ISLAM AND KURDISH NATIONALISM: A THEORETICAL AND
EMPIRICAL APPROACH TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION
AND NATIONALISM

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ABSTRACT

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This study attempts to understand and explain the intricate relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationalism. It first provides a framework in which the nexus between religious and national identity is relativistic, with varying degrees of conflict and coexistence. Then, it reduces this complexity to a bifurcation in terms of interaction between Islam and Kurdish nationalism. In doing so, it develops a binary approach by which a competitive and symbiotic relationship between nationalism and religion occurs simultaneously. In this configuration, Islam averts the awakening of the Kurdish national consciousness by promoting a transnational identity building on one side, breeding the attainment of Kurdish political aspirations on the other. The competitive interplay presents religion and nationalism as virtually equivalent but contradicting order-creating systems while postulating Muslim nationalism as a distinctive religious nationalism. Islam, on the contrary, ceases to be an obstacle to slowing down Kurdish political mobilization by playing a supportive role, albeit not a leading one, in the symbiotic or intertwined relationship. It serves as a source of motivation for legitimizing and reinforcing the Kurdish national cause through spiritual words,

images, and symbols based on the discourse of egalitarian justice. Islam is thus no longer a barrier for ethnically conscious pious Kurds to correlate religious identity with national self-consciousness.

ÖZ

İSLAM VE KÜRT MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİ: DİN VE MİLLİYETÇİLİK ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİYE TEORİK VE AMPİRİK BİR YAKLAŞIM

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Şubat 2023, 374 sayfa

Bu çalışma, İslam ile Kürt milliyetçiliği arasındaki karmaşık ilişkiyi anlamaya ve açıklamaya çalışmaktadır. İlk olarak, dini ve ulusal kimlik arasındaki temas noktalarının değişen derecelerde çatışma ve işbirliği içermesi nedeniyle bağlamsallığa dayalı bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Tez, anlaşılması güç olan bu ilişkiler ağını, İslam ile Kürt milliyetçiliği özelinde bir çatallanmaya indirgemektedir. Bunu yaparken, milliyetçilik ve din arasında rekabetçi ve simbiyotik bir ilişkinin aynı anda gerçekleştiği varsayımından yola çıkarak ikili bir yaklaşım geliştirir. İslam, bir yandan ulusötesi bir kimlik inşasını teşvik ederek Kürt milliyetçiliği fikriyatının dindar çevrelerde yayılmasını yavaşlatırken, diğer yandan Kürtlüğe dayalı siyasi mefkûreye sahip mütedeyyin kesimlerde Kürt ulusal bilincinin uyanmasına ve güçlenmesine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki rekabetçi etkileşim tarzı bu iki olguyu fiilen eşdeğer ancak birbiriyle çelişen düzen-kurma amaçlı sistemler olarak sunmaktadır. Müslüman milliyetçiliği bunun açık bir tezahürüdür. Simbiyotik veya iç içe geçmiş ilişki biçiminde ise İslam birincil olmasa da destekleyici bir rol oynayarak Kürt mobilizasyonunu yavaşlatan bir engel olmaktan çıkmaktadır. Bilhassa eşitlikçi adalet temasına dayalı manevi sözler,

imgeler ve semboller aracılığıyla Kürt ulusal davasını meşrulaştırmak ve tahkim etmek için bir motivasyon kaynağı görevi görür hale gelmektedir. Dolayısıyla dindar Kürtlerin dini kimlikleri ile ulusal düzeyde bilinçlenmeleri birbirlerini karşılıklı dışlayan ilişki tarzına sahip olmadıkları gibi içiçe geçmekte ve bulanıklaşmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam, Kürt Milliyetçiliği, Sekülerleşme, Siyasal Mobilizasyon, Kolektif Aksiyon.

To my family for their endless support, encouragement and love…

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Like many PhD theses, the writing process of this dissertation has been with ups and downs, sometimes filled with concerns, uncertainties, emotional and psychological upheavals, and sometimes euphoria, contentment and joy. After all, it was a fruitful, exciting and enlightening experience. Nevertheless, I need to point out that there are several reasons not to complete my PhD study on time, which took me more than nine years to achieve. I do not, however, consider it necessary to go into the details here because these nine years would remain a period in my life that I want to leave behind and that I hope not to occupy a redundant place in my memory.

Of course, the PhD process has given me a lot of things. Foremost among them are learning patience, being more tolerant, dealing with frustration, keeping an open mind, and knowing the value of loved ones. When it took me years to even construct the thesis structure, my hastiness was somewhat eroded, and I became more convinced that many of the dreams we want to realize would not come into being all at once and need time to develop. Since seclusion and introversion are natural consequences of the writing process, I sometimes even gave up drinking coffee with friends, which was my regular social activity. I also often tried to explain, with mostly excuses other than the thesis, why I could not attend my mother's dinner parties. By the way, my mother, an illiterate housewife, has always been a source of inspiration and guidance for me during my lifetime. No matter what I do, I can't make it up to her. My father also deserves special thanks for enabling my siblings and me to educate in difficult conditions.

While writing the dissertation, I graduated from Law School somewhat reluctantly. Obtaining a bachelor's degree in law has been helpful in many ways, particularly in giving me insight into the Turkish legal framework. Although it has not made writing easier for me, it developed my analytical thinking skills to conclude the study. As I write these words, I look forward to completing my

internship at Diyarbakır Bar Association but feel straddled between being a lawyer and continuing as an academic.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a product of my intellectual journey, which began investigating what role Islam plays in making Kurdish national consciousness and ethnopolitical claims. Soon after I got involved in the research topic, I realized that the role of religion in the formation and maintenance of national identities had received little scholarly attention. There is, at present, no well-established literature on the relationship between religion and nationalism studies that have generated a range of conceptualizations and theoretical frameworks. Whereas scholarly literature on nationalism today is abundant and continues to grow, including numerous categories based on different theories and types of nationalism, the same is not true for the literature on the relationship between religion and nationalism. It thus requires extensive empirical investigation due to its dynamic features, context-dependent structure, historical particularism, and ever-changing nature. Through case analysis, I attempt to overcome the theoretical limitations and draw on a context-dependent approach that treats nationalism as *"relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms"* (Brubaker, 2006). I prefer this approach because many nationalisms have produced different discourses, practices, and actions, just as religious meanings vary widely according to the interpretations, representations, and procedures. No text or belief system stands wholly and entirely for what it represents. As Greenfeld puts it, *"neither religion nor nationalism is uniform"* (Greenfeld, 1996b).

From the outset, I knew it would not be a simple task to elucidate the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the relationship in question. Religion's linkage with ethno-nationalism is already complicated. The nexus between Islam and Kurdish nationalism is, however, extraordinarily more intricate given the persistence of

Islam to guide Kurdish individuals in their daily lives and to create collectivity serving as a badge of group identity. I mainly equate the relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationalism to a relationship of love and hate, in which passionate togetherness and big fights exist at the same time. While it is difficult to separate the two phenomena in some instances, they can also be mutually exclusive sets of ideals and contradictory forces in others. In other words, there is a potential for competition and cooperation between them. The modern presupposition that a secular way of life necessarily generates religious decline or that religion is eventually replaced by secular nationalism becomes increasingly difficult to sustain because one can observe several cases where nationalism and religion flourish together. It is problematic to relate the rise of nationalism to the ultimate decline of religion. My study is thus based on "the co-existence of the secular and religious". As a reinforcement power, religion may instill a higher level of commitment within a particular group, cementing the desire for oneness and unity around shared ethnic identity. It also has the ability to prevent embracing ethnopolitical goals and taking collective action on behalf of the nation as a group solidarity. The scope of the relationship differs according to the social, historical, and political context in which religion and nationalism interact.

The main reason I have chosen the Kurdish case as a subject of inquiry is to shed light on the ambiguities and complexities resulting from the interaction between religion and nationalism. My personal experience through the complicated feelings and thoughts about Islam and Kurdish nationalism has also necessarily influenced my orientation to such a field of study. Research questions often grow out of the researcher's biography and social context. *"The decision about a specific question mostly depends on the researcher's involvement in certain social and historical contexts"* (Flick, 2022:72). My research subject is interesting and deeply personal to me as someone who wants to understand the social changes that have swept across religion and nationalism. My interests, combined with my past experiences, encouraged me to penetrate this research field. The process has been accelerated by my long-standing observation of

changing attitudes of the religious people in the environment where I live. I grew up in a Kurdish family whose background was strongly influenced by the ideal of the Islamic brotherhood and had been in contact with various Islamic circles. Sayyid Qutb's Milestones, Said Nursi's Risale-i Nur Collection, and Said Havva's El Esas Fis-Sünne are, for instance, some Islamic works that shaped our worldview and reflected our attitude toward political action. My intellectual journey began with reading those books and then turned to the scrutiny of the culture I am socialized into, which cannot give coherent answers to some of my questions. Some of them are as follows: Is there such a thing as "Islamic brotherhood" in practice? If so, is it a faithful or political community? If a political one, on which regulations and institutions is it built? Who are the human groups that form it? Does it provide justice in representation among the ethnic groups that make up such a Muslim society? How were the Kurds represented in this configuration? If there is no such organization in reality, why did the Kurds continue to pursue this idea? I have been preoccupied with these and similar questions for a long time.

Through this study, I attempt to satisfy my curiosity about the role of religion in the nonexistence and development of national identity, particularly in religiously homogeneous but ethnically heterogeneous conflicts, and contribute to the literature on the subject. Much of the existing literature on the relationship between religion and nationalism has been devoted to the coexistence of the two while neglecting the competitive interaction between Islam and the modern idea of nationalism. Much of the literature focuses on the encouraging role of religion on national identity and has less say about the inhibiting aspects of faith on"the idea of the nation. To shed light on that, I particularly turn my attention to the forms of interaction between the two. I mainly develop a binary approach because, I argue, there is either a symbiotic or competitive relationship between specific configurations of religion and nationalism. In other words, religion has both the capacity to foster (positive impacts) and hinder (damaging effects) the emergence and growth of national sentiments. In the Kurdish case, Islam slows

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down the consolidation of the Kurdish nation-building process on one side, promoting national consciousness and national unity on the other.

My main research question is whether religion promotes or hinders the emergence of national identity and how does faith play a part in the construction and non-formation of national identity? This dissertation examines Islam's influence on the justification and non-existence of Kurdish national demands and aspirations. It aims to understand whether there is an Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism in Turkey through the deconstruction of Kurdish Muslims. It explores the ways in which Sunni Muslim Kurds frame religion and nationalism as a space for political and social change. Whether nationality or religiosity promises more dignity has been one of the focal points of the study. In the Kurdish context, religion and nationalism have contradictory and intertwining pathways on the road to creating a good society. This study examines the Kurdish case within a conceptual and theoretical framework. It does not deal with the interplay of Islam and Kurdish nationalism from a historical standpoint. Rather, it aims to discuss the subject from present-day interaction, not a retrospective point of view, acknowledging that it is not free from specific historical circumstances in which it grows while keeping in mind that the historical framework of Kurdish nationalism constitutes one of the determinant aspects of explaining pious Kurds' modern political orientations.

1.1. Research Method

I mainly use the qualitative method through semi-structured interviews to generate data in this study. In addition to the qualitative interviews, I employed content analysis of newspaper articles and social media posts, particularly Twitter, to follow new perspectives on current issues as auxiliary methods for data generation. Although I do not strictly employ an ethnographic approach, observation and participation consist of the characteristic features of my research design, in addition to face-to-face conversation and the analysis of secondary sources. I have produced knowledge about a social reality or processes in which

I am inside of it. In other words, I do not impose an outsider's view on the subject. Rather I have an insider view. I went to mosques, madrasas and Islamic non-governmental organizations for interviews. I prayed in the congregation with some interviewees because of the coincidence of the meeting with prayer times. It allowed us to establish a more confident relationship based on trust and further gave me the opportunity to access data efficiently. I have conducted qualitative interviews with a sampling strategy based on talks with elites, my unit of analysis is thus mostly the individual. I choose qualitative interviewing as a research method because the data I seek to achieve is not available in any other form to a large extent. Interviewing is a way of understanding the social world and, more importantly, the only way to generate the data I want relevant to my case study (Mason, 2017). Direct participation and observation of phenomena I am interested in do not alone adequately create meaningful data. Although the qualitative method does not offer researchers a route to the truth, it provides a route of partial insights into what people do and think about their complex behaviors, opinions, emotions and various experiences (Longhurst, 2003:153-154). As Mason puts it, "people's knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions are meaningful properties of the social reality which my research questions are designed to explore" (Mason, 2017:111). In other words, my research concerns the respondents' perceptions of a particular social reality through their attitudes and discourses.

1.2. Recruitment Strategy

The intellectual and political elites are often at the center of ideological movements, whether secular or religious. Some scholars of nationalism have particularly focused on the role of political and cultural elite sectors of society, that is, ethnic entrepreneurs, in the formation of national consciousness rather than society as a whole (Hroch, 1985: Brass, 1991: Greenfeld, 1993; Brubaker, 2006). Although ethnicity remains an authentic source of the nation-building process, nationalism finds its meaning in the hands of elites. It is perhaps to exaggerate to argue that nationalism is purely an elite phenomenon, but one

easily recognizes that it does not emerge by itself. It is somewhat of a social engineering project and thus needs to be promoted among the masses. I agree with the role of elites in shaping national identity to a large extent that elite enterprise is essential for the initial establishment of nationalism. I have therefore employed elite interviews in this study to explain the relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationalism. I claim that nationalism requires a relatively educated and literate population to flourish because elites are the first to uncover philosophical and political issues in a particular society. The mass base of nationalism is thus the end product of the process of mobilization-interaction between elites and the entire population. The role of elites in religious-oriented political mobilization is no exception as well.

Respondents were selected through snowball sampling, an effective strategy where the study aims to explore people's individual and collective understandings of the political processes (Atkinson & Flint, 2004). Snowballing strategy or chain-referral helped me find further potential respondents who are relevant to the study's object. The selection process continued until I felt the sample was large enough for the study and further respondents were unlikely to yield important new information (Tansey, 2009). The extension of how large the representative sample should be or how many respondents to include related to it should be large enough to make a meaningful set of comparisons of the feedback to my research questions but not so large as to become diffuse that a detailed and nuanced focus on something becomes impossible (Mason, 2007:136). Snowball method was also helpful in contacting the population's hidden representatives. I became aware of some influential individuals and Islamic NGOs after entering the field. In doing so, however, I have paid attention to reaching a representative sample, an all-encompassing link between the sample and target population, to generalize from the findings of that sample to the wider population (Babbie, 1995; Omair, 2014).

In other words, the interviewees were selected to represent all sectors of religious groups and organizations. They were chosen purposively to represent

Kurdish Islamic circles based on their roles as public figures that can influence and transform Kurdish society. The major criterion for selecting them was based on the frequency with which they dealt with the Kurdish issue and participated in public debates within the Kurdish ıslamic circles. I first asked myself what the wider universe or population I expected to sample was. As my thesis examines the relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationalism, Muslim Kurdish intellectuals, politicians, researchers, activists in Islamic NGOs, and academics were within the scope of the study. During the study, I realized that Kurdish Islamic circles have different attitudes and motivations toward the idea of the nation. They do not form a monolithic category because even similar ideological movements do not all go the same way and act accordingly. On the contrary, religious Kurds comprise composite clustering groups accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts, and ideological competition. The lack of uniformity makes generalization difficult. If we take the in-groups and out-groups as a whole, we will have an incomplete understanding of the social reality. The representative sample I delineated can, at most, be an example or illustration of the wider population, but I am not making claims about how well it represents that universe (Mason, 2017:126).

Snowballing is not a chaotic process in which the researcher engages with mass data. Rather, "the researcher is heavily involved in developing and managing the initiation and progress of the sample and seeks to ensure that the chain of referrals remains within boundaries relevant to the study" (Biemacki &Waldord, 1981 quoted in Tansey, 2009:770). I chose snowballing as a non-random method to avoid the risk of encountering similar characteristics and the same outlook as the preceding respondents. The sample that I used is not random, is rather based on a criterion-based selection through which I construct a list of characteristics or attributes the participants in the study must possess (deMarrais & Lapan, 2003). I had certain inclusion and exclusion criteria for the interview and refrained from interviewing individuals who did not meet the requirement for a good data source. A set of inclusion criteria or exclusion criteria, or a combination of both, must be specified while illustrating a representative sample

(Luborsky & Rubinstein 1995; Patton 1990). Inclusion criteria specify attributes that respondents must possess to qualify for the study, while exclusion criteria stipulate characteristics that disqualify the participants from the study (Robinson, 2013:26).

In this study, the inclusion criteria for potential participants is to simultaneously have an ethnically Kurdishness and Sunni Muslim identity. In contrast, exclusion criteria encompass those with only Kurdish or Sunni-Muslim identity and Muslims but not from the Sunni sect. Although the inquiry about the ethnic background of the respondents would not be well-received in Turkey, I asked with some hesitation the ethnic origin of the participants before each interview telling them the reason why I asked such a question because my primary goal was to understand pious Kurds' thoughts and attitudes and perceptions on the relevant issues. Out of 66 respondents, only two are Turkish, with high relevancy to the research subject. That is why they are even known as Kurds in public. In addition, I expected the respondents who might qualify for participation to know the focus of the study and can provide a perspective on it. Although there may be many people I could interview about my research subject, I particularly contacted people who could potentially tell me what I want to know and who have a background in Islamic networks.

1.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The semi-structured interview method was chosen as the most appropriate strategy for exploring attitudes and experiences in a small group of participants representing Islamic circles in the Kurdish community. Semi-structured interviewing allowed me to ask open-ended questions and engage in dialogic interaction while letting respondents talk freely without having to answer according to static categories. I opted for it due to its fluid and flexible design. I had a list of questions in my hand before the interviews. Nevertheless, I did not restrict myself to those questions because unexpected themes often developed during the interview. Meanings are constructed as a result of interaction or co-

production involving both researcher and the interviewee, semi-structured interview consists of the construction or reconstruction of knowledge more than the excavation of it (Mason, 2017:62-63). I conducted interviews with formal and informal Islamic networks, starting with the representatives of political parties, unions, Islamic NGOs, and foundations and then moving outward to the individuals relevant to the topic. All interviews relied primarily on one-to-one conversations rather than larger group interviews or focus groups.

In total, I conducted 66 interviews, approximately lasting between one and two hours between August 2020 and January 2021. The longest interviews were with Necat Zivingi and Zekeriya Yapıcıoğlu, with 3 hours and 40 minutes, while the shortest interview was with Süleyman Serdar Budak, the ruling Justice and Development Party's (AKP) Diyarbakır Provincial Head, which lasted over 45 minutes. My fieldwork lasted nearly five months because of my difficulties accessing the interviewees for two reasons. The first was Turkey's relentless crackdown on freedom of expression and the dissent politicians, intellectuals, journalists, and human rights activists after the coup attempt on July 16, 2016, causing fear and anxiety in the Kurdish public sphere. No wonder it created a reluctance to express views and feelings in public among the Kurdish population. Some interviewees expressed opinions on particular issues provided that were off the record. The other challenge I faced during the interview was the widespread impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the interviews, therefore, took place over the internet using computer-mediated communication through various technology platforms such as Skype, Facetime, and Whatsapp. Most of the interviews were conducted in the location of the respondent's selection, varying from a house, a mosque, a madrasa, a cafe, and an office to a school. Most of the face-to-face interviews were often held outdoors. I went to the indoor meetings wearing N95 or two disposable *surgical masks*. Indeed, I felt bizarre when the two interviewees told me their tests were positive a few days after our interview, which led me to question whether it was worth risking my life for scientific work. I was not exposed to Covid-19 and did not have its symptoms during the five months of fieldwork.

I conducted data collection and analysis. Respondents were told that the purpose of the interview was to find out their views and perceptions on the relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationhood. They were also given brief verbal information on the interview schedule to explore the themes such as views on consciousness, attitudes toward the political mobilization processes, core motivations for collective action, prospects for community aim and policy stance, views on secular Kurdish nationalism and the prospect for future orientation, views on Turkish Islam and the prospect for future orientation. As noted above, my intellectual crisis through the complicated feelings and thoughts about Islam and Kurdish nationalism has influenced my orientation to this field of study. Nonetheless, I introduced myself as having little or no idea about what happened behind the scenes in the research subject I was interviewing to ensure neutrality and objectivity. I tried to be a good listener during the interviews by encouraging the participants to speak freely and avoiding unnecessary interruptions. Shutting up is among the most important rules for qualitative interviewing. When respondents got off-topic, I let them finish, then brought them back to the issue and theme my research wished to cover, but I never tried to control them to avoid missing spontaneous information (Leech, 2002:668). The participants were also informed they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without explanation.

