human mind lead to pluralism? The following quotation belongs to a theology professor and a devout Muslim helps us understand how individuals who

¹ İnsanın aklı toplumsal yaşama kifayyetli değildir. Yani nasıl insan ayrı, ayrı şeyleri görüyorsa, heykelleri görüyorsa, Allah'ı da öyle görüyoruz. Hayatı veren bir tane Allah vardır. Biz de onu öyle görüyoruz. Ona Allah diyoruz. Fakat mesela nasıl sen aynada yansıyan çeşitli görüntülere bırakıyorsan, aynaya baktığın zaman güneşin şeyisini görüyorsan, bizim heykelimiz de, ruhumuz da öyledir. Hepimiz değiştiğimiz. Bazı aynalar değişiktir. Bazı aynalar kırıktır, bazı aynalar güzel gösterir. Biz de bu aynalar vasıtası ile görüyoruz. Şimdi yer yüzünde tabi çeşitli inançlar vardır, çeşitli dinler vardır, yani çeşitli ideolojiler vardır. Herkes diyor benimki doğru, benimki doğrudur demeye hakları vardır. Yalnız doğru benimki demeye hakları yoktur. Başkalarının görüşlerine dokunmamak şartıyla benim görüşüm doğrudur (No.87, Melle, Kürt Fahri İmam, yaş 79, erkek, Diyarbakır).

² John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 246-247.

adopt the deconstructivist rationality understand the implications of not being able to claim to know God.

In your perception, there is your world, your emotions and you also have what the society have given to you and, there, there are your loses. I cannot act on everything I see. I may know but I cannot act on them all. Thus, the goodness, the truth and the beauty stays there, and the things I do are just my subjective efforts to get closer to the good, truth and beautiful. They say that “there is no absolute justice in this world, but there is love for justice.” There is no absolute goodness, truth and beauty in this world but there are steps taken, work done and behaviors chosen towards the good, truth and beautiful. You better think that your actions are reflections of it (No.221, Theology Professor, 62 years old, male, Istanbul).³

According to deconstructivists’ interpretation, believers inevitably go through a process of reinterpretation and re-appropriation of the teachings of Islam. Multiple interpretations are possible and legitimate because we are incapable of absolute and total knowledge of truth. The important thing is that these individuals while they talk on behalf of Islam, they seem to be cognizant of this legitimacy. When my interlocutor says “there is no justice in the world, only love of justice,” he is adopting the position of “reflecting faith,” where the individual strives to *favor* goodwill over knowledge.⁴ In other words, instead of imposing his version of the truth (knowledge) he tries to see the world from the perspective of the person who is not in possession of this truth. This attitude affects the way in which deconstructivists interact with others, because they show the necessary flexibility and unconditional positive regard (goodwill) to embrace diversity.

One’s faith appears as a personalized form of the general principles, teachings, advices, tenets of Islam. What they perceive is what is reflected on their behaviors after perceiving it. While in the process of perceiving, there are many deficiencies. There are also many deficiencies while practicing it and that’s why it is some sort of ‘deficient Muslimhood.’

³ **Şimdi algılarken kendi dünyan vardır, duyguların vardır, toplumun bana verdikleri vardır, orda fireler vardır. Algıladıklarımın hepsini yapamam zaten, bilirim de bildiklerimi yapamam. Onun için iyi doğru güzel orda durur benim yaptıklarım onun iyi doğru ve güzelin subjektif ve olabildiğince yani iyi doğru güzele yaklaşma çabalarıdır.** “Dünyada adalet yoktur da adalet severlik vardır” derler ya. Dünyada iyi doğru güzel mutlak olarak yoktur da, iyi doğru güzel aşkına yapılmış işler, atılmış adımlar vardır, davranışlar vardır. Benim yaptıklarım da onun bir yansımasıdır diye düşüneceksin. (Fıkıh Profesörü, erkek, 58 yaşında, İstanbul).

⁴ Derrida makes this differentiation following Kant in Jacques Derrida, “Faith and Knowledge: the Two Sources of ‘Religion’ at the Limits of Reason Alone”, in *Religion*, eds. Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo. (London: Polity Press, 1998), 10.

And there are no exceptions; it can be the person with the longest beard, or the one with the longest cloak... (No.221, Theology Professor, 62 years old, male, Istanbul).⁵

Individuals that employ deconstructivist reasoning believe in the limitations of the rational mind. So what is left? One possible answer is to consider the heart and conscience (*vicdan*).

Mind (*aqil*), now mind and conscience (*vicdan*) are two different things. Conscience is a concept formed by the revelation (*vahiy*) or is a thing that rules over human beings. Mind on the other hand... So let's say stealing for example, you can steal in the best way possible by using your mind. If you would rob a bank, you would think about all the details, and you can plan a perfect robbery. But the mind cannot decide if stealing is right or wrong. It is the conscience which makes that decision. For example, conscience... Are these so contradictory to the West? No, they are not. Because these are essential things in human nature (*fitri*), similar to our heartbeat, we cannot control it. For example the feeling of justice comes from our nature. God (*Cenab-ı Allah*) created justice as emotion in the very essence of human beings. The feeling of justice works in every human being. It doesn't make any difference if you are Muslim or Christian (No.227, Factory owner, 51 years old, male, Istanbul).⁶

The limitation of mind and supremacy of heart is one of the most recurrent themes in the in-depth interviews. All modes of religious reasoning make reference to the heart but it is difficult to understand what they mean by it. In some cases it is presented as a form of fatalism, in others it is uttered because by now it is a religious cliché, and in other cases yet it is used to denote the issues I have been discussing so in this chapter. Using one's heart to relate the world and to discern what is right, good and beautiful pulls the discussion to the metaphysical level. This has been the case during my fieldwork, but other anthropologists concerned with the mystical part of Islam have come to a similar result in their work. Marsden in his ethnographic study of northern

⁵ Her insanın Müslümanlığı, dinin o genel prensiplerinin, öğütlerinin ilkelerinin onun kendi özeline inmiş şeklidir. Onun algıladıkları, algıladıktan sonra kendi davranışlarına yansımalarıdır. Algılamak birçok fireler verilir, algıladığımızı yaparken fireler verilir ve onun içinde olan Müslümanlık fireli Müslümanlıktır. Yani kim kim olursa olsun, en sakalı uzun insan, en cübbesi uzun insan da dahil buna (No. 221, din görevlisi, ilahiyatçı, yaş 58, erkek, İstanbul).

⁶ Akıl şimdi akılla vicdan farklı şeylerdir. Vicdan işte vahyin oluşturduğu bir kavramdır veya insana hükmeden bir şeydir. Akıl ise... yani mesela hırsızlığı diyelim hırsızlığı aklın akılla en iyi şekilde yapabilirsiniz. Bir banka soyacaksınız en ince detaylarına kadar düşünürsünüz mükemmel bir soygunu planlayabilirsiniz. Ama hırsızlığın doğru mu yanlış mı olduğuna akıl karar veremez. Ona vicdan karar verir. Vicdan da... mesela, Batıya bunlar çok mu ters? hayır değil. Çünkü insanın mesela kalp atışlarını hükmedemediğimiz gibi fitri bazı kavramları vardır. Mesela adalet duygusu fitridir. Yani Cenabı Allah yaradılışa koymuştur adalet duygusunu. Her insanda adalet şeyi çalışır. Bunun için Müslüman olması Hıristiyan olması falan gerekmez (No.227, fabrika sahibi, yaş 51, erkek, İstanbul).

Pakistan was researching the ways in which villagers “conceptualize the interplay between the intellect and the faculties of feeling and emotion.”⁷ The participants in Marsden’s study debate the relation between the intellect (*‘aql*), heart (*hardi*), and the carnal soul (*nafs*). A commonly shared belief is that a person’s brain can be cunning and it produces speech and ideas that can deceive, but a person’s heart always tells the truth.⁸ “The ability to understand others’ thoughts requires not only a ‘fast brain’ (*tez dimagh*), but also a highly developed sense of feeling (*ihsas korik*).”⁹ Villagers believe in the existence of secret, inner (*batin*) knowledge, which they claim is located in the “concealed parts” of the body.¹⁰

During my interviews I also noticed the participants who employed deconstructivist reasoning refer to intuition, senses, feelings, conscience (*vicdan*) and heart (*gönül ve kalp*) in order to explain their decisions about what is right, good and beautiful. In some cases it was as if they could not find the right words or as if they found it difficult to give explanations. There were quite a few moments of silence. Here are a few examples of references to the “heart” my interlocutors use when asked to explain their decisions:

Matters have a heart and soul;

I remember the heart and I am soothed;

The heart is full of secrets and there are a thousand paths that lead to it;

The heart is at the center of the Real;

The heart is the Kaaba of God;

You have to go through the heart to reach the Real;

The soul is the house of the Real;

Not an absolute reason but a reason that takes the heart and soul into consideration;

The heart is a sieve between the mind and the tongue;

The heart sieves the good and the beautiful before presenting them.¹¹

⁷ Magnus Marsden, *Living Islam: Muslim Religious Experience in Pakistan's North-West Frontier* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Marsden refers to the anthropology of the embodied experience of thought, *Ibid.*, 28.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹¹ Meselelerin kalp ve gönül boyutunun var, kalbi zikrederek sakinleştirmek, sır dolu kalbin doğruya ulaşacak binlerce yol var, işin hakikatinde kalbin var, kalp Allahın Kâbe’sidir, hakikate ulaşmak

These phrases are not outright explanations or justifications, but they show that the “heart” is an important factor in decision-making for the deconstructivists. This language is common in the mystic Islamic tradition, which relies heavily on story-telling and metaphors. When a story is told, the story teller does not stop to make sure that his or her listener took away the “right” message from the story. It is believed that everyone will take away what they can, depending on their ability to comprehend. The deconstructivists do not set themselves the goal of producing the ultimate truth. For them listening to the heart at times it can mean to embrace things that the mind is not willing to accept immediately. The implication is that they show good will towards the different and the unfamiliar rather than reject it outright. Egginton analyzed the characteristics of the moderate people and argued that their worldview depends on “tolerance for inconsistency and incoherence.”¹² In other words, people who hold moderate religious views, rather than fundamentalist ones, are better at coping with ambiguity and doubt. Acknowledging that we cannot fully grasp matters of faith with our intellect opens up a space for doubt and for the rejection of any conception based on single truth.

7.2. Rejection of single truth

The rejection of single truth poses a paradox to the investigator of deconstructivist religious reasoning. The individual who adopts this reasoning mode is ultimately a Muslim believer, which means that he or she believes in the one true God and the fundamental tenets of Islam. How, then, can such a person reject a single truth? What are the Islamist justifications for embracing multiplicity? How is it possible to believe in the tenets of the Islamic doctrine and also claim that there is a multiplicity of meaning and that the one truth is open to change and interpretation? I asked these questions to my interlocutors who were operating in the deconstructivist rationality and I have divided their answers into three groups. Each group provides a resolution to the tension between revelation and the human mind. A further implication of each

kalpten geçer, gönül hakkın evidir, sadece mutlak akıl değil, kalp, gönül boyutunu da katan akıl, akıl ile dil arasında süzgeç olan kalp, gönülle süzerek temiz ve güzelleri ortaya koyar.

¹² William Egginton, *In defense of religious moderation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).108.

resolution is the possibility of using the teachings of the Koran as a guide for the current society.

The first group calls for the separation of worlds, namely the idea that there are several realities and each has its own rules. The claim is that the reality of God is different from the reality of the human beings. One participant talked a separation between three realities. The first he calls the physical reality (*mülk*), the other is the metaphysical reality (*melaküt*) and the third is the reality of God (*La hut*). Each of these realities needs a particular epistemological and ontological approach. The scientific method is valid for the physical reality. So in dealing with the matters of this world one should use the knowledge gained through scientific methodology. But in the other realities one need to move to the metaphysical or a higher order of thinking. This understanding may even go as far as to accept the evolution of species.

During the interviews there were several mentions of the differentiation between the law (*Şeriat*), the way (*tarikât*) and the Real (*hakikat*). My interlocutors who differentiated the Real and the many interpretations of it can be seen as examples of deconstructivist reasoning at work. Similarly:

Now, I think there is one Koran. The Koran is one, but I think its interpretations are millions. That is, I don't think that my interpretation is the absolutely correct one. I think my interpretation is right, based on what I know, but I don't think it is absolutely right because there could be something else. I could be wrong (No.92, vice director of an human rights association, 35 years old, male, Diyarbakır).¹³

In some cases individuals suggested that the existence of *tarikât* that opens space for the coexistence of radically different ideas regarding faith. The *tarikât* level provides room for acceptance of diverse thinkers from Mansur Al-Hallaj, who said "I am God" to Ibn-i Arabi, whom the renown Sharia scholar Al-Alusi Al-Hanafi addressed as Sheikh ul Akbar.

The second group deals with hermeneutics. They believe that the Koran has divine origins but it is read and understood by human beings. The Koran is above time and place, but at the same time it is the product of a certain context and as such it has its own historicity. For this group bearing in mind the human element that is reading

¹³ Şimdi bence bir Kur'an var ama yorumlarının milyonlar olabileceğine inanıyorum. Yani burada benim yorumum mutlak doğrudur gibi düşünmüyorum. Ben kendi yorumumun doğru olduğuna inanırım, kendi açımdan, ama bunun mutlak bir doğru olduğuna inanmam, çünkü doğru farklı bir şey de olabilir yanılıyor da olabilir (No.92, bir insan hakları derneği yöneticisi, yaş 35, erkek, Diyarbakır).

the Koran is as important as acknowledging the divine source. This means that the meaning of the Koran changes in line with the changes in the social and historical context of its interpretation. Hence, there can be no invariable meaning of the Koran. The deconstructivists in this group readily acknowledge the Koran as the holy book of Islam and Muhammad as the Prophet, but they are very skeptical of “literalist” approaches to the Koran and to Islam. They assert that the Koran can be read and understood in different ways, and the symbolic reading is at least as valid as the literalist one. They also distinguish between the verses of the Koran that descended at times of war from those of the times of peace. Furthermore, they argue that the verses concerning discrimination and violence are not fit for our times because they belong to the period of wars. To foreshadow one of the issues I will be discussing with regard to gender, some of my interviewees lamented the fact that all the interpretations of the Koran so far are made by men and they have overt patriarchal claims that contribute to the suppression of women. The people who adopt the hermeneutic strategy believe that through the Koran God spoke to the people of that time. The Koran may contain messages for all spheres of life but they need to be interpreted individually. More importantly, the Koran has different messages for different people and for different times. Individuals and communities must learn in their own way from these past times and places.

The third group calls for the restriction of the sphere of religion. By this I mean that religion does not apply everywhere. It only concerns faith and worship. The participants that give this answer begin by making the distinction between “true Islam” and “radical Islam.” According to them, true Islam is a religion of faith and worship and it does not have practical advice to give to this world. The penetration of Islam in all spheres of life is the doing of radicals. There is an absolute truth, but it only concerns belief and worship.

-For example, can we say... and I have come through this a lot... they say that there is scientific truth in the Koran. Everything is already written in the Koran, from the beginning. Do you think is this correct?

-I think it is just an invention to sanctify the Koran. [They say everything is in] The Koran from A to Z. Just to give an example, why would the Koran mention chromosomes? The Koran is not a book of physics. It is not a book of chemistry. It is not an encyclopedia. The structure of the Holy Koran is clear. Believe in the

afterlife, be moral, practice praying (No.124, Teacher, 36 years old, male, Erzurum).¹⁴

For deconstructivists, any interpretation of the truth cannot be ultimate. The claim is that religions are conceived by our own intellect and reflect our interpretation and as such it is limited and partial. In this mode of reasoning individuals accept the simultaneous presence multiple perspectives and interpretations. This approach suggests that the differences of positions and perspectives make plurality possible. Here are a few examples of how the rejection of the single truth is articulated.

For example Said Nursi talks about that. While explaining a verse in the Koran, he states that it is only one of the thousands of meanings in the Koran. If we can establish such consciousness, we wouldn't imprison Koran, to the templates we created. We would know that there might be other meanings, and we might be wrong too (No. 227, Factory owner, 51 years old male, Istanbul).¹⁵

Also,

Let me explain this to you. I say that this is more useful for life, I tell this as my opinion. Look, I don't agree with others' opinions. After Hz. Rasullullah, Hz. Ali, famous Ali that Alevi accept, he says that every word you speak should be right. But you don't have the right [monopoly] to say all the righteous things. He says another thing, the expression of Hz. Ali I mentioned, he says that when you say something, say that this is only what you think and it is your choice. Say that this is beautiful for me, for my belief but don't tell that the only beauty belongs to me. Do not claim that only my ideas are beautiful. So we say that you don't have the right to say that only your ideas are correct and the others are not. We don't have that right. So we agree on this, right? (No.87, unpaid and 'unofficial' imam, 79 year old male, Diyarbakır)?¹⁶

¹⁴ -Peki şöyle diyebilir miyiz mesela, ben bunu çok duydum, işte diyolar Kur'an'ın içinde aslında bilimsel gerçeklik var, Kur'an her şeyi en başından beri zaten söylüyor, bu doğru mu sizce?

- Bence Kuran-ı Kerim'i yüceltmek için uydurulmuş bişey. Kuran-ı Kerim A dan Z ye işte atıyorum Kuran-ı Kerim kromozomlardan neden bahsetsin, Kuran-ı Kerim bir fizik kitabı değildir, bir kimya kitabı değildir, bir ansiklopedi değildir. Kuran-ı Kerim'in geliş şeması bellidir: öte dünyaya inanmak, ahlaklı olmak, ibadet etmek (No.124, Öğretmen, Erkek, yaş 36, Erzurum).

¹⁵ Said-Nursi söylüyor mesela. Bir ayeti açıklarken diyor ki bu ayetin binlerce anlamından bir tanesi şudur. Yani bu bilinç olursa o zaman böyle Kur'anı şeye hapis etmeyiz bizim kurduğumuz kalıplara hapis etmeyiz. Biliriz ki bundan başka anlamlarda çıkabilir, biz yanılıyor da olabiliriz. (No. 227, fabriak sahibi, yaş 51, erkek, İstanbul).

¹⁶ Onu arz edeyim size. Ben diyorum bunun şeyi yani yaşam için bu daha faydalıdır ben bu benim görüşümdür diyorum. Başkalarının görüşüne katılmıyorum bak. Hz Rasulullah'tan sonra Hz Ali, meşhur Alevilerin kabul ettiği Ali, o diyor ki her konuştuğun doğru olmalıdır. Fakat her doğruyu söylemeye hakkın yoktur. Şimdi bir şey daha diyor Hz Ali'nin söylediğim o ifade var ya o da diyor ki

And also,

-My question is this: for example I am not going to ask you whether the truth (*hakikat*) is one, but rather I ask do you think is there only one right (*doğru*)?

-I disagree, the truth is one and only but this is not valid for ‘right’.

-Of this world?

-Of course, so the truth is one but the rights that everybody sees are different, and here we need to be able to accept that the utmost righteousness does not belong to us, but everybody has their own version of truth. Everybody has a point of view and I have to respect everyone’s point of views (No.43, theology professor, 43 years old male, Çorum).¹⁷

We need to differentiate plurality from pluralism, however. While the former denotes an empirical reality, the later refers to an attitude that recognizes the difference as desirable. This is something that only deconstructivists can discern. Individuals operating in the deconstructivists mode are able to say:

One can say that ‘I like the view of my hodja, it is correct and beautiful’. But they don't have the right to say that it is the only beautiful one. This is the Koranic perspective. Do you know (No.87, unpaid and ‘unofficial’ imam, 79 year old male, Diyarbakır)?¹⁸

7.3. Empathy

Deconstructivist religious reasoning emerges in the course of a highly emphatic and warm communicative interaction. I observed its emergence or appearance during in-depth interviews and long informal conversations. My interlocutors stated that talking

sen de ki ben bunu diyorum, bu benim tercihimdir. Bu bana göre, benim inancıma göre güzeldir ama yalnız güzel benimdir deme. Yalnız benim düşüncem güzeldir bunu deme. Yani diyoruz ki bu düşünce benim düşüncem doğrudur başkaları doğru değildir bunu demeye hakkın yoktur. Yani hakkımız yoktur. Burada mutabık kaldık değil mi (No.87, fahri imam, yaş 79, erkek, Diyarbakır)?

¹⁷ -Tek bir soru şu mesela hakikat diye sormayacağım ama doğru tek midir peki sizce?

-Değildir hakikat tektir ama doğru tek değildir.

-Bu dünyanın?

-Tabiki yani hakikat tektir ama herkesin gördüğü doğru farklıdır burada bizim şunu demeyi başarmamız gerekiyor en doğru benim bildiğim doğru değildir herkesin doğrusu vardır. Herkesin bir bakış açısı vardır ve ben herkesin bakış açısına saygı duymak zorundayım (No.43, ilahiyatçı, yaş:43, erkek, Çorum).

¹⁸ Benim hocamın görüşü doğrudur beğeniyorum güzeldir diyebilir. Fakat yalnız güzel budur demeye hakları yoktur. Yani Kuran bakışıyla böyledir. Biliyor musun? (No.87, fahri imam, yaş 79, erkek, Diyarbakır)

about religion is a sensitive issue if it involves revealing one's own beliefs. At times it was difficult to talk about it; on the odd occasion individuals became irritated when they were asked about their religious beliefs. In the in-depth interviews with the religious people the initial phase often contains skepticism and hesitance both about me and especially about the possible issues that may come up during the interviews. In a certain way it is easier to talk to people who engage predominantly in the other modes of reasoning because they are all very confident in their opinions. For the utilitarian and principled reasoning modes this confidence is the product of arrogance and being pleased with oneself. For the communitarian reasoning mode the confidence comes from knowing that your belief is shared by others and you cannot be wrong if you are not alone in thinking this way.

But once we are past the initial introductory stage and as the conversation proceeds my interlocutors begin to feel comfortable. If they do not perceive any threat, and if they are capable, they slowly change their way of reasoning to deconstructivist reasoning. As deconstructivist reasoning begins to emerge empathy becomes more intense. The interview turns into a warm conversation (*sohbet*) and communication becomes significantly easier. The conversation contains more pauses, and more moments of hesitation as individuals do not hide their perplexities and confusions. During these pauses when the tensions become evident in the questions that tap into dilemmas, then you truly understand how doubt becomes a constitutive element of belief. Uncertainty is the strongest characteristic of deconstructivist reasoning. Indeed, most of the time deconstructivist reasoning appears as the sharing of confusions, dilemmas and hesitations. When we talk about the influence that religion has on their daily life, that is, when the examples become personal then the conversation becomes truly genuine.

In the other religious reasoning patterns I argued that individuals reduce the tension by resorting to one mode of religious reasoning. But here, something else happens. The tension is resolved by simple acceptance. Deconstructivist reasoning became a way to embrace the tension. Since its major aspect is doubt, they just share their perplexity, and recognition of impossibility of coming up with a concrete answer to any of my questions especially those that contain dilemmas. In their reply, refraining from any readymade answers they tend to say 'it depends.' Sometimes I pose well-known ethical questions such as if you find a huge amount of money on the street when you were desperately in need, what would you do; or questions

concerning abortion when the fetus is diagnosed with a congenital disease, the individuals tend to answer by saying: “May God not discipline me with trials such as these.”

One of my interlocutors¹⁹ suggested that religion does not bring peace but on the contrary, it creates a deeper existential anxiety. He resembled this doubt to Prophet Mohammed’s first experience with revelation on Mount Hira. Here is his account of that episode: Why was Mohammed waiting in that little cave? Today’s interpretations of the specialists of Islam focus on the life of Mohammed after the first revelation. Wasn’t Mohammed, Mohammed before Islam? The days he spent waiting in the cave were not days of internal peace. What he was feeling at the time, before the supposed clarity that came with Islam, is as relevant to our lives as is what happened after. If the life of Mohammed is the exemplary path that Muslims should try to emulate, then why do we not take into consideration his life before Islam?

In many circles such questions would be considered disrespectful, but during the in-depth interview a mutual feel of empathy is created and the participant feels at ease, opens up, and dares to voice aloud his or her existentialist ideas. The individuals who adopt principled reasoning tend to repeat theories they have rehearsed before. This makes impossible the discussion of existential issues and in many cases the conversation lacks that feeling of genuineness. They become vehement about the certainty of their truths and arguments that they see as the dictates of reason. On the other hand if my interlocutor cannot go beyond utilitarian or communitarian reasoning, then they are not very expressive verbally and this is not conducive to long talk. Answers in this case tend to be brief. Conversely, the deconstructionists are more than willing to engage in long conversations and to share their ideas, even as they are hesitant or need time to formulate them. One interview with a deconstructionist went on for nine hours. The deliberative nature of the conversation enable participant to go further and question commonly accepted assumptions. It is as if the right, good, and beautiful are reformulated during this communicative dynamic. However, this can only happen in an empathic dialogical environment where parties do not judge each other.

Quite often the differences between myself and the interviewees were obvious, but they were addressed only once we reached the empathic point. One of my

¹⁹ No. 235, religious scholar without formal education who wrote many books on Islam, age 49, male, İstanbul

interlocutors from Erzurum was a young man who wore a skullcap (*takke*) and baggy trousers (*şalvar*) and spoke in his local accent. I, on the other hand, was someone who came from Istanbul, was not wearing any visible religious signs and spoke with the Istanbul Turkish. At some point I confessed to him that even though I had seen people dressed like him in certain neighborhoods of Istanbul I had never spoken long to them before. What followed was a very warm talk, with plenty of laughter and my interlocutor dropped the commonly used “we” (*biz*) and began talking in first person singular. This is the point after which the dialogical growth takes place. This is where the participants in the conversation, including myself, openly questions the already existing assumptions about the other, and this creates the intricate process of rethinking of deep-rooted prejudices. In the Gadamarian language, it is a “hermeneutical experience” where we find the chance to “critically and rigorously reflect on our own prejudices.”²⁰ This dialogical experience is based on language and in it time loses its quality.

The more language is a living operation, the less we are aware of it. Thus it follows self-forgetfulness of language, that is real being consists in what is said in it. ...the form of operation of every dialogue can be describes in terms of the concept of the game. It is necessary for the players to free themselves from the customary mode of thinking that considers the nature of the game form the point of view of the consciousness of the player.... The game is underway when the individual player participates in full earnest, when he no longer holds himself back as one who is merely playing, for whom it is not serious. Those who cannot do that we call men who are unable to play. ...dialogue in which language is reality. When ones enter into dialogue with another person and then is carried along further by the dialogue, it is no longer the will of the individual person, holding itself back or exposing itself, it is determinative.²¹

Becoming lost in dialogue is the moment when the shift takes during the interview. It is the moment when the game begins and my interlocutor operates with deconstructivist reasoning. Those who are able to get into this kind of experience show also the ability to embrace pluralism. Questioning one’s principles and being able to have an open dialogue seem to be the requirements for a pluralist attitude. Gadamer’s argument is that during the dialogue we come to realize the endless possibilities of interpretation. This creates the feeling that differences can be

²⁰ Hans-Goerg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. David E. Linge, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977), 93.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 65-66.

dynamically and creatively fused, as one changes upon hearing the others perspectives and interpretation. Vincent calls this the “dialectic of growth, change, and psychological maturity in individuals.”²²

Pluralism is a process in which some individuals are able to engage. These individuals are able to shift their way of reasoning in so as to embrace even radical differences. It is a kind of readiness on behalf of individuals to be open in the context of dialogue. It is tied to a specific pattern of reasoning that emerges during a dialogue. I am aware that my claim is subjective; the ability to accept pluralism emerges in a specific moment of my interaction in the research (in-depth interview, or conversation). As I discussed in the chapter on methods, knowledge is produced during my interaction. Participatory experience becomes the knowledge that I aim to produce. I believe the gist of pluralism at the individual level resides in emphatic dialogue; it emerges in the way we interact in our everyday life experiences.

When my interlocutor adopts deconstructivist reasoning my questions that require self-reflexivity are appreciated more. In such case I ask my interlocutors to evaluate the experience of the conversation they have with me and also ask if they have such open exchange of ideas with other people as well. In the cases when the participant began by using the other modes of reasoning in answer to my question they reply by saying that what we have been discussing here clashes with the realities of the world and that they cannot possibly hold such conversations with the people near them. One *imam* said: “If I spoke like this to my community I would make many people unhappy.” Another participant from a small town in the Black Sea, a graduate of the faculty of theology and current mayor of the town said that even though religion has a great space for existential issues he does not normally engage in them. The last time he had this kind of conversation was when he was at the university and debated with fellow students. In his town they discuss the legal aspects (*seriat*) of religion.

Thus, the importance of dialogue for a world where pluralism is upheld cannot be stressed enough. It allows both parties taking part in it to listen as well as answer back. Dialogue is not about winning or dominating the other by forcing one’s view. “Understanding is not about producing a facsimile of established knowledge. The hermeneutic problem usually materializes either when there is no tradition able to contain one’s own view, or, when encountering an unfamiliar or unknown tradition.”²³

²² Vincent, *The nature of*, 309.

²³ *Ibid.*, also see Gadamer, *Philosophical*, 46.

Also the fact of the matter remains that the doctrinal versatility is not often transferred other spheres in life – gender being a case in point.

7.4. Politics

The political attitude of the individuals who employ the deconstructivist rationality is shaped by strategies that involve layering, multiplying, pluralizing and at times relativizing the form and the content of knowledge. As pointed out, deconstructivist reasoning owes its existence to the recognition of plurality of perspectives, groups, and interpretations in the social and political sphere. Individuals who are accepting of plurality in religious interpretations also tend to display a pluralist attitude in the way they formulate their ideal political life.

In the previous section I identified empathy, rejection of one knowable truth, skepticism towards the power of human reason, and emphasis on dialogue as the constituting elements of deconstructivist reasoning. These elements do not favor rigid ideological perspectives on politics. Deconstructivist reasoning is conducive to a view of politics which is non-authoritarian, critical of oneself and open to alternative understandings. The significance of these attitudes for pluralism is obvious.

In an interview with the vice director of a human rights association, he expressed the following view on the living together of people with different world views:

We talk with people who think that being Alevi is being outside religion, outside Islam. At times I talk to nonbelievers. I can live with them and living with them gives me a lot. Or many groups of different beliefs or nonbelievers, extreme groups or various groups come to us because they face unjust treatments and we are [he says the name of the association]. Through this way, we have the opportunity to engage in dialogues and listen to the most of them. The biggest problem of people in Turkey is not being able to understand and talk with ‘the other’ in this singularizing system. Everyone forms invisible curtains for themselves. As an example, in Malatya, there is the neighborhood of the Sunnis and then there is the neighborhood of the Alevi. People make remarks about each other based on the mistakes and the violence others did in the past. He thinks that if he is a Sunni then he is a bad person, even if he doesn't know him at all. Or like he thinks ‘he is bad because he is an Alevi’ without knowing that person. People are acting with the codes of the state, or the definitions coded and misused by some religious people with

bad intentions (No.92, Lawyer and vice president of an association, 35 year old male, Diyarbakır).²⁴

This opinion is a good example of deconstructivist religious reasoning. It emphasizes dialogue and also rejects preconceived stereotypes, even when they are encouraged by the political authorities.

It should be noted that deconstructivist religious reasoning strives to find a way to open a space for religion in politics. Although religion comes to the public sphere through argumentations, it does not dominate or even guide political decisions. The individuals who use deconstructivist religious reasoning are critical of those interpretations of Islam that permeate all spheres of life, including the political system and constitution making. In this view, Islam does not have fine prescriptions for everything that takes place in a polity. Rather the members of a polity have the responsibility to create and build the necessary institutions and to make the laws that will govern them. This is one the biggest differences between deconstructivist and principled religious reasoning in terms of their visions of politics. Two further issues that are often mentioned by my interlocutors who employ deconstructivist religious reasoning are the strong references to freedom when discussing justice and their critical stance towards electoral democracy as a means of solving political issues.

Allah gave us reason '*aqil*' to use it; if it were otherwise, He would have listed everything we have to do every day, every hour, and every second. Do this and that, for such and such occasions, and then there would be binders of books. However, Allah didn't send binders of books. But he sent the Koran bounded by the societies it was sent. That is how we believe; and he established the foundations from there. He let us deal with the details, and the interpretation. Therefore the parliament is very necessary. If not, that is a wrong statement: Sir, there are people, for them the Koran is the constitution. That is not a quite right expression; they say all these because of their ignorance. For

²⁴ Aleviliğin din dışı olduğunu düşünen, İslam dışı olduğunu düşünen gruplarıyla, belki bazı boyutları ile belki de inançsız insanlar ile sohbetlerimiz oluyor. Ben onlarla yaşayabiliyorum ve benim onlarla yaşamam bana çok şey katıyor ya da farklı inanç ya da inançsızlık guruplarıyla çok uç radikal ya da çok alt tonlarıyla farklı gruplar [derneğin adını söylüyor] olduğumuz için uğradıkları mağduriyetler yüzünden bize baş vuruyorlar. Bu yolla çoğunu dinlemek diyalog kurmak gibi imkânımız oluyor. Türkiye'deki insanların en büyük sorunu tek tipçi yapının içinden ötekini anlayamamak, konuşamamak. Hani herkes kendisine görünmez perdeler oluşturuyor. Örnek söylüyorum Malatya'da bir Sünnilerin oturduğu mahalle var, işte Alevilerin oturduğu mahalle var. Hani insanlar hep birbirlerine gelip geçmişte birilerinin yapmış olduğu hatalar zulümler üzerinden yorum yapıyor. Hiç tanımadığı halde o sünniyiye o kötüdür. Ya da hiç tanımadığı halde o aleviyse o kötüdür gibi. Devlet kodlarında ya da bir kısım dindarların kötüye kullanılarak insanın kafasına ya da dincilerin insanların kafasına kodlamış olduğu tanımlar üzerinden hareket ediliyor aslında (No.92, avukat, Dernek başkan yardımcısı, erkek, yaş 35, Diyarbakır).

example, I have the Koran in front of me, you open and look at it, you read it and probably there would be expressions that shouldn't be in the constitution. For example, hypothetically speaking, 'we sent prophets before you'. What is it to do with the constitution? Am I right? So, what would be in a constitution? There would be major rulings on what should do and not to do. Therefore, it is the human beings' mind to form the constitution, laws and jurisdiction. So in a way, it means that a parliament is necessary (No.219, Mayor of a province, theologian, 51 years old, male, Trabzon).²⁵

Reason (*akıl*) in this quote refers to the faculty and endeavor needed for political conduct. However it does not mean that we can understand everything through reason alone or that human reason has primacy over all other faculties. God gives reason to humans and it is their duty to arrange their lives to the best of their capabilities. This involves consultation and deliberation with fellow human beings. In this sense consultation becomes a political concept. The word used for it is *shura*, which is an Islamic concept. So this is how Islam enters the politics without dominating it. One of my interlocutors went as far as to say that to seek consultations is the duty of any political actor that pursues authoritative action and creates binding interpretations in the name of justice.

Now everyone thinks that they act with justice. Even when justice appears to be a fundamental principle of religion, when you start interpreting it, everyone would think that their own understanding is the most just; nobody would admit to act with the intentions of cruelty, but justice. But when time passes, and when we look at the history, we see that the most cruel people are these ones. So there are certain concepts of the religion that is subject to interpretation, like justice, which requires a little bit of explicit form with some effort. As a matter of fact, these [concepts] do not belong to religion, but

²⁵ Allah bize akıl verdi bunu kullanın diye verdi yoksa, aksi takdirde öyle olsaydı her gün, her saat, her saniye yapmamız gereken herşeyi sayması lazımdı değil mi sayması lazımdı. İşte şu zaman şunu yap, bu zaman bunu yap, o zaman da ciltler dolusu kitap olması lazımdı. Hâlbuki Allah ciltler dolusu kitap göndermemiştir. Ya ne göndermiştir işte toplumlarına göre sınırlı mahdut işte en son Kur'an ı göndermiştir. Öyle inanıyoruz, oradan temel esasları koymuştur. Bunun detayını, ayrıntısını, yorumunu bize bırakmıştır. Dolayısıyla parlamento gereklidir. Yoksa şu yanlış bir ifade. Efendim, bazı insanlarda vardır. İşte Kuran anayasa. Ona geleyim, doğru ifade değildir, bunu cahilliklerinden söylüyorlar. İşte benim önümde Kurani kerim, açıyorsun buradan bakıyorsun ki işte mesela rastladığınız yer, ben okuyayım, anayasada hiç olmaması gereken ifadedir muhtemelen. Mesela attım hamd olsun senden önce de peygamberler gönderdik. Bunun anayasayla ne ilgisi var. Değil mi? Yani geçmiş, anayasada ne olur? Şunu yapınız veya yapmayın, temel hükümler olur orda. Anayasa, yasa ve işte yönetmelik yapmak insan aklının işidir. Dolayısıyla yani gerekli, parlamento gerekli (No.219, Belde Belediye Başkanı, ilahiyatçı ve hafız, erkek, yaş 51 Trabzon).

they are common ideals of human beings (No. 221, Theology professor, 62 year old male, Istanbul).²⁶

Deconstructivist religious reasoning accepts the fallibility of human reason. Their solution is to emphasize the need for a common effort on the part of the community as a whole. This is very different from the solution espoused by those who engage in principled reasoning and who claim that the solution to the fallibility of human reason is turn to word of God by a literalist reading of the Koran. One of the participants stated: “Religion has to do with politics. But you cannot deduce democracy or monarchy, or any other model of government from religion. If you do that you would be in the wrong.”²⁷ He further said:

Is monarchy a thing that shouldn't exist at all for Islam? Is a disastrous, rejected and unwanted form of governance? Not at all, religion states that: “provide justice, and rights (*hak*)” [it states] “But how can I provide it?” “It is not my business how you provide,” it states. It is not my business if it comes from a system of father to son lineage, or kingdom, or monarchy, but the essence of it is important, it states. (No.221, Theology professor, 62 year old male, Istanbul).²⁸

Deconstructivist and principled religious reasoning share the theme of justice as one of the important topics they discuss when referring to politics. However, for deconstructivist religious reasoning freedom becomes a prerequisite for realization of justice. A political community that makes no room for other views and religions and discriminates against them cannot make any claims about justice. In this view justice is a condition in which the power of the state is limited and it remains equidistant to all religions and also atheists. It is the duty of the state to provide the necessary conditions for the practice of different religions.