1.4. Interview Locations

The study was primarily conducted in Diyarbakır and Istanbul with 66 people aged 35–75. Although Turkey's census data does not indicate what percentage of its population ethnically comes from Kurdish origin, Istanbul is often referred to as the largest Kurdish city in Turkey due to massive urbanization accompanied by Kurdish mobilization from rural areas to the large cities (Galletti, 1999; McDowall, 2002; Gourlay, 2018; Kalaycı, 2022). With a significant Kurdish population, Istanbul is one of the most famous centers of the public intellectual life of Turkey, particularly given its multicultural character. On the other hand, Diyarbakır has a major role in the political mobilization of Kurdish identity,

acting as a center of attraction of politics, culture, and literature among the Kurdish population. In addition to Istanbul and Diyarbakir, I conducted interviews in other cities -Ankara, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Mardin and Van, as supportive places.

1.5. Limitations

The target population for the study was the Kurdish community's Islamic circles in general, Sunni Kurds who speak Kurmanci and Zazaki dialects of the Kurdish language, in particular. The study does not include non-Sunni Muslim sects such as Shiites, Alawites, and other heterodox communities within Islam. Limited women participation was also a challenge during the fieldwork. I had difficulty reaching women participants, perhaps because Islam allows restricted social interaction between women and public space. Some of the individuals I contacted did not accept the interview. Out of 66 respondents, 7 are women, while 59 are men.

1.6. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation comprises seven chapters, including the introduction to the subject of inquiry and the conclusions drawn from the research. The second chapter following the introduction, titled "Religion and Nationalism: A Conceptual Investigation," begins with a conceptual deconstruction of religion and nationalism for further theoretical and empirical investigation. Weber's characterization of religion on two levels, namely, "the inner realm of individuals" and "the foundation of the world" and Durkheim's distinction between the realm of the sacred and that of the profane has been the point of my departure for the discussion of the influence of religion on social change. Tracing Weber's path, I suggest that religion, cannot be sufficiently explained without understanding it from within. Although a constant interaction occurs between religion and the world, which sets in motion from the spiritual to the material and from the material to the spiritual, most faiths are not something out

there but can be initially observed and experienced from within. Religion cannot be without belief, but it is not merely about faith. It is a collective enterprise about the profane because the sacred occupies a unique place in the human enterprise to construct this world from a Durkheimian perspective.

The crucial difference between Weber and Durkheim lies in their approaches to the role of religion in change. The "change" comes with collective action through the substantive meaning in Weber, while in Durkheim, it takes place in a context where society gives meaning to religious beliefs and practices. Since religion has no substantive and ontological value but draws its strength from the community, it can accommodate the national aspirations of ethnopolitical units in which it existed from a Durkheimian point of view. Islam, on the contrary, in line with Weber's definition, manifests itself through its substantive content as a system for ordering the world. Its transnational emphasis, which is, I suppose, emanating from its substantive capacity, has influenced individual and collective behaviour. The second subsection explores why religion still matters and whether secularism is in a retreat due to religious challenges to modernization processes. The chapter concludes with a critical analysis of mainstream nationalism studies for their failure to tackle the strength of religion in making and consolidating national feelings while subscribing to the modern account of nationalism as an emancipatory aspiration for political purposes. One cannot speak of nationalism if the ultimate source of political mobilization is not national consciousness oriented towards collective action. I take nationalism as a dynamic process rather than an objectivist arrangement, highlighting its being a source of motivation for the emancipation of the subordinate ethnic groups while allowing hegemony over other groups of people in the hands of the superordinate.

The third chapter, titled "The Complicated Relationship Between Religion and Nationalism," aims to understand and explain religion's role in some historical and contemporary nationalist movements worldwide. The influence of religion on nationalism has long been a puzzle for the first generations of scholars on

nationalism, who mostly neglected religious belief in studying nationalism and saw no causal link between the two. The first section critically revisits the classical modernist account of nationalism accompanied by the question of to what extent are the two phenomena mutually exclusive sets of models or contradictory forces. In what follows, the study attempts to provide a framework in which the relationship between religious and national consciousness is relativistic, with varying degrees of coexistence and competition, eventually making it ambiguous. It must be examined case by case to explore particularities. The dissertation thus embraces a contextual-dependent approach that treats nationalism as a political ideology bound to social and cultural relations, processes, and practices. This approach allows us to uncover different discourses, practices, and actions nationalism has produced, just as religious meanings vary widely according to the interpretations, procedures, and representations. Neither religion nor nationalism is uniform. The chapter then stresses the need for new alternative theoretical frameworks to nationalism that involves the so-called "return of religion" or de-secularization, considering a global resurgence of religion in the age of nationalism. Although the study was designed to accept the secular consciousness at the core of nationalism, it demonstrates the coexistence of the secular and religious. The last part deals with the definitional problem of religious nationalism, for the concept is problematic to understand and explain. It suggests a comparative and historical perspective to overcome this problem when looking at different cases that mirror the context because religion can either promote or hinder national identity.

The fourth chapter, "Two Forms of Relationship Between Religion and Nationalism" ponders why an all-encompassing definition of "religious nationalism" is misleading, as there are various interactions between religion and nationalism. No single definition or model can adequately explain religion's complex relationship with nationalism. Description changes according to circumstances and patterns in how religion and nationalism interact. It also depends on whether the two assert themselves as individual order-creating systems, the framework of ethnic conflicts in which the parties are religiously

homogeneous or heterogeneous, or whether religion is the constitutive or supportive element of the national movement. The difficulty of generalization does not, however, prevent us from laying out a category of the interplay of religion and nationalism. This chapter mainly develops a binary approach in which a symbiotic and competitive relationship exists between specific configurations of nationalism and religion. Religion has either promoted or inhibited the emergence of national sentiments. Yet, much of the literature concentrates on the fostering role of religion on national identity while saying less about its hampering effects. The first section presents the competitive relationship between religion and nationalism in which the two have mutually exclusive goals as contradicting order-creating systems. This model fits well into "Muslim nationalism" or "Muslim transnationalism." Islam still acts as a source of motivation to create a political order for self-conscious religious groups and frames their collective action.

The second section examines the symbiotic interaction between religion and nationalism, dividing it into three parts. The constitutive role of faith in the construction of nationalism will be the first focal point. The chapter then addresses the supporting role of religion as "a source of legitimation and reinforcement of national cause" rather than "a marker of ethnic identity." It ends with a brief discussion of nationalism as a kind of religion.

The fifth chapter reflects on Muslim Kurds' position vis-à-vis Kurdish national cause. The major question around which the relationship between Islam and nationalism revolves is whether pious Kurdish circles support, oppose, or are indifferent to the idea of nationalism. The study here focuses on the perception of self-consciousness, core motivations for collective actions, and political aspirations of religious elites, despite measurement problems. It explains how Islam has discouraged ethnic Kurdish consciousness from turning into a national one and promoted a supra-ethnic identity beyond ethnic boundaries. The first section deals with the pious Kurds' view on self-consciousness. It tries to understand whether ethnic grounds or religiosity influences political

mobilization in the public sphere, considering the ways in which pious Kurds embrace the idea of nation and Kurdish nationalism as well as their formulation of the Kurdish issue. Is the Kurdish issue only a matter of equal citizenship or a manifestation of the need for political status-claiming emancipation? The second section is about how the discourse of the Islamic Brotherhood does not merely correspond to the subliminal consciousness of the classical Muslim mind but also becomes a core motivation of collective action aimed at creating social and political order. Islam is a religion with political purposes. Thus, an ideological conflict exists between loyalty to the nation and the transnational claims of Islam. Nationalism, as an essentially secular consciousness, cannot find an accommodation with Islam. The second section elaborates on why pious Kurds who are dedicated to Muslim nationalism do not buy the idea of Kurdish national unity in the public sphere and do not actively participate in or remain indifferent to what is happening in Kurdish geopolitics, especially in Syria and Iraq. The last part of the chapter examines how Islam as an order-creating system has cultivated a transnational discourse and distinctive political aspirations that transcends Kurdish national claims.

The sixth chapter analyzes how religious identity reinforces national consciousness and ethnopolitical claims within the Kurdish context. Some relevant questions are as follows: Is it possible to argue that the long-standing contradiction between the substantive content of Islam and Kurdish nationalism no longer exists? Or is it imaginable to talk about Kurdish Islam in which a fusion between the self-consciousness of religious identification with that of nationalism has been a distinctive feature? What role does Islam play in the legitimacy of a national cause and the ethnicization of political mobilization oriented toward nationhood? Does it have a primary or secondary role in uniting the ethnically conscious community around a shared goal? In answering these questions, this chapter focuses on the religiously motivated Kurds' perception of self-consciousness, core motivations for collective actions, and political aspirations. The first section examines how Islam-influenced Kurdish national circles frame their ethnic identity. Do they consider it simply as a matter of

biology of human nature or more than that by transforming ethnic affiliation into a national cause? The study then discusses national consciousness around the emancipation of Kurds and the sense of belonging to a territorial imagination, Kurdistan. The view on the nation and nationalism and formulation of the Kurdish issue around national survival, security, and dignity will be focal points. The following section explores the political agendas around which the pious Kurds mobilize and their attitudes in the public sphere on relevant issues. To what extent do they take collective action with Turkish Muslims or not, and how do they regard Turkish Islamic Synthesis or Turkish Islamic communities, including orders and cemaats, and converge with secular Kurdish politics? The last part of the chapter aims to shed light on how Islam ceases to be an obstacle to Kurdish national claims, accompanied by secularization to a certain degree.

CHAPTER 2

RELIGION AND NATIONALISM: A CONCEPTUAL INVESTIGATION

2.1. Introduction

This chapter offers a conceptual analysis of religion and nationalism for further theoretical and empirical investigation into the relationship between religion and nationalism. It starts with an introduction to the question of what religion means by looking at Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, the most cited scholars in the sociology of religion, since they have become central to theories of the succeeding generations. Their approaches to the definition of religion will be briefly discussed. Weber's characterizations of religion on two levels, namely, "the inner realm of individuals" and "the foundation of the world," and Durkheim's distinction between the sacred and the profane, will be critically examined for the conceptualization of religion, particularly in terms of social change. I suggest that the spiritual (ontological) and sociological (functional) definitions of religion, on their own, do not suffice to understand the role of religion in our daily lives and the societies in which we live. I also do not consider religion as a substantive issue or social construction. Therefore, I combine Weber's ontological concern for meaning – religion as a system for ordering the world - with Durkheim's functionalism – belief as a seed of collective social action because religion has both meaning and social dimensions, which can be called "the social construction of the meaning systems ."I will mainly refer to these two aspects of religion throughout this study. I will then elaborate on why religion still matters and whether secularism is a retreat accompanied by challenges to modernization processes.

In what follows, I will focus on the emergence of the idea of nation and nationalism by pointing out the strength and limitations of some contemporary

accounts, including Ernest Renan, Ernest Gellner, Elie Kedourie, Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson, John Breuilly, including Liah Greenfeld. For these scholars, nationalism, in one way or another, is essentially secular consciousness replacing traditional religious forms of consciousness as the primary cultural mechanism of social integration. Nationalism has become "a constitutive element of modernity" or vice versa. Such approaches, however, can hardly account for the interaction between religion and nationalism due to their failure to adequately address the role of religion in constructing and consolidating a sense of national identity. In my attempt to explore nationalism, I will subscribe to various accounts of nationalism in terms of their ability to explain nationalism as an emancipatory aspiration for political purposes, notably Rennan, Connor, and Kedourie. Kedourie's description of nationalism as "a secular doctrine of self-determination" inspired by Kant's philosophy is of considerable value. Drawing on Renan and Connor's emphasis on the intangible dimension of the nation, I also assert that we cannot speak of nationalism if the ultimate source of social mobilization is not national awareness or if self-consciousness exists without political mobilization and collective action. In this way, I propose a broad definition of nationalism, whether secular or religiously motivated, regardless of all its forms. I do not, therefore, adopt an objectivist characterization of nationalism, treating it as a dynamic process of collective action. While the sense of nationalism prioritizes "the struggle for emancipation or resistance" for the subordinate ethnic groups, it does "tendency to establish hegemony over other groups of people" for the superordinate.

2.2. On Religion

It is widely acknowledged that there is neither a single definition nor a single form of religion since it is too complex and diverse to allow simple generalizations about its content and scope[1]. Since Weber and Durkheim are

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[1] Asad, for example, holds that "there cannot be a universal definition of religion, not only because its constituent elements and relationships are historically specific, but because that

particularly significant figures in the sociology of religion and their writings have become central to the theories of the succeeding generations, I will here briefly review their approaches to the definition of religion. Weber refuses to define the term in his book "The Sociology of Religion" and argues that "to define religion, to say what it is, is not possible at the start of a presentation such as this. Definition can be attempted, if at all, only at the end of the study" (Weber, 1993:1). Not surprisingly, he never came to such an end. His cautious approach to definitional problems makes sense because we live in a world where each religion has its ways of seeing, thinking, knowing, and teaching the social reality based on its historical and socio-cultural context as well as geographical limitations, despite the similar universalistic claims. Let alone diverse approaches of different religions, members sharing the same religion can understand and interpret the same divine call in unequal forms. Historically, religions have frequently been understood or interpreted in various ways. However, I do not claim that religions have never produced a universally consistent practice based on religious premises. Religious traditions have, for instance, played a universalizing role by decreasing the salience of ethnic boundaries in favor of religious boundaries in some cases, like Hui Muslim communities (Stroup, 2016:2).

Despite his unwillingness to provide a formal definition of religion, Weber seems to work with a substantive explication of religion in the "Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism." In this view, religion is something separate from society or the world. In other words, religion has its own "existence driven by the content of a belief system or an ethic that does not simply mirror the context in which it exists" (Davie, 2006: 174). Religion is conceptualized as Geist (spirit

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definition is itself the historical product of discursive processes" (Asad, 1993:29). For Flood, it is impossible to define religion in any absolute sense (Flood, 2006:47). For a detailed discussion of the problem of different approaches to the definition of religion, see Kevin Schilbrak "What Isn't Religion?", The Journal of Religion, Vol.93, No.3 (July 2013), pp.291-318; Melford Spiro, "Religion: Problems of Definition and Explanation," in Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion, ed. Michael Banton (London: Tavistock, 1966), pp.85-126; Berger, Peter L. "Some Second Thoughts on Substantive versus Functional Definitions of Religion" Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Jun., 1974), pp. 125- 133

or mind) located in the inner realm of individuals and understood as the foundation of Welt (world) or different civilizations, which according to Weber, includes Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Confucianism, Hinduism and Buddhism (Horii, 2012). If we take religion only through a functional or social perspective, we probably would not be talking about different civilizations such as these. Weber, of course, emphasizes the multi-causality and non-deterministic character of social reality, including religion. Yet "the content of a particular religion" has remained prominent to the extent that it influences individual and collective behavior. Weber's characterization of religion on two levels has been, for some, the point of departure for a discussion of the influence of religion on social change. In the Weberian sense, there has been constant interaction between religion and the world or between religious and material interests. The relationship between religion and social change runs in two directions: from the material to the religious but also from the spiritual to the material, through which change in a belief system changes social codes of behavior, as illustrated in the role of the Protestant ethic in the rise of capitalism (Weber, 2005, Davie, 2006).

In other words, there is no religion without belief, but religion is not just about faith. Religion is and historically has been necessary for social change. It can sometimes be a driving force in the struggle for national emancipation or express oppressed people's desire for justice, dignity, and recognition. Thus, religion has two aspects; an individual response to life crises and a system for ordering the world through individual or collective behavior. In other words, each religion reflects how individuals give meaning to their inner lives and physical relations with the world around them. Weber's weakness lies in that he did not anticipate the ways that "conceptual nuances, ambiguities, and complexities in religious belief systems can offer many meanings" (Smith, 2017:126-27). Many meanings, inherently, have produced different types of actions. As Peter Berger, a sociologist who contributed to secularization theory in the 1960s, has highlighted, religion has played a strategic part in the human enterprise of world-building (Berger, 1973:37), but in significantly different ways depending on the relationship that society establishes between social reality and religion. Unlike

Berger, however, I do not imply that religion is itself a "human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established" (Ibid:34). Even though religion requires a collective enterprise, it is a belief that lies at the core of religion (Stark, 2006:49).

Contrary to Weber's argument, however, the French sociologist Emile Durkheim provides a clear definition of the phenomenon. Central to Durkheim's understanding of religion is the conviction that it is about the community where people feel it binds them together and makes them one people. For him, "a religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things…beliefs and practices which unite into one single community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (Durkheim, 1995: 47). According to this definition, religion combines four elements: beliefs, practices, the Church and the sacred. For Orru and Young, the sacred has become a distinguishing element in Durkheim's definition of religion, implying the referent matter of religious beliefs and practices because Durkheim repudiated "supernatural beings as a feature of religious phenomena and instead proposed the sacred as central to all religions" (Orru&Wang, 1992:49-50). It is at this very point that Spiro correctly criticizes Durkheim for his argument that "religion refers to the sacred while secular concerns are necessarily profane" and claims that "religious and secular beliefs alike may have reference either to the sacred or to the profane" (Spiro, 1966:95). A sacred could be anything regardless of its pertinence to metaphysical matters. In other words, "a rock, a tree, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house" or anything like that can be sacred (Orru&Wang, 1992:58).

The sacred is of great value as long as it can unite the collective consciousness for a common cause because society becomes a moral community through ritual activities. Therefore, the apparent function of religion is to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to society, since God is only a figurative expression of society" (Durkheim,1995:226). Unlike Weber, Durkheim distinguished between the sacred and the profane, then saw society and religion as inextricably entangled. In this view, although religion usually evokes a sense of the sacred, it

primarily serves to unify community members as a social or moral force, thus requiring collective practices to exist. For Durkheim, there is no religion without collective representation and collective action. Acting as a group is of greater significance than "the object of worship" (Davie, 2006:175). Accordingly, religion is a somewhat collective social act that plays a crucial, regulatory, and cohesive role, mobilizes individuals, and renews the purposes of societies (Smith, 2000:797). Thus, his analysis is based on the functional approach, which assumes that religion acts as a social or moral force rather than an individual quest for life's meaning. The focal point of a religion can be God, which is, in fact, a projection and an expression of society, but it can also be one's nation or the like containing bonds that unite a community.

Smith vindicates this claim by adding that the Durkheimian perspective takes us beyond the conceptualization of nationalism as a merely modern phenomenon. So we may see "nationalism as a particular form of political religion, whose tensions with traditional religions have led to a growing politicization of religion" (Ibid.:792). To encapsulate, the substantive definition of religion refers to an understanding of religion from within, while the functional perspective focuses on the capacity of religion to serve as social power. The former includes the transcendental entities in the conventional sense, like God, supernatural beings, and worlds. The latter provides revolutionary faiths or even nationalism (Berger, 1974:128), as Durkheim demoted God and defined religion in social terms. But besides Weber's influence, Clifford Geertz criticized the reductionism of Durkheimian tradition situating religion in its socio-historical context while continuing to reject the reduction of religious conceptions to mere behavior or social structure (Munson, 1986:23)

As is seen, attempts to define religion are not neutral but reflect these thinkers' theoretical orientation. Weber's writings, for example, are within a Christian tradition. His notion of religion was generated from the Christian belief in two worlds, the spiritual and the material (Albrow, 1990:13). Similarly, Durkheim's study of religion can be understood in the context of the French Revolution on

which secular morality was founded. My writings can also be categorized in a similar vein as simply reflecting my own intellectual crisis. My aim here is not merely to lay out a general framework for the comparative definitions of religion. Following Weber, I suggest that religion, like any other area of human affairs, cannot be adequately comprehended without understanding from within in the sense of those who adhere to it. Religion is not something out there but can be observed and experienced from within. It is something real in that it exists in people's minds and influences individual and collective behavior despite its different orientations. Just as religious beliefs affect individuals and collective behavior, changes in shared belief generate changes in behavior. In this respect, Durkheim's approach to religion is more radically sociological than Weber's – that is, religion is grasped as a collective social action. The main difference between Weber and Durkheim is that social action takes its meaning from religion in Weber; in contrast, the social and political context gives meaning to religious beliefs and practices in Durkheim.