²⁶Şimdi herkes adalet yaptığını düşünür, adalet dinin çok açık bir ilkesi görüncede yorumlamaya başladığınız vakit herkes kendi uygulamasını en adil görür, ben zulüm ediyorum diye birşey yapan yoktur, herkes adalet diye yapar ama daha sonra üzerinden tarih geçince bakarız ki en büyük zalimler bu şahıslarmış yani şimdi dinin adalet gibi yoruma açık yorumlanması ve çaba ile verilecek belli bir çaba ile biraz belirgin hale getirilmesi gereken kavramları vardır. Zaten bunlar dine de ait değildir bunlar insanların ortak idealeridir (No.221, Theology professor, 62 year old male, Istanbul).

²⁷ “Din siyasetle ilgilidir ama dinden demokrasi işte monarşi işte falan gibi onlarla yarışan bir siyasi model siyaset yönetim biçimi çıkarırsanız yanlış yaparsınız.” (Ali Bardakoğlu)

²⁸ Monarşi İslama göre hiç olmaması gereken birşey midir, felaket, tamamen merdut, istenmeyen bir yönetim şekli midir? hayır öyle değil, din ne der: “adaleti sağla, hakkı hukuku sağla” [der]. “Efenim ben nasıl sağlayayım”, “nasıl sağlarsanız beni ilgilendirmez” der. Babadan oğula mı geçer, krallıkla mı yönetirsin, monarşiyle mi yönetirsin beni ilgilendirmez. Ben işin mahiyetine bakarım der (No. 221, din görevlisi ilahiyatçı, yaş 62, Istanbul).

If this is a democratic state, it should legislate not only according to Islam, but also keeping in mind the sensitivities of Christians and Jews. “I am the state and I order you to uncover your head regardless of what your religion says”, if that’s what it says, this is not just, this is not freedom. It is also not, if it claims that this is how it is because it is a secular state, what kind of an idea is this. If the state exists for the people and accepts my way of living...But I emphasize that it holds not only for the Muslims but the state should be able to protect the rights of the atheists too. For example when someone demands cremation for the burial services, but the state dictates that it should be according to the Islamic rituals; but come on, the man wants cremation and if you are the state, you have to respect that. I have to respect that as a Muslim, even more, I have to help him out if this is what he wants. Now this is democracy as well as freedom (No. 225, Factory owner, male, 46 year old, Istanbul).²⁹

Allowing the practice of religions different from the dominant one becomes the hallmark of democratic rule for those who adopt deconstructivist religious reasoning in politics. On the other hand, for principled reasoning the defining concepts are neither freedom, nor equality, but rather politics is a quest for consensus over ‘the right’ interpretation of Islam.

Some of the participants who operate in deconstructivist reasoning asserted that for them freedom and free will is a necessity to choose between good and evil, one cannot chose under an oppressive regime. Accordingly God will make judgments on persons free choices and for them Islam can only be lived under a free political regime. One of my interlocutors who wrote several books on religion and also who own a publishing house in Istanbul argued that socialism is the best form of Islam. For him, the idea of equal distribution and classless society are indeed Islamic ideas. He claimed that God’s purpose in sending the prophets was to eliminate domination and poverty in this world. He continued: “For me Marx is godless prophet... the only problem with socialism for me is the embedded atheism in it.” For this person having

²⁹ Bu devlet bence eğer demokrat bir devletse sadece İslam’a göre değil Hristiyanların Yahudilerin de hassasiyetlerini göz önünde bulundurarak kanun yapması lazım. “Ben devletim kardeşim başını açacaksın” diyorum “senin dinin ne derse desin” diyorsa bu devlet değil işte, adalet ve özgürlük de değil. Şey de değil. Burası laik devlet biz de böyle diyorsa, böyle bir şey var mı ya. Devlet millet için varsa ve beni yaşam tarzımla kabul ediyorsa ki bakın tırnak içinde sadece Müslümanlar için demiyorum ateistlerin bile hakkını koruyabilecek devlet olması lazım. Adam cenazesini yakmak istiyor bizim devletle diyor ki yok cenaze namazı kaldırılacak; ya adam yakılmak istiyor kardeşim sen devletsen buna saygı göstereceksin. Ben Müslüman olarak ona saygı göstereceğim, hatta ona yardım edeceğim, eğer adamın talebi oysa. Demokrasi bu, özgürlük de bu yani (No. 224, fabrika sahibi, yaş 50, erkek, İstanbul).

only one point of reference when judging on what is good, right and beautiful is misleading. He said: “I need revelation for inspiration” (No. 223).

Most of the participants who operate in deconstructivist reasoning also discussed the limitations of democracy as it is experienced not only in Turkey but also across the world. In their understanding liberal democracy has to be extended and become a better provider of freedom and justice. This can be achieved through more direct participation of citizens. A common element of their narrative is the ironic comments about the Kemalist practice of democracy.³⁰

Look, what it means to have full democracy, according to me, is to abolish the parliament, but under what conditions? Let me tell you under what conditions, today the money is the most valuable thing for us, right? And I can manage my money as I wish. Why can't I manage my own vote, you know we have the technology to switch from representational democracy to participatory democracy. But the ones ruling the world – with my former leftist friends, I entered the university in 77, graduated in 81- we would make fun of them back then, they would call them ‘hegemonic powers’, you know the ones who rule the world, they have the technology to do his now. They, in a manner of speaking, have us play in the sand, by saying the parliament, the Shari’a, the religious state, the headscarf... The headscarf, can you imagine, those powerful people have meetings for this, speeches, voting in the parliaments. You know these are intolerable for me, so degrading.. The headscarf issue is a personal issue for me. No, it is not political. What if it is? My wife had an experience; I killed myself laughing about it back then. She took our children to the military museum and they did not let her in since she wore headscarf. I asked her, “What happened?” She said, “I don't know. I think I was accused of forcefully changing the political order by wearing a headscarf” (No.227, factory owner businessman, 51 years old, male, Istanbul).³¹

³⁰ The current divide between AKP and the Gulen Community had not surfaced yet at the time when I was conducting my fieldwork in 2009-2011. Although the Islamists to whom I talked subscribed to different religious doctrines, in term of politics they all agreed that the bête noire is Kemalism and its legacy, specifically its interpretation of religion. I would expect stark divides on the issue of politics and place of religion and religious groups even among the Islamists today.

³¹ Bakın, ful demokrasi demek bana göre meclisin kalkması lazım; ama ne şartla? Ne şartla söyleyeyim mesela bugün para en kıymetli şeyimiz değil mi bizim? Ve ben şuradan tık tık yürüyerek paramı istediğim gibi yönlendirebiliyorum, hiç sorun olmuyor. Niye oyumu ben yönlendiremiyorum yani temsili demokrasiden bana göre katılımcı demokrasiye geçecek teknoloji var. Ama dünyayı yöneten - bizim eski solcu arkadaşlardan 77 de üniversiteye girdim 81 de mezun oldum o zaman çok dalga geçerdik onlarla böyle "eğemen güçler" derlerdi onlara yani bu aslında şu anda bunu yapacak teknoloji var ama dünyada iktidarı elinde bulunduranlar. Bizi böyle tabiri caizse kumda oynatıyorlar işte ya; işte parlamento, şeriat bilmem ne, din devleti, başörtüsü diye. Başörtü yani düşünebiliyor musun koca koca insanlar bunlar için toplantılar yapıyor, konuşmalar yapıyor, mecliste oylamalar yapıyor. Bana o kadar ağır geliyor ki bunlar; o kadar aşağılayıcı geliyor ki. Yani başörtüsü mevzusu benim için kişisel bir mesele. Yok, siyasi yok değil. Olsa ne olur? Bizim hanım şey olmuştu; ona çok gülmüştüm. Askeri müzeye çocukları götürmüştü de. Başörtülü diye almamışlardı onu. “Ne oldu?” Dedim. “Ne biliyim”

In this view, the criticism addresses the complete control the state exercises on religion in the public sphere. For devout Muslims, religion constitutes a crucial dimension of their personality. It provides the necessary content in their particular definition of good life. Therefore, the memories of Kemalist secularism make them cautious in any formulation of politics without a place for religion. Islam is a good, but it only brings about good if it is not hijacked by people who have rigid ideological views on politics.

In their approach to politics deconstructivist thinkers do not uphold a vision of secularism that foresees a strict separation of religion from politics. The common theme is that Islam, as applied in different polities so far, is incapable of coming up with a viable alternative. It is in the hands of fellow human beings to formulate the necessary alternative to the problem of co-existence; that is, to be able to harbor multiple groups with different religious and philosophical orientations, despite the hostile collective memories. In this outlook, the state should be responsive to the religious needs of the citizens but it should do so by providing equal opportunity for all religions and also atheists. The following is a criticism directed to the current situation of the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Turkey:

The law regarding the religious lodges was passed, there were the revolution laws and Atatürk was trying to control the religious life. He felt the need for this and, you know, they experienced some problems. In the last days of the Ottoman Empire, those problems were known by nearly everyone in the intelligentsia, were mentioned in their works, this kind of solution was found in order to solve those problems. However, the Directorate of Religious Affairs developed a peculiar religious understanding, you know very vain, official, strict, developed a very official religion, a religion without a spirit. It did not satisfy the needs of the society, if it was actually like this, it should have been like that by now, that the Directorate of Religious Affairs respects different sects and gives reference and takes care of their sources...in this respect it is a historical step that the Alevi/Bektashi classics are published by the Directorate of Religious Affairs Foundation. As a result, it will be embraced more by the society, and in fact it will lead to societal harmony. But since in Turkey, the state is perceived as a Sunni state, it is perceived to serve only the Sunnis, the Directorate of Religious Affairs is not welcomed by the society. And it disregards society. Here we came back to this point, the same point. The state should respect different faiths, respect the traditions and should try to cherish the

dedi. Başörtüsü zoruyla düzeni mi değiştirecekmışim ne yapacaktım (No.227, fakriba sahibi iş adamı, yaş:51, erkek, İstanbul).

symbols and rituals (No.43, Male, Age: 43, Professor, Academician and Director of an Institute, Çorum).³²

Similarly, another participant criticized the way the Turkish state came to view religion and discussed the need for a more liberal interpretation of secularism:

Now I believe we need a liberal understanding in Turkey. In fact the laicism is being discussed when it is enforced in a wrong way. I believe Muslims would not have a problem with laicism if it were enforced in a liberal way. But an understanding of laicism, that is militarist, interventionist, controlling, statist, constraining or totalitarian, whatever you call it, a positivist understanding of laicism that requires the withdrawal of religion from societal life is never healthy and would always make laicism debatable. People will never give up their religions. You know, religion has a powerful influence on the soul. People would never give up their religions. Religion is the most influential constitutive factor in humans. It is one of the most influential ones. You know the sand disappears but the heavy rocks stay put. All the worldly problems disappear but the religious thoughts always stay put in human soul, human life is like heavy rocks. If you push people very hard they become hypocrites. They will satisfy the needs for religion in their soul (on the inside) but satisfy the needs of positivist laicism on the outside (superficially). Why do we force them to be hypocrites? Turkey should move towards a more liberal laicism (No. 221, Theology professor, 62 year old male, Istanbul).³³

³² Tekke ve zaviyeler kanunu çıkartılmış, işte devrim yasaları var ve Atatürk dini hayatı kontrol etmek istiyor. Bunun ihtiyacını duyuyor, yani bazı problemler yaşanıyor. Osmanlı devletinin son zamanlarında o problemler hemen hemen her aydının bildiği, eserlerinde yer verdiği problemler, onları çözebilmek için böyle bir çare bulunmuş. Ama diyanet zaman içerisinde kendine özgün bir din anlayışı üretmiş; yani çok kuru, resmi, katı, çok böyle resmi bir din üretmiş; ruhu olamayan bir din üretmiş. Bu da aslında toplumun ihtiyaçlarına cevap veremiyor hâlbuki şu olsaydı şu anda belki olması gerekirdi o farklı mezheplere meşreplere saygı duyar ve onların referanslarına da gönderme yapabilen kaynaklarına sahip çıkabilen diyanet işleri başkanlığı olsaydı... bu anlamda Alevi Bektaşî klasiklerini diyanet vakfi tarafından yayınlanması son derece tarihi bir adımdır. O zaman toplum tarafından, taban tarafından daha fazla benimsenecek ve aslında sosyal bütünleşmeye de daha fazla hizmet edebilecek. Ama Türkiye’de devlet Sünnî devlet olarak algılandığından dolayı sadece Sünnîlere hizmet veren bir kurum olarak algılandığından dolayı diyanet işleri başkanlığı toplum tarafından hep soğuk karşılandı. O da o toplumu yok saydı. Burada yine şuraya geliyoruz aynı noktaya geliyoruz. Devlet inançlara saygı duymalı geleneklere saygı duymalı ve sembollerini ritüelleri vs yaşatmak için gayret göstermeli (No.43, Çorum, erkek yaş 43, prof, akademisyen ve enstitü başkanı).

³³ Şimdi liberal özgürlükçü bir laiklik anlayışına ihtiyaç var Türkiye’de kanatimce. Laiklik aslında yanlış uygulandığı vakit tartışılır hale geliyor. Laikliğin kendisi özgürlükçü olarak uygulansa bana göre Müslümanların laiklikle bir sorunu olmaz. Ama laikliğin militarist, müdahaleci, kontrolcü ve devletçi bir laiklik kısıtlayıcı, müdahaleci, totaliter militarist hangisi dersiniz, bir laiklik anlayışı ve dinin sosyal hayattan çekilmesini öngören pozitivist bir laiklik anlayışı hiçbir zaman sağlıklı değildir ve her zaman laiklik anlayışını tartışılır kılacaktır. İnsanlar dinlerinden vazgeçmezler. Yani dinin öyle bir iç dünyada etki gücü vardır. İnsanlar dinlerinden vazgeçmezler. Din en etkili, belirleyicidir insan hayatında. En etkili en belirleyici güçlerden biridir. Haaa yani kum kum gider ağır taşlar yerinde kalır. Dünyanın bütün bu hengameleri gider, ama dinin dedikleri hep insanın iç dünyasında, insanın hayatında ağır taşlar olarak kalır. Çok fazla zorlarsanız insanları iki yüzlü olurlar, yani iç dünyalarında dini, dış dünyalarında pozitivist laikliğin gereklerini yerine getirirler. İnsanları neden iki yüzlü yapıyoruz? Onun

It is important to note that people who are able to engage in deconstructivist religious thinking can and do think in radical ways about liberal democracy. One participant said the following concerning the limitations of liberal democracy:

To my way of thinking, no political system in this world can be judged in terms of absolutely goodness or rightness. There are rights that have been relatively established. They have been the result of a common human experience. But sometimes they are just for show. I would rather live under a king, then in a parliamentary system where a person is subjected to all sorts of violence. I don't have absolute ideas in my head. I don't think that either parliamentary system or monarchy is sacred. Humanity is something like this, brother... wherever there are two people in the same place there are power issues. Then on it all depends on how you establish this foundation, this power. After that instead of making claims on whether it is in agreement with Islamic regulations we should be more interested on whether it is fair (No.232, Director, and writer, 38 years old, male, Istanbul).³⁴

Another argument that was brought forth while talking about politics with people who use deconstructivist religious reasoning was the Medina Charter. This episode from the life of the prophet Mohammed is used as an example of the possibility of establishing a multiple legal system.

That is, when we look at history, when we look at the territories over which the Muslims ruled, while they were regulating daily life they used the Koran as a source but mostly they prioritized the living together of different people. Of people of different faiths. That is an arrangement that allows compromise... That is, even in Medina, the state founded by the Prophet, is a state that takes Jewish people as partners. That is, it does not apply the Shari'a to them. They are allowed to have their own Shari'a law. For this reason I believe that a political system has to do with its time. So today democracy looks like the most livable system, which allows for the greatest participation and allows different people a voice and a chance to negotiate. But I don't say that democracy is the highest system we can reach, that is I don't think we can say it. It [democracy] is important now. We cannot call it the highest Islamic political system. I enjoy reading about such things.

için özgürlükçü olmak özgürlükçü laikliğe doğru Türkiye'nin rota değiştirmesi lazım" (No. 221, İlahiyat Profesörü, yaş 62, erkek, İstanbul).

³⁴ Benim düşüncem şu dünya da var olan hiçbir yönetim şekli, politik düzen mutlak anlamda iyi ve doğru anlamında değerlendirilemez. Görece ulaşılmış doğrular vardır. İnsanlığın ortak tecrübesinin doğurduğu ama mesela göstermelik ve insanın her türlü şiddete maruz kaldığı parlamenter bir sistem içerisinde yaşamaktansa adaletli bir kralın altında yaşamayı tercih ederim. Mesela benim böyle kafamda mutlak şeyler yoktur yani. Ne parlamenterizmi kutsuyorum ne monarşiyi. Bu biraz şöyle bir şey; insanlık [pause] abi 2 kişinin bir arada olduğu her yerde bir iktidar sorunu vardır. Bu temel, bu iktidarı nasıl kurduğunuzla ilgili bir şey. Artık bundan sonrası bize düşen, şu sistem caizdir, bu sistem caizdirin arkasında durmak yerine adaletin peşine düşmektir (No. 232, İstanbul, Film yapımcısı, sosyolog, Erkek, yaş 38. İstanbul).

They say it is not Islamic, but when you look at the Golden Age, after the Four Righteous Caliphs, it is not important to Muslims how the people in charge of the political authority come to be in charge. That is it doesn't have to be by election, he could be appointed. The important part is that this political authority is just. Therefore saying democracy is the best for now is not possible. Bush's rule was also democracy (No.228, academician, 43 year old, female, Istanbul).³⁵

Deconstructivist religious reasoning not only is critical of the creation of an Islamic state, because it inevitably leads to the establishment of only one interpretation of Islam. In their emphasis on liberty this reasoning provides a rationale and attempts to integrate ideas such as popular sovereignty, ideological, religious and political pluralism, and equal citizenship rights into their understanding of Islam. They are dissatisfied with the current situation and they strive to find a new form of relationship between religion, society and the state that conforms with the requests of a pluralistic society. Some participants stated that Western democracies provide the best environment for devout Muslims. Consequently, they argued that the European experience and liberal democracy are the best instances of Islam in practice.

7.5. Gender

The individuals who operate in deconstructivist reasoning on the gender issue point out the negative effect that widely shared Islamic interpretations have on women's participation in public life. These individuals interpret the Koran themselves or cite verses and *hadiths* that highlight the equality between sexes. This deconstructivist reasoning sustains that the dominant exegeses, which relegate women to private domain and do not believe in the equality between sexes, are done by fundamentalists

³⁵ Yani tarihe baktığınızda da Müslümanların yönettiği toplumlara da baktığımızda gündelik hayatı tanzim ederken aslında hem Kuran'dan yola çıkan ama aslında orada farklı insanların farklı inançlı insanların yaşamasını da mümkün kılan. Yani müzakereye de şey yapan, yani ta Medine'deki Peygamberin kurduğu devlette bile Yahudilerle ortak mutabakat halinde bir devlet kuruyor. Yani onlara Kur-an şeriatını uygulamıyor. Onlar kendi şeriatlarını kendi şeylerini uyguluyorlar o açıdan bu bunun yani siyasi sistemin biraz gene ben dönemseldiğini düşünüyorum. Yani bugün evet demokrasi şuan için hani en katılımlı sağladığı için farklı insanlara müzakere imkânı verdiği için hani en yaşanabilir şey gibi gözüküyor. Ama hani mesela demokrasinin ideale ulaşabilir bir sistem olduğunu da söylemiyoruz yani söyleyemeyiz diye düşünüyorum ben. Yani şuan için en önemli İslami sistem falan diyemeyiz mesela benim okuduğumda hoşuma giden şeylerden birisi. Şöyle İslami hayır diyenler var da o açıdan diyorum yoksa şöyle bir şey yani aslında hani şeydeki o asrısaaadetteki ilk halifelerin falan seçilişini sonraki dönemlere bakarsak aslında Müslümanlar için önemli olan siyasi otoritenin başa nasıl geldiği değil. Yani illa seçimle gelmesi gerekmiyor atamayla da gelebilir; seçimle de gelebilir; babadan oğla da geçebilir. Bizim için önemli olan kısmı otoritenin adil olması. Yani o yüzden hani şundan bakıp da işte şuan demokrasi var en iyi sistem Bush da demokrasiyle aslına bakarsanız (No. 228, Akademisyen, yaş 43, kadın, İstanbul).

who impose their monist understanding on all aspects of life. Therefore deconstructivist reasoning appears as a response against hegemonic interpretations of Islam on gender.