I have yet to propose a clear definition of religion in this study. My purpose is to understand and explain religion in terms of its relevance to nationalism, as we will see in more detail below. The spiritual or theological definition of religion alone, however, does not allow us to determine which beliefs and behaviors connected to it may be classified as religious or non-religious (Mitchell, 2006). I have adopted an approach, therefore, not based on a distinction between the worldly and other-worldly but on the interaction between theological and sociological in the Weberian sense. The distinction as such could be helpful for the reason that a particular religion can have an effect on the individual in the theological and ontological sense. It cannot, however, be influential in his/her sociological orientation. Or vice versa. Because individual psychologies are patterned to interpret the world and act differently, someone who regularly fulfills his/her obligation to God in their personal life may behave through secular codes in social life. Or someone who regularly refers to religious principles in social life may be unfamiliar with religion from an ontological point of view. Hence, my approach highlights that the sacred (religion), for sure,

occupies a unique place in the human enterprise to construct this world. But it is not necessarily true that this enterprise is all about the profane (world). It is virtually impossible to draw a sharp distinction between the realm of the sacred and the realm of the profane, as Durkheim did. Contrary to what he implied, religion is not about separating the sacred from the profane. Weberian and Durkheimian approaches to religion will, therefore, be noted where relevant.

Almost all religions are concerned with ultimate realities such as eternity or the meaning of life, although they vary widely according to the interpretations, representations and practices. Then it comes to constructing the social reality within which men exist in their everyday lives. For this reason, I will seek to combine Weber's ontological concern for meaning – religion as a system for ordering the world - with Durkheim's functionalism – religion as a collective social action. Substantive and functionalist approaches can overlap in the sense that a belief or a practice can be both substantively religious (concerning certain kinds of realities and what the beliefs and practices are about) and also functionally religious (about certain types of benefits) (Schilbrack, 2013:298). Therefore, these approaches should not be separated. In the Weberian sense, I suggest that religions - autonomous but not independent realms of social life- have particular doctrinal teachings and moral orientations to explain and justify circumstances and events. In other words, there is no clear distinction between the profane and the sacred.

Furthermore, each religion, as a creed, a cult, or a code of conduct, has some substantial changeless essence such as good versus evil, right versus wrong, the belief in the afterlife, etc. By changeless essence, I do not mean religious practices or rituals. What I mean is that the premises on which religion is based. To illustrate more specifically, divine unity (tawhid), prophethood (nubuwwah), resurrection afterlife in Islam; Trinity and Incarnation in Christianity; unlimited tolerance, and God is ideal, and the goal of human life in Hinduism are such examples. Unity of God (similar to Islam) and the idea of the holy land, predicated on the indivisibility between the return to the land of Israel and the

messianic redemption of the people of Israel in Judaism, is another example. The universal essence of religion, however, may manifest as particular forms with important implications for interpreting religious belief and practice.

This study claims that almost all religions include a combination of immutable essence and the ways in which human beings interpret the world around them. When I refer to functionalism, I distance myself from Durkheimian school in some ways. I do not mean that the essence of a particular religion will vary from place to place and from period to period or that the reality of religion is itself a social construction. Instead, I prefer to use the concept of "the social construction of the meaning systems" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). By this, I mean that religious beliefs and practices may come in wide varieties, but what unites them all is the view that the collective performance of practices is not always an essential feature of religion. Religion is not just concerned with rituals. For example, a person who is socialized into a religious tradition but is unsure of his belief and does not engage in regular religious practices may refuse to marry someone of another religion because of differing beliefs (Mitchell, 2006, p. 1137). It is also called a religious act despite not being essentially religious. Immutable essence means that most religions have an explicit central purpose. Catholicism, Protestantism and Islam emphasize teachings about social justice, human development and mundane concerns. If religion itself were simply functional or a social phenomenon, how would we explain the emergence and spread of religion, then. If we describe religion as the embodiment of society's highest goals and ideals, how would we explain non-religious ethics or communities?

Nonetheless, I agree with Durkheim's social realism to the extent that religion draws its strength from the community and that religion is the collective representation of that which a community counts to be sacred about itself (Durkheim, 1995). Because the sacred does not always necessarily imply belief in the supernatural but can also take the form of profane. Therefore, "the opposite of the sacred is not secular or non-religious but profane" (Smith,

2017:24). The nation, the flag, and the anthem, for instance, are being treated as sacred, which cannot reasonably be considered religious, but they are viewed as sacred at the end of the day. As such, I prefer to employ the term functional to refer to the ideological motivation of "religious beliefs and practices that unite into one single community", while I do not endorse reducing the value of any moral theory to merely a collective social action.

2.2.1. Why Religion Still Matters?

Having pulled apart and elaborated on particular definitions of religion, we can now turn our attention away from various controversial concepts of religion and focus instead on how religion works and why and how it influences people and societies. It is important to note at the outset that religion is everywhere around us. Let us assume for a minute that we are non-believers, deists, or atheists. If we look around when walking along the streets in the city we live in, it is not difficult to see people entering and exiting the mosque, the church, or the synagogue. Whatever our attitude towards them, whether positive, negative, or neutral, one thing remains certain: The appearance of temples and rituals performed around them alone keeps religion alive even in secular societies. In a Muslim country, to exemplify, however secular you are, you may find yourself in an environment where you hear azan (the call to prayer) five times each day and likely attend the funeral prayer in the mosque at least once in a lifetime.

One can also see people fasting, and restaurants are closed in the daytime during Ramadan (the holy month in Islam). These examples demonstrate that religion works as an institutional order or system in the particular socio-cultural contexts in which we are located. Apart from providing the institutional context for socialization and resocialization, religion is increasingly salient for two reasons. The first is cognitive psychology, and the second is social. In other words, while religion as a meaning system concerns itself with the ultimate meaning of life in Weber's interpretation and as a social construct, individuals and social groups are active and cooperative actors, giving it additional implications in the

Durkheimian sense. It is, however, essential to recognize that both meaning and identity (or group feeling) can change according to the historical formations and circumstances in which they occur.

As a meaning system, religion gives individuals the cognitive tools to understand and explain the world in (post) modernized societal conditions. Perhaps the most crucial element of religion is the collective belief in the supernatural, superhuman and transcendental being, or the God (Spiro, 1966:95). This applies to godless religions such as elite forms of Confucianism and Taoism, too. Their followers may have no one to pray to, but they things to pray (Stark, 2006:54). Like Spiro, Smith, by taking cultural aspects into account, locates the origin of religious phenomena in spiritual reality and wrote, "religion is a complex of culturally prescribed practices, based on premises about the existence and nature of superhuman powers … in hopes of realizing human goods and avoiding things bad (Smith, 2017:22). The notion of "superhuman power" in both Spiro and Smith, implies that religion is not human creations like the internet, capitalism or institutions. The core of all religions is that, if any, belief in superhuman power which is believed to be able to control much of reality beyond direct human intervention (Ibid, p:22).

I agree with this view to some extent that because limitations of individuals' personal capacities to address their weaknesses and concerns incline them to look for natural explanations of suffering, injustice, existential anxiety, and death through superhuman powers. These are mainly what makes religion persistent even though it leaves too many important questions unanswered, but still, religion concerns itself with ontological issues. In this way, religion works because human beings "make causal attributions to superhuman power" (Ibid.). Religion, indeed, works as a cognitive and existential system because it tells its followers about the meaning of life and the truth. As a moral code, religion offers the individual a place in the universe, a worldview on which an individual's life is based (Alston, 1964). The similar arguments Smith and Alston present share certain features with that of Weber regarding ontological

concern for ultimate meaning and salvation. In this respect, religion would collapse without making causal attribution which is its ontological feature.

Thus, the fundamental cognitive process that sustains religion is human attribution of the causes of "certain life events and experiences to the intervening influence of superhuman powers" (Smith, 2017:188-89). Cognitive processes that shape people's ability to make sense of the world serve as the basis for belief in God to understand how life and the world work (Tremlin, 2006). It is not what all people everywhere use abstract thought about their technical and practical matters, but they tend to believe that their lives are intended, purposive and meaningful. Thus, most of them adopt the notion that nothing happens randomly, arbitrarily, or meaninglessly (Smith, 2017), especially when and where people feel powerless and incapable of explaining what is happening. Malinowski, who exclusively focused on religion's individual and psychological function, believed that "religion arose as a response to emotional stress" (Malinowski, 1948). His psychological approach is intended to account for religion as a reality that enables people "to cope with life's vicissitudes". Malinowski kept his distance from the collectivist view of Durkheim, favoring the individual psychological approach. Unlike Durkheim, religion exists and continues to exist because it serves a function at the individual level. His analysis of religion and its persistence is much more about its practical aspects that enable people "to cope with life's vicissitudes."

I contend that religion has both meaning (ontological) and social (practical) dimensions. The two dimensions are not mutually exclusive in the sense that I attempt to combine Weber's ontological concern for meaning with Durkheim's emphasis on the social and Malinowski's stress on individual psychology. I will mainly refer to these two aspects of religion throughout this work. Humans in various times and places conceive of reality or existential problems through their religious beliefs, which are crucial to religion's ontology. Most religions are responses to these problems. The underlying reason for this may be the conviction that religion unquestionably engages every human concern, anxiety,

weakness, and calamity, enabling its members to avoid, relieve and cope with misfortune and crisis at the individual or psychological level. Hence, religion has remained a crucial feature of human life in facing life's uncertainties.

On the other hand, religion provides people with identity and enhances solidarity and support at the collective level in the Durkheimian sense. To clarify, the persistence of the religion's influence does not just rely on its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also to unite the collectivity serving as a badge of group identity. Like Mitchell, I primarily suggest that religious meanings (Weberian) and behaviors (Durkheimian) rise to the surface and continue to influence both individual and collective identities during times of personal and social crisis (Mitchell, 2006:1138). In this way, one can easily observe "the social construction of the meaning systems", which does not necessarily arise from top-down to bottom-up but can be formed "from below rather than from above". Religion offers its believers crucial meanings by which to orient their existence, thus shielding both individuals and society from an otherwise purposeless existence at a grassroots level (Davie, 2006:177). It is the religion through which individuals have "created communities, developed charitable institutions, provided humanitarian assistance to many in times of crisis" and have also attempted "to unify and liberate those oppressed for years under communism" as in Poland (Rieffer, 2003:217). In this sense, religion will likely exist in one way or another, for it is a natural component of the larger fabric of human and social life.

It is, however, sometimes explicit about distinguishing between ontological and practical dimensions, as Flood indicates, "religions are less about truth claims and more about identity…less about abstraction or more about tradition" (Flood, 2006:47). From my perspective, it is not clear which has played a prominent role in this regard. Such generalizations do not allow us to capture the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the phenomenon "religion". It is probably true that while some people conceive of religion as something individual or ancestral because religious faith can be a highly personal relationship between them and

God, the reverse is also true. Some others fervently believe that religious doctrine readily motivates to establish a political order, together with its transcendent orientation toward truth. Both are intelligible because the motives behind each vary across time and space, from one culture to another, and, more importantly, across religions and societies.

The motives of individuals or groups are, in any case, usually plural and often fluctuating and vary by social class, types of people, and the nature of religion. For some others, religion can also be employed for political purposes or influencing state policies due to its important place in social life in the way that "governments rely most heavily on religion, opponents tend to formulate dissent in religious terms" (Lee, 2014:58). For that matter, it often functioned in place of nationalism (Marsh, 2007:101). I am not here to suggest that secular or conservative nationalist forces simply use religion. What emerges, in fact, is a complex interaction between religion and other social realities such as ethnicity, nationalism, political ideologies, and social class. According to a view, these social realities may have religious origins but became secularized over time. Karl Marx, for example, though supposed anti-religious by many, was influenced by the "utopian millenarianism of Christendom" and "infused that utopianism with a moral passion" (Smith, 2017:98). We really have here other actual examples for the institutionalization of religion. India, for instance, is a formally secular state, but Hinduism still holds significant sway over its legal system. Similarly, Islam still has an impact upon the legal, educational and economic systems of Muslim-dominated societies. In short, religion possesses various capacities to shape people and social life in ways that influence local and national politics and international relations.

Religious influence can also stand out as exceptionally powerful through "the direct and public interventions of religious leaders in political, economic and military affairs", particularly in certain contexts where "their moral authority is highly respected by the other actors involved, whether political authorities or masses of people" (Ibid:110). Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic Revolution in Iran,

Desmond Tutu's pivotal role in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, and Dalai Lama's activism against China's occupation of Tibet are some examples that come quickly to mind. Consequently, as a pervasive basis for group identity, religion did not lose its distinctiveness and has maintained its crucial role in specific social contexts. On the contrary, it has created the collective consciousness of social groups in the age of so-called secularism and identity politics. Let us now see how secularization and religion, as social forces, can both simultaneously exist.

2.2.2. Is Secularism in Retreat?

Until the end of the Cold War, religion, not surprisingly, received little scholarly attention. Modernist accounts devoted less discussion to the role of religion in domestic and international politics. Because the modern understanding of religion assumed the incompatibility of secularization with religion that the latter became utterly irrelevant in modern and supposedly secular society (Berger 1967, 1969, 1973; Wilson, 1979, 1982; Bruce 1995, 1996, 2002). They have broadly failed to notice religion's continuing social significance since their focal point was rather secularization theories. Characterization of religion, during that period, as a changeless essence, unlike modernity's ambivalent premises, relegated it to the private sphere or minor role in modern daily life. In this view, religion and modern life are essentially incompatible, and secularization directly results of modernization.

There has been, however, growing scholarly attention to the study of religion to explain varieties of religious persistence from 1990s onwards for some reasons such as the imminent end of the Cold War, salience of counter-secularization movements in both domestic and world politics, upsurge of religion in many parts of the world -Hinduism, Buddhism, Islamic and Evangelical revivalism- rise of conflicts in which religion is involved like those in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Sri Lanka (Berger,1996,1997,1999,2000; Casanova, 1994; Davie, 1999, 2006; Habermas, 2006, Mitchell, 2006). Scholars of religious studies have

particularly tended to focus on the process of "de-secularization" or retreat of secularism with religious revivalism in some parts of the world. As one of those scholars, Berger, who previously believed that modernization necessarily leads to a decline of religion both in the minds of individuals and in society, later confessed that he and other most sociologists of religion had made a mistake in the 1960s and 70s about religion, secularization and modernity. In his own words,

> Our underlying argument was that secularization and modernity go hand in hand. With more modernization comes more secularization. It wasn't a crazy theory. There was some evidence for it. But I think it's basically wrong. Most of the world today is certainly not secular. It's very religious. So is the U.S. The one exception to this is Western Europe. One of the most interesting questions in the sociology of religion today is not, how do you explain fundamentalism in Iran? But, why is Western Europe different? (Berger, 1997:974).

Berger was correct in asserting that "there was some evidence for it" or the increase in the indicators of secularization ie. "attendance at services of worship, adherence to church-dictated personal codes especially with regard to sexuality, reproduction and marriage" (Berger, 1996:8) or visibility of the performance of religious rituals. According to this view, secularization was considered to be a simple matter of declining religiosity. There is still some evidence for it. The point, however, he and his colleagues missed is twofold. First, Berger and others were wrong to assume that secularization and religion are necessarily mutually exclusive or competitive. We know, however, today that there is no sharp distinction or a clear boundary between the two phenomena in terms of their overlapping and intertwining goals. Even some ardent secular individuals, regimes or systems did not entirely give up capitalizing on religion in terms of personal or public benefits. Thus, the rise of one does not necessarily lead to the other's decline since the two can simultaneously exist in some circumstances. Second, contrary to modernization and secularization theories suggest, religion didn't go anywhere. What happened was that it simply lost its obvious superiority in the public sphere at a certain time and at a certain place in history. It was always over there waiting for to be unveiled". It has not disappeared.

Hence, the notion that modernization leads to secularization, which will eventually triumph, has turned out to be wrong because such a secularization has not happened with the exception of Western Europe, where there is now a massively secular culture. Berger himself and some others have already noticed that secularization solely constitutes a pervasive and widespread worldview in the Western European context mainly due to the existence of pluralism in social life. It is substantially confined to Western Europe in the way that while it is much stronger in the Protestant countries, it is less influential in the Catholic ones (Berger 1996, Berger, Davie, and Fokas 2008). The United States, for instance, has not been taken as a secular country due to the higher level of religiosity among members of society. That is because although the secular elites of both Western Europe and the United States have much in common, most Americans continue to be religious in their daily lives (Davie, 2006). As Davie points out, if this is the case, the assumption that "pluralism necessarily generates religious decline becomes difficult to sustain" (Ibid.:177). It means that pluralism has, if anything, contributed to the rise rather than the decline of religion in the case of the United States (Ibid.:177).

Whitehead and Gorski go on to claim that Christian nationalism that merges Christian identity with national identity has been on the rise in the US. They argue that Donald Trump, the 45th president of the US, as a figure of Christian nationalism, "explicitly played to Christian ideas throughout his presidency by repeating the claim that the United States is abdicating its Christian heritage."[2] heritage is perceived to be a symbolic defense of the US, at least for many Americans. Trump's 2020 presidential election loss has once again revealed Christianity's crucial role in shaping US history and politics, contrary to the contention that religion loses its influence in the US. Thousands of people gathered for the "Save America" rally to challenge the election result. In the wake of calling on God to "Save America", some Trump supporters who carried

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[2] https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55578096 Trump's Christian supporters and the march on the Capitol

signs bearing religious messages such as "Jesus Saves" " In God We Trust", "God, Guns and Guts made America, let's keep all three"and chanted "Jesus is my savior and Trump is my president" marched on the Capitol building. The aftermath was violence and chaos. At this very moment, the question of whether the US is really a secular state or society may come to minds. The answer can be implicitly found in Berger's explanation that secularization is also limited to small elites but who are potentially more capable of providing effective leadership than the ordinary people.

Aside from the exception of Western Europe, Berger adds one more exception to the decline of the secularization thesis, noting the presence of a global elite with western-type higher education, especially in the humanities and social sciences who are very "influential as they control the educational system, the media of mass communication and the higher legal system" (Berger, 1996:8). Berger's elite-level view may, I think, be taken as a ground for explanation the relationship between secularization and religion in that both secular and religious fluctuations exist in the US, like many other countries, simultaneously. Unlike Berger, however, I argue that this does not mean that secularism is in retreat. There is considerable evidence from around the world that, other beings equal, secular educational, legal and political institutions have, in part, led to the lowering importance of traditional religion both as a social force and as a source of explanation of human nature and the world (Mein, 2006:148).

Just as religion does not completely lose its influence in a particular geography, so, too, the various forms of secularism are surrounded by contestation and challenges in every corner of the world. We also see new modes of secularism that do not entirely remove religion from the public sphere but allow for an accommodating relationship with religion rather than one way, like in the US, India, Poland, Turkey, Sri Lanka, and Israel. I agree with Berger and others' new formulation that secularization is no longer a worldwide theory but a theory with limited application in the Western European context to the degree that people there do not display high levels of commitment to a specific religion or belief in

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supernatural beings. Nevertheless, I do not take secularization as a simple matter of declining religiosity or the disappearance of religion underpinned by the distinctively French notion, but rather as the decline of the importance (not the absence) of religion in public space (Wilson, 1982; Bruce, 2002).

What we understand when we think of secularization is strongly shaped by how we conceive of religion and vary according to nationality, gender, social class, personality, profession and age. It is hardly surprising that religion has not simply receded into the realm of private and the sentiments, still occupies a distinctive place in the social construction of reality. As pointed out earlier, the sacred becomes "integral to the well-being of both individual and collective life" in Durkheimian sense (Davie, 2006:188). True, religion is no longer on the retreat and is increasingly becoming more salient in the public sphere compared with the 19th or the first half of the 20th century. But it is not clear whether religion is re-emerging today and secularism is in retreat in many parts of the world. Secularism in France, for example, has become an alternative source of collective identity that Durkheim sought to promote as a form of religion suited to a modern industrial economy (Ibid.:182). But then, it is true that religion, as a spiritual and social force, has been on the rise in many different regions, while it has been disregarded by secularism as the dominant paradigm in some other societies.

Let me give two distinct but well-known examples in which religion and secularism are in a complicated interaction. What rising religious nationalism in India, despite a pervasive secular culture among the society, distrusts specifically are secularism and secular state, while political elites in China still look with suspicion on religion for thinking that it is "a backward phenomenon that has lost its importance in Chinese society" (Veer, 2008:390). Although secularism and religion in China and India have, indeed, very similar genealogies, their route map is almost the opposite. Chinese brand of secularism saw religion "as a sign of backwardness that had to be removed and controlled", it was perceived as a sign of national culture or social identity, an essential difference from the

colonizing British (Ibid.). Yet, today, one must forget that religion cannot be a sole social force in any society or essential source of intellectually satisfying explanations of human nature and the world for all. It is, therefore, hard to agree with Berger when he claims that secularism, as a phenomenon, is in retreat (Berger, 1996). As a human project in a constant processes of construction and renovation, secularism does not necessarily mean that religion ceased to matter for everybody or every society.). We do not yet know where this process evolve since social realities cannot happen at once. We know that we do not experience and go through a homogeneous or smooth secularization process but with ups and downs. If we consider secularization as rationalization and a kind of institutional differentiation in the Weberian sense, it seems that secularization comes no decline of individual-level religious belief under any circumstances (Eastwood & Prevalakis, 2010). As already pointed out, secularization and religion continue to exist side by side.