This reasoning is common among feminist Islamists circles and learned Islamists but is not very widespread. During an in-depth interview a woman professor of theology asserted that: “So far all the hadith transmissions and interpretations have been done by men. So they reflect their mentality. We can’t accept these interpretations that omit fifty percent of the human kind. We need to have a woman’s perspective in the interpretations of the Koran.” Similarly another Islamist feminist who held a doctoral degree in theology talked about the patriarchal language of the Koran. She argued that the patriarchal tone in the Koran addresses men only because such were the power relations at the time:

In my opinion, the matter of understanding the Koran is completely ideological. By ideological I mean in terms of denomination, or group; ideological in terms of what you feel yourself close to, that is. So I always think in this way: revelation (*vahiy*) came down for the Holy Prophet and his friends who lived 1500 years ago. It came down in their language, through their frame of mind. Arabic is a male dominant language, the system is male dominant, so it came down using this male dominant language. For instance, I asked one of my philosophy professors at the religious studies, I said to him: “if there is no male dominant background in the Koran...” (in my opinion, there is a male dominant background in the Koran, because the language is male dominant and it is a language with male and female patterns. And the system is very male dominant. How could the Koran possibly not have a male dominant background!) I said for instance: “The fact that Allah talks about himself in ‘hüve’ male pronoun is an indicator of this”. I mean, if he talked about himself in ‘hiye’, Allah wouldn’t be respected. Because woman was not a respected creature, how could he talk about himself with the female pronoun? Allah introduces himself as excluded from genders, so he is genderless but he talks about himself in male pronoun. And thus he has got power, he is the owner, he is dominant, has the power etc. etc. So what do you think this professor’s comment was? He couldn’t tell me anything and later he gossiped about me. He was saying “... [says her name] says that God is male”. This is what the respected professor understood from this question (No.238, Islamic Intellectual, writer, 53 years old female, Ankara).³⁶

³⁶ Bu Kuran-ı Kerimi anlama meselesi bana göre son derece ideolojik. Yani ideolojik derken mezhepsel anlamada ideolojik, grupsal anlamda ideolojik. Kendinizi yakın hissettiğiniz şey anlamında ideolojik, böyle bir şey. Onun için, ben Kuran’ı Kerim’e hep şöyle düşünerek bakıyorum, bu vahiy 1500 sene önce yaşamış Hazreti Peygamber ve arkadaşlarına indi. Onların diliyle indi, onların zihniyetleri içinden indi. Arapça erkek egemen bir dil, sistem erkek egemen, bu erkek egemen dili kullanarak indi. Mesela, ben şunu sordum bir felsefe hocama, ilahiyatta, dedim ki: “madem Kur’an’da erkek egemen bir fon

The major contestation on the gender issue tackles the hegemonic interpretations and the authorities that convey the hegemonic message. They argue for the need for reinterpretation that accommodates today's world. However, this reinterpretation quest does not suggest that religious scholars should make new interpretations to regulate gender and family issues. They sustain that Islam should be cleaned from over interpretation. One of my interlocutors said:

The majority of the sentences that start with "according to Islam," "according to the Koran" are actually the information people understand from the Koran, from Islam and read from this or that book. Now woman and man, role of woman as a mother, woman taking care of the house and the man... Islam is not interested in these. Why would it be? Why does it matter who brings the food into the house? What if the man does the chores and the woman works outside so comes home in the evening? So what? This is out of Islam. (No.221, Theology professor, 62 year old male, Istanbul)³⁷

Similarly other participant complained about over interpretation and sacralization attempts in the name of religion:

Now actually there are things we can think and decide for ourselves. Or humanity can say to itself "this should be like this." Once you get into the Koran, once it turns into a verse of The Koran, it is sanctified. We call this a process of sanctification. Once it is in a verse of the Koran it gets universalized, becomes sacred and to act against it means being an infidel. This [talking about veiling oneself up] is a human arrangement and even if it is in the Koran, there is no meaning to put this through a process of sanctification (No.223, owner of a publishing house and Islamic intellectual, 50 years old, male, Istanbul).³⁸

yok" (bana göre erkek egemen bir fon var Kur'an ı kerimde, çünkü hem dil erkek egemen, Eee eril, dişil kalıpları olan bir dil. Hem de sistem çok erkek egemen. Nasıl olmayacak yani Kuran-ı Kerim'de erkek egemen bir fon!) Mesela dedim: "Allah'ın kendinden 'hüve' erkek zamiri ile bahsediyor olması bunun bir göstergesi" dedim. Yani kendisinden 'hiye' diye bahsetseydi Allah-ü Teala itibar görmezdi ki. Çünkü kadın itibarlı bir varlık değil ki, yani nasıl kadın zamiri ile bahsedebilir kendisinden. Hem Allah kendisini cinsiyetten münezze olarak tanıtıyor, cinsiyetsiz ama kendisinden erkek zamiri ile bahsediyor. Dolayısı ile bu güç yani, malik, hakim, güç sahibi vesaire vesaire. Peki bu hocamın yorumu ne oldu dersiniz? Bana hiç bir şey söyleyemedi sonra benim arkamdan gitmiş dedikodu etmiş bir yerlerde, ... [ismini söylüyor] diyormuş ki Allah erkektir. Anladığı, koskoca felsefe profesörünün bu sorudan anladığı şey bu (No.238, İslami entelektüel, yazar, yaş 53, kadın, Ankara).

³⁷ İslam'a göre, Kuran'a göre diye başlanmış cümlelerin önemli bir kısmı, aslında kişilerin, Kur'an'dan, İslam'dan anladıkları, okudukları, şu kitaplardan okudukları bilgilerdir. Şimdi kadın erkek, işte kadının annelik rolü, kadının ev işlerine bakması, erkeğin... bunlar, İslam bunlarla ilgilenmez. Niye ilgilensin ki, yani şimdi eve ekmeği kim getirdiği, erkek şimdi ev işlerine baksa kadın çalışsa yani akşam eve gelse n'olacak yani. Bu İslam dışı bir durumdur. (No. 221, İlahiyatçı Prof. din görevlisi, yaş 62, erkek, İstanbul)

³⁸ Şimdi bunlar Kuran'a girdiği için, aslında bizim kendi kendimize düşünebileceğimiz; insanlığın kendi kendine "ya böyle olsun" diyebileceğimiz şeyler, bir kez Kuran ayetine dönüşünce kutsallaştırılıyor. Yani buna kutsallaştırma prosedürü diyoruz. Bu bir kez Kuran ayetine girince

It should be noted that these individuals who use deconstructivist reasoning suggest that the undesirable consequences are not a result of religion itself, but of hegemonic interpretations of religions in today's world. For them verses like those on inheritance which state that men are entitled to twice as much inheritance as women; or testimony, whereby two women's testimony equals to a man's; and the verses defining the role of women in the family that seem to curtail women's rights were indeed ahead of their times. A feminist Islamist and a columnist said the following regarding the intention of religion:

It is all about protection of the weaker one. The Koran advises to treat the weak not even equally, but to favor them. For instance let's say a man and a woman got engaged and later they gave up the engagement, it advises not to take the presents back for instance, let her keep them. (No.238, Islamist intellectual, writer, 53 years old female, Istanbul)³⁹

The argument here is that all today's controversial verses did not put pressure upon women when they were revealed. On the contrary they were emancipative in the context of their time. The restrictions on women in Islam reflect the difficulties of the era during which Islam was initially disseminated in the Arab peninsula. They are not valid anymore. On this issue the same participant said: "The Koran is not revealed to me. I don't read the Koran as it is was being revealed to me today." She is saying that on gender issues the Koran talks to the people and their concerns 1400 years ago.

Other participants also made similar critical comments with regard to the hegemonic interpretation that is accepted as religion today. One participant stated that the literalist application of the Koran in today's world brings about dogmatism:

If we present this as Islam... I mean, at the 3rd, 5th, 7th centuries marriage concepts were different; marriage definitions were different, expectations of the family and individuals from each other were different, education was different, there were lots of other things, their understanding of education was different. So if we attempt to connect these things

evrenselleşiyor kutsallaşiyor ve buna aykırı hareket etmek kâfirlik yapar gibi oluyor. Bu [Örtünmeden bahsediyor] insani bir düzenlemedir ve bu Kuran'da geçiyor olsa da bunu bir kutsallaştırma prosedürüne tabi tutmanın bir anlamı yok (No.223, yayın evi sahibi İslami entelektüel, yaş 50, erkek, İstanbul).

³⁹ Hep zayıf tarafın korunması var. Kuran-ı Kerim zayıf tarafa eşit bile değil, lütuf ile davranılması konusunda tavsiyeler verir. Mesela bir erkek ve bir kadın nişanlandı ve daha sonra nişanlanmaktan vaz geçti, ona verdiğiniz hediyeleri geri almayın diyor mesela, bırakın onda kalsın (No.238, İslami entelektüel, yaş 53, kadın, İstanbul).

too much with religion, then dogmatism ensues (No.221 Theology professor, 62 year old male, Istanbul).⁴⁰

In some, my deconstructivist interlocutors say that Muslims should welcome contemporary challenges of modern everyday life on the issue of gender. The interpretations that come forth should accommodate the consciousness of today's women and men. Some also sustained that the so called literalist scholars who are responsible for the hegemonic interpretations do not strictly follow The Koran on the issue of gender themselves. They interpret the Koran in such a way as to restrict the presence of women in the public sphere. One participant said:

These religious scholars drew such things against women from this verse (meaning the verse about testimony), so this verse is not one that sits like it sits in the bottle (No.238).⁴¹

Upon realizing that she just compared the writing in the Holy Book to *rakı* in a bottle she corrects herself:

Like it rests in the book [Laughs quietly].

The same participant gave many examples of how today's religious scholars make interpretations that are difficult to derive from the Koran. Besides issues like testimony and inheritance, her examples include veiling and divorce.

Another interlocutor said:

It may sound strange to you but in the near future Muslims in Turkey will start discussing the possibility of a gay imam (No.232, Writer and a director, 38 years old, male, İstanbul).⁴²

In one case I have come across deconstructivist reasoning on gender the rural parts of Anatolia. I was in a small village near Bismil in the province of Diyarbakır. I chatted in the village room with a group of men. They were: my contact person formerly from the village and currently a resident of Bismil; an unofficial (*fahri*) imam - given the size of the village the Directorate of Religious Affairs does not appoint an imam, so

⁴⁰ Bunu İslam gibi sunarsak, yani 3. 5 .7. asırda evlilik telakkileri farklıydı, evlilik tanımları farklıydı, ailenin bireylerin birbirlerinden bekledikleri farklıydı, eğitim öğretim farklıydı yani çok şey vardı, eğitim anlayışları farklıydı. Yani bunlarla falan biz bunlarla dini çok örtüştürür, iç içe geçirirsek bu sefer dogmatizm başlar.

⁴¹ Bu alimler bu ayetten (şahitlik ayetini kastediyor) öyle kadın aleyhde şeyler çıkarmışlardır ki, bu ayet öyle şişede durduğu gibi duran bir ayet değil yani (No :238).

⁴² Yakında bu ülkede gey imamın caiz olup olmadığı bile tartışılacak (No.232, Yazar ve yönetmen, yaş 38, erkek, İstanbul).

the villagers hired someone who was trained as an imam in the Nakshibandi *tarika* effective in the region; the elected headman of the village; the headmen's assistant who oversees day to day tasks; a landowner (*aga*); and a librarian who worked in Bismil, but who visited the village frequently.

After a two and half hours talk about economy, politics and the role religion in these spheres I steered the conversation towards the issue of gender. So I asked why there were no women among us. The landlord answered first: "They don't attend such meetings," implying that it is not the way the things are done around here. He was surprised by my question he looked as if to say "Isn't it obvious?" thus exhibiting an attitude whose working logic is communitarian reasoning, as I discussed in the chapter 4. I insisted on hearing what the others had to say, so I said: "No, seriously, why they don't attend?" Imam said: "If there was a woman among us, it would distract my concentration, I wouldn't be able to concentrate on what I am saying; it would be sinful not just for me but also for entire *cemaat*." This answer contains calculation of religious cost and benefits best fits with what I have called utilitarian religious reasoning. The landowner interrupted the imam and said: "This is a talk among men. We reveal secrets about ourselves. We talk about the money I lend or borrow from my brother or from my close friends. Or we sometimes go to western Turkey for vacation. If my wife was to know all these I believe it would ruin peace in my family" The imam at this point began citing a *hadith*, as an evidence as why women and men need to be kept apart (slowly shifting towards principled reasoning by bringing in an "authoritative" interpretation of Islam). His recitation was met with reverence. While we were discussing the hadiths, the librarian somewhat unexpectedly said: "Actually I would like to have my wife here, but if I invite her people in the village would scorn me. This village is not the place to do such things. For a long time now, I have been thinking about migrating to the Netherlands. In the worst case I will end up in Istanbul." Then he proceeded to give a religious explanation as to why women should be present. He said: "We can find examples that go against what we have just been saying so far in our religion." He went to his room and brought back Muhammed Asad's *The Message of the Koran*. He started to read a section where it was explained why women and men should be together. We ended up with very lively discussion on the gender issue. This was quite an unusual experience for me. The librarian showed courage in going against the established agreement on the presence of women in public. Moreover he offered an alternative reading of the

Koran in the presence of others. His interpretation is an example of deconstructivist reasoning on the issue of gender.

Issues related to gender constitute a major challenge and are the source of dramatic tension for Muslims in Turkey today. There are, however, religious circles that discuss this issue. The deconstructivist reasoning pattern emerges during discussions but it is the result of the tensions that individuals experience in their everyday lives. The topic that produces tension in the sphere of gender relations can vary. It can be the decision to send a veiled daughter to university, or the decision on whether a veil should be worn at all, the acceptability of sexual relation before marriage, or simply having a different sexual orientation. In such situations deconstructivist reasoning recognizes the inability of existing religious interpretations to overcome the challenges and complexities of life.

7.6. Economy

Deconstructivists do not believe that Islam has prescribed solutions to offer on how to overcome the conundrums of modern capitalist system. They also do not think that it is possible to formulate an Islamic economic model.

In 60's and 70's, mostly with the effect of the southern winds, it was claimed that Islam was an economic model. It was introduced as a third model after Capitalism and Socialism. Alright, what does Islam say about ownership? Advises respect to ownership. But an economic model? You can't create an economic model of Islam's commands and prohibitions. If you really push it you will have to write most of it yourself. And what you'll write will not be Islam, it will be what you understand from Islam (No.239, journalist, 44 years old, male, İstanbul).⁴³

The rejection of an Islamic economic model should be read against the background of the claims thus such a model indeed is possible. As we saw in the previous chapter principled reasoners argued that this was the case. For some deconstructivists economic principles can be deduced from stories of the past but these stories should

⁴³ .60-70 li yıllarda bu daha çok güneyden gelen rüzgarların etkisiyle İslam'ın bir ekonomik modeli olduğu iddia edildi. Kapitalizm, sosyalizm ve İslam diye 3. bir model olarak üretildi. Peki, mülkiyet konusunda İslam ne diyor? Mülkiyete saygıyı öneriyor. Ama ekonomik model, İslam'ın emir ve yasaklarından ekonomik bir model çıkmaz. Çok zorlarsınız ve çoğunun kendiniz yazmak zorunda kalırsınız. Kendi yazdıklarınız şey İslam değil, senin İslam'dan anladıklarındır (No. 239 gazeteci, yaş 44, erkek, İstanbul).

not be taken literally. They need to be understood in the context of their time and the lessons learned should have meaning for our times.

- Now the other day one of my friends, who is a serious tradesman, says “we buy the goods from Japan without even seeing it and sell it to another country. I’ve heard that that is illicit.” I asked why, and he said in one of the earliest years of Islam, an ulema / one of the pundits had said that if the goods don’t enter your shop you may not do trade. I said to him, you are a sensible person, you should consider the reason of this. Why did the ulema say that, at that period? And I know that period well, what was the product of the period? Agricultural product. And you can’t produce it at your sweet will, can you? The earth, the nature has a system. Depending on his temperament, some guy used to buy all of next year’s dates from this year. Let’s say that year dates cost 5 lira, and he bought next year’s dates for 4 lira. And next year the price went up to 20 lira, so the guy made huge amount of money. The producers became miserable. So why did the ulema say that, he said it to prevent the speculations. That is his real reason and he has a good way to make it accepted by the market, he has a good solution. He says: “the goods shall enter the shop!” Because some people close the market with speculation and then he defines the price he wishes.

-So they set that directly?

-They bring in a verdict directly and they say “it shall enter the shop”. It is exceptionally wise; since it is not possible to bring next year’s dates to your shop from this year, you will have to define the price next year. He has solved the system very well. But for that moment. I said to my friend, do you speculate the prices with the machinery you buy from Japan? No, you just buy it and sell it. Could you ever physically bring it to your shop here and then load it back to sell? He said “no, it is not possible”. So what? I mean, we should not idolize those verdicts (No.227, Businessman, 51 year old, Istanbul).⁴⁴

⁴⁴ - Şimdi geçen gün arkadaşım bir tanesi, ciddi bir tacir birisi, söylüyor. Ya diyor, biz diyor hiç malı görmeden Japonya’dan alıp işte bilmem nereye satıyoruz diyor. Bu diyor caiz değilmiş diyor. Niye dedim işte bilmem ne fi tarihinde İslam’ın ilk yıllarında işte ulemanın bir tanesi demiş ki mal dükkâna girmeden ticaret yapamazsın. Ya dedim şimdi sen bak akli başında bir adamsın bunun illetine bakman lazım. Ulema bunu niye böyle söylemiş o devirde. Çünkü o devirde bildiğim de bir konu, çünkü o devirde ürün neydi tarım. Tarım ürünü de sizin keyfinize göre üretilmez değil mi. Dünyanın, doğanın bir sistemi var. Yaratılış şeyine göre, adam o zaman bu seneden önümüzdeki senenin hurmasını kapatıyordu. Bu sene 5 lira hurma 4 liradan önümüzdeki senenin hurmasını alıyordu. Önümüzdeki sene de hurma çıkıyordu 20 liraya adam bal kaymak para kazanıyordu. Üretici perişan oluyordu. Ne için demiş bunu adam bak spekülasyonu önlemek için söylemiş. Asıl maksadı o ve bunu piyasaya kabul ettirmenin yöntemi de ne güzel çok da güzel şey çözmüş. Mal dükkâna girecek kardeşim demiş. Spekülasyonla pazarı kapatıyor ondan sonra istediği fiyattan şeyi belirliyor.