 To conclude, the assumption of secularization as the dominant paradigm postulated that modernization means secularization has collapsed. Predictions of secularization thesis about the inevitable decline and disappearance of religion have turned out to be wrong either. As Bruce rightly puts it, however, secularization is irreversible because it is an "unintended consequence of a variety of complex social changes we can summarily call modernization" (Bruce, 2006). In other words, modernization is necessary but not a sufficient element to explain the complexity and diversity of secularization. Despite its modern characteristics, secularization has never been uniform or inevitable in that it takes many expressions and various forms at different levels of religion and society (Smith, 2017:244). It can thus fairly be argued that secularization is a relativistic to a degree, then, it can be specific to a certain religion, within the bounds of a particular time and geographical context depending on the religious tradition, historical and social circumstances, and people involved as well as the substantive content of the particular religion. (Ibid.). For instance, though many common features, Egypt and Turkey have followed different paths on the way to secularization.

It is, of course, obvious that the process of secularization has been neither monolithic nor linear, it provoked its counter-movements in the forms of protest and resistance against secular elite that crippled modernity-secularization linkage in some instances. Secularism, as a challenge to religion, has itself faced challenges as many other social phenomena. In this respect, "counter-secularization movements" are at least significant social facts in the contemporary world as secularization on the grounds that secularization at the state level did not go parallel with secularization at the level of individual or societal consciousness. Khoury concurs with Berger on the counter-secularization movements regarding the ideological challenge of political Islam in much the same way as a structural crisis of the secular states in the Middle East (Khoury quoted in Tibi, 1997:5).

Islamic movements in Muslim countries, for instance, have not merely adopted traditional religiosity but rather constitute a challenge to "secularization" and "modernization". They owe their political success to primarily social and religious grievances that the secular parties lost credibility due to the failures of socialism and secular nationalism" (Munson, 2006:267). Islam's universalistic claims, however, did not prevent many of them from accommodating a particularistic ideology such as nationalism. Then, as Coakley asks how religion can feed into nationalism if the great religions are universalistic and transcendental unlike nationalism (Coackley, 2012:83). I will not go futher into this question, as I will later elaborate patterns of nationalism with which even universalistic religions are sometimes associated. I now aim to discuss the content and boundaries of the nation, considering the relatively dominant position of modernist approaches within the mainstream theoretical debate on nationalism.

2.3. On Nationalism

Nationalism, like religion, addresses intrinsic human needs to make sense of the world. It provides its members with a secure and established identity that can be

as important as religion (Rieffer, 2003:218). Unlike religion, however, contemporary theoretical debates on nationalism have sparked interest within academic community in the last decades of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century during the time which was called "the age of nationalism" (Kohn, 1950) or "the spring of nations" when nationalism appeared to be ruling passion on the continent of Europe (Greenfeld, 1993). But most accounts of nationalism were produced in the second half of the 20th century. As an ideology or a political and social movement, however, nationalism itself has been very much in evidence since at least the end of the eighteenth century (Özkırımlı, 2010:9). It would be, then, accurate to say that the discussions of nationalism have followed a similar path in that scholars from various disciplines have offered various explanations for this multifaceted phenomenon. In line with paradigmatic changes which have made the nation a political and social power in world politics or the inter-state political order, the concept of nationalism has proved more resilient than expected as a subject of academic inquiry in the intellectual arena. Scholarly literature on nationalism today is vast and continues to expand, including numerous classifications based on theorists in the field. Some do not always reflect the works of the thinkers concerned and thus can be seriously misleading (Ibid.).

In this section, I will not search for details of historical debates on the emergence of nation and nationalism. I will mainly seek to critically discuss the writings of some influential modernist scholars whose contribution to the literature is generally acknowledged and much addressed by most, if not all, scholars. My purpose in this section is to reveal that there are and will be various forms of nationalism because they follow a different path and undergo considerable change over time. Nations and national identities are neither fixed nor static because they are ways of articulating that shapes our consciousness and collective action in multiple contexts and on different levels. More importantly, they are composite entities in which collective social action is formed by the association of individuals but accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts, and ideological competition among its members. For all that, nationalism as a

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modern political ideology and an emancipatory aspiration for self-determination, in which Kedourie gives us a precise definition, occupies a central position in this endeavor to understand it properly. According to the doctrine of self-determination, humanity is divided into distinct and separate nations through which its members acquire freedom and fulfillment (Kedourie, 1996).

2.3.1. Nationalism as a Sign of Modernity

Scholars have long focused on an adequate definition of nationalism. But they have yet to agree on the general causes and mechanisms that set in motion nationalist sentiments. Again, there is no agreement in the field on the success of some nationalist movements and the failure of others. Let us begin with Weber's definition of the concept of nation. In the first section of this chapter, as we may recall, Weber's difficulty of definining satisfactorily the term "religion" has been discussed. When it comes to the definition of nation, he does not have the same difficulty. For him, "nation is a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own; hence, a nation is a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own" (Weber, 2000:9). The constituent elements of Weber's thinking of nationalism include "a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups" and "the role of politics under the sponsorship of the state" rise to prominence, among other things.

Weber's characterization of nation as emotion-based community whose aim is to create a political entity or state resembles Ibn Khaldun's conception of asabiyyah that is the feeling which makes possible the solidarity of one group whose ultimate purpose is royal authority (mulk) vis-a-vis other groups. Asabiyyah was later formulated and interpreted in the framework of a concept of nationalism by some scholars such as Von Kremer, T. Khemiri and Sati al Husri (Tibi, 1997:139). In my view, it is hardly possible to see asabiyyah as equivalent to or an authentic pattern of nationalism due to its mutative nature. Despite the lack of a clear definition, asabiyyah, compared to nationalism, is doomed to change corresponding to the historical cycle in which it appears. Suffice it to say, at this

stage, the two phenomena may appear to be similar from the point of their functions. While the royal authority is the natural aim of asabiyya, nationalism aspires to create a political community based on a particular nation.

On the other hand, although Durkheim placed his whole emphasis upon collective consciousness of a particular human society i.e. the family, clan, the tribe, the city state, the nation and religion, he admits that national state is the most highly organized human group that existed (Mitchell, 1931). He came to regard the nation as the supreme reality of his time and believed that domestic ends should be subordinate to national ends. French education, for instance, ought to be something essentially national (Ibid:101-102). On the definition of nation, the position he adopted is closer to that of Weber in terms of its objectives. According to him, "a nationality is a group of human beings, who…desire to live under the same laws, and to form a single state" (Ibid.:96). The essence of his nationalism is his understanding of the nation as "the most exalted collective being" with a personality distinct from and superior to that of its individual members, like his other societies.

Nationalism, for him, is "a kind of religion or perhaps it is a religion" because it provides meaning and purpose to individuals and some basis for communal life in modern times (Mentzel, 2020:2). The collective consciousness of a particular group was underpinned by religion in pre-modern societies. Weber and Durkheim have much in common. Though Weber stresses the multi-causality of a social phenomenon, he is concerned with identifying and explaining national identity in terms of secularization theory, like Durkheim. Another common feature of these two approaches is a distinction between traditional and modern societies deriving from western experiences. It is based on the belief that modernization involves a breakdown of the conventional patterns of religion and building a new type of society with new values and new relationships.

In his famous lecture "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" (What is a Nation?) delivered at Sorbonne in 1882, Ernest Renan defines the nation as "a soul or spiritual

principle". It is a "historical result brought about by a series of convergent facts" and constituted by two things "the past and the present" or "the possession of common memories and the desire to live together" (Renan, 1996:52). In his opinion, objective characteristics such as race, language, material interest, religious affinities, geography and military requirements are not adequate for creating a nation. It seems pretty evident that he is not within the lands of objectivism, for his elucidation of the nation does not attribute to "the tie of blood". England, France and Italy (even Germany), provide vivid examples where "the blood is the most mixed" (Renan, 1996:48). "Common glories in the past" and common will in the present are essential conditions for being a nation while forgetting is another crucial factor in creating a nation ironically. Forgetting what? The essence of a nation is that its members forget what happened in the past. Such examples abound in French history. "No French citizen knows whether he is a Burgundian, an Alan, a Taifale, or a Visigoth, yet every French citizen has to have forgotten the massacre of Saint-Bartholomew or the massacres that took place in the Midi in the thirteenth century" (Renan, 1996:45). Drawing on these samples, Renan argues that unity is always put into practice through brutality.

Another striking point in Renan's view is "the will", similar to Rousseau's idea of "general will". What distinguishes Renan from Herder and Fichte who are mainly interested in "language" or culture is his emphasis on the conception of nation which is grounded on "will" and "consciousness". Herder for example argues that "to rob a nationality of its language or to degrade it, is to deprive it of its most precious possession" (Herder quoted in Özkırımlı, 2010:13). In a similar vein, Fichte writes, "wherever a separate language is found, there a separate nation exists, which has the right to take independent charge of its affairs and to govern itself ... where a people has ceased to govern itself, it is equally bound to give up its language and to coalesce with conquerors". Whereas Renan insists that language tells us very little about the blood of those who speak of it, thus, that is not what nation is about. Speaking a common language helps to build a degree of unity, but it does not force people to do so. Because if language was a

constituent element of a nation, The US and England, Latin America and Spain would form single nations. Similarity of language does not generate becoming a nation. He then proposes a spiritual ingredient of nationality.

In his own words, "there is something in man which is superior to language, namely, the will" (Renan, 1996: 50), even though he does not sufficiently explain how, when and under what conditions the will of the members of a nation emerges. According to this idea, despite being perhaps one of the most important components of national identity, language is not sufficient to constitute a nation. Renan appears to develop "a theory of nationalism" with normative implications, for he postulates that each member as an inseparable part of a nation has full consciousness. Yet, as Hastings points out, it would not be wrong to say that everyone within a nation does not necessarily have full consciousness that it exists. Or one cannot simply say that "this is a nation" or "this is not" because it is not a simple matter of a nation existing or not existing (Hastings, 1997:25-26). Thus, a particular nation, if any, does not form a monolithic ideal like what Renan envisioned.

In addition to the will and consciousness, Renan notes, neither a community of interest nor religion is sufficient for a nation's existence. Because interests do not suffice to make a nation without bonds of sentiment, a sense of shared destiny among the members of the community, which can also be found in Ibn Khaldun and Weber's writings. In a similar vein, Renan appears to have taken for granted nationalism as large scale solidarity shared by the feeling of support. He also stands closer to Durkheim in insisting that "a nation's existence is daily plebiscite", stressing the collective character of nation (Renan, 1996:53). Here again, like consciousness, Renan's account of the nation treats it as if nations are monolithic and unitary collective actors with common purposes through daily plebiscites. His understanding of religion also differed too profoundly from that of Durkheim, who believes that "religious beliefs and practices that unite into one single community", in neglecting the gravity of religion in collective conscience since Renan admits that religion has become an individual matter, it

only concerns mental and emotional world of the individuals. His approach to religion is, indeed, one of the weaknesses of his thinking, for it is too narrow to understand the relationship between religion and nationalism. As we will see in more detail below, religion can provide one of the main motive forces for national mobilization in different parts of the world.

Not surprisingly, selected examples of Renan's conception of nation are modern France, Germany, England, Spain and Italy whose defining characteristics is "the fusion of their component populations". Renan goes even further and makes the point that "there is nothing analogous to what you will find in (unmodern) Turkey, where Turks, Slavs, Greeks, Armenians, Arabs, Syrians, and Kurds are as distinct today as they were upon the day that they were conquered" (Renan, 1996:44). Such an account that reduces nationalism to Western European states makes sense, however. In the year of 1882, Ottoman Empire did not seem to fit Western model of nation, Renan maintains, due to lack of fusion among its ethnic elements. It was likely that these elements had failed to forget their past, hence, they remained divided into distinct, objectively identifiable ethnic groups. They could not be "one" like modern European societies. For my own part, Renan was right in explaining the nation to focus on the fusion of distinct ethnic elements despite their historical and sociological variations. It is, of course, not possible to claim that Ottomans lacked unity, which is always established by means of brutality according to Renan, if there was no fusion among its elements. If Ottoman Empire was not, in modern sense, a nationalistic state, what was it like to be? We cannot find an appropriate answer to this question in Renan's lectures. What was, indeed, the cohesive bond that became the major way of providing an identity to members of ethnically distinct populations in Ottoman territorial sovereignty?

My answer to this question is unequivocal: Islam has frequently been employed as a cohesive social force to unify distinct groups of people, excluding non-muslims. Muslim identity was especially promoted through integration of religiously homogeneous ethnic groups into the Ottoman system when the need

to create order and unity becomes paramount particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries. Islam was explicitly a way of collective social act in Durkheimian sense with regard to its functional ability to bind people together. Those who remained out of the Muslim ummah had no other choice but to comply with political and social order reinforced by religious values, taking advantage of limited freedom and tolerance. After the period when nationalism became the dominant political paradigm in Western Europe, some Ottoman elites decided that nationalism is indispensable for modernization in order to catch up Western material success[3]. The ruling elites sought to create a new nation based on a combination of ethnic and civic model, in spite of Renan's account of the lack of fusion among the Ottoman society stemmed from its traditional character.

Ernest Gellner, on the other hand, following Weber, Durkheim and Renan puts it, nationalism is not a universal necessity, implying it has become a sociological necessity in the modern world (Gellner, 1983). His theory of nationalism is not limited to European history, but based on an analysis of what modernization entails everywhere in the world. He purports to offer that nationalism is not "the only force operating or an irresistable one" against its rivals even in the modern world, but it will definitely come in the end. Gellner presents an argument that shares certain features with that of Weber and Durkheim within the context of a sociological tradition whose cardinal feature is "a distinction between traditional and modern societies" (Özkırımlı, 2010:98). As a prominent representative of modernist approach of nationalism, Gellner objects to inherent attribution of nation based on the belief that "a man must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears" (Gellner, 1983:6). He also rejects theories of nationalism which regard nationalism as "a natural, self-evident and self-generating

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[3] Selim Deringil offers a more detailed analysis of the continuity of Turkish nationalism betweeen Ottoman State and the Kemalist Republic of Turkey. Deringil, S. (1993). The Ottoman Origins of Kemalist Nationalism: Namik Kemal to Mustafa Kemal. *European History Quarterly*, *23*(2), 165–191. See also Makdisi, U. (2002). After 1860: Debating Religion, Reform, and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire. *International Journal of Middle East Studies, 34*(4), 601-617.

phenomenon". Because "it is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round" (Gellner 1983:55). Eric Hobsbawm, a notable and influential representative of modernist theories of nationalism, offers a similar explanation: "Nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round" (Hobsbawm, 1990: 10). In short, Gellner concludes:

> nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed political destiny, are a myth; nationalism, which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: that is a reality, and in general an inescapable one (Ibid: 48–9).

On the origin or starting point of national identity and nationalism, Gellner's central question is: "Do nations have navels?". His answer to this question is constructed on the grounds of an analogy with the creation of humans. Adam and Eve, unlike their descendants and ensuing generations, were first created and did not have a navel because they did not go through the process by which people acquire navels. The same applies to the nation. "Some nations have it and some don't and in any case it's inessential" (Gellner, 1996: 367). In light of this perspective, navel-free nationalisms are very clear instanses of modernism. Estonian nationalism is a case in point. In Gellner's words;

> (Estonians) were just referred to as people who lived on the land as opposed to German or Swedish burghers and aristocrats and Russian administrators. They had no ethnonym. They were just a category without any ethnic self-consciousness. Since then they've been brilliantly successful in creating a vibrant culture … (which) was created by the kind of modernist process (Ibid.: 367–68).

In addition, Gellner posits a progressive description of the origin of nationalism focusing on correlation between industrialization and nationalism including the standardization of local languages. In his view, as a natural and perhaps necessary form of society in modernity, nationalism is closely related with the distinctively industrial, growth-oriented economy and development of a common culture, that is, a shared language and education. What he calls "high culture" then becomes a requirement at a certain point in a modern industrial society

which largely depends on capitalism, urbanization, cognitive development and secularism. The ultimate aim of nationalism is, therefore, cultural homogeneity through the organization of human groups into large, centrally educated and literacy-based cultural units. Similarly, industrialization would generate a homogeneous culture, too. In this way, nationalism is essentially "the general imposition of a high culture on society" and holds together "an anonymous, impersonal society made up of mutually substitutable atomized individuals (Gellner, 1983:57).

The overall conclusion for Gellner is straightforward: "shared high culture" tends to become the basis of a nation, as cultural homogenization in modern industrial societies would bring about political homogenization which also paves the way for nationalism. After all, there cannot be nations in pre-modern ages when "the nationality of the rulers was not important for the ruled, what mattered for them was whether the rulers were more just and merciful than their predecessors" since there was no cultural homogenization (Gellner, 1964:153). In a similar vein, Hobsbawm shares Gellner's view of modernity of both nations and nationalism, which are generally associated with the process of industrialization, by establishing a link between nationalism as a historically recent phenomenon and the rise of modern territorial sovereignty. (Hobsbawm, 1990: 9-10). According to Hobsbawm, who also emphasizes the role of politics in understanding of nationalism, nations emerge in the context of a particular stage of economic and technological development, including consciousness of belonging to a political and cultural group as a perceptual aspect of nationalism (Hobsbawm, 1990).

The idea of nationalism consisted of three overlapping stages in the modernization process: technology, social transformation and politics. Consequently, nationalism, as a phenomenon of a modern society, has been inherent in a certain set of social conditions, which in fact prevail in the modern world, and nowhere else. Interestingly, Gellner is not denying the existence of pre-industrial structures and national sentiment in some instances. Because

exceptionless generalizations are seldom in a complex world, these counter-examples do not prevent his theory from being sociologically explicable (Gellner 1983: 139). The examples he gave are really interesting. The Somalis and Kurds, whose sense of lineage affiliation are strong and vigorous, are "the blending of old tribalism based on social structure with the new, anonymous nationalism based on shared culture" (Gellner, 1983:85).

Gellner's conception of nationalism is the most explicit statement: "nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (Ibid:1). In light of this definition, it would not be inaccurate to suggest that nationalism virtually adds up to the aspiration for the sovereignty of a national group over a particular territory it considers to be its homeland. Nationalism is primarily rooted in demographic homogeneity so that a specific ethnic group demarcated along territorial and cultural lines desires to have their own political unit. Perhaps the most vital aspect of Gellner's theory lies in its inclusive definition of the concept of nationalism, that is, "a norm for the legitimacy of political units in the modern world" (Gellner, 1983:49). His definition, which articulates nationalism as "the ultimate source of political legitimacy" and "fundamental "organizing principle of interstate order," seems perfectly intelligible because it is as valid today as it was when it was written.

Gellner's theory, however, has been extensively subjected to various criticisms for its neglect of the emotional sources of national sentiment (Anderson, 1992), paying adequate attention to the view from below (Hobsbawm, 1990) and overestimation of the role of industrialization (Kedourie, 1996; Zubaida, 1978). Hobsbawm, for example, admits that nation and nationalism are socially "constructed essentially from above". But, he continues, it is not possible to understand these two phenomena "unless analysed from below in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and still less nationalist" (Hobsbawm, 1990:10-11). Nevertheless, Hobsbawm's observation does not remain compelling in that his work does not itself "provide much of an analysis of the effects of modernization

on the lower classes", as Koelble notes (Koelble, 1995:78). Elie Kedourie, who describes nationalism as a modern doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century, also looks with some suspicion on the role of industrialization in the emergence of the nations, unlike Gellner. Kedourie traces the origin of the nation back to the idea of self-determination, which is at the centre of Kant's philosophy, that "a good man is an autonomous man, and for him to realize his autonomy, he must be free", thus "self-determination becomes the supreme political good" (Ibid.:22).

In this view, a determination of the will comes the determination of the unit of populations. In other words, efforts for full self-determination of an individual makes sense of national self- determination. Hence, nationalism is largely a doctrine of national self-determination, self-realization or a determination of the will (Ibid.:76). Gellner, however, strongly disagrees with Kedourie's Kantian doctrine of nationalism and claims that "Kant is the very last person whose vision could be credited with having contributed to nationalism". Because it is the essence of Kant's philosophy that "a person's identity and dignity is rooted in his universal humanity not in his cultural or ethnic specificity". For this reason, "if a connection exists between Kant and nationalism at all, then nationalism is a reaction against him, and not his offspring" (Gellner, 1983:132-34).