-Doğrudan bunu belirlemiş?

-Doğrudan hüküm veriyor dükkâna girmesi lazım diyor. Son derecede mantıklı çünkü önümüzdeki senenin hurmasını bu seneden dükkâna getirmen mümkün olmadığı için önümüzdeki sene fiyatı belirleyeceksin. Sistemi güzel çözmüş. Ama o an için. Şimdi sen dedim ya dedim Japonya’dan aldığın makineyle spekülasyon mu yapıyorsun? Yok, alıyorsun satıyorsun. Senin peki o makineyi getirip burada dükkâna indirmek, ondan sonra tekrar yükleterek satabilir misin o malı? “Yok satamam, orada

In this example we are told of the tension that moral religious order creates for economic practices. My interlocutor listens carefully to the story his friend has to tell, and then he takes apart all the elements in the story and reconstructs it in a new way, which helps to ease the anxiety his friend is feeling. My interlocutor's objection to a literalist interpretation of the story and his re-interpretation of it shows how deconstructivist reasoning works in the economic sphere. He is historicizing and contextualizing the doctrinal argument, while acknowledging the wisdom (*hikmet*) behind it. Accepting that the doctrinal argument has still something to teach us today expresses the good will with which a deconstructivist receives a piece of information with which he does not agree. This act creates the common ground for the conversation to continue, rather than turn into a lecture of what is right, as it would have been the case if my interlocutor had been a principled reasoner.

One of the arguments repeated several times during the in-depth interviews was that the real life is too contingent and unpredictable, so we cannot find answers to the challenges it poses from literalist readings of religious sources.

There are people who say that the Koran explains even how to make a contract. It is believed that every detail concerning the economical life is prescribed. Our life changes so much that, it is not possible to make a hundred percent accurate decision on a particular subject. I mean, I am also talking in terms of Islamic principles. It may be possible about prayer or fasting, but about the details of science, of economy, it is not possible for religion to tell us everything (No.214, Businessman, 49 year old, male, Trabzon).⁴⁵

The deconstructivist reasoners are not censorious of banking interest only because it is considered forbidden (*haram*) in the Islamic tradition. Taking an empathic position they refer to the unfortunate circumstances in which people who have to pay back their loans find themselves. This is the case when the banking interest (*faiz*) is identified as usury.

No matter which system or religion it is, the interest (*faiz*) makes one miserable. Someone needs and withdraws some cash, but after that in order to pay it back, he goes

kalır" dedi. Ee daha ne? Yani bakın hükümleri böyle putlaştırmamak lazım (No. 227 fabrika sahibi iş adamı, yaş 51, İstanbul).

⁴⁵ Kur'anda sözleşmenin bile nasıl yapılacağını anlatıldığını söyleyen kişiler var. Ekonomik hayata ilişkin her türlü ayrıntının belirtildiği düşünülüyor. Günümüz o kadar değişiyor ki, o konu hakkında yüzde yüz isabetli karar verebilmek mümkünat dahilinde değil şu anda. Yani İslami prensipler anlamında da konuşuyorum. İbadetler konusunda, oruç namaz hakkında olabilir belki ama Ekonomi biliminin detayları hakkında dinin herşeyi söylemesi mümkün değil artık (No.214, İş adamı, yaş 49, erkek, Trabzon).

through such an ordeal that he becomes miserable. The marriage gets damaged, divorces, quarrels, violence, it has lots of negative effects. Because of this, I believe that the system of interest can exist, but it is better if Muslims or people with faith would never get involved in the system of interest (No. 92, Lawyer, 35 year old male, Diyarbakır).⁴⁶

Some of my deconstructivists interlocutors, however, are critical of the capitalist economic system as a whole. They argue that an alternative system is and should be possible.

In one case, a participant told me of the initiative he began in his own company and which he proudly acknowledges as inspired by his interpretation of Islam. He explained about his alternative version of banking interest which consists in a charity pool at the factory.

-I think we can solve this matter in the scale of our own company. For instance we started a practice here, it aims to establish a sense of belonging. In order to save our workers from the trouble of interest, we have something here which we call “pool of goodwill”.

-Pool of goodwill?

-Pool of goodwill, 1 % of each worker’s wage.

-So you form a common purse (chest)?

-Yes but 1% is taken from the wages and let’s say 1000 lira is raised, the employer adds 1000 lira too. And he has a committee of management which also involves the workers. And whoever has a need, he can take it without any interest. The person with the need takes that money and pays back in installments but he also continues to give 1% of his wage. Instead of borrowing from the bank with an interest rate, this is what we are trying to do here (No.227, Businessman, 51 year old, İstanbul).⁴⁷

The deconstructivists who are critical of capitalism and banks in general radically rejected the idea of banks and banking interests. They argue for a total transformation

⁴⁶ Hangi sistem olursa olsun birisi birisine farklı din faiz sonuçta aldığınız insanı perişan ediyor oradan adam gidip bir nakit çekiyor ama o nakitten sonra onu ödemek için o kadar bir perişan oluyor ki yani anasını ağlatıyor işte evlilik boşanma tartışmalar ayrı şiddet bir çok negatif etki unsuru var ben bu yönleriyle faiz sistemi olabileceğini ama Müslüman yada inançlı insanların faiz sistemine bulaşmamalarını ve daha doğru olacağını düşünüyorum (No.92, Avukat, yaş 35, erkek, Diyarbakır).

⁴⁷ -Yani bunu işletme bazında çözebiliriz yani burada mesela nasıl bir uygulama başlattık şey için söylüyorum bir aidiyet oluşturmak için. Ve işçilerin işte demin söylediğiniz faiz noktasında şeyden kurtulmaları için mesela burada bir şeyimiz var ona iyilik havuzu diyoruz.

-İyilik havuzu?

-İyilik havuzu her işçinin maaşından %1.

-Sandık oluşturuyorsunuz?

-Sandık ama şey % 1 oraya kesiliyor diyelim ki kaç lira toplandı 1000 lira 1000 lira da işveren koyuyor. Ve onun bir yönetim heyeti var işçilerinde içinde olduğu. Ve kimin ne ihtiyacı varsa tamamen faizsiz. Onu ihtiyacı olan oradan alıyor, işte taksitlerle ödüyor. O arada da maaşından da öbür % 1 ler kesilmeye devam ediyor. Bankadan faiz alacağına burada biz böyle birşey yapmaya çalışıyoruz (No. 227 fabrika sahibi iş adamı, yaş 51, İstanbul).

of the economic system. The position of anti-capitalist Muslims, whom I mentioned in the discussion of politics, is a case in point. They are highly critical of all sorts of interests and other banking operations from a leftist perspective and have developed their own alternative interpretation of Islam for a classless society.

-The Koran didn't introduce things that were totally unknown to the people of the time. The Koran doesn't include things that people don't know. So people don't know anything and they learn from The Koran - there is no such thing. They are the things that people already know. Justice, righteousness, honesty, sharing, never going to bed satiated when one's neighbor is hungry, these are things that the whole humanity has been after... Now I don't position history in the Koran, I position the Koran in history. There is a historical flow, and in this flow there is a 5000 year old conflict of the oppressor and the oppressed. There are those who live 'upstairs and downstairs', those who transform their differences into hegemony, those who cannot live their freedom, and those who restrain them. There are those who take hold of the information, power and wealth and use them as means of classification, stratification, hierarchy and hegemony, and those who cannot use them. According to the Koran, there are two lines throughout history, one is called oneness and the other polytheism. It says monism, wholism and fragmentation, division of the society, creating classification; it says '*hak*' (truth), which is the reality, it says superstition, which is fiction that doesn't suit the reality. It calls the oppressed "*müstahkem*" and those who take over power '*mistakbil*'.

-That is practically Marx. That sounds like Marx a bit.

-I actually find Marx quite close to myself. I regard him in this way: Muhammet İkbal calls him the prophet without Gabriel. Marx spoke the words which would be spoken if there was a prophet on our age. However Marxism doesn't involve metaphysics, that's the different between us. Thus I am not a Marxist. (No.223, writer, Islamic intellectual, 50 year old male, Istanbul).⁴⁸

⁴⁸ -Kur'anı kerim insanların o ana kadar hiç bilmediği şeyleri getirmemiştir. Yani Kur'anı Kerim'de insanların bilmediği şeyler yok. Yeni insanlar hiç birşey bilmiyor da Kur'an'dan öğreniyor. Böyle birşey yok. İnsanların bildiği şeylerdir. Adalet, doğruluk dürüstlük, kardeşlik, paylaşma, bölüşme, komşusu açken tok yatmama bunlar hep bütün insanlığın peşinde koştuğu şeylerdir.... Şimdi ben Kur'anı tarihi Kur'anın içine koymuyorum, Kur'anı tarihin içine koyuyorum. Tarihi bir akış var, bu tarihi akışın içerisinde bir 5000 yıldır süren bir ezen ezilen çelişkisi var. Yukarıdakiler ve alttakiler var, farklılıkların hegemonyaya dönüştürenler, özgürlüklerini yaşayamayanlar, onları kısıtlayanlar. Bilgiyi, iktidarı ve serveti ele geçirip bunu bir sınıflaşma, tabakalaşma, hiyerarşi ve hegemonya aracı olarak kullananlar ve bunu kullanamayanlar söz konusu. iki çizgi var tarih boyunca Kur'ana göre birine tevhid der, ötekine şirk der. Bircilik, bütüncülük ve toplumu parçalama bölme, sınıflaşma yaratma, hak der, yani gerçek, batıl der gerçeğe uymayan kurgu. Müstahkem der aşağıda, ezilen, mistakbil der iktidarı yüklenenler.

-Resmen Marx, biraz Marx oldu bu sanki..

- Ben zaten Marx'ı kendime yakın buluyorum yani. Marx'ı ben şöyle görüyorum, Muhammet İkbal Cebrailsiz peygamber diyor. Günümüzde bir peygamber gelseydi, söylenecek sözleri Marx söylemiştir. Ama Marxisinin metafiziği yoktur, aramızdaki fark burda, Marxist değilim yani (No. 223, yazar, İslami entelektüel, yaş 50, erkek, İstanbul).

8. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

This thesis explores the patterns of religious reasoning and their political and social implications in Turkey. I argue that religious reasoning is the product of the attempt to relieve the tensions experienced by Muslim believers in their search for congruency between the teaching of Islam and the demands of life in modern society. Religious reasoning reflects the efforts of the believers to create meaning and direction in their private and public life. This thesis is an endeavor to contemplate on the question of how one's commitment to certain knowledge is shaped and negotiated in everyday life situations. The purpose is to gain a more sound descriptive knowledge of individual level religiosity, and its relation to one's willingness to uphold pluralism.

Even though religion is articulated and manifested mostly in a dichotomous form in everyday life experience of the Turkish society, whereby one either is religious or is secular, we cannot stop at portraying these binaries as they are manifested. In order to understand them we should search for the tensions that create the predefined dichotomies and the factors which trigger them. The aim of this thesis is to uncover how different individuals resolve their tensions they experience through religious reasoning. Reasoning is important because it is the process through which intentions and beliefs are modified.⁴⁹

8.1. The four modes of religious reasoning

Religious reasoning appears in four modes. These are the communitarian, the utilitarian, the principled and the deconstructivists modes of religious reasoning.

Communitarian religious reasoning is exhibited performatively. It is inscribed in the reiterated bodily practices of the individuals. These are widely shared and known performances that are easily recognized by the members of the community. Religious message is encapsulated within gestures, performances and curt statements. Communitarian reasoning emphasizes norm compliance and rule following. We become aware that someone is adopting the communitarian religious reasoning when he or she address someone and requires them to conform to the demands of religious

⁴⁹ Mele, "Irrationality," 5.

norm in the face of actual life situations. Communitarian reasoning divides individuals into in-groupers and out-groupers. The non-compliers belong to the latter group. Vernacular tradition is expressed through communitarian reasoning. The individuals who adopt it are incapable of articulating their cognitive engagement with tradition.

Utilitarian religious reasoning is operating when the reasoner engages with the teachings of Islam through incentives and threats. The utilitarian reasoner weighs his or her action in this world through the consequences they will have for afterlife and behave accordingly. Utilitarian religious reasoning carries with it the burden of being unacceptable at times, because it is believed that God and religion should be embraced open-heartedly and not because of fine calculations. Therefore utilitarian religious reason often appears as an attributed of other people.

Principled religious reasoning emerges when reasoners adhere solely to one truth. They argue for the subordination of values to a single system, which is their reading of Islamic teachings. Principled religious reasoners are eloquent and argumentational but very often the logic of their arguments is tautological. Principled reasoners refuse to recognize the legitimacy of other claims therefore making dissent unacceptable.

Deconstructivist religious reasoning materializes when Muslim believers express their skepticism towards the power of reason to formulate ultimate answers. The individuals who adopt deconstructive reasoning believe in multiplicity of different interpretations and judgments of truth in Islam. They argue that truth-claims have to be understood in their own historical and social context. Deconstructivist reasoners also sustain that religious truths should not be apply literally to other spheres of human existence. Believers who employ deconstructivist reasoning show in good faith in dialogue with others and can enter an empathic relation with person to whom they are talking.

8.2. The shifts between modes of reasoning within the individual

Political theory scholars study religious reasoning and its effect on pluralism, public sphere, and civil society tend to treat religion as if it is a property of monoglot religious citizens (Habermas). In this thesis I show that religious reasoning appears in several patterns and each of these patterns has significant social and political implications. To illustrate, a religious argument can appear as part of principled reasoning, but it may also be formulated in the form of utilitarian calculations; it may

appear as embedded in rituals and performances and the same thing also has potential to inspire one's conscience through the words of wisdom as we see in the case of deconstructive reasoning. The straw man arguments against religious reasoners and their inability to accommodate other worldviews are drawn mainly from principled reasoning. This study shows that to limit religious reasoning to principled reasoning is a reductionism. It is, however, essential to keep in mind that religious reasoning modes are found within the same individual.

The individuals fluctuate between different modes of reasoning depending on the issue and the context in which they are required to think or respond. Consequently, the religious reasoning mode has to do with the "constantly moving context that constitutes our reality and the place from which these values are interpreted and constructed."⁵⁰ We have to think of religious reasoning patterns as relational rather than fixed. This means that we cannot identify a mode with a particular individual but need to think of each mode as the product of its own context. Religious thinking modes resemble automobile gears; individuals maneuver in them as they suppose it is needed. Let me clarify this point with an example: during group conversation over tea in Erzurum, a middle-aged man reproachfully lamented the fact that we nearing Doomsday (*ahir zaman*) because society is in decadence and people do not respect our values anymore. Some even dare to eat during Ramadan and you can see restaurants that are open at daytime in this holy month." A younger man intervened and said that there are people who complain that they cannot find an open place to eat. For a reason or other they cannot fast. In some cases it because they are sick, others are travelers and others still are tourists in the city but are not Muslim. This speech was eloquent and appealing enough to the group that it induced a spontaneous deliberation among all the people present. The relax environment and mutual exchange of ideas in the context of warm friendly conversation over a tea gave rise to the older man change his mind and later said: "Oh, I had not thought of it this way. You are right."

It should also be noted that religious reasoning cuts across other forms of religious identities and belongings, such as membership to congregation or *tarikats*. Approaching religion from the perspective of the individual and their ways of thinking renders the distinction between orthodox and heterodox Islam redundant. I have spoken with individuals from communities that self-identify as heterodox as well as

⁵⁰ Susan Geiger, "What's So Feminist about Women's Oral History?," *Feminist perspectives on social research* (2004): 399-410, 171

from those communities that consider themselves orthodox. I talked to Alevis and to Sunnis. I have chatted with people employed in theology education departments of different universities and also individuals who have *medrese* education in Eastern Turkey and belong to Sufi *tarikats*. Modes of religious reasoning cut through congregational affiliation, level of education, geographical location and cultural background. Religious reasoning is not a matter of teaching or group interpretation of a teaching but rather of an individual's own appreciation or rejection of the teaching. It all comes down to how the individual will deal with religious knowledge to which he or she is exposed. It can be argued that this is the case because Islam does not have one formal higher authority that issues finding *fatwas*. But I believe that it has more to do with the fact that Islamic tradition relies on teaching through story-telling and metaphors. Anyone may listen to the story, but each person will take away what they can and not necessarily the same message. This attitude makes room for individuals to operate according to their "preparedness." The same sermon of a *hodja* will mean different things to individuals who operate in communitarian, utilitarian, principled and deconstructive religious reasoning. The incoming information will be "used" in tension resolution as each person sees fit.

8.3. Who employs these reasoning modes?

Is deconstructive reasoning or principled reasoning a characteristic of only some individuals? The current study and the fourfold classification of religious reasoning patterns I have devised do not classify individuals. The question is answerable, but I believe it would be futile attempt to reach at an answer because religious reasoning takes place in a dynamic process that we need to think in terms of positionality. To give an example: deconstructive reasoning necessitates abstract thinking and the ability to understand, to engage in self-reflective thinking, and to appreciate the multiplicity of truths. Similarly, principled reasoning requires learning detailed accounts of Islamic interpretations and some level of abstract thinking so that individuals to embark upon long debates on Islam. At the first sight one might think that the prerequisite for both these modes of religious reasoning is a high level of education. And indeed during the fieldwork I found that most of the individuals who used predominantly either deconstructive reasoning or principled reasoning have higher education. But this is not the rule. I also came across individuals without formal education who operate in deconstructive reasoning. A *mele* form Diyarbakır is

a case in point. Furthermore as individuals shift between different reasoning modes, so it is not uncommon to talk to highly educated individuals adopt principled religious reasoning on a political issue but will use communitarian reasoning while discussing “sensitive issues” such as gender. This switch in reasoning modes depending on the topic under discussion is another finding of this study.

Rather than asking “who,” we need to focus on moments, positions and contexts. Which moments are conducive to principled reasoning? What are the characteristics of contexts that push individuals to uphold an intolerant attitude towards women? For instance, renown religious figures that I interviewed frequently resorted to deconstructive reasoning in the context of my in-depth interview but at times in their public speeches, in the presence of a *cemaat* or when they issue *fatwas* they use principled reasoning and contradict what they have said during the interview. I think it is crucial to think of religious reasoning in terms of positionality. Individuals who are closer to state institutions, those who have a lot at stake due his or her opinions, those who are being asked for binding decisions regarding religion, those who make authoritative speeches on behalf of religion, who can issue *fatwas* can lose the genuineness embedded in a dialogue (*muhabbet*) setting. These positionalities request concomitant behaviors and discourses suitable to demands of the situation, that is, individuals adapt to demands of the context and play the necessary roles. These are only my preliminary observations on context and positionality, but they support my thesis that religious reasoning consists of a dynamic process.

Human beings when they are reasoning in religious terms do not solely resort to convictions or simply instrumentalize their belief. And they also do not strictly obey principles. They are doing something more complex in the way they interact with others. My guiding criterion has been to listen as closely as possible to the justifications that my interlocutors give rather than steer them in a certain direction. My priority is to catch the ruptures, twists, and shifts in the modes of rationality that someone adopts, and not to prove that one type of rationality is the dominant one, as is often the case in the literature. The argument that “reason is historically situated and premised ultimately in everyday processes of communication and understanding”⁵¹ provides opportunities to grasp the implications of reasoning for the plurality of the human condition.

⁵¹ Vincent, *The nature of*, 283.

Religious reasoning has political and social implications. In turn, the political and social settings also constitute the backdrop against which reasoning takes place. Despite the contention of liberal political views that comprehensive doctrines and demands of pluralism in modern political and social life do not fair along, it seems that many Muslims in Turkey, manage to reconcile their comprehensive doctrines with the demands of pluralism in their day-to-day practices. In the social sphere we witness the cohabitation of plural lifestyles and the redefinition of gender roles and family relations; in the economic sphere, believers are guided by the norms established by the market economy; and in the political sphere, believers operate successfully both at the macro-level of secularism and constitutional liberal democracy and the micro-level of everyday politics. So under what conditions does each form of reasoning accommodate the demands of pluralism?

8.4. A brief note on pluralism

In the first chapter of this thesis, while discussing the debate surrounding the compatibility of Islam and democracy I stated that I refrain from dealing directly with the concept of democracy because the term is too broad. Instead I focus on the implications of religious reasoning modes for pluralism. Nonetheless, the overall aim of this thesis is to gain understanding on the possibilities of having a flourishing democracy in societies that are predominantly Muslim. My analysis of different styles of religious reasoning has two implications for the study of democracy.

Firstly, most of the current studies that deal with the relationship between religiosity and democracy approach the issue through surveys that analyze data by aggregating individuals. However, in-depth understanding of the democratization process in Muslim societies necessitates the contribution of rigorous, exploratory qualitative studies. Understanding the religious motivations of single individuals to either accept or reject the demands of modern society constitutes a key challenge for democratization efforts in Muslim majority societies.

My second contribution has to do with the deliberative aspect of liberal democracy. In this dissertation I have argued that the very existence of different modes of religious reasoning within and across Muslim individuals necessitates the re-examination of the discussion concerning the role of religion in public sphere and its repercussions for democratic citizenship. The different modes of religious reasoning bring new light into the theoretical debate about the place of religion in public sphere

as well as the role of public reason as discussed by Habermas⁵² and Rawls. At the core of the debate was the argument that democratic legitimacy is assured only to the extent that regime extends public deliberations to all its citizenry in an inclusive and unconstrained way in liberal democracies. "According to this criterion of democratic legitimacy, citizens owe one another justifications based on reasons that everyone can reasonably accept for coercive policies with which they all must comply. Only in this way can citizens see themselves not just as subject to the law but as authors of the law, as the democratic ideal requires."⁵³ As it is discussed, the problem arises when someone brings arguments that are not accessible to all citizenry. To illustrate, if a person accepts or rejects a policy due to his belief in God, the arguments become inaccessible to secular citizens as they may not share the same basic assumptions regarding religion. Philosophers in this debate have treated religiously grounded beliefs which make their way to the public sphere only via comprehensive doctrines, i.e. "reasons given solely by comprehensive doctrines, reasons that are not accessible by everyone due to their 'religious' content."⁵⁴ However, this is the distinguishing feature of monoglot citizens. It is neither necessarily the characteristic of a religious group nor that of a religious person. Scholars have generalized monoglot citizen's inability to formulate arguments acceptable to people who think different from him or her. By now monoglot citizen has become identified with religious persons and religious group. Yet, as I have demonstrated in this study, 'monoglot' religious citizens resort to more than one form of religious reasoning in their daily encounters. For instance one may resort to principled reasoning in the issue of gender, but he or she may shift to utilitarian reasoning in the issue of economy. Hence, this flexibility within individuals necessitates rethinking our approach to religion in our understanding of democratization in a given society.

Religion comes to life with the intermediation of actual persons and as a result it does not appear through two dimensional religious doctrines and the lives of zealots.

As mentioned at the very beginning, in this study I do not operate with a ready-made definition of pluralism. There are many such definitions in the literature. In the

⁵² Jürgen Habermas, "Religion in the public sphere." *European journal of philosophy* 14 (2006): 1-25.

⁵³ Cristina Lafont, "Religion and the public sphere What are the deliberative obligations of democratic citizenship?." *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 35 (2009): 127-150, 128.

⁵⁴ John Rawls, *Political liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). 217.

context of Turkey beginning with a definition means that by the end of my study I will have a list of items of how Turkey does not fit any existing definition of pluralism, rather than an idea of what is there in Turkey.

From the data upon which this study is based I have identified two components that are associated with pluralism also in the literature. The first is that pluralism goes hand in hand with the acknowledgement that there are multiple worlds, realities and truths. The claim is that knowledge is not fixed, but open to continuous critical change. Hence, this component entails accepting the plurality of truth-claims. The second component has to do with values. Pluralism implies the recognition of diverse social practices and the accommodation of competing ways of life. It goes beyond accepting it and affirms this component as a requirement for human flourishing.

Most importantly, one of the findings of this study is that pluralism is not a permanent characteristic of society or individuals, whereby some have it and some do not. My data shows that pluralism is a potentiality that every individual possess. It either emerges or retreats in a process of interaction with others within a context. This dynamism and fluctuation is closely linked to the shifts in modes of religious reasoning I have described above. Therefore we need to look at each of the four religious reasoning modes in terms of whether they contribute to the emergence or the retreat of the pluralist potential.

8.5. Reasoning modes and pluralism

Communitarian religious reasoning becomes evident through performatively reiterated acts and short speeches. They come from existing repertoires in a given society. Therefore this response to tension is easy to access and to employ. However, it inhibits the formation for necessary deliberative environment for pluralism because it lays emphasis on norm and rule compliance over critical thinking. This mode of reasoning does not encourage active engagement with knowledge, but it shows great respect for those who can. While it is censorious of the in-group individuals who transgress the vernacular convention, it can be surprisingly tolerant towards out-groupers, i.e., tourists. This tolerance however does not extend to accepting them, but to simply let them live their way without attempting to impose the community rules on them. In the economic sphere it appears again through cliché expressions so the individuals who adopt this mode in the economic sphere are simply happy to follow the lead of others rather than be innovative. In terms of the relations between genders,

this mode of reasoning reflects the patriarchal values of the society, so individuals adopt in the strongest traditionalist attitude possible with regard to women and their role in society. In the political sphere, communitarian religious reasoning is conservative but not authoritarian. It is the reasoning that functions best in a crowd, therefore even though it is tolerant of out-groupers it can be easily aroused and radicalized by inflammatory speeches. Despite abundance of contrary examples communitarian reasoning is not essentially anti-pluralist or inherently authoritarian. During its actual practice in everyday life each time a behavior is enacted, performer's actual repetition is unique and the performance is original, there is no doubt about it. But with respect to pluralism the problem arise from the hegemonic forms of rituals and their ethical implication in a given society. If the hegemonic forms of sociability and existing hegemonic imaginaires are rich in authoritarian forms, performer's repertoire becomes bounded by the existing hegemonic forms. In some section of Turkish society there are highly anti-pluralist, dominant interpretations and ways of doing things whose repetition becomes problematic. But in sections of society where "liberty" is assumed to be the hegemonic value and it colors communitarian reasoning with the liberal spirit, can we assume that pluralism will prevail? This is not necessarily so. I have lived for the past two years in Moda, Kadikoy. This is a neighborhood that takes pride in its open-mindedness and Western appearance. Bars are open till very late and women can safely walk in the streets at all hours. Yet I am not sure how open-minded the current inhabitants of this neighborhood would be if women wearing the black veil and men wearing baggy trousers (*şalvar*) were to be seen frequently in these streets. Chats with friends and neighbors have led me to believe that these out-groupers would not be very welcome. The "pluralist" communitarian reasoning dominant here is tolerant only of the diversity within its own ranks.

Utilitarian religious reasoning finds comfort in numbers in its attempt to alleviate tension. Its relation to knowledge is guided by the conviction that the human mind can never understand the workings of God; therefore it should not even begin to do so. There is purpose (*hikmet*) in everything that is; and God has provided guidance. The duty of the believer is to do as commanded by religious teachings and leaders of faith and all will be well in the end. In order to know that he or she is on the right path, the utilitarian reasoner calculates the good deeds (*sevap*) performed. This mode of reasoning shares with the communitarian the simplicity with which it approaches

knowledge. Also like communitarian religious reasoning, it invites other people to behave in the same way as the reasoner is behaving. But while the communitarian will justify this imposition on others in terms of the shared values of the community, the utilitarian will emphasize the rewards in the afterlife. This calculative attitude is applied to the self, but at times it is also offered as advice to other people. While imposing utilitarian advice on others does not foster pluralist tendencies, it does not pose a serious threat either. However, when the *imams* adopt this reasoning in their speeches while addressing the *cemaat*, as is often the case, the results are problematic. Talking about punishment in the afterlife, the imams do not only discuss the deeds but also the doers and their lifestyles. This is done through speeches that put an emphasis on “the other” in order to legitimize making people feel fear in order to invite them to the “right way.” In terms of politics at the institutional level, the utilitarian religious reasoner claims that Muslim believers make better politicians because they can differentiate well between *helal* and *haram*. Again, this stance is not conducive to pluralism, but it does not necessarily inhibit it either.

The utilitarian religious reasoner is often stigmatized as self-serving. This becomes more evident in the economic sphere, where the utilitarian reasoner searches for suitable *fatwas* to make his or her trade congruent to Islam. During the fieldwork, the participants talked about this attitude not as something they engage in, but as a feature of other people, whose sincerity in religious matters is doubtful. However, there are no formal censures for this behavior, therefore in the overall individuals can act with great flexibility in face of demands of modern economic life. This flexibility is not the case in the issue of gender. The utilitarian reasoners, like the communitarians, uphold the Islamic teachings that reinforce the patriarchal system of values. The justification is based on the benefits that the patriarchal arrangement has to offer for everyone. The line of argument is that women who stay home, as is ordered by religious teachings, make better mothers. This benefits the children, the family harmony and eventually society. The implication of this argument is that the role of the women in public is limited seriously. However, this is not only a position shared by men, because some of the women interviewees shared it as well. As the content of both incentives and threats become hegemonic interpretations, this religious reasoning does not bode well for gender pluralism.

Principled religious reasoning is characterized by strong adherence to a single truth. Differently from communitarian reasoning, individuals who operate in this

mode are keen on supporting their position with arguments. Frequently these individuals claim that their arguments are deduced from the Koran, thus justifying the complexity of the language and the higher moral ground that the person adopts when talking to others. The principled reasoner is also very sure of the internal consistency of his or her claims, to which he or she attributes universal validity. Therefore, for them it is inconceivable that others may not agree with their claims. Those who do not agree to the principled reasoner either do not have full knowledge or are not mature enough to appreciate the knowledge imparted to them. Their own relation with knowledge is formulated in terms of the true – false dichotomy. Being wrong is considered a serious failure, therefore in their attempt to be right principled reasoners produce tautological arguments.

In the political sphere, for principled reasoning the legitimate scope of politics is defined in the Shari'a, which has guiding principles for all spheres of life including family and the economy. In politics principled reasoning is authoritarian. It has no patience or tolerance for difference of opinions because differences make society weaker by diminishing civic unity. Politics is a tool for the administration of the society in the “right” way.

Individuals in the principled reasoning mode create “us and them” categories, as do communitarian reasoners. The gestures and brief remarks are similar in both modes. However the principled reasoner becomes articulate and produces argument when challenged; the communitarian reasoner responds by reproofing his or her addressee so that the latter will feel either embarrassed or ashamed. Conspiracy theories and “othering” discourses are part of the repertoire of principled reasoners; this is particularly the case in the conservative milieus where they tend to be hegemonic. This is a major problem of all three religious reasoning modes discussed so far, hence it obstructs the emergence of pluralism.

The principled reasoning mode stresses unity of thought and feeling rather than dissent or diversity. The individual who adopts it expects that the person to whom he or she is talking must be of the same opinion and share it as well. At the level of individual agency, this self-assuredness relies on vanity and a feeling of being in possession of the true knowledge of the world. In certain cases it is because the individual has absolute faith in the leader of his community. If we approach the issue at a more structural level, we can argue that the political climate in Turkey and obedience to authority, independently of whether it is religious or secular, facilitate

the authoritarian attitude and principled reasoning. Once “us and them” discourses are uttered they tend to dominate the rest of the interview. They colonize other ways of reasoning and other forms of agreements. In my fieldwork experience, the antidote to this attitude is dialogue (*sohbet*) that contains self disclosure.

In the economic sphere, principled religious reasoners argue for the need to go to primary sources and find the details of how economic relations should be managed according to Islamic principles. This is the case when individuals think that they live in an Islamic society, (*Dar-ül Islam*); but if the society where they live does not conform to Islamic principles (*Dar-ül Harp*), a principled reasoner would see it religiously legitimate to do whatever necessary in modern economy. From a doctrinal point of view they may think that until an Islamic state is formed the rules that exist will apply. There are also other principled reasoners that do not see Turkey as *Dar-ül Harp*, so a principled reasoner thinks that Islam has a concrete alternative to offer to the capitalist economic order. Many of my interlocutors take seriously the Islamic teachings on economy. During our conversations it became clear that the concepts of the forbidden and the permissible, sin and good deeds feature heavily in their economic decisions. Given the global economic climate these concepts are being constantly renegotiated. To illustrate, in June 2012 Hayrettin Karaman, a prominent theologian, issued a *fatwa* stating that investments in government bonds were not in accordance with Islamic teachings. The debate that followed and the different interpretations that were brought up to support each side showed also the variance that religious reasoning on economic issues can take. I also demonstrated that this reasoning can accept that there is more than one way to be a good Muslim when dealing with economy.

The pluralist attitude we see in economics ceases to exist when the issue is gender relations. Principled reasoners appeal to the “true” interpretation of Islamic sources, which define the “true nature” (*fitrat*) of men and women as well as their duties. Different from the communitarian and the utilitarian reasoners who will also refer to “true nature” and duties, principled reasoners are ready to produce eloquent arguments to support their claims. However, it is difficult to hear a different interpretation. The usual account is that men and women have the duty to marry, that women are more suitable to be at home and that men are breadwinners and should look after the family. Since the reference point of their argument is grounded in religious teachings to which the principled reasoners attribute universal validity, they

are even less likely than the communitarians or utilitarians to be tolerant of alternatives. The implications for gender pluralism are not promising.

Deconstructivist religious reasoning approaches the religious teachings through history, culture and contextuality. These reasoners acknowledge the reality of the God but argue that we can only have a limited knowledge of this reality and only a partial understanding of the religious teachings. One has to avoid certainty when thinking on important questions about life and religion. Different from utilitarian reasoners, the awareness of being limited does not stop deconstructivists from engaging actively with the text and religious canon. They use this awareness as a constant reminder that their interpretation of truth cannot be ultimate. This attitude fosters the pluralism of ideas. In this view, the Koran is a holy text but its words need to be made relevant for our times. As one of the participants said, we need to look for the ways the teachings are practiced rather than turn the written word into a fetish.⁵⁵ There is a great divergence in the way deconstructivists talk about the sacred text compared to the other modes of reasoning. While the other three modes would consider it a heresy to discuss the Koran as something historical, the deconstructivists see themselves as capable of interpreting it. The cases where not only the word but the material book itself is considered holy are quite common in Turkey. I personally once came across a box in a library upon which it was written “Attention! Beware of the Koran” (*Dikkat! Kur’an var*). The deconstructivists read sacred text to be “inspired.” A historicized approach to the teachings of Islam gives them the necessary flexibility in deducing a meaning for the modern social and political life. Principled reasoning approach divine knowledge in order to reach at a truth to be applied in the social and political sphere. They keep a sharp eye on what is orthodoxy and what may constitute heresy. Deconstructivists also believe that we should strive and aspire to reach the good guided by religion, but during this process of reasoning the truth or the good are not carved in stone.

⁵⁵ *Bu metnin arkasında bir yirmiiç yıl vardır. Ve bu 23 yıl çok çöşkulu, böyle devrimler tarihine geçecek büyük fedakarlıkların, ideolojik aşkların, idealist savaşların olduğu bir zaman dilimi. Bu Kur’an o 23 yıl içerisinde süzülerek çıkmış arda kalan metinlerlerdir bunlar. O sürecin ardından kalan metinlerdir bunlar. Aslolan bu metin değil, aslolan orada yaşanan. Orada ne olduğu, biz buradan yola çıkarak orada ne olduğunu anlayabilir miyiz? Aslolan hadise, praksis yani pratiğin kendisi yani aslolan bu. Şimdi bu metni kutsallaştırdığın zaman, fetişleştirdiğin zaman her yere çekebilirsin yani bunu. Sonuçta bir metin fetişizimi falan ortaya çıkar yani. Ben daha çok buradan yola çıkarak orada, onun ne yaptığına bakarım.* (Publisher, 50 year old male, Istanbul)

In the economic sphere the deconstructivists share with the utilitarian and principled reasoner the versatility of thought that tends towards making the demands of a competitive capitalist economy fit with the teachings of Islam. However unlike them, it can go one step further and question the current economic practices and their effect on human flourishing. It does so not in the name of righteousness based on literal reading of Islam, as principled reasoning does, but from a human dignity perspective interpreted from Islamic teachings. The deconstructivist economic critique focuses on fairer distribution and greater equality.

In the political sphere, individuals in the deconstructivist mode do not take rigid ideological perspectives. They see human plurality as a richness that is to be treasured rather than as nuisance that divides and weakens society. In this view, political stances can and should be open to change. Thus this mode of religious reasoning is the most open and encouraging of pluralism.

The gender issue in the deconstructivist mode is also very promising. The deconstructivists are critical of the patriarchal system of values and call for the reinterpretation of the Islamic canon to make more space for women in the public sphere. The only problem is that this mode of reasoning is not widespread on the gender issue. In other words, while there are many individuals who can easily adopt deconstructive reasoning when discussing economics, and to some degree even politics, these numbers are reduced dramatically when we talked about gender. As mentioned before, an eloquent and open-minded participant who thinks nothing of being critical of the reading of the Koran by well-known personalities will retreat to communitarian reasoning when asked to comment on gender relations.

8.6. A last note on pluralism

Pluralist attitudes appear in the play of two or more minds in a dialogue or a forum. In my field experience, every individual has the potential of realizing that there are multiple ways of knowing as long as the appropriate atmosphere is created. It also requires shuffling of the existing repertoire of ideas and courage to admit that one can be wrong. When this self-critical thinking occurs in my presence, the interviewee initially laughs a little awkwardly, and then as if coming to the conclusion that it can't be worse than this they feel brave enough to play with their own ideas without fear of being judged. It involves self-disclosure and requires mutual respect and

unconditional positive regard;⁵⁶ hence, the importance of a relaxed atmosphere and empathy on the part of the listener.⁵⁷ Such scenes are not rare in everyday life throughout Turkey. There is a name for such a meeting and it is *muhabbet*. There are great similarities between the experience of *muhabbet* and the one described by Gadamer when he talks about “fusion of horizons.”⁵⁸ Both involve the amalgamation of different views, a process that expands and alters the view of the individual.