Apart from self-determination, Kedourie differs from Gellner in underlining the role played by "the political thought of German Romanticism" rather than industrialization in the appearance of national consciousness. For him, Gellner's tendency to associate nationalism as a prerequisite for or a response to industrialization does not match either nationalism's or industrialization's chronology, since nationalism as a doctrine was enunciated in German speaking lands where there was as yet hardly any industrialization. Likewise, the idea of nationalism later spread in various areas like the Balkans and other parts of the Ottoman Empire before the advent of industrialization (Kedourie, 1996:143). Industrialization does not necessarily result in nationalism in all societies, we

should also pay attention to the historical and regional conditions under which it arises (Zubaida, 1978). To sum up, nationalism should not be treated as a decisive product of industrial social organization which is characterized by high level of social mobility and homogeneous culture.

As Miroslav Hroch and Van der Veer rightly observes in their analysis of Gellner's position, industrialization may, at the most, be viewed as one of many preconditions of successful nation formation, but it is far from "the origin or "starting point" of the nationalism (Hroch 2006, Van der Veer, 1994). Another critic points out that Gellner makes a teleological assumption that while the rise of nationalism may not be smooth everywhere, it will eventually emerge and yield the fruits of modernity (Sally Falk quoted in Van der Veer, 1994). Despite the fact that there are crucial links between the industrialization process and the emergence of nationalism, Gellner seems to exaggerate the success of homogenization. Like any other social phenomenon, modernization and homogenization always simultaneously create their own counterforces, that is, antagonization and heterogenization (Ibid.). Veer is correct in asserting that Gellner tells us little about contradictions of homogenization and the modes of resistance it encounters. Still, Veer admits that a state-controlled education system has been instrumental in the gradual homogenization of culture.

Benedict Anderson is another scholar who draws our attention to the role of the modern processes - the spread of print-capitalism with the rise of modern bureaucratic state- in the construction of nations as "imagined community" (Anderson, 2006). Accordingly, the general increase in literacy rates along with "the coalition between Protestantism and print-capitalism created large reading publics" and mobilized the people to gather public support for political purposes (Ibid.: 40). Nationalism is, essentially, a concomitant of cultural conditions which give birth to new imagined communities (nations), with the decline of religiously imagined communities and dynastic realms. In other words, nationalism became apparent when the two large cultural systems – the church and the dynasty- disappeared. Then, it looks clear that nationalism in Anderson's

view relies heavily on the dichotomy between traditional and modern dealing with the social-cultural transformation brought by capitalism rather than the awakening of historical self-consciousness.

The problem here is that, as Veer notes, Anderson's argument is based upon "ahistorical and essentializing treatment of culture as either traditional or modern" (Veer, 1994:16). He overlooks the impact of colonialism and orientalism while reducing modernization to Europe, which is assumed to be universal. His theoretical position is therefore close to that of Gellner. In their discussion of the emergence of nationalism, which divides societies into traditional and modern, tradition is what societies have before the great transformation of capitalism touches them, and what seems to characterize traditional societies most is that they are under the sway of religion (Ibid.:15). Both scholars prioritize "cultural heterogeneity" or imply the cultural project of the modern nation-state in understanding nationalism, despite their disagreements on various points. In contrast to Gellner, however, Anderson treats nationalism not as an inevitable consequence of the development from agrarian to industrial society, but rather as "the attachment that people feel for the inventions of their imaginations' and a product of cultural modernity (Anderson, 2006:141).

In this context, John Breuilly should also be mentioned for his stress on nationalism as a form of politics, like Weber. For him, scholarly literature on nationalism does not pay enough attention to the politics, but it focuses our attention on modernization, industrialization, economic development, class etc. Gellner, for example, downplays the role of political dimensions of nationalism while overemphasizing the connection between transition to industrialization and nationalism. Anderson, too, was wrong to neglect the significance of power politics, which, in fact, determines what culture becomes nation, while exaggerating the impact of cultural dimension of nationalism. As a reply to Gellner and Anderson, Breuilly points to the influence of political structure and concludes, "if not all cases of industrialization plus cultural nationality produce

nationalism, if nationalism can be produced in the absence of industrialization and cultural nationality, we must recognize that the modern state is not necessarily national or nationalist" (Gellner, 2006:XIV). He has cast doubt on Gellner and Anderson's assumption that nationalism requires a cultural homogenization arguing that it does not explain why unification of nationalism itself arise.

In this sense, he cites the example of the unification of Germany which was associated with nationalist ideas and actions on the basis of the principles of constitutionalism and self-determination rather than cultural unification (Breuilly, 2000). Breuilly admits that nationalism can or do develop strong cultural concepts of the nation, but it is mainly (like other political ideologies) contains a doctrine of political order based on "inclusion/exclusion" or "the us/them distinction" (Ibid.:221). Politics, in fact, lies at the heart of nationalism, which is about power. Although cultural dimension matters in the analysis of nations and nationalism, it can merely explain why a small proportion of ethnic groups have become consciouss of themselves as a nation. In other words, the nationalist intellectuals and politicans had to persuade the masses to form a nation through promotion of a particular national identity. The nationalist ideas were carried and implemented through three different stages: "Coordination, mobilization and legitimacy". By "coordination", nationalist ideas were used "to promote the idea of common interests amongst a number of elites which otherwise have rather distinct interests in opposing the existing state"; By mobilization, nationalist ideas were used "to generate support for the political movement from broad groups hitherto excluded from the political process"; By legitimacy, nationalist ideas were used "to justify the goals of the political movement both to the state it opposes and also to powerful external agents, such as foreign states and their public opinions" (Breuilly, 1996:166-167).

Nationalism is, therefore, essentially a political doctrine built upon three premises: "There exists a nation with an explicit and peculiar character; the interests and values of this nation take priority over all other interests and values;

the nation must be as independent as possible (that) requires at least the attainment of political sovereignty" (Breuilly, 1994:2). Perhaps Breuilly's the most important contribution to the theoretical debate on nationalism is his state-oriented approach regardless of its association with the development of capitalism, despite its modernist credentials. Because power politics is eventually about control of the state. Then, the state is leading cause of the rise of nationalism, at the same time (Breuilly, 1994). A similar point is made by Ibn Khaldun who argues that the ultimate purpose of "asabiyyah" or "the feeling of solidarity" of one group is royal (political) authority, as already stated.

Breuilly appears to stand closer to Ibn Khaldun in terms of his emphasis on political sovereignty in understanding nationalism. Nevertheless, Breuilly's view needs to be criticized for its inability to explain the long-term existence of stateless nationalisms like Tamils, Sikhs as well as Igbo people. It also fails to account for the emotional attachments, cultural sentiments, strong passions and psychological circumstances aroused by nationalism. One of the most controversial arguments that Breuilly made is about power politics or the nationalists' view of power. Is power a means or an end for nationalist ideologues and elites? The answer lies somewhere between the two, mainly because, the ultimate aim of nationalist movements is to establish a politically independent nation state in the belief that it would bring prosperity, equality, security, dignity and recognition as a separate entity. They do not necessarily do so with the purpose of attributing to power relations in the political sphere, but with the aim of self-determination that requires the formation of national communities, as Kedourie noted.

2.3.2. Modernity as a Sign of Nationalism: A Different Conceptualization

Unlike Breuilly, Liah Greenfeld does not make a priori assumption about nationalism as a function of the state, while not underestimating significance of the state, however. For her, nationalism has been "a constitutive element of modernity", rather than "a product of the structures and processes of

modernization", unlike the writings of a number of theorists of nationalism such as Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson etc. (Greenfeld, 1996a). It means that there can be no nation and nationalism without modernity because modernity is itself defined and shaped by nationalism. In other words, a modern society is by definition a nation which is a "historically recent phenomenon". Nationalism, in its broadest sense, encompasses national consciousness (identity) and collective action based on the principle of nationality. Following Durkheim, Greenfeld maintains that it is a secular form of consciousness that "sacralizes the secular" (Greenfeld, 1996b). The reason why Durkheim chose to declare that "God is society" was also "modern sacralization of the secular through national consciousness" (Ibid.).

Greenfeld's conception of nation also refers to political and cultural elite sectors of society, rather than to a society as a whole (Greenfeld, 1993:49). As she notes, the concept of the nation as an elite phenomenon attracts our attention to the account of the emergence of nationalism that focus on representation. The elites represent the nation to the people, rather than representing the people (Greenfeld, 1996b:106). Hroch, too, stresses the massive role of elites-activists in the structural phases of a successful national movement. In the first two phases of A and B, activists have sought to attract the masses, if not successful wholly, national sentiments and aspirations. The majority of the population have become concerned about national consciousness in the last phase, which Hroch calls Phase C, turning to a mass movement (Hroch, 1985). Brass goes one step further by exaggerating the importance of the role of elites and argues that "ethnicity and nationalism are not givens but are social and political constructions, they are creations of elites" (Brass, 1991:8-9).

I agree with the role of elites in shaping national identities to some extent that elite enterprise is essential for the initial establishment of nationalism and I have therefore employed elite interviews in this study to explain the relationship Islam and Kurdish nationalism as we will see in more detail in the next chapters. But the concept of nationalism as an elite phenomenon does not make immune to

criticisms. Walker Connor objects to elite-based explanation of nationalism and claims that "national consciousness is mainly a mass, not an elite, phenomenon", but scholars of nationalism have largely remained faithful to written records for evidence and failed to observe popular aspirations (Connor, 2004:40). It is hardly possible to expect Connor's argument to be revealing. As I already indicated, I adopt the view that nationalism requires relatively educated and literate population to flourish, because elites are the first to uncover intellectual and political problems in the evolution of national identity. Nationalism is infused into society at the hands of intellectuals and politicians through mobilization, but the masses are convinced that their collective identity is under threat. Concrete conditions must also exist for this. The mass base of nationalism is thus the end product of the process of mobilization-interaction between elites and the entire population in the genesis of nationalist thought. Once national identity has become established and self-sustaining process, however, the domination of elites tend to gradual decline by further spreading a sense of solidarity among the masses.

The most distinctive characteristic of Greenfeld's understanding of nationalism, as one of the initial challenges to the prevalent view in the literature on nationalism, is her criticism raised against the assumption that nationalism has become a functional requirement of secularized societies. Greenfeld's position differs from mainstream modernist theories of nationalism due to its attachment to religion in forming national consciousness. In her view, "nationalism emerged in a time of ardent religious sentiment...the time of Reformation. It was able to develop and become established owing to the support of the religion, and in many cases, it incorporated religion as a part of national consciousness (Greenfeld, 1993:48-49). For example, the necessary legitimacy of the new English national identity emanated from unearthly sources or Protestantism during its formation. Nonetheless, Hastings criticizes Greenfeld for not going far enough and being still within the enterprise of the modernists. In Greenfeld's work,

nationalism remains the road to modernity, a road which still opens in the late eighteenth century apart from the one privileged exception of England. I am not convinced by the great divide between the pre-modern and the modern and I certainly do not think that nationalism is … from the former to the latter. It can often be a road in quite the opposite direction… Secondly, she still does not get England right. For Greenfeld, 'the emergence of national sentiment in England' is to be located in 'the first third of the sixteenth century'. I find this decidedly unlikely. For one thing there is really no obvious reason why it should emerge at that point, prior to the Reformation and in a period of peace. For another she, like all other modernists, totally avoids consideration of the medieval evidence. (Hastings, 1997:8-9)

Greenfeld's originality lies in her reformulation of religion (in the Weberian conception of "meaning") and nationalism as "the basis for the social order"[4]. Although structural similarities between religion and nationalism as "order creating cultural systems" and the latter has its source in the nature of the former, it turns into a secular cultural system with a particular focus on this world. Nationalism has thus provided "the sense of order" in the wake of the substantial decline of "social consciousness of religion". This approach implicitly distinguishes modern nationalism from religion in many ways, as some modernist theories of nationalism have done. For instance, Anderson argues that nationalism became apparent when the two large cultural systems – the church and the dynasty- disappeared. Greenfeld is, however, too quick to stress that nationalism, as a collective sentiment, has remained unrivaled within the framework of the modernization paradigm.

Gellner himself, who is strongly committed to modern processes in the construction of nations and nationalism, left doubt that nationalism has yet to be "the only force operating or an irresistible one" against its rivals even in the modern world (Gellner, 1983:138). Unlike Gellner, Greenfeld leaves no room for doubt that nationalism has transcended its universal alternative ideologies like liberalism, socialism and conservatism, by establishing a link between dignity and nationality (Greenfeld, 1993:48). Because the man of modernity will

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[4] For a classical analysis of the two comparative frameworks of religion and secular ideologies as order-creating systems, see Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System" and "Ideology as a Cultural System" in The Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

never give up their dignity through which they have acquired nationality. In this view, national identity differs from other identities in that it provides status with satisfaction to each member of the nation, and there are still no ideological alternatives to satisfy people's need for dignity, including globalization to go beyond the reality of the modern state. On the face of it, socialism was particularly about to transcend the nation's worth because it promised more dignity than the nation in certain conditions, but it did so while keeping all the characteristics of the nationalism ironically (Ibid.:58). But Greenfeld does not give an explicit answer to the following question: "What agency did provide dignity with the people before the age of nationalism?" Her answer would probably be "religion" since both phenomena are treated as interrelated and order-creating cultural systems.

It also needs to be pointed out that Greenfeld's suggestion "the nation's worth has not yet been transcended" has in fact proved resilient given the rise of nationalism and ethnopolitical conflicts in many parts of the globe. But it would not be wrong to argue that some alternatives have come up to challenge it, foremost among them is anti-nationalism version of global Islam, which I will elaborate in the next section. Suffice to say that Islam still fulfills this task in some ways and satisfies some of its followers' need for dignity around the "concept of Muslim ummah". Then we must recognize that the more an identity offers dignity, the more preferred it is. One can hardly resist the assumption that "the nation's worth has not yet been transcended" within the framework of system of states, but counter-nationalism political movements in the Middle Eastern societies raise more question about trajectory of nationalism at least in the region. The question of whether the nationality or religiosity promises more dignity in the Kurdish context will be focal point in the next chapters.

2.3.3. Nationalism as an emancipatory aspiration for self-determination

My theoretical approach to nationalism is basically twofold. I will propose a broad definition of nationalism, whether secular or religiously motivated,

regardless of all its forms. I do not, however, adopt an objectivist definition, instead of treating it as a dynamic process of collective action. Nationalism rests on its emphasis on "the struggle for emancipation," taking the forms of resistance against diverse forms of power for nascent nationalism or a tendency to establish hegemony and dominance of a particular nationalist project over the members of the non-dominant ethnic groups. In other words, nationalism ironically denotes "a source of emancipation" from the nationalism with which it competes for stateless or emerging nations, while it acts as an ideological legitimation to control the subordinates for established nations that have a state or at least institutional settings. Throughout the study, I particularly draw attention to the first definition of nationalism in which the ultimate goal is emancipation from the hegemony of superordinate ethnic groups, for it is relevant to my case study of Kurdish nationalism.

In contrast, the ultimate goal in the latter definition is hegemony, implicitly or explicitly. Both national claims are, of course, concerned with the possession of or connection to a specific territory (Connor, 1978, 1994; Hastings, 1997; Oommen, 1997; Rieffer, 2003). The most distinctive feature of nationalism, or as Connor pointed out, "the essence of the nation", is "a matter of self-awareness or self-consciousness" (Connor, 1978:389). The tangible characteristics such as language and religion are complementary elements, while self-consciousness is the most crucial part of the nation. They make sense only to the extent that they contribute to this notion or sentiment of the group's self-identity and uniqueness, as illustrated in The Irish and the Scots, who lost their language without relinquishing their conviction of a distinct national identity (Ibid. 389-90). Although it is problematic to measure consciousness precisely, I look at the political motivation for collective action in my own work.

This viewpoint allows us to distinguish different forms of relationship between religion and nationalism. It also helps explain political settings in which whether nationalist claims or religious rationales demarcate collective action. The role of

the sacred through which the rituals are directed to create a political community depends on the real purpose of the society.

As earlier noted, the appeal of nationalism has several factors: the advance of capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, secularism, mass communication, the standardization of local languages, the spread of literacy, its paradigmatic position in global politics, etc. As human political units are organized along with national principles rather than city-states, feudal entities, or dynastic empires, the scholarly attention on nationalism will, too, continue to grow exponentially. As discussed in the previous section, the modernist approach of nationalism, including Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson, Breuilly, and Hroch, basically contend that there were no nations before modernity, situating nationalism within the context of secularizing modernity. In other words, national identity did not exist before its invention and creation by modern entrepreneurs. According to this line, nationalism is indistinguishably linked to the secularization thesis as a modern phenomenon. However, the secularization thesis and its close relationship with modern approaches to nationalism have come under increasing scrutiny in recent decades. Because they thought that "more modernization leads to more secularization," and there is a link between "the rise of nationalism and "the decline of religion (Berger, 1967, 1973; Gellner, 1983).

As a matter of course, the first generation of scholarship on nationalism was influenced by secularization and modernity, which was then deemed a dominant social scientific approach to religion, and largely disregarded the role of religion in the formation and consolidation of national identity as well as the association between religion and nationalism. Religious self-identification, particularly religion as a leading locus of group allegiance or as a transcendental order, was thus taken for granted pre-modern by definition. However, like religion, nationalism as a social phenomenon does not form a monolithic category. In addition, nationalists do not all go the same way, and they do not act on the basis of the same logic. On the contrary, national movements form composite clustering groups, accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts and

ideological competition. It would be difficult for most people to possess the same level of motivation and commitment to their national identity to the degree that various ways of thinking and acting have existed within each national context.This also forms the gist of the critical approaches (perennialism, ethnosymbolism, new researchs on nationalism etc.), which basically posit that nations and nationalism are by no means restricted to modernity. Because these concepts are subjected to historical variations since they may be defined and developed in many ways. Despite their conceptual and terminological variations, the common denominator of critical approaches is their tendency to trace the evolution of the idea of nationalism back to pre-modern and pre-industrial ages. Perennialists, for example, treats national identity as "a constant and fundamental feature of human life throughout history" referring to cultural continuties (Smity, 1998:159), but not as "given" and "natural part of human beings" like primordialists do. Cultural continuities and religious affinities are associated with national identity. Adrian Hastings, one of the most cited exponent of perennialist views in nationalism studies, asserts that national identity emerged out of preexisting religious ties, while another perennialist Steven Grosby, takes it as far back into ancient and medival periods (Hastings 1997, Grosby 2003).

My criticism of the modern theory of nationality, however, concerns what it ironically omitted the contemporary trend in which emergent nationalism generates its counter-nationalisms as a result of a reactionary process. We should not fall into trap of assuming that industrialization, secularization, capitalism, rate of literacy, etc. are the essential stages in constructing new nationalisms. There is considerably less scholarly attention to the political determinants of nationalism such as conflict, war, destruction, genocide[5]. We can perhaps call

[5] There has been some case-based research that discusses the influence of genocide on nation-building. For the case of German unification through the interaction between social identification, nationalism, state-building, and the power politics of interstate war after the Franco-Prussian war, see Sambanis, N., Skaperdas, S., & Wohlforth, W. C. (2015), "Nation-building through war", *American Political Science Review*, 109(2), 279-296. For nation-building in Iraqi Kurdistan, see Baser, B., & Toivanen, M. (2017), "The politics of genocide recognition:

this "reactive nationalism", which appears in the way that sequences of patterns are repeatedly observed. I must stress at this point that it is certainly not easy to predict which nationalism started first, but there is hardly any agreement about which nationalism reacts to what, let's say, imperialism or any other nationalism. To illustrate my argument, let me give an example. Counter-nationalism of Indonesian nationalism is not Turkish nationalism but Chinese or Japanese nationalism given the present, historical and geographical context. Nevertheless, the reactionary evolution of the nation does not reduce nationalism to only a modern phenomenon or constructivist approaches. It helps awaken the nation in the course of time. It assumes that the survival of a particular nation requires emancipation from all forms of oppression. As Gellner put it, it is also directly or indirectly related to "the system of states". Thus, the impact of high culture does not play important role after a while because once the idea of nationality spread to the masses it has become established. Elites and intellectuals, too, maintain a harmonious, if not absolute, the relationship between consciousness and culture.

Furthermore, nations, like religions, are also neither "internally homogeneous" nor "externally bounded groups". Besides, Moreover, national consciousness does not refer to a cognitive mechanism of collective meaning that felt equal at every stratum of society. It must therefore be framed as "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated terms". Unlike other "group feelings," however, national sentiments possess the organizational capacity to redefine collective interests and agencies upon which they are built. If one treats Serbs, Croats, Albanians, Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, or Turks and Kurds "as if they are unitary collective actors with common purposes," it eventually implies

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Kurdish nation-building and commemoration in the post-Saddam era", *Journal of Genocide Research*, 19(3), 404-426; Ihsan, M. (2016), "Nation-building in Kurdistan: Memory, genocide and human rights", *Routledge*; Sadiq, I. (2021), "Origins of the Kurdish Genocide: Nation Building and Genocide as Civilizing and De-civilizing Processes", *Rowman & Littlefield.* For another case study, see Rusagara, F. (2005), "Gacaca as a reconciliation and nation-building strategy in post-genocide Rwanda", *Conflict Trends*, 2005(2), 20-25.

the socially constructed spirit of national identity (Brubaker, 2004). In approaching the origin of national identity by focusing on its socially constructed dimensions rather than ontological ones, Brubaker highlights the collective representation of the nation, like Durkheim. The proper question is not " "what is a nation?", but "how it is institutionalized as a cognitive frame?" (Brubaker, 1996:16). This is not, however, to say that the nation can only be regarded as "a perspective on the world" rather than real or substantive thing in the world. Although national identity is constructed around a specific ethnie, it is needed to grasp the reason why while some ethnies remain dominant, some others have become extinct. Smith's answer to this question comes with a Social Darwinistic perspective or the notion of social evolution. "The stronger and more persistent the pre-existing ethnic identity, the more likely was any nation that might emerge to be based on that identity" (Smith, 1991:71).

Hobsbawm also reminds us, despite the fact that nation is socially "constructed essentially from above", it would be too simplistic "unless analysed from below". Like religion, national identity includes a combination of tangible characteristics -perception of distinctive racial and cultural traits such as language, religion and tradition- and intangible one, that is, self-consciousness accompanied by political, economic and social transformations which change according to circumstances. Therefore, many nationalisms may exist based on ideological and psychological orientations within a particular national context. But Smith is right noting that "a nation is first and foremost a community of common descent" (Smith, 1991:11). One can, then, speak of national identity as a phenomenon and nationalism as an ideological movement, separately. The latter refers to the aspiration to the self-rule. Like in modernist theories of nationalism, nationalism are supposed to create nations and nation states, but not the way round (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1991). In other words, nationalism engenders national identity. Unlike modernist theories, however, I would say, nationalism does not necessarily deny its reality on which nationalist projects are based.

Such a conception of nationalism seems to be rational in that nationalism is directly or indirectly the product of modern conditions, social mobilization, spread of literacy, capitalism, mass communication and "high culture". But it reckons without the substantive character of ethnic identity and "the role of the past". Gellner was wrong to assume that "nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness; it invents nations where they do not exist" (Gellner, 1964:169). It is hardly possible to argue that nations were invented or created out of nothing. As Smith rightly stated, "nationalisms cannot be understood without reference to earlier ethnic ties and memories... I do not wish to assert that every modern nation must be founded on some antecedent ethnic ties…but many such nations have been and are based on these ties". (Smith, 1996: p.361). These ties are mainly based on the myth, memories, traditions, symbols and often religion which are rediscovered by elites. Smith appears to adopt an approach, which is somewhere between the modernists and perennialists, would later be called "ethnosymbolism". Accordingly, it may not be simple to claim that all the nations were always over there or existed in ancient times, but some of them remember a shared historic past through a common spoken language that paved the way for a sense of affinity. According to Gellner, however, modern system of nation states were formed about the end of the eighteenth century (Gellner, 1996b). In a similar vein, Kedourie described nationalism as an invented doctrine in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century (Kedourie, 1996). If Gellner and Kedourie's insistence on the impossibility of the roots of modern nations in pre-modern periods is correct, nation and nationalism cannot be related to pre-existing ethnic or religious ties. In a sense, if the nation were only invented or imagined, it would not be established as it is today.

Yet Kedourie's explanation seems reasonable when he takes the origin of the nation back to the idea of self-determination in Kantian sense, a determination of the will comes the determination of the unit of populations, which we now call "the nation". Renan's main focal point was "the will", too. Nationalism, be it modern or primordial, ethnosymbolist or post-modern, is essentially a doctrine of

self-determination or self-realization, thus an emancipatory aspiration from all forms of political oppression of the other. In this sense, Gellner, speaks of an ideal-type of the nationalism that it is "a political principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (Gellner, 1983:1). By a similar logic, Hecter describes it as "collective action designed to render the boundaries of the nation congruent with those of its governance unit" (Hechter, 2000:7-8). What Hechter sets a higher standard for nationhood that "if a group strives for something less than complete sovereignty it is less nationalist" appears to be unrealistic, however. The struggle for self-determination does not necessarily lead to a sovereign state, instead it may reach its culmination within a state. Though the political and the national congruency does not always exist, romantic nationalists often articulate their demands to live under the homeland's national boundaries, referring mostly to uniting into one state.

In this sense, I subscribe to various accounts of nationalism in terms of their ability to explain nationalism as an aspiration for emancipation into political claims, notably Renan, Kedourie Connor and Smith. For my part, although nationalism is essentially a European phenomenon linked to the birth of the modern nation state in Europe, it has been primarily about a community with an aspiration of self-determination in Kantian terms, as Kedourie noted. Unlike modern theories of nationalism, however, it is the belief in a territorially framed common descent that lies at the core of nationalism with the aim of acquiring its own political autonomy or statehood. The term nation, indeed, refers to "the idea of common blood ties" when it was first coined (Connor, 1978:378). For Connor, similar to Renan's "will" formula, the essence of the nation is intangible on the ground that "tangible characteristics such as religion and language are significant to the nation only to the degree to which they contribute to the group's self-identity and uniqueness" (Ibid.: 389). Renan, too, rejects objective characteristics such as race, language, material interest, religious affinities, geography and military requirements for the creation of a nation. The essence of the nation is thus a psychological bond of sentiment among the members with subconscious conviction. Connor defines the nation as "a self-aware ethnic

group" citing The Irish and the Scots as examples (Ibid.) Both ethnic groups lost their language but not their conviction of a separate national identity or their sense of uniqueness. Consequently, tangible characteristics are not constituent elements Connor's conception of nation.

Connor appears to explain the emergence of group solidarity with an intangible characteristic: the self-consciousness of the ethnopolitical group. Ethnic-national identity has become more rooted and robust than other communal identities – let's say, belonging to the same class, religion, citizenship, or territory - is the intuitive perception of the common descent among its members. Until the members are aware of the group's uniqueness or self-consciousness, the group is just an ethnic community and not a nation (Ibid.) As Smith puts it well,

> Not just in the imagination, as Benedict Anderson claims, but equally in the conscious will and mass sentiments. The nation is not just an imagined political community, but a willed and felt communion of those who assert a moral faith and feel an ancestral affinity. This indicates the dual origins of the nation, as a community of presumed ethnic descent and as a community of believers, an ideological union of those who share the same values and purposes (Smith, 2000:803).

I argue, however, that a group's sense of uniqueness is necessary but not sufficient for the formation of national identity. It also requires mass mobilization oriented towards specific political aims through collective action. We cannot talk of nationalism if the ultimate source of the mobilization is not national awareness or if self-consciousness exists without political mobilization and collective action. Smith claims that the nation is not only imagined but is constructed in people's minds and feelings. Nation has thus a dual origin, the assumed ethnic heritage as an objective element and a moral community of faithful as a sacred dimension. Modern nations were once composed of segmented people whose self-consciousness was limited to the family, village, clan, tribe, region, or religion. As national consciousness has become established, it has further increased cross-cultural contacts by integrating the disparate ethnic populations' customs, traditions, habits, and attitudes (Connor,

1978: 390-94). Unlike Connor, I also assume that tangible and intangible characteristics of the nation should not be separated. Because we do not know which ones are more effective in the construction of national sentiment. Sense of vital uniqueness may not suffice to make a nation. Let me give an example. For many Turks, including seculars, Turkish national identity cannot be separated from Islam which is regarded as an indivisible part of Turkishness, particularly against its Christian Western rivals. Turkish nationalism has initially located itself within the boundaries of Islam in the face of non-Islamic societies such as Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians, Russians etc. It is for this reason that the sense or feeling of uniqueness needs distinctive identifications and use tangible facts in order to make itself more visible. My own definition is thus as follows: "A nation is a self-conscious ethnic group which mobilizes the group to defend its rights (interests) and compete with other groups for political purposes through collective action".

I do not, however, regard the nation (even ethnicity) as given and unchanging entity, like primordialists presented. Because ethnic groups are subjected to mutation, or even disappear, through mutual relationship with the dominant ethnic group, voluntary or coerced assimilation, deportation, annihilation and genocide. But ethnic categorizations are supposed to form a natural essence and cultural homogeneity in practice. Therefore, we should take miscellaneous ethnic groups at their face value. Nevertheless, neither all ethnic groups have to follow the line of nationalism nor they manage to survive at the end of harsh competition among themselves. Adrian Hastings expresses similar views with regard to the emergence of a nation and argues that "a nation is far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity" and it "possesses or claims the right to political identity and autonomy as a people, together with the control of specific territory" (Hastings, 1997:3). Hastings's approach is not different that of some modernist theories in that it designates nationalism as a political doctrine at the end of the day. Another similar observation comes from Breuilly who suggests that nationalism "requires at least the attainment of political sovereignty" or emancipation (Breuilly, 1994:2).

Yet Hastings does not take "the nation" as the offspring of modernity while acknowledging the idea of nationalism as a modern political theory. For him, like Smith, nations emerge out of pre-existing ethnic or religious ties through "the literary development of a spoken vernacular" and mainly English translation of "the Bible". The Bible constituted the origin or starting point from which the idea of nation is derived or developed, for the Christian world at least. Hastings further argues that "nations and nationalism could have never existed" in the absence of the Bible and its Christian interpretations. In his view, the most excellent example of the nation and the nation-state in the total sense is England (Hastings, 1997). England represents a prototype of the nation and the nation-state as exemplified "the role of religion in the birth of English nationalism". Religion is particularly significant in the evolution of national identity when it takes the attachment to a group symbol and "myths of ethnic election or chosenness". It is, in fact, an integral part of some cultural and ethnic groups, as exemplified in the cases of the ancient Jews, Armenians, Azeris, Turks, Irish, Polish, Bosnians, Uighurs, Tamils, and even Americans. Since the primary task of this study is to understand and explain how and why nationalism interacts with religion, let us now look more closely at the complicated relationship between nationalism and religion.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have proposed a broad, integrative framework for understanding the concepts of religion and nationalism. First, following Weber, I suggest that religion, like any other human affairs subject, cannot be adequately comprehended without understanding from within. Because religion is not something out there but can be initially observed and experienced from within. In other words, there cannot be religion without belief, but religion is not merely about the belief. In the Durkheimian sense, it is also a collective enterprise about profane. The sacred also occupies a unique place in the human enterprise to construct this world. The fundamental difference between Weber and Durkheim lies in their approaches to the origin and function of religion. The "change"

comes with social action through the substantive meaning of religion in Weber, while in Durkheim, it takes place in a context where society gives meaning to religious beliefs and practices. As Schilbrack pointed out, substantive and functionalist approaches overlap to the extent that religious beliefs and practices can be both substantively religious (concerning certain kinds of realities) and also functionally religious (concerning certain kinds of benefits). Religion, thus, still matters. The persistence of the religion's influence does not just rely on its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also to form a collective identity as a source of political power.

When it comes to nationalism, I first argue that modernization does not always come from secularization, which will necessarily lead to religion's inevitable decline and disappearance. Furthermore, the process of secularization has been neither monolithic nor linear. Despite the abundance of its counter-movements, as with many other social phenomena, secularization has been irreversible in some ways since it is one of the "unintended consequences of modernization". Secondly, although national identity requires some tangible characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, language, etc., its essential component is self-consciousness or self-awareness. Nevertheless, modern theories of nationalism pay little or no attention to intangible characteristics. My theoretical frame of nationalism is based on self-consciousness. Instead of using an objectivist definition, I embrace nationalism as a political doctrine with an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups based on collective action for political purposes. Although it is problematic to measure consciousness precisely, I look at the political motivation for collective action, which allows us to distinguish different forms of relationship between religion and nationalism. It also helps explain political settings in which whether nationalist claims or religious rationales demarcate collective action.

CHAPTER 3

THE COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

3.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to offer a systematic understanding of the role that religion plays in some historical and contemporary nationalist movements throughout the world. The influence of religion on nationalism has long been an enigma for the first generations of scholars on nationalism like Renan, Gellner, Hobsbawm, and Anderson, who ignored the impact of religion on the formation of national identity found no causal connection between the two. They could not explore a potential nexus or co-existence between the two systems in search of a common goal. As they assume, are these phenomena mutually exclusive sets of models or contradictory forces? In answering this question, I will first discuss the position of modernist explanations of nationalism that lacks a comprehensive vision of the relationship between religion and nationalism and then consider the strength and weakness of secular nationalism vis a vis religious movements. In what follows, I will attempt to provide a framework in which the bond between religious and national consciousness is relativistic, with varying degrees of coexistence and competition, eventually making it ambiguous. It must, therefore, be examined case by case to uncover the intractable relationship.

Under the sway of the secularization thesis, religion was long seen as irrelevant, trivial, or uninteresting to comprehend nationalism. Inspired by this thesis, mainstream theorists of nationalism have long recognized that nationalism and secularization are inextricably related. Critics of modern accounts of nationalism have correctly emphasized the need for new alternative theoretical approaches on nationalism that involves "the return of religion" or de-secularization,

considering a global resurgence of politicized religion. I use Brubaker's approach and take nationalism as a "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated" subject. I prefer this approach because nationalism has produced different discourses, practices, and actions, just as religious meanings vary widely according to the interpretations, procedures, and representations. Neither religion nor nationalism is uniform. While I agree with Durkheim, Kedourie, Gellner, Greenfeld, and Smith standing firm on the argument that secular consciousness constitutes the doctrine of nationalism, I do not pursue a mechanical, materialist view of religion. Secularization is, thus, not a prerequisite for sharing a sense of nationhood. You do not need to be secular to feel a solid attachment for your nation, or you can become a nationalist without being secularized.

3.2. A Critical Review of The Literature

Having sketched the conceptual landscape of religion, nation and nationalism, it is now time to deal with whether, how and why national movements have been directly or indirectly related to religion. As I have already pointed out in the previous chapter, although many religions are concerned with ultimate realities such as eternity or the meaning of life, they are also intended to construct the social reality within which human beings reproduce in their everyday lives. Because religion has both ontological concern for meaning –as a system for ordering the world in the Weberian sense- and functional benefits in Durkheimian sense – as a collective social action. While the essence of religion comes to the fore in the Weberian conception of meaning, social actors whose actions are products of their own experiences of objective reality are of decisive importance in the latter. Religion becomes a valid and reliable instrument as long as it serves as "a source of collective action" for the interest of society in the Durkheimian symbolist approach. To put it another way, religion has a greater sense of intrinsic value in itself in Weberian thinking. It becomes superordinate to the collective faith for those who regularly fulfill their obligations to God. In

contrast, a person's faith is extrinsic and valued because it helps build up large social actions in the second.

On the relationship between religion and national identity, I adopt a perspective, drawing on Brubaker, that treats nationalism as "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated terms" (Brubaker, 2006:11). The two kinds of belongingness involve composite clustering groups, accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts, and ideological contests among themselves, pointing out the complexity of the relationship. I prefer this approach because many nationalisms have produced different discourses, practices and actions, just as religious meanings vary widely according to the interpretations, representations and practices. No text or belief system stands wholly and entirely for what it represents. As Greenfeld puts it, "The decision about a specific question, nor nationalism, is uniform" (Greenfeld, 1996b). Nationalism can take various forms depending on political, cultural and social factors unique to each case. Before embarking on my discussion on the typologies of the nexus between religion and nationalism in the next chapter, it seems appropriate to give an outline of contemporary theoretical debates on the pertinent subject.

First and foremost, I should stress that we see no fully fledged literature on the relevant topic. Despite prolific research on religion and endless classifications of nationalism, there is a very little scholarship that systematically addresses the connection between the two. I would like to say at the beginning that the existing literature is limited to providing substantive conceptualization and categorization of the diverse types of interactions between the two phenomena. There are, of course, many reasons for this. The most compelling one is perhaps "the dominant and secular belief in the modernity of nations and nationalism" over the bulk of the twentieth century. Accordingly, discussions about how religion influences national movements and sentiment remained scarce until the end of the Cold War, when the dramatic global resurgence of religion has demanded more scholarly attention prompting a new set of questions. Until then, most contemporary theories of nationalism, in parallel with the mainstream

sociological studies of theology, saw religion, like all other primordial elements, as inessential in constructing and maintaining national identity.

By locating nationalism as a product of modernization processes (capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, the spread of literacy, high culture etc.), they embraced a sharp distinction between traditional or supernaturalistic view of the world and modern, primarily urban, forms of life. The main argument of this narrative has highlighted a strong connection between modernity and nationalism without taking the influence of religion in contemporary nationalist movements into consideration. Religion has ironically become a source of inspiration for the emergence of nationalism in some pre-modern societies (Greenfeld, 1996b; Hastings, 1997; Smith, 2000). It has also played and continues to play an indispensable part in a wide range of national movements. It is thus evident that modern accounts of nationalism (whether consciously or unconsciously) have overlooked the impact of religion in the formation of national identity due to their reliance on the premise that nationalism is peculiar to modern times within the enterprise of the modernists. They were right to the extent that modernity has precipitated the disposition of emerging nationalism or national demands once articulated by secular nationalists.

Contrary to this trend, however, religion did not fade as the modernization processes have advanced. What precisely happened was that religion has supposedly lost its apparent (and moral) paradigmatic superiority in the public sphere with the Enlightenment Project, particularly in Western Europe. Modernity, rooted as it is in this Project, involves the rationalism and empiricism in which reality can be discovered through scientific methods, in contradistinction to metaphysical claims of religious beliefs about reality. Nonetheless, religion was always over there, waiting to be unveiled as a subject of inquiry. It has never disappeared.

As a foundation of an individual and group identity, religion has persisted in drawing dividing lines between members of the group and others in modern

times. Even in secularized settings, national movements are too increasingly aware of the lasting prestige of religion. They have thus sought to strengthen in-group bonds through religious self-identification, especially in religiously heterogeneous conflicts.

With the global resurgence of religion in world politics from the 1990s, some scholars of nationalism such as Hastings (2007), Smith (2000, 2008), Brubaker (2006, 2012), Greenfeld (1996a, 1996b), and Gorski (2000) have tended to focus their work on efforts for a proper understanding of the evolution of nationalism. Hastings and Smith have, for example, respectively emphasized the importance of religious and cultural systems in the nation-building processes, particularly in Judaism and Christianity (Hastings, 1997: Smith, 2000, 2008). It is a vain attempt to separate religion from nationalism under the circumstances, as they are more readily combined. Despite its modern characteristics, the nation cannot be adequately investigated without careful attention to the pre-existing ties, including religion. Religion, one of the most organic elements in the pre-modern period, has thus today attracted growing awareness from scholars of nationalism. Similarly, there has recently been a rise in scholarship on the relationship between religion and nationalism.

Some scholars have attempted to undermine modernist assumptions, claiming that religion and nationalism have increasingly become intertwined to greater and lesser degrees in many societies (Juergensmeyer 1993, 2008; Keddie 1998; Bruce, 2001; Smith 2000, 2003a; Safran 2003). The two phenomena have become so intertwined in many historical and contemporary conflicts that one can hardly comprehend where one ends and the other begins due to the difficulty of separating the two. There are undoubtedly many intertwined modern conflicts, such as Northern Ireland, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kashmir. Some other scholars have further argued that religion can, in itself, become an essential part of ethnic identity. In this way, it serves as a significant constituent element in the national consciousness in the pre-modern era as the religious sources of English and Dutch nationalism (Greenfeld, 1996b; Hastings, 1997;

Gorski, 2000) or ancient religious origins of contemporary political Zionism (Smith, 2000; Roshwald, 2006).

In light of this new research trend, these works deal with direct or indirect influences of religion in contemporary nationalisms and ethnic origins. If this is so, why did the most prominent (and early) scholars of nationalism like Gellner, Hobsbawm, and Anderson miss the systematic impact of religion on the formation of national identity and find no causal connection between the two? Why could they not unearth a possible nexus or co-existence between the two systems? Are these phenomena mutually exclusive sets of ideals or contradictory forces ? Is it not feasible for these two to come together in search of a common goal toward which collective action is oriented? Let us now more closely look at why and how religion has largely been neglected in the mainstream literature on nationalism, considering the contemporary challenges it encounters and must reply.