This atmosphere is difficult to achieve when one or more of the interlocutors insist on employing the communitarian, utilitarian or principled reasoning modes. All these three modes lack the courage to admit to their “ignorance, doubts, and uncertainties”, in the words of Isaiah Berlin.⁵⁹ Principled reasoners treat truth as a certainty. Communitarian reasoning and utilitarian reasoning do not provide the necessary relaxed environment as these modes involve quick responses based on either community values or calculations. Moreover they can be derisive and disparaging of any other person in the group who tries to do that.

According to Margaret Canovan there are two political ways in which we deal with fundamental differences: “on the one hand, heroic but desperate attempts to unite diverse individuals in a common will; on the other, a less ambitious acceptance that plurality is inescapable, but that worldly institutions nevertheless can provide a way of holding people together while leaving them space to differ.”⁶⁰ The argument of this thesis is that reasoning as such can lead to both pluralism and monism. However, only certain modes of reasoning under certain settings are conducive to pluralism, therefore distinguishing between modes of reasoning as employed by individuals becomes essential.

⁵⁶ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961).

⁵⁷ During these moments I felt that I was in the same wave-length with the person whom I was talking. There is joy in chatting and I feel the ‘fusion’ with the other person. Time passes slowly; we do not become aware of its passage. Some of the in-depth interviews went on for hours. In one case it was 9 hours long. The language of *muhabbet* takes you to the world of the other person.

⁵⁸ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd revised ed., (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 306-307, 374-375.

⁵⁹ Isaiah Berlin, “Pluralism and Enlightenment” in *Leo Tolstoy*, ed. Harold Bloom, (Broomall, PA: Chelsea House Publishers, 2003), 49.

⁶⁰ Margaret Canovan, “Arendt, Rousseau, and the Human Plurality in Politics,” *The Journal of Politics*, 45 (1983): 286-302, 300.

Appendix 1. List of the Participants

No	Name	City	Elite	Residential Area	Sex	Age	Education	Occupation
1	Adana.01Pharmacist.female.55	Adana	X	City Center	F	55	University	Pharmacist
2	Adana.02.housewife.female.48	Adana	X	City Center	F	48	High School	Housewife
3	Adana.03.distributor.female.27	Adana	X	City Center	F	27	University	Distributor
4	Adana.04.male.23	Adana	X	City Center	M	23	University	Worker in air conditioning firm
5	Adana.05.shopkeeper.male.48	Adana	X	City Center	M	48	High School	Salesman
6	Adana.06.lawyer.female.31	Adana	X	City Center	F	31	University	Lawyer
7	Adana07Dentist.52	Adana	X	City Center	M	52	University	Dentist
8	Adana.08.janitor.male.65	Adana	X	City Center	M	65	Primary School	Janitor
9	Adana.09.farmer.willage.51	Adana	X	Rural Area	M	51	Primary School	Farmer
10	Adana.10.farmer.willage.29	Adana	X	Rural Area	M	29	Primary School	Farmer
11	Adana.11.gas.station.worker.male.34	Adana	X	Rural Area	M	34	Secondary School	Worker
12	Adana.12.assitant.to.director.60	Adana	X	Rural Area	M	60	Occupational High School	Retired Railroads Worker
13	Adana.13.textile.manager.male.38	Adana	X	City Center	M	38	University	Manager
14	Adana.14.cafeshop.staff.male.31	Adana	X	City Center	M	31	University	Cafeshop staff
15	Adana.15Bussiness.consultant.male.38	Adana	X	City Center	M	38	University	Bussiness consultant
16	Adana.16.printing.press.male.56	Adana	X	City Center	M	56	High School	Printing press and cafe owner
17	Adana.17.cleaner.male.34	Adana	X	City Center	M	34	High School	Cleaning firm manager
18	Adana.18.accountant.30	Adana	X	City Center	M	30	High School	Accountant in hardware firm

19	Adana.19.housewife.fe male64	Adana	X	City Center	F	64	High School	Housewife
20	Adana.20.agri.engineer. female25	Adana	X	City Center	F	25	University	Unemploye d/agricul. engineer
21	Adana.21.worker.male. 30	Adana	X	City Center	M	30	Faculty of Theology	Textile firm worker
22	Adana.22.realiestate.m ale.39	Adana	X	City Center	M	39	High School	Real estate bussiness
23	Adana.23.farmowner.fe male.50	Adana	X	Rural Area	F	50	Secondary School leave	Housewife/ farmer
24	Adana.24.housewife.fe male.43	Adana	X	Rural Area	F	43	Primary School	Housewife/ Farmer
25	Adana.25.housewife.fe male.28	Adana	X	Rural Area	F	28	Primary School	Housewife
26	Corum.01.teacher.male .38	Çorum	X	City Center	M	38	University	Teacher
27	Corum.02.puddler.male .57	Çorum	X	City Center	M	57	Primary School	Puddler
28	Corum.03.Project.mana ger.female.36	Çorum	X	City Center	F	36	University	Project manager
29	Corum.04.housewife.fe male.49	Çorum	X	City Center	F	49	High School	Housewife
30	Corum.05.housewife.fe male.24	Çorum	X	City Center	F	24	Secondary School	Housewife
31	Corum.06.housewife.fe male.54	Çorum	X	Rural Area	F	54	No school	Housewife
32	Corum.07.housewife.fe male.68	Çorum	X	Rural Area	F	68	Primary School	Housewife
33	Corum.08.housewife.fe male.66	Çorum	X	Rural Area	F	66	Primary School	Housewife
34	Corum.09.farmer.male. 51	Çorum	X	Rural Area	M	51	Primary School	Farmer
35	Corum.10.retired.male. 49	Çorum	X	Rural Area	M	49	Primary School	Retired
36	Corum.11.engineer.ma nager.male.50	Çorum	X	City Center	M	50	University	Engineer/M anager
37	Corum.12.relegious.wo rker.male.31	Çorum	X	City Center	M	31	Master Degree	Relegious Worker
38	Corum.13.teacher.fema le.34	Çorum	X	City Center	F	34	University	Teacher
39	Corum.14.housewife.fe male.50	Çorum	X	City Center	F	50	High School	Housewife

40	Corum.15.housewife.fe male.58	Çorum	X	City Center	F	58	Primary School	Housewife
41	Corum.16.tailor.cerkez. female.63	Çorum	X	City Center	F	63	Primary School	Housewife/ Tailor
42	Corum.17.theologist.m ale.30	Çorum	X	City Center	M	30	University	Theologist
43	Corum.19.theologist.m ale.43	Çorum	elite	City Center	M	43	PhD	Theologist
44	Corum.20.theologist.m ale.42	Çorum	elite	City Center	M	42	PhD	Theologist
45	Corum21.lawyer.male.4 1	Çorum	X	City Center	M	41	University	Lawyer
46	Corum22.lawyer.male.4 9	Çorum	elite	City Center	M	49	University	Lawyer
47	Corum23.lawyer.male.5 3	Çorum	X	City Center	M	53	University	Lawyer
48	Corum.24.shopkeeper.f armer.male.51	Çorum	X	Rural Area	M	51	Primary School	Shopkeeper /Farmer
49	Den.01.craftsman.male. 30	Denizli	X	City Center	Ma le	30	High School	Craftsman
50	Den.02.lawyer.male.59	Denizli	X	City Center	M	59	University	Lawyer
51	Den.03.physics.teacher. male.39	Denizli	X	City Center	M	39	University	Physics Teacher
52	Den.04.publisher.male. 30	Denizli	X	City Center	M	30	Trade High Schoolsi	Publisher
53	Den.05.prepschool.man ager.male.32	Denizli	X	City Center	M	32	University	Prep School Manager
54	Den.06.craftsman.male. 37	Denizli	X	City Center	M	37	Secondary School	Craftsman
55	Den.07.teacher.female 36	Denizli	X	City Center	F	36	Master	Teacher
56	Den.08.public.relations. expert.male.26	Denizli	X	City Center	M	26	University	Public Relations
57	Den.09.studnet.assistan t.female26	Denizli	X	City Center	F	26	Master	Student Assistant
58	Den.10.shelf.designer. male.28	Denizli	X	City Center	M	28	College*	Shelf Designer
59	Den.11.student.female 22	Denizli	X	City Center	F	22	College*	Student
60	Den.12.project.manage r.male.33	Denizli	X	City Center	M	33	University	Project manager
61	Den.13.spor.male.33	Denizli	X	City Center	M	33	High School	Sport Shop Manager

62	Den.14.marble.trader.male.30	Denizli	X	City Center	M	30	High School	Marble Trader
63	Den.15.waitress.female.41	Denizli	X	City Center	F	41	University	Waitress
64	Den.16.linen.draper.female	Denizli	X	City Center	F	34	High School	Linen Drapper
65	Den.17.research.assistant.male.29	Denizli	X	City Center	M	29	Master	Research Assistant
66	Den.18.prep.school.teacher.male.45	Denizli	elite	City Center	M	45	University	Prep School Teacher
67	Den.19.male.50	Denizli	elite	City Center	M	50	University	Factory owner
68	Den.20.religious.worker.male.59	Denizli	elite	City Center	M	59	University	Religious Worker
69	Den22.engineer.female.32	Denizli	X	City Center	F	32	University	Engineer
70	Den23-support.personel.female.43	Denizli	X	City Center	F	43	Secondary School	Suport Personel
71	Den24.retired.teacher.female.54	Denizli	X	City Center	F	54	University	Retired Teacher
72	Den25.housewife.female.28	Denizli	X	City Center	F	28	Secondary School	Housewife
73	Den26.craftsman.female.47	Denizli	X	City Center	F	47	High School	Craftsman
74	Den27.student.female.24	Denizli	X	City Center	F	24	University	Student
75	Den28.student.female.22	Denizli	X	City Center	F	22	University	Student
76	Den29.teacherfemale.25	Denizli	X	City Center	F	25	University	Teacher
77	Den30.manager.female.29	Denizli	X	City Center	F	29	University	Manager
78	Den31.physician.female.conjoint.50	Denizli	X	City Center	F	50	Master	Physician
79	Den.32.lawyer.Female.conjoint.39	Denizli	X	City Center	F	39	University	Lawyer
80	Den.33.lawyer.female.conjoint.48	Denizli	X	City Center	F	48	University	Lawyer
81	Den34.cleaner.female.53	Denizli	X	City Center	F	53	No school	Cleaner
82	Den35.Student.female.24	Denizli	X	City Center	F	24	University	Student (Senior)

83	Den36.housewife.female.47	Denizli	X	City Center	F	47	Primary School	Housewife
84	Den37-sales.rep.female.21	Denizli	X	City Center	F	21	Uni. Drop	Sales Consultant
85	Den38.housewife.female.74	Denizli	X	City Center	F	74		Housewife
86	Den39.retired.chemist.female.53	Denizli	X	City Center	F	53	Master	Retired Chemist
87	D.bakir.01.religious.male.79	Diyarbakir	elite	City Center	M	79	No school	Religious Worker
88	D.bakir.02.social.worker.male.47	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M	47	University	Social Worker
89	.D.bakir.03.farmer.male.42	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M	42	High School	Farmer
90	D.bakir.04.Worker.male.31	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M	31	High School	Worker
91	D.bakir.05.akp.city.director.male.45	Diyarbakir	elite	City Center	M	45	University	Akp city director
92	.D.bakir.06.lawyer.male.35	Diyarbakir	elite	City Center	M	35	University	Lawyer. vice director of an human rights assoc.
93	.D.bakir.07.farmer.male.34	Diyarbakir	elite	Rural Area	M	34	Secondary School	Farmer
94	D.bakir.08.farmer.male.38	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	M	38	Secondary School	Farmer
95	D.bakir.09.religious.worker.male.26	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	M	26	Secondary School. HighSchool	Religious worker. Cook
96	D.bakir.10.officer.male.40	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	M	40	HighSchool	Officer
97	D.bakir.11.reeve.male.35	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	M	35	High School	Reeve
98	D.bakir.12.barber.male.28	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M	28	Primary School Leave	Barber
99	D.bakir.13.lawyer.male.43	Diyarbakir	elite	City Center	M	43	University	Lawyer
100	D.bakir.14.lawyer.male.36	Diyarbakir	elite	City Center	M	36	University	Lawyer
101	D.bakir.15.lawyer.male.40	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M	40	University	Lawyer
102	D.bakir.16.government.officer.female	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M		High School	Government officer
103	D.bakir.17.biology.teac	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M	29	University	Teacher

	hermale.29							
104	.D.bakir.18.officer.female36	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	F	36	University	Officer
105	D.bakir.19.construction.worker.male.37	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	M	37	Primary School	Construction Worker
106	.D.bakir.20.pre-school.teacher.female.37	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	F	37	University	Pre-school Teacher
107	D.bakir.21.Student.female.17	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	F	17	High School Third Grade	Student
108	D.bakir.22.housewife.female.38	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	F	38	No school	Housewife
109	D.bakir.23.housewife.female.41	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	F	41	No school	Housewife
110	D.bakir.24.housewife.female.34	Diyarbakir	X	Rural Area	F	34	No school	Housewife
111	D.bakir.25.housewife.female.28	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	F	28	Okur-writer	Housewife
112	.D.bakir.26.housewife.female.30	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	F	30	Primary School	Housewife
113	D.bakir.27.craftsman.female.21	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	F	21	Primary School	Craftsman
114	D.bakir.28.retiredofficer.female51	Diyarbakir	X	City Center	F	51	High School	Retired officer
115	Erz.01.electronics.specialist.male.35	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	35	High School	Electronics Specialist
116	Erz.02.craftsman.male.25	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	25	High School	Craftsman
117	Erz.02.Shopkeeper.male.27	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	27	High School	Shopkeeper
118	Erz.03.surgeon.male.45	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	45	University	Surgeon
119	Erz.04.prep.center.owner.political.party.city.director.male.48	Erzurum	elite	City Center	M	48	University	Prep Center Owner/political party city director
120	Erz.05.student.male.28	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	28	Master	Student
121	Erz.06.prep.center.director.male.37	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	37	PhD	Prep Center Director
122	Erz.07.Computer.Specialist.male.32	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	32	University	Computer Specialist
123	Erz.08.teacher.male.43	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	43	University	Teacher
124	Erz.09.philosophy.teacher.male.36	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	36	University	Teacher

125	Erz.10.barowner.male.30	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	36	Açık öğretim	Bar Owner
126	Erz.11.elektronik.specia litst.male.33	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	30	College*	Electronic Specialist
127	Erz.12.engineer.male.27	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	27	University	Self employed engineer
128	Erz.13.pastry.shop.own er.male.42	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	42	Secondary School leave	Pastry Shop Owner
129	Erz.14.bussinessman.m ale.47	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	47	University	Bussinessm an
130	Erz.15.pharmacist.male. 54	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	54	University	Pharmacist
131	Erz.16.Computer.Specia list.male.30	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	30	University	Computer Specialist
132	Erz.17.relegious.worker .male.40	Erzurum	X	Rural Area	M	40	İlahiyat	Religious Worker
133	Erz.18.lab.technician.m ale.25	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	25	University	Lab. Technician
134	Erz.19.worker.chiroprac tor.male.39	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	39	High School	Worker- Chiropracto r
135	Erz.20.lab.technician.m ale.24	Erzurum	X	City Center	M	24	University	Lab. Technician
136	Erz.21.journalist.female .32	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	32	Master	Journalist
137	Erz.22.researcher.write r.female.55	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	55	University	Researcher, writer
138	Erz.23.retired.female.54	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	54	University	Retired
139	Erz.24.education.consul tant.female.25	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	25	Açık öğretim	Education Consultant
140	Erz.25.teacher.female.41	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	41	University	Teacher
141	Erz.26.teacher.female.40	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	40	University	Teacher
142	Erz.27.academician.fem ale.41	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	41	University	Academicia n
143	Erz.28.research.assistan t.female.29	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	29	University	Research Assistant
144	Erz.29.memur.female.50	Erzurum	X	City Center	F	50	Open University	Officer
145	Erz.01.factory.owner	Erzurum	elite	City Center	M			Factory Owner

146	Erz.02.owner	Erzurum	elite	City Center	M			
147	izm.01.teacher.female.36	izmir	X	City Center	F	36	University	Teacher
148	izm.02.construction.worker.male.40	izmir	X	City Center	M	40	High School leave	Construction Worker
149	izm.03.retired.teacher.male.80	izmir	X	City Center	M	80	Köy Enstitüsü	Retired Teacher
150	izm.04.insurance.specialist.male.38	izmir	X	City Center	M	38	University	Insurance Specialist
151	izm.05.craftsman.male.50	izmir	X	City Center	F	50	High School	Craftsman
152	izm.06.housewife.female.29	izmir	X	City Center	F	29	University	Housewife
153	izm.07.sales.rep.female.33	izmir	X	City Center	F	33	University	Housewife
154	izm.08.export.trader.female.26	izmir	X	City Center	F	26	University	Export Trader
155	izm.09.retired.teacher.male.64	izmir	X	City Center	M	64	University	Retired Teacher
156	izm.10.retired.teacher.female.61	izmir	X	City Center	F	61	Teacher okulu	Retired Teacher
157	izm.11.lawyer.male.66	izmir	X	City Center	M	66	University	Lawyer
158	izm.12.turism.female.35	izmir	X	City Center	F	35	University	Turism
159	izm.13.pharmacist.female.71	izmir	X	City Center	F	71	Özel Kolej	Pharmacist
160	izm.14.student.female.23	izmir	X	City Center	F	23	University	Student
161	izm.15.marketing.specialist.male.35	izmir	X	City Center	F	35	University	Marketing Specialist
162	izm.16.teacher.female.30	izmir	X	City Center	F	30	University	Teacher
163	izm.17.camci.male.50	izmir	X	City Center	M	50	Primary School	Glazier
164	izm.18.retired.officer.female.65	izmir	X	City Center	F	65	High School	Retired officer
165	izm.19.student.male.22	izmir	X	City Center	M	22	College Senior	Student
166	izm.20.cook.male.30	izmir	X	City Center	M	30	Secondary School	Cook
167	izm.21.engineer.male.33	izmir	X	City Center	M	33	University	Engineer

168	Kays.01.furniture.shop.owner.male.57	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	57	Primary School	Furniture Shopkeeper
169	Kays.02.industrialist.male.49	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	49	Primary School	Industrialist
170	Kays.03.linen.draper.male.60	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	60	Primary School	Linen Draper
171	Kays.04.electrical.engineer.male.55	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	55	University	Electrical Engineer
172	Kays.05.furniture.shop.owner.male.55	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	55	Secondary School	Furniture Shopkeeper
173	Kays.06.mechanical.engineer.male.32	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	32	University	Mechanical Engineer
174	Kays.07.mechanical.engineer.male.60	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	60	University	Mechanical Engineer
175	Kays.08.craftsman.male.57	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	57	Secondary School	Craftsman
176	Kays.09.linen.draper.male.40	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	40	Primary School	Linen Draper
177	Kays.10.retired.male.55	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	55	University	Retired
178	Kays.11.furniture.shop.owner.male.62	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	62	Primary School	Furniture Shopkeeper
179	Kays.12.trader.male.75	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	75	Primary School	Trader
180	Kays.13.industrialist.male.58	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	58	University	Industrialist
181	Kays.14.former.governor.male.87	Kayseri	elite	City Center	M	87	Primary School	Former Governor
182	Kays.15.former.congressman.male.55	Kayseri	elite	City Center	M	55	University	Former Congressman
183	Kays.16.industrialist.male.75	Kayseri	elite	City Center	M	75	Primary School	Industrialist
184	Kays.17.furniture.shopkeeper.male.45	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	45	Primary School	Furniture Shopkeeper
185	Kays.18.industrialist.male.32	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	32	High School	Industrialist
186	Kays.19.factory.worker.male.32	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	32	University	Factory worker-businessman
187	Kays.20.furniture.shopkeeper.male.45	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	45	University	Furniture Shopkeeper
188	Kays.21.religious.worker.male.40	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	40	University	Religious Worker