3.3. Objections to Modern Views of Nationalism

The proponents of the modernization paradigm basically hold that nationalism as a political ideology has inherently been contradictory with religion by definition or at least have de-emphasized the extent to which religious forms of identity may involve nationalist claims. Religion has been less of an issue in the mainstream academic literature on nationalism. By the prevalence of secularization, religion was long seen as irrelevant, trivial, or uninteresting to comprehend nationalism. In classical nationalism theories, there is often a distinction between religion and nationalism and thus general indifference to religion as an integral or essential part of national consciousness. In other words, the first belongs to pre-modern social identity formation while the latter is virtually a concomitant of the modernization processes, making nationalism inevitably a matter of secular politics. Despite several challenges against this approach in recent years, modernization and secularization theories continue to include the bulk of nationalism studies and have yielded new theoretical debates.

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As we have already seen in the first chapter, Berger long assumed that "*with more modernization comes more secularization*". In this sense, a certain dualism, an estrangement between man and supernaturalistic view of the world or a sharp distinction between the realm of the profane and the sacred, lies at the heart of modernization.

Nationalism, as a result of modernization, was frequently associated with the replacement of religious institutions, practices and ways of describing the world. It was treated as the natural and necessary stage of an industrial society or modernity (Gellner, 1983; Hobbsbawm, 1990; Wimmer, 2006). In this sense, there is a positive correlation between the emergence of nationalism and the decline of religion under the diminishing impact of faith on everyday life with secularization. Gellner, one of the prominent representatives of the modernist explanation of nationalism, underlines the influence of high culture in the development of nationalism without paying attention to the ways in which religion has shaped that culture (Gellner, 1983). In this respect, his conception of nationalism leaves the concept of culture vague because it could not establish a meaningful link between culture and religion. Religion is, however, socialized into a particular cultural context, even though it has ontological aspects. As Flood has argued, "religions are less about truth claims and more about identity…less about abstraction or more about tradition" (Flood, 2006:47). Gellner likely bases his arguments on the premises of modernization theory, which largely omits the role of religion in the construction of nations and nationalism.

On the other hand, Hobsbawm ironically recognizes the limited power of religion to forge loyalties and collective identification within a community, but he rejects that nationalism has had some religious elements. For him, "nationalism has become a substitute for social cohesion through a national church, a royal family or other cohesive traditions, or collective group self-presentations, a new secular religion" (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983:303). By his definition, religion has survived to the extent that it can serve primarily as a

badge of national identity. This brings us to the Durkheimian symbolist approach or religion's functional ability to unify community members. However, although religion is "a paradoxical cement for modern nationalism…" it may also constitute a challenge to "the nation's monopoly claim to its members' loyalty" (Hobsbawm, 1990:68). In this sense, Hobsbawm clearly distinguishes religion and nationalism by juxtaposing them as competing ideologies of order, which we will discuss extensively in the next chapter.

According to Anderson, the reality is much more complex. Therefore, he adopts a much more sympathetic attitude towards religion. Viewed in this way, "the consciousness of belonging" before modern nationalism was created through religious beliefs and sentiments. The "sacred imagined communities" have thus existed in the past. He nevertheless seems reluctant to involve "a formal relationship between religion and nationalism". In Anderson's words, " it would be short-sighted to think of the imagined communities of nations as simply growing out of and replacing religious communities' (Anderson, 1983:22). He highlights political and cultural factors through which nationhood becomes a new source of collective identity. National identity has come to be socially constituted as a "new reality" in the wake of three developments: "The decline of the great religiously imagined communities and dynastic realms", "the gradual decay of the sacred language (Latin was once the dominant language of the high intelligentsia in Europe) or the standardization of particular vernaculars, the growth in literacy rates through what Anderson calls "print-capitalism". But ironically, Anderson notes, "the coalition between Protestantism and print-capitalism quickly created large reading public and mobilized them for politico/religious purposes" (Ibid. 40). Unlike other modern accounts of nationalism, Anderson draws our attention to the contribution of Protestantism to the formation of nationalism and thus seems to escape from the modernization paradigm in some ways. Kedourie, like Anderson, adopts a moderate stance. Although the language, ethnicity, culture, and sometimes even religion comprise different aspects of the nation, the doctrine of nationalism appears as a modern

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European phenomenon and has spread to the rest of the world in modern times (Kedourie, 1996).

The modern theory of nationalism seems not to incorporate religion as a part of the national consciousness. For most of these early scholars, nationalism is primarily a political principle of the ideological currents in modern western political thought with an invented high culture, despite some nuances among their theoretical perspectives, as seen in the previous chapter. To use Kedourie's words, " nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century", which holds that "humanity is naturally divided into nations", and "that the only legitimate type of government is national self-government" (Ibid.,:1). In this view, national self-determination as the organizing principle of inter-state order thus becomes the main aim of nationalist claims. It seems evident that Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson, and Kedourie treat nationalism as a product of modernization and a secular phenomenon.The function of religion in the development and consolidation of social identity is predominantly disregarded in their explanations of nations and nationalism.

Nevertheless, these scholars fail to account for the persistence of pre-modern ties like religious commitment in the 18th and 19th-century national movements and contemporary national trends, focusing primarily on the economic and social transformation or the structure of inter-state order. Modern understanding of nationalism suggests that the nation is the product of various modernization processes such as capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, the spread of literacy, high culture, etc. while ignoring religion's binding force as an institutionalized identity. However, it is essential to note that at the heart of the neglect of religion lies the belief that nationalism is a modern historical creation and a secular phenomenon. Because "modern societies are thought to be those societies that, among other things, progressed past religion or at least past the influence of religion on political institutions" (Rieffer, 2003:223). Such a view incorrectly presupposes a divide between public (central) and private (periphery), then locates religion within the private sphere. Even though some

modernist accounts of nationalism conceptualize religion as something situated inside the individual and a private matter to be kept out of the public life in a secularized world, nationalism could also be linked to a particular religious tradition.

Furthermore, attempts to explain nationalism akin to religion but not in the sense of traditional sacred terms inevitably reflect Durkheim's conception of religion, which is about the community where people feel it binds them together and makes them one people. Religion is implicitly expected to uphold the very foundations of existing society rather than undermine it. In Durkheim's words, "religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things…beliefs and practices which unite into one single community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (Durkheim, 1995: 47). The sacred is of great value as long as it can unite them around a common cause. Religion, then, has a clear function in these accounts: strengthening the bonds attaching the individual to society. In this view, although religion usually evokes a sense of the sacred, it primarily serves to unify members of the community as a social or moral force, thus requiring collective practices to exist. Durkheim's symbolic functionalism assumes that religion acts as a social or moral force rather than the individual quest for life's meaning. The focal point of religion can thus be one's nation or the like. Accordingly, nationalism as a secular form of consciousness sacralizes the secular (Greenfeld, 1996b).

As Smith suggests, Durkheimian perspective takes us beyond the conceptualization of nationalism as a merely modern phenomenon. It allows us to see "nationalism as a particular form of political religion, whose tensions with traditional religions have led to a growing politicization of religion" (Smith, 2000:792). As noted earlier, there has also been constant interaction between religion and the world, which sets in motion from the spiritual to the material and from the material to the spiritual, in the Weberian sense. Religion may thus be a driving force for social change, such as the struggle for national emancipation or the oppressed people's desire for justice, dignity, recognition

and wealth. In assessing modern theories of nationalism, we can remind ourselves to take "the secularization paradigm" into account. "The secularization thesis" is closely linked to modernization processes like capitalism, rationalization, industrialization, urbanization, individualism and egalitarianism. Modernization was often thought to be intimately intertwined with "the secularization thesis" that predicts the disappearance of religion as a political force. Hence, mainstream theorists of nationalism have long recognized that nationalism and secularization are inextricably related (Zubrzycki, 2006).

Like Berger's turnabout, another confessional observation comes from Koenig that we, scholars of secularization, have "ignored the nation-state as the institutional framework of relations between politics and religion in modernity" (Koenig, 2005:291). The reason is not that there are natural barriers between religion and nationalism but perhaps somewhat little contact between these subfields of social science. Their view of secularization has turned out wrong following a dramatic global religious resurgence throughout the world and across religious movements, including those in the West. Peter Berger conceptualizes the new framework of the relationship as "de-secularization of the world", which rests on "the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false" (Berger, 1996:3). From the late 1990s, there has been a progressive resurgence of interest in empirical approaches to the sociology of religion, much of it characterized by "the return of religion" that focuses on processes of re-traditionalization. It became evident that the enduring influence of religion did not simply represent a component of cultural traits transmitted from generation to generation across time and space. Instead, religion has shaped and inspired nationalist discourses lending them power and depth through the composition of the national elites who invoke religious traditions to mobilize popular masses around a sacred communion.

Modernization, which is attributed to a decline of religion, have clearly undermined at least some aspects of religion. Modern theory of nationalism, therefore, did not only "relegate religion and the sacred to the pre-modern past"

(Smith, 2003a:21) but also relegated them to the private sphere. It was argued that they essentially belong to the realm of faith and spirituality, or are separate from society and the world. This way of thinking has mainly focused on the threat posed by the organizational capacity of religion, being founded on political authority and limited freedoms, to the individual rights and liberties, even though religious beliefs can be acceptable at the personal level. Furthermore, it attempts to demonstrate that a specific blueprint of the nation-state is an unavoidable outcome of modernity on which historical facts and social ideas were based. Under the sway of modernization theory, advocates of secularization thesis have also argued that secularization requires nationalism as a substitute for religion. Secularization, however, does not necessarily lead to the inevitable decline and disappearance of religion or religious self-identifications will not entirely succumb to secular values, vice versa.

Rather, secularization means the decrease of salience of religion in political and social sphere. What happened was that religion simply lost its obvious superiority in the public life at a certain time and at a certain place in history. It was always over there waiting for to be uncovered. It has not disappeared. Hence, much of the criticism of modernist explanations of nationalism is built on the fallacy of the triumph of secular society over religion and the privatization (depoliticization) of religion. Smith, a leading scholar of ethnosymbolism, occupies a central position in critical engagement with modernity and looks at different roots of nationalism such as ethnicity and religion. For him, these two phenomena have challenged "the dominant and secular ethos of modernity" (Smith quoted in Özkırımlı, 2010:127). It means that such a challenge has lead to a renewed emphasis on the institutional arrangements of modern societies and the interdisciplinary disposition of nationalism (including secularization theory) as a subject of academic investigation. Critics like Smith have often emphasized the role of religion in the ideological origins of nationalism, which implicitly raises the question of whether there were nations in pre-modern times. Thus, the theoretical assumption that nationalism can solely be examined as a modern ideology was falsified.

Another objection against modern theories of nationalism concerns their downplaying the continuing vigor of religion in consolidating a sense of national identity. Because the narratives they produced stem from the core assumption that nationalism as a new primary carrier of identity replaced religion. But they frequently failed to clarify what is precisely happening in world politics in the second half of the 20th century: a global resurgence of politicized religion. The Iranian revolution of 1979, the spread of Islamic ideology in Muslim societies, the rise of American evangelical Protestantism, the increasing level of religious mobilization throughout the world are some prominent examples of this. We can then better understand why there are few works on the role of religion on nationalism in the earlier studies. Because nationalism was basically thought be synonymous with modernity and modernity was expected to be inherently secular, as secularization thesis suggests (Rieffer, 2003:223).

One can ask at this point "what is the secularization thesis?". The main assumptions of the secularization thesis are "the separation of religion from the state", "the privatization of religion", "the diminishment of religious organizations at the societal level in the wake of modernization processes such as rationalization, egalitarianism, and bureaucratic state". No wonder "the notion of secularism" lies at the core of the secularization thesis. For Asad, secularism can be traced back to the "Renaissance doctrine of humanism", "Enlightenment concept of nature" and "Hegel's philosophy of history" (Asad, 2003:192). But again, one should not think of secularism "as the space which real human life gradually emancipates itself from the controlling power of religion and thus achieves the latter's relocation" (Ibid.:191). But modernists understood the opposite and that was a great mistake they could not avoid. For example, Berger, once a firm advocate of secularization, defined the concept as "the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols" (Berger, 1967:107). It is, of course, obvious that Berger then attempted to construct secularization as a universal phenomenon that could no longer be denied in any modern society because there was much evidence for a causal connection between modernization and secularization.

On the basis of this supposed connection, the secularization thesis propounds that "the decline of religion is not an accident but is an unintended consequence of a variety of complex social changes" brought about by modernization (Bruce,2006:428). Nonetheless, the phenomena do not always go hand in hand. In the shadow of modernization, secularization theory has excluded religion since it does not concern itself with ultimate meaning and thereby drawn too tight a distinction between the human and divine realms. In this view, as religion began to lose its grip on human consciousness and social institutions, human societies have become progressively disenchanted. It has also implied that nationalism cannot not be associated with the existence of religion, but with its disappearance. It is then presumably possible to claim that nationalism has nothing to do with religion, according to the secularization thesis. Given the overemphasis of secularization in formation and persistence of national identity, the relationship between religion and nationalism have been automatically neglected.

The vital defect of the secularization thesis is, however, its omission of religious persistence both as an ontological concern for meaning and as an identity marker in social relationships. In both traditional and modern societies, human beings may conceive of reality or existential problems through their religious beliefs, which I here say crucial to religion's ontology. Religion serves simultaneously to relieve people's anxieties about death and to uphold rather than undermine existing society. It provides people with a sense of belonging and enhances solidarity at the collective level in the Durkheimian sense. Hence, the persistence of the religion's influence does not merely rely on its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also to unite the collectivity serving as a badge of group identity.

Contrary to exponents of secularization theory, however, the impact of religion on politics and everyday life has dramatically increased on almost every continent over the past three decades. In other words, religion is discovered through everyday interaction and conversation. We have witnessed and are still

seeing the existence of different forms of nationalism that have strong connections with particular religious traditions and sentiments of the masses. Carl Schmitt, for example, asserts that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of the [nation] state are secularized theological concepts", although he is not himself directly concerned with nationalism (Schmitt, 1985:36). Nationalism can, in itself, become a secular religion.

To sum up, modern theorists of nationalism have tended to assume that modernity implies secularism. What is modern is simply secular, and nationalism is also secular because it is a modern phenomenon. In this view, nationalism that is fundamentally secular cannot reconcile itself with religion in general and Islam in particular because nationalism as a political ideology is primarily founded on secular reason to understand and control the physical world, while religion concerns supernatural assumptions about the ultimate meaning. The result was the marginalization and the decline of religion, particularly where nationalism cannot find an accommodation with the religious theoretical frame. The problem with this approach is the presumption of secularization as the dominant paradigm. But paradigms are bound to change and nationalism has no single meaning, such as religion, political systems, social boundaries. It is also a western-centric approach because the fact that nationalism is understood and interpreted differently in different parts of the world was dismissed by advocates of the secularization thesis.

Furthermore, modern scholars of nationalism have had difficulty with modern nation-states that are secularized in part or not secularized, where "one may find forms of religious nationalism in which discourse on the nation and discourse on the religious community are combined" (Veer, 1994:12). Modern concept of nationalism, which originally meant secular nationalism as a product of modernity, can be contested by other versions of nationalism. The criticisms leveled at the modernists are, therefore, appropriate in that an approach neglects religion automatically and unavoidably introduces a systematic bias into the relationship between religion and nationalism. It has also caused them to

overlook the role religion has played in the construction and consolidation of national identity. The secular basis of the national identity seems increasingly open to criticism more than ever. Consider, for example, national desires, emotions and impulses blended with religious elements in Islamic societies, which are conflicting with modernity, cannot be expected to establish a harmonious relationship with a secular version of nationalism.

3.4. Secular Nationalism Under Attack

We find ourselves in a multicultural world where various attitudes range from secular to religious and ultra-orthodox about the idea of the nation and where "the concept of secular nationalism" is highly controversial among scholars. As Smith rightly points out, though nationalism is a fundamentally secular ideology, there is nothing unusual about other forms of nationalism like religious nationalism (Smith, 1991:48-49). Here, the contention that secularism is an essential element of nationalism does not inevitably mean a large confusion or fundamental disagreement on the relationship between religion and nationalism. Instead, it reflects the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the relationship in question. Nationalism, among other things, goes on Smith, corresponds to the outwardly secular ideology but can inwardly follow religious patterns through "the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritage" rediscovered by political elites (Smith, 1999:9). In highlighting the vital role of religion on national movements, Smith argues that religion may even become an essential aspect of the ethnic group due to its bolstering sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups as in Sri Lanka, Israel, Armenia, Poland and Ireland, where religious beliefs and institutions have reinforced nationalism. In these cases, religion has resisted assimilation to the dominance of secular nationalism.

In this sense, the notion that secular modernity necessarily generates religious decline or religion is replaced by nationalism becomes increasingly difficult to sustain, in that there are several cases where nationalism and religion thrive together. It is therefore problematic to relate the rise of nationalism to the decline

of religion. On the contrary, as a reinforcement power, religion may instill a higher level of confidence and commitment within a particular group, cementing the desire for oneness and unity. In a similar vein, Gorski accuses secular theory of nationality of drawing a rigid line between modern nationalism and pre-modern ethnic-religious consciousness (Gorski, 2006). There is no such thing that automatically implies discontinuity with the past because the characteristics of any particular nation have neither single meaning and form. Nations are thus neither homogeneous or uniform socio-political entities. In his brief study of the formative phases of Indian nationalism, Van der Veer harshly criticizes secular assumption of nationhood, suggesting that "we have to get away from the tyranny of modernization theory" to grasp the specific ways in which the idea of nationalism is heavily influenced (Veer, 1994).

Hastings, too, objects to the prevalent view that the origins of modern nationalism are located in a secular context by arguing that the nationhood may arise out of preexisting religious ties (Hastings, 1997). For him, "nations and nationalism could have never existed" in the absence of Bible and its Christian interpretations. The most excellent example of this is England which has become a proto-type of the nation and the nation-state (Ibid., 1997). Greenfeld, on the other hand, disagrees with the view that nationalism is a functional prerequisite for or a product of secularizing societies. This is equivalent to saying that you do not need to be secular to feel a strong attachment to your nation. Does nationalism requires secularization? Is secularization a functional element contributing to the construction of nationhood?. In answering these questions, Greenfeld contends, "secularization was neither a condition nor a cause for … nationalism. Both, in fact, emerged during the period of great religious fervor, the source of which was the Protestant Reformation" (Greenfeld; 2006:83).

In other words, secularization does not necessarily lead to nationalism or not the way round. Ironically, even though Greenfeld considers the nation at the very heart of modernity, she has hesitation in drawing it as a product of modern conditions. Unlike some of her contemporaries, Greenfeld concludes that

nationalism is in itself "a constitutive element of modernity" rather than "a product of the structures and processes of modernization". In this view, modernity is defined and shaped by nationalism, that is to say, there can be nation and nationalism without modernity, but there can be no modernity without nation and nationalism. Modern culture or reality, in general, is primarily nationalistic in the sense that "it has at its core the nationalist world view and that it projects this world view on every sphere of cultural/social activity", including interstate order (Greenfeld, 2006a:205). Greenfeld goes even further and argues that the political ideology we recognize today as nationalism was able to develop and become established through the support of the religion because there have been many empirical cases where religion is incorporated as a part of national consciousness (Greenfeld, 1993:48-49).

In general, however, Greenfeld admits that nationalism, being specifically modern consciousness, has become "the symbolic blueprint" of modern reality (or culture). At first glance, the image of modern reality seems to be only secular to our minds and inseparable from this world or the mundane. After all, "this image is not only secular", it is fundamentally humanistic" (Greenfeld, 2006a:204-205). By humanistic, she means "the principle of egalitarian social order" which lies at the basis of the modern secular conception of popular sovereignty and reflects the main characteristics of an ideal-typical definition of the nation. Such a definition of an earthly community treats nationalism as sovereign on this world and humanity, leaving no room for God, religion or spirituality, and creating an essentially secular consciousness. Like Smith, Greenfeld acknowledges that nationalism refers essentially to secular consciousness, but it is founded on "the principles of popular sovereignty and egalitarianism".

The parallels here with Durkheim's conceptualization of nationalism as a merely secular phenomenon are obvious. Durkheim, who concerned himself with the link between the realm of the sacred and the realm of the profane, described nationalism as a particular form of political religion by declaring that "God is a

projection and expression of society". Following Durkheim, Greenfeld, too, claims that nationalism as a secular form of consciousness "sacralizes the secular", because it implies "modern sacralization of the secular through national consciousness" (Greenfeld, 1996b). Smith, inspired by Kedourie, offers a more recent version of this objection, noting that although nationalism refers to "a secular, this-worldly, anthropocentric ideology and movement", it can also draw on "motifs, symbols, and rituals of the religious traditions of the designated national population according to the social constituency and political need" in varying degrees (Smith, 2000:802). According to Smith, Kedourie somewhat revised his thought on nationalism. At first, while treating nationalism as "a secular doctrine of self-determination" invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Kedourie later recognized the use of religion to bolster national feelings, as illustrated by nationalist leaders in India and Kenya. Political leaders often invoke religious beliefs or values "to mobilize the atavistic emotions of the masses…legitimating the use of force" thereby enabling nationalism to "ally with religion and make use of its emotional repertoire for its own destructive ends" (Ibid.:793). Yet, I suggest that Kedourie seems not to change his ideas radically, subscribing to the notion that nationalism is a secular aspiration.

Although nationalist elites often employ the prestige of religion in pursuit of their own political goals, nationalism remains a secular consciousness. While I agree with Durkheim, Kedourie, Greenfeld and Smith standing firm on the argument that secular consciousness constitutes the origin and very nature of nationalism, I do not attempt to pursue a generally mechanical, materialist view of religion. In practice, it is not easy to separate religious ceremonies from social actions. Despite being essentially secular, nationalism seems to include a certain set of commitments through a deep engagement with religious beliefs, traditions, practices and objects. In other words, the secularization of the world views through which human societies have become increasingly disenchanted did not mean the disappearance of religion. As a result, religion can not totally be divorced from political and social systems, even in secular societies. Still, it must

be viewed as an element in which varying discourses, symbols and modes of power relations are reshaped in pursuit of political ends.

Nationalism as a social phenomenon and as an order-creating system[6] that determines the pattern of a particular society, like religion, does not form a monolithic category. Therefore we usually need typological categories based on the different versions of nationalism, namely secular nationalism, religious nationalism, cultural nationalism, ethnic nationalism etc. Typological endeavors have become even more prevalent today than ever before since current nationalisms are too diverse to be explained by a single method of investigation. As Calhoun notes, "grasping nationalism in its multiplicity of forms requires multiple theories" (Calhoun, 1997:8). In other words, there can be no general theory of nationalism, which originally meant secular nationalism based upon industrialization or individualism proposed by modernists.

To reiterate, I explain nationalism as a political doctrine that has an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups based on collective action for political purposes. Nationhood has become a new source of "the consciousness of belonging together" in the modern world. It is a way of articulating that shapes our consciousness and collective action in multiple contexts and on different levels. An illustration of the various ways in which nationhood builds on and reinforces new social relations is also found around the question of multiple modes of relationship between religion and nationalism. A wide range of national movements emerges where religion plays quite different roles for that complex interactions exist between a specific religion and societies of which it is part. National movements do not simply go through similar pathways or possess a series of similar experiences because they are patterned to interpret the world and act differently depending on their context. Therefore, they do not form a monolithic category for being shaped by dissimilar processes.

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[6] I borrow this concept from Greenfeld in the sense that both nationalism and religion are order-creating political and cultural systems.

On the contrary, they form composite clustering groups, accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts and ideological competition. It would then be possible to argue that many nationalisms come into existence even within each national context, with all ambiguities and tensions.

Nationalism studies, however, have long been dominated by modernist approaches that are suspicious of religion, and this suspicion has inhibited critical research that addresses the complex intersection between religion and nationalism. Secular nationalism, one of the main features of European Enlightenment, was based on "the secular idea of a social compact of equals rather than on ethnic ties or sacred mandates" (Juergensmeyer, 2006:357). It has once appeared to political elites a compelling idea that all human societies can apply it universally. After reaching its worldwide acceptance, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century, secular nationalism has been challenged in various ways (Ibid.:357-59). In most cases, the new religious movements in the wake of globalization, particularly Islamic movements, have reacted to "the spread worldwide of secular modernity". The phenomenon of religion has thus gradually gained recognition "as a system for ordering the world" like nationalism, and various approaches have been adapted to explain the structural effects of religious concepts, doctrines, myths, experiences, rituals and institutions on politics. For instance, Juergensmeyer (1993, 2006), who typically describes religion and nationalism as "competing ideologies of order", considers secular nationalism from a modernist perspective, which relegates religion to the private sphere and keeps it out of political life in a nonreligious world. Like Greenfeld, Juergensmeyer considers both "religion and nationalism in terms of order as well as ideology".

Despite lacking a general theoretical analysis, Juergensmeyer introduces a new conception of nationalism, that is, nationalism as a response of religious-political elites to secular nationalism, what he calls "the loss of faith in secular nationalism". Juergensmeyer was particularly interested in the symbiotic or intertwined relationship between religion and nationalism, a distinctive feature of

a new form of nationalism or "religious nationalism". But he was more interested in religious systems as "a system for ordering the society" and how symbols of solidarity linked religious activities with other aspects of social life. Because religion and nationalism represent "the confrontation of two ideologies of order" in his thought. Like Juergensmeyer, Friedland has argued that there is an inherently competitive dimension of the relationship between religion and nationalism of the secular state (Friedland, 2001:128). One can easily observe that religious mobilization versus secular authority is involved here.

There is, ironically, no clear definition of "religious nationalism" in Juergensmeyer's writings. He calls movements of religious nationalism activism whose goals and motivations are as national as religious. Hindu and Sikh partisans in India, Hindu Tamils and Buddhist Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, "Christian activists in eastern Europe and Latin America, Right-wing Jewish politicians in Israel, Islamic activism in the Middle East and Central Asia" are some prominent examples of "religious nationalism", he says (Juergensmeyer, 1995). With the limited retreat of secular nationalism, various other movements of religious nationalism have emerged. In brief, the destabilizing effects of the resurgence of resultant politicized religion throughout the world and across religious traditions have been accompanied by an increasingly weakening position of secular nationalism. The underlying reason is that secular nationalism has failed to appeal to the general public because it could not bridge the gap between traditional values in the public sphere and the political community. Turkey, Tunisia and Egypt typify this trend, brought about a dramatic popular resurgence of politicized religion.

As noted above, Juergensmeyer's approach to "religious nationalism" does not, however, appear to have a theoretical framework. Instead, it reflects the processes by which religious nationalisms come into being case by case and cannot be assumed to be uniform worldwide. In this respect, Juergensmeyer's logic is similar to Brubaker's account, which relies on a contextual-dependent pattern that accepts nationalism as a "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful,

and disaggregated" phenomenon. In other words, there is no unitary category of "religious nationalism", which can be unproblematically conceived as the focus of theoretical assumptions about the nexus between religion and nationalism. Now that the fierce ideological competition occurs between adherents of different religions or even among many sects and factions of the same religion, religious movements may develop in different political and cultural contexts shaped by under particular circumstances. Besides, religious revivalism has affected secular nationalism in differing ways. For example, while religion in the West was becoming less political with its marginalization and decline, "secular nationalism was becoming more religious" (Juergensmeyer, 1995:383). But this is not always the case because religious engagement of a society does not necessarily generate an absolute retreat of secular nationalism. I argue throughout this study that secular ideologies may also contribute to the construction of national consciousness and nationalism may foster a secular sense of the sacred. Nevertheless, secularization is not a prerequisite for sharing a sense of common nationhood. You do not need to be secular to feel a strong attachment to your nation or you can become a nationalist without being secularized.

The so-called comeback of religion has, however, reinvigorated scholarly debates centered on whether religious beliefs are meaningful in terms of providing the groups with a transcendental and sacred mandate for their actions. Peter Berger conceptualizes this process as "de-secularization of the world", which rests on "the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false" (Berger, 1996:3). In such a world, secular nationalisms would seem to be under siege of new challenges. Scholars like Juergensmeyer were, however, wrong to predict the vulnerable secular nationalisms that have produced both the opportunity and the need for new nationalisms would lead to the fading of the nation-state (Juergensmeyer, 2006). The belief that the nation-state would no longer be necessary and would fade away with the impact of globalization has proved to be false in most cases. By contrast, the nation-state has remained immensely influential in world politics, though its secular basis seemed

increasingly open to criticism. Hence, the link between the nation-state and old form of secular nationalism is paradoxical. While the nation-states unavoidably continue to construct a unified national identity out of thousands of small communities in terms of secular circumstances and secular needs, they seek to come to terms with increasing religious confrontation on the global scale. As Mitchell rigthly points out,

> Whilst identity conflicts and other social struggles may stimulate the return of the religious, once reactivated, religion may take on a logic of its own. Given the continuing salience of religion in public life, and the ever-increasing emphasis on the negotiated nature of identity, teasing out the relationships between religion and ethnicity in modern societies, theoretically and empirically, promises to be a challenging new area of research (Mitchell, 2006:1149).

In sum, although secular nationalism has increasingly come under attack in recent years, secularism is not in total retreat. We have considerable evidence from around the world that other beings equal, secular educational, legal and political institutions have, in part, led to the diminishing significance of traditional religion both as a social force and as a source of explanation of human nature and the world (Mein, 2006, p. 148). Just as religion does not completely lose its influence in a particular geography, so, too, the various forms of secularism are surrounded by contestation and challenges in every corner of the world. One can observe new modes of secularism that do not strive to remove religion from the public sphere but accommodate religion, like in the US, India, Poland, Turkey, Sri Lanka, and Israel. "Secular nationalism was becoming more religious," as Juergensmeyer has ironically noted. I agree with critics that secular nationalism no longer has a worldwide acceptance but a limited application in the Western European context to the degree that people there do not display a high commitment to a specific religion or belief in supernatural beings. One must take secularization as the declining influence (not the absence) of religion in public space rather than its disappearance.

The Eurocentric assumptions of secular nationalism as the dominant paradigm have, of course, collapsed due to considerable evidence from around the world that religion and nationalism can co-exist in a symbiotic relationship. Nevertheless, secularization is irreversible to a large extent because it has become an "unintended consequence of a variety of complex social changes we can summarily call modernization" (Bruce, 2006). The narrative, which tells us that the influence of religion will decrease with modernity and secularization, can be relatively weak but not as weak as some thought. It is highly significant, I think, that even critical knowledge production about the scientific investigation of religion develops in modern and supposedly secular countries, being primarily a Western enterprise. Despite the much-proclaimed crisis of secularism, like predicting the demise of religion, there is no worldwide endogenous decrease in secularization in terms of organized religion as a legitimate basis of public engagement and political action.

The fact that religion fights back from its political marginalization does not mean it is on the rise or secularism is in an irreversible retreat. The comeback of religion undoubtedly reacts against the radical secularist trend. The energy of this reaction gathers more on the periphery or at the popular level, putting pressure on the center or at the decision makers' level. But the latter does not fail to respond to this challenging situation, leading to increasing ideological debates in the context of social conflict. For example, some secular regimes continue to fight against new religious movements through violent mechanisms, like Egypt under the current Sisi rule. Other governments choose to absorb the political motivations of religious organizations via national discourse and even transform them, such as AKP's Turkey and Tunisia's Ennahda movement. Public recognition of religion and its continuing salience in almost all parts of the globe have not brought dramatic changes in the secular character of politics and the secular functioning of the modern inter-state system symbolized by the Treaty of Westphalia. It is true that religion, as a cohesive social force, has become a discursive resource in the public sphere for national leaders in shaping political commitment and preferences. But secularism, which is still in process on its way

forward, is likely to remain one of the central pillars of modern political thought and practice despite its fluctuations.

In a similar vein, secular nationalism, as a result of engagement with temporal ways of thinking, imagining, and understanding the world, continues to exist even if it is going through moments of crisis in terms of its role in the Jacobin dimension of modernity. Like secularism, secular nationalism has never been uniform or monotype. It has come into existence with many expressions and various forms in terms of its association with religion. According to one view, there are, at least, two forms of secularism. One of which has become associated with "the idea of keeping religion under the state control" seems firmly authoritarian and exclusivist in its attitude toward religion. It is called "assertive secularism", which "demands that the state play an assertive role in confining religion to the private domain", has become "the dominant ideology in countries such as France and Mexico" (Kuru, 2014:321).

On the contrary, the state plays a passive role in "passive secularism" by allowing more space for religion in the public sphere. This type of secularism has been dominant in the United States and India (Ibid.) For instance, the French version of secularism that allows no place for religion to construct national identity is not synonymous with the English version of secularism linked with Protestantism. In the French type of secularism, a public space in which religion was virtually subdued for the sake of reason and emancipation was created, and religious organizations were largely controlled by state regulations. It is called "laicite" "a term that denotes the absence of religion in public space, especially the state and public school system" and has become a new source of collective identity for French people that Durkheim sought to promote (Davie, 2006:182). Religion was, however, particularly significant in the birth of English nationalism because it has placed itself as an attachment to a group symbol and "myths of ethnic election or chosenness". These two cases indicate the significance of the historical, political and social context that gives religion its very meaning.

The connection between religion and national consciousness is, therefore, relativistic with varying degrees of coexistence and competition, eventually making it ambiguous. It must be examined case by case to uncover the complex relationships between religious beliefs and particular human groups that become either the source or the carrier of national identity. More specifically, it manifests itself in various ways in which the substantive content of a particular religion influences both individual behavior and collective action within the boundary of a specific time, geographical location, and historical and social conditions. As already mentioned, the substantive content of religion refers to an understanding of religion from within in the Weberian sense. In this view, there has been constant interaction between religion and the world, which sets in motion from the spiritual to the material and from the material to the spiritual, as illustrated in the role of the Protestant ethic in the rise of capitalism (Weber, 2005).

This approach involves "ontological concern for meaning," enabling religion to order the world, including national sentiments. Yet "religion has an existence driven by the content of a belief system or an ethic that does not simply mirror the context in which it exists" (Davie, 2006: 174). In this respect, I combine Weber's ontological concern for meaning – religion as a system for ordering the world - with Durkheim's functionalism – religion as a collective social action because religion has both meaning and social dimensions.

I argue that religion has both meaning (ontological) and social (practical) dimensions, not mutually exclusive. Thus, I attempt to combine Weber's ontological concern for meaning with Durkheim's emphasis on the social and Malinowski's focus on individual psychology. Malinowski's espousal of religion "as a response to emotional stress", too, indicates its ability for people "to cope with life's vicissitudes" (Malinowski, 1948). Although his individual psychological approach does not appear similar to the collectivist view of Durkheim, religion exists and continues to exist because it serves a function as in Durkheim but at the individual level. Malinowski's account of religion is, however, more tied to its practical aspects that enable people to cope with stress,

anxiety and fear of death. Following the social construction of the meaning systems, I contend that religions -autonomous but not independent realms of social life- have particular doctrinal teachings and moral orientations to explain and justify circumstances and events. In other words, there is no clear distinction between the profane and the sacred.

When it comes to secular nationalism, it remains true that, like many other social phenomena, it has faced challenges and brought about its counter-movements against secular elites that crippled modernity-secularization connection in some instances. Islam-influenced national movements, I would say, in particular, constitute a challenge to secular nationalism because they often owe their political success to mainly social and religious grievances caused by the failures of secular nationalism. They have thus adopted the notion that religion and nationalism are not contradictory and mutually exclusive forces, affirming the compatibility of Islam and national identity. In contrast to modern approaches of nationalism, these newly emerging actors have contended that modernity does not imply secularism. National identity encompasses religious allegiances based on a combination of the two. Piscatory points to the prevalence of the dual commitment of adherents to the Islamic faith, for it is not difficult to reconcile religion with nationalism and a world of nation-states in contemporary Islamic political thought (Piscatori, 1986).

By the distinctively religious character of a particular nation, modern nationalism does not simply become secular. The modernist assumption that nationalism as a secular phenomenon cannot reconcile itself with religion in general and Islam, in particular, has proved false. In a similar vein, another assumption that secular nationalism presumes the triumph of national over religious identity has also become erroneous because nationalism did and does not require secularization in some circumstances. In this sense, secularization does not appear a necessary or inevitable, perhaps even unnecessary, element contributing to the construction of nationhood in some cases. It may also have a profound secularizing effect on the ways of thought in some other places,

convincing people that religion is hardly persuasive for their survival. Some Islamic groups, for instance, describe religion and nationalism as "competing ideologies of order," for the claim that nationalism as a political ideology contradicts religion by definition even though the role of religion in social change remains ambivalent and uncertain during the recent uprisings in the MENA region. These organizations that symbolize transnational political, economic, social, and cultural interaction have adopted a more explicitly anti-secular position. In their ways of approaching social reality, religion is the only possible solution to the primary political and social problems created by secular national elites. The two different counter-examples of anti-secular nationalism reveal that attempts to make generalizations do not allow us to capture the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the relationship between religion and nationalism. Suppose we wish to understand the capacity of religion to influence national feelings. In that case, we need to focus on defining the purposes of religion in Weberian conception, its interpretation, and application in Durkheimian sense on the individual subjects in terms of social change.

3.5. Religious Nationalism: A Definitional Problem

Until the end of the Cold War, the continuing vigor of religion, not surprisingly, received little scholarly attention. Much was written about the strong correlation between the process of secularization and the marginalization of religion in that the spirituality would become utterly irrelevant in "modern and supposedly secular societies" (Berger 1967, 1969, 1973; Wilson, 1979, 1982). Lacking any empirical evidence, this unrealistic perspective (perhaps driven by wishful thinking) welcomed the decline of religion as "a sign of humanity's progress". Based on this perspective, advocates of "the secularization thesis" repeatedly emphasized that the shared belief systems no longer influence the physical world and so would fade away. No wonder this view highlighted a weakening religious faith and traditional belief systems in modern times. As Grace Davie aptly put it, "this weakening, to the point that religion has ceased to be an effective force in society, lies at the heart of the process known as secularization, as a result of

which the world has become progressively disenchanted" (Davie, 2006: 174). However, the sharp divide between the sacred and the secular turns out to be illusory and unreal. Many scholars, including Berger himself, have criticized this approach for its limitations and inability to yield different kinds of data that illuminate the deeper meanings of religion (Stark & Bainbridge, 1985,1987; Berger, 1997; Bruce 1995, 1996, 2002).

The secular view of nationalism leaves too many important questions unanswered as we observe the endurance of religious consciousness, like: "What role does religion play in the construction and non-existence of national identity in religiously homogeneous ethnically heterogeneous conflicts? Does religion promote or hinder the emergence of national identity?". As Durkheim rightly stated, "there is no known society without a religion" and "religion has given birth to all that is essential in society" (Durkheim quoted in Stark R.& Bainbridge, 1985:4). Yet religion as a meaning system gives individuals the cognitive tools to understand and explain the world for human beings need "self-actualization. It also fulfills the need for socialization and unites its members around a common goal as a collective social action. Religion, in particular, provides people with identity and enhances solidarity and support at the collective level in the Durkheimian sense. It is thus apparent that the persistence of the religion's influence does not just rely on its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also to unite the collectivity serving as a badge of group identity. With the imminent end of the Cold War, dominated by an ideological confrontation between capitalism and communism, the trend toward a secular focus of nationalism was bound to change.

However, at that time, relegating religion to a minor role was not to dismiss it as a delusion. Religion being part of the ideological competition was probably again connected with political motivations and influenced the social world during the Cold War. But religious-based conflicts did have a much less central role in the inter-state system than it currently plays. The collapse of ideological bipolarity and "the failure of forced secularization" denote "the difficulty of

eradicating religion in today's desecularizing world" (Marsh, 2007:108). Although we do not know to what extent states, non-state actors, and people can be attached to the de-secularization process, there has been growing scholarly attention to studying religion. Contemporary research on religion attempts to evaluate its impact on everyday life and increasing visibility in the public sphere, especially regarding religious-motivated political activism. The global agenda of religious revivalism helped usher in a new generation of theoretical literature to explain what was happening.

The changing nature of world politics that caused the abandonment of secularization theory in the mid-1990s and the emergence of alternative theoretical approaches to religious identities stem primarily from some developments on the ground, such as the salience of counter-secularization movements in both domestic and world politics, the upsurge of religion in many parts of the world -Hinduism, Buddhism, Islamic and Evangelical revivalism-, Christian nationalism in the USA, the rise of conflicts in which religion is involved like those in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Lebanon, Iraq and Sri Lanka (Berger, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000; Casanova, 1994; Davie, 1999, 2006; Habermas, 2006, Juergensmeyer, 1993; Mitchell, 2006; Toft et al.2011). In contrast to the prior studies, many scholars have found that religious and national identities are often coexistent and overlapping (Greenfeld, 1996a,1996b; Veer, 1994; Hastings, 1997; Smith, 1999, 2000; Grosby, 