189	Kays.22.vet.male.63	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	63	University	Vet
190	Kays.23.sanayici.male.70	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	70	Primary School	Industrialist
191	Kays.24.sanayici.male.53	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	53	Primary School	Industrialist
192	Kays.25.furniture.shopkeeper.male.35	Kayseri	X	City Center	M	35	Secondary School	Furniture Shopkeeper
193	Kays.26.religious.worker.male.70	Kayseri	elite	City Center	M	70	University	Religious Worker
194	Trabz.01.craftsman.male.50	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	50	Univ. leave	Craftsman. Shoe Seller
195	Trabz.02.craftsman.male.42	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	42	Secondary School leave	Craftsman
196	Trabz.03.cafe.owner.male.29	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	29	High School	Cafe owner
197	Trabz.04.cook.female.43	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	43	Primary School	Cook
198	Trabz.05.craftsman.female.41	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	41	Primary School	Craftsman
199	Trabz.06.housewife.female.45	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	45	Primary School	Housewife
200	Trabz.07.housewife.female.42	Trabzon	X	Rural Area	F	42	High School	Housewife
201	Trabz.08.housewife.female.70	Trabzon	X	Rural Area	F	70	No school	Housewife
202	Trabz.09.housewife.43	Trabzon	X	Rural Area	F	43	Primary School	Housewife
203	Trabz.10.housewife.female.28	Trabzon	X	Rural Area	F	28	Primary School	Housewife
204	Trabz.11.waiter.male.40	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	40	Open Uni. 2nd Grade	Waiter
205	Trabz.12.cook.female.35	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	35	Primary School	Cook
206	Trabz.13.shop.owner.female.37	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	37	High School	Shop Owner
207	Trabz.14.housewife.female.45	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	45	Primary School	Housewife
208	Trabz.15.housewife.female.40	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	40	College*	Housewife
209	Trabz.16.nurse.female.37	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	37	University	Nurse
210	Trabz.17.housewife.female.42	Trabzon	X	City Center	F	42	Primary School	Housewife

211	Trabz.18.social.worker.male.49	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	49	High School	Social Worker
212	Trabz.19-20.linen.draper.25	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	25	University	Craftsman
213	Trabz.19-20.carpenter.erk	Trabzon	X	City Center	M		Primary School	Carpenter
214	Trabz.22.bussinessman.49.erk	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	49	University	Bussinessman
215	Trabz.21.former.governor.bask.	Trabzon	elite	City Center	M	55	University	Former Governer
216	Trabz.23.retired.teacher.male.65	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	65	College*	Retired Teacher
217	Trabz.24.shopkeeper.male.26	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	26	Occupational High School	Furniture Shopkeeper
218	Trabz.26.social.worker.male.58	Trabzon	X	City Center	M	58	High School	Social Worker
219	Trabz.27.province.mayor.male.51	Trabzon	elite	Rural Area	M	51	High School	Social Worker
220	İst.former.deputy.male.73	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	73	University	Former Congressman
221	İst.religious.worker.professor.male.62	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	62	PhD	Religious Worker
222	İst.political.party.founding.member.male.62	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	62	University	Lawyer
223	İst.publisher.writer.male.50	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	50	University	Publisher/Writer
224	İst.factory.owner.male.44	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	44	University	Factory Owner
225	İst.factory.owner.male.46	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	46	University	Factory Owner
226	İst.textile.firm.owner.male.46	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	46	University	Textile Firm Owner
227	İst.factory.owner.male.51	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	51	University	Factory Owner
228	İst.akademician.female.43	İstanbul	elite	City Center	F	43	PhD	Academician
229	İst.journalist.writer.female.39	İstanbul	elite	City Center	F	39	PhD	Journalist/Writer
230	İst.professor of religion.writer.male.77	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	77	PhD	Writer

231	İst.professor of sociology.male.65	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	65	PhD	Retired
232	İst.writer.director.male.38	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	38	University	Writer
233	İst.association.board.member.male.41	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	41	University	Lawyer
234	İst.Sociolog.female.40	İstanbul	elite	City Center	F	40	University	Sociolog
235	İst.theologist.male.49	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	49	Middle School	Writer
236	İst.writer.male.60	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	60	University	Writer
237	İst.social.scientist.female.43	İstanbul	elite	City Center	F	43	PhD	Academician and writer
238	İst.Intellectual.writer.female.53	Ankara	elite	City Center	F	53	University	Writer
239	İst.Journalist.male.44	İstanbul	elite	City Center	M	44	University	Writer

*[i] I use academy to mean the two years certificate program after high school commonly referred in Turkish as yüksekokul.

Appendix 2. In-depth Interview Guide

Social Structure and Religion in Turkey

Semi Structured In-depth Interview Guide

Presentation of research project and the interviewer:

We are working for a TUBITAK sponsored project titled “Social Structure and Religion in Turkey” supervised by Prof. Dr. Bahattin Akşit and Prof. Dr. Recep Şenturk. If you have time, can we conduct an interview with you?

We will audio record the interview to ensure our appreciation and comprehension of your thoughts and comments. You have the right to refuse the audio recording. If you feel uncomfortable during the interview you may also ask us to stop recording anytime you want.

[The following questions intend to guide interviews, the interviewer should not read them, instead s/he should get the basic ideas, the questions should be adapted to the interviewee]

Section 1

- Could you briefly introduce yourself? Where did you live, where were you born, what schools did you attend, what is your current job, what were you doing before? Are you married? Do have children? (**Ask general questions about his/her family story, partner choice, friends, family environment, social environment**)
 - Spouse Choice Occupation of the spouse
 - Number of kids Children’s education and occupation
 - Children / and their families

- Could you talk little bit about your family and social environment? Who are the most significant people in your life?
 - Social environment of the family Friends Occupation
 - Education: primary, secondary, University

- How do you spend your day? And your week?
- Do you have spare time? What do you do other than work? Where do you spend your spare time? (Adapt questions for housewives, students etc.)
- Are you member of any association, foundation, political party or any other sort of civil societal organization? Do you participate in any voluntary activity?
- Are you coming from a religious family? What would you say if you compare your religiosity with that of your parents? Where did you learn your religion?
- Do you think that you are informed about religion?
- What is the best way to learn religion? What is the best way to teach religion to kids? (Qur'an recitation courses, Imam and preacher schools, Theology Faculty etc.)
- How would you define the neighborhood relations in your community?
- What about religious life in your neighborhood?
- In what circumstances you mostly talk about religion?
- Do you have anybody in your neighborhood that you can consult on religious matters? Have you ever consulted to this person? If "yes," do you remember, what was the subject matter?
- Did you observe any change in religious life in your neighborhood and the city you live in? (About practice, belief or attitudes, solidarity etc)

Free Association Question:

Now I will tell you some words, could you please tell me the first things that come to your mind?

Islam, *haram* (illicit), sin (*günah*), permissible (*helal*), *rızık* (ones daily bread), *Başörtüsü* (veil), atheist, religious, *tarika*, sharia, secularism (*laiklik*), modern, conservative, state.

Section 2

1. A: Gender – Profane X Mundane Tension

- How would you define ideal family life?
- Do you think marriage is something sacred? Or issues concerning marriage and sex should be seen as entirely this-worldly affairs?

2. B: Gender – Public X Private Tension

- In your opinion, what are the fundamental problems of women in our society? Could you briefly talk about your views on the place of women in our society, and also your possible suggestions to make the things better?

- Nowadays people talk about “neighborhood pressure” upon women; do you think is this true? Could you talk about your observations?
- How Islam approach to man and women in family? Does it assume different roles for each sex?
- How can you define ideal fatherhood and motherhood in family? Can you talk about your own experience?
- Do you thing men and women should be together in social life? Or is it better if they remain separate?
- Do you think is it right thing to do to get married with someone from a different religion? Would you interfere with such a decision if your daughter or son wants to marry with somebody from other religion? (Marriage with foreigner or Alewite)
- If you had a daughter, how would you react if she introduce you her boy friend?
- What do you think about pre-marital relations?
- How would you define *mahrem* (forbidden)?

2. C: GENDER– Traditional X Modern

- How do you take the decisions affecting everyone in your family, such as decisions like buying a house, moving a new place, deciding best schools for kids? Who says the last word?
- What do you think about women’s work outside home? Do you approve of new born baby mothers working outside home? ,
- Does your spouse have a separate social life, friends and hobbies outside family?
- Some people think that women and men should not stay together where there is no likelihood that a third person may show up. Do you agree with this preference? Why, Why not?
- Do you think that boys and girls should get different religious education?
- Some people send their children to Qur’an recitation courses, other prefer ballet training, what do you think about this issue?

2. D: GENDER– Text X Praxis

- Do you consider religion in your relations with your spouse? Concerning your marriage have you ever looked at verses or Hadiths to evaluate your behaviors? And have you have ever altered your manners accordingly?
- Whose family would you consider as a model? Why?
- What do you think about honor killings?

2. E: GENDER– Religious Knowledge X Scientific Knowledge

- What do you think about birth control?
- You learned that your wife is pregnant to a child with serious medical problems, what would you do? Would you consider abortion?
- What do you think about having a child with in vitro fertilization (tube baby)?

Section 3

3. A: Economy – Profane X Mundane

- In your opinion, what is the ultimate aim of work and earning money?
- Is it possible to hold on to Islamic values while prospering economically?
- Does religion have any effect on business / work success? Does religiosity bring success at work and business?
- Does religion have any role in economic relations? How would you define this role? If you were more religious (or less religious) would your work life be any different than what it is today?
- Is there any conflict between working for earning a living (*rızık*) and working for profit? What do you think of Islam’s interpretation of this relationship?

3. B: Economy - Public X Private

- In your opinion, how does Islam view prosperity? Do you think that can a devote Muslim be a very rich person?
- Do you give alms (*Fitre* and *zekat*)?
- What do you think of spending money for luxury living? Ask question for others as well?
- Do you talk about business, or do business during religious meetings? Or do you think that business should stay away from religion and mosque?
- Do you observe any influence of a religious congregation in your sector (in cases ask neighborhood as well)? What sort of influence do they exert? In general what do you think about religious congregations’ impact on social and political relations?

3. C: Economy – Traditional X Modern

- Regarding decisions concerning shopping, do you care for/look at religion of the shop owner?
- What do you think about the debates on “Islamic capital”? Do you believe such a thing exists?
- Do you think, is it possible to sustain “Islamic Economy” and “Islamic banking” in today’s economic system?
- Do you give importance to the religiosity and religion of the people that you are in business relation? Or you work with?
- What are the major differences between religious and non-religious people, as you observe in your economic relations? Can you give any examples about this?
- Who do you turn to first in times of economic hardship for financial support? Can you get help from any group or people on occasions of economic hardship? Who are they?

3. D: Economy – Text X Praxis

- What do you think about bank interest? What about Islamic banking, so called banking without interest?
- What do you think about Islam’s approach to private property? Is there any limit to own private property in Islam?
- Is there any limit for profit in Islam?

3. E: Economy – Religious Knowledge X Scientific Knowledge

- If religious rules contradict with the demands of economic rules, how would you decide? Would you follow economic rules or religious rules?
- Concerning decisions about your work, do you make decisions solely looking at practical necessities and demands of the work, or do you sometimes prefer to follow religious rules?
- Have you ever consult to a religious person about economic issues? Do you remember the issue? Did you follow the religious ordinance? Would you follow it if it is not reasonable?

Section 4

4. A: Politics-Law – Profane X Mundane

- What should be the aim of politics?
- In your opinion, what is the place of self interest in politics?
- Do you agree with the motto that “serving people is equal to serving God”?

4. B: Politics: Law – Public X Private

- Would you prefer a religious state where religious laws have the upper hand?
- Would you prefer to have laws in harmony with religion? Or is it better those laws should be determined arbitrarily by people according to the needs of the society?
- What do you think of religious education in primary and secondary schools?
- In your voting decision, do you consider religiosity of the political party? What about the party leader’s religiosity? Do you think is it proper for a party to run campaigns according to religious sensibilities? Do you approve of political party, if it assumes a religious stance on its policy formulations? Why?
- People complain about religion’s instrumentalisation in politics? In your opinion, is it wrong? What should be the proper role of religion in politics?
- Do you think sovereignty rests unconditionally with the nation, or does it belong to God? Do you see any difference?
- Thinking of the city you live in, do you think that religion have any influence on local politics? Could you describe it?

- What do you think of the relationship between religious congregations and political parties? In this city which groups support which political parties? In what ways and means do they support political parties? Have you ever involved in such and activity?
- Is there anything that you disapprove of in the state's policies towards religion?
- Do you remember anything from the past in state policies that is similar to what you have said? How did you react to these unfavorable state policies?
- What do you think about Turban issue in general? What do you think about Turban problem in the Universities? In general, what do you think about women's covering head? Do you think should it be compulsory? Why?

4. C: Politics-Law – Traditional X Modern

- In your opinion, what does *Laicite (laiklik)* mean? Do you think that Turkey is a secular (*laik*) country?
- How would you evaluate the impact of early republic's revolutions on religious life in Turkey? Do you think, did it cause positive or negative impact?
- Which one is more important: Secularism or democracy?
- Is the right to religious organization a democratic right?
- What do you think about Turkish Republic's relations with religion? Do you approve its policies regarding religion?
- Is Islam compatible with democracy?
- Which one is more important for you: Justice, equality, or freedom?
- Do you think that conservative and religious sections of society are being discriminated against and suffering in Turkey?
- Which one of the following would make a good ally for Turkey in the near future? EU, Middle East, Muslim countries, Turkic nations? Why?

4. D: Politics-Law –Text X Praxis

- How would you decide if you notice a conflict between religious rules and the way you and your family live? How would you decide if tradition and religious rules are in conflict?

4. E: Politics-Law – Religious Knowledge X Scientific Knowledge

- How would you decide if laws and religious rules are in conflict?

Section 5

5. A: Belief – Profane X Mundane

- Do you believe in God and after life? Why?
- How would you describe your belief? Are you religious person?
- How do you reply if your children ask questions regarding these issues (questions concerning issues such as life after dead or existence of God etc.)?
- What do you feel when you think of God / Allah?
- Apart from God, do you also believe in genies, spirits, angels, heaven and hell?

5. B: Belief – Public X Private

- What do you think of regulating public life according to religious sensibilities and rules? For instance, regulation of work hours according to *Iftar* (evening meal during Ramadan), or daily prays?
- Which one would you prefer: is it better that religion should remain in private life, or it is lived best in a community or congregation?

5. C: Belief – Traditional X Modern

- Is modernization changing Islam? Have you ever thought of the necessity of reform in Islam?
- Is Islam open to different interpretations? As you know some groups or individuals interpret some verses and hadiths differently, what do you think about these attempts?
- Do you think that Islam, in its some rules and regulations, is incompatible with today's life style? Can you think of some examples?

5. D: Belief–Text X Praxis

- In your opinion, what are the fundamental sources of Islam? Among Qur'an, Hadiths and Sunna, which one is most important for you? How do you decide which one to follow?
- Do you believe in evil eye?
- Some say that religion is a private thing and it should remain between God and individual, but we are aware of the fact that there are religious congregations, tarikas, communities and groups and there are religious leader in these groups, what do you think about the place of these groups in Islam? Is there a room for them in Islam?
- If Islam is one, why there are so many sects in Islam?
- Do you identify yourself with any one of Islam's interpretations, sects or tarikas?
- In your opinion, to be a good Muslim, is the guidance of a Sheikh or a religious leader necessary?
- Concerning your belief, do you feel the need for someone more knowledgeable than you are? Why? Why not?

- When did you start thinking in this way (following a sheikh or a membership to a congregation)? What happened? Why do you think you underwent such a change? How did your life change in general?

5. E: Belief – Religious Knowledge X Scientific Knowledge

- Can human beings grasp everything in this world by reason? Have you ever felt stuck between your reason and belief?
- Do you see any conflict between science and religion? If you were stuck between religion and scientific knowledge, which one would you prefer to follow? Can you give an example?
- Do you believe in revelation (*wahy*)?
- What is the scope of knowledge that religion can offer to you about this world?
- What are the predicaments that you face in this world that you think religion may help you to overcome?
- Can we explain deaths in traffic accidents or earthquakes with destiny?

Section 6

6. A: Religious Practice – Profane X Mundane

- Do you do religious practices? How often are you able to do?
- Which religious practices do you do? Which religious practices you are not able to do, but you want to do?
- Do human beings need to do religious practices? Why?
- Do you do some special practices other than commonly accepted ones?
- Do you say prayers? Can you give me an example of one of your recent prayers?
- In your opinion, which religious practices are must?
- What do you think about people who deliberately refrain from doing religious practices?
- Do you do religions practice more often during some specific periods in a year? Ever since you could remember, have you been doing your religious practices in this same frequency? Has the frequency of your practices ever changed in your life time? Has it increased or decreased? What was the reason?
- Why do you think people do their religious practice? Do they do them for this-worldly purposes, or rather do they think of other world? (Discuss veiling or attending to religious communities due to perceived this-worldly gains?)

6. B: Religious Practice – Public X Private

- What do you think about worshiping in public?
- What do you think about regulation of public spaces according to religion? (prayer rooms in work places, shopping malls and universities, Qur'an in hotel rooms, *Wudu* closets in work places etc.)
- What do you think about eating in public during Ramadan?

- In your opinion, do the religious practices (like pray, fasting or almsgiving) better be performed in public or in secrecy? Which one of these would be done better if in secrecy?
- Does Religion better practiced in a community or individually?
- How do you feel when you pray with community? In what respects it is different?

6. C: Religious Practice – Traditional X Modern

- What do you think about religious practice in Turkish? For example, the Azan in Turkish?
- What do you think about new religious rituals? What about Yoga as religious practice?

6. D: Religious Practice –Text X Praxis

- We are told that in a mosque during a daily pray a man had a heart attack, and nobody helped the person until the community (*Cemaat*) finish the pray, what do you think about this situation? What would you do, if you were among the community of prayers?
- Is there any commonly done practice in our society, that you think it is sin, it is outside Islam? (Talk about Bid'at, any kind of dhikr, tarika, sect, mevlit etc.)
- What do you think about shrine visits? Do you do such visits? Do you make a vow? Do you think that these practices are within Islam?
- Do you believe in superstition? Can you give an examples?
- What do you think about *burqa*, long beards and similar religious garbs worn in public?
- Elite- 6 – d Scholars talk about differences of internal (*Batni*) and external (*Zahiri*) in religions practice. Would you approve of dismissing external practices to achieve greater internal practice? Would this be acceptable for you? Why?
- Elite- 6-d What is the difference between silent and out loud dhikr? In your opinion which one is more correct? What is your criterion in your judgment?
- Elite- 6-d Do you believe in religious seclusion? (*Halvet*) In your opinion is it in Islam? Is there anybody that practice seclusion among your close community?

6 E: Religious Practice – Religious Knowledge X Scientific Knowledge

Where did you learn religious practices? How do you decide on the ones that you perform?

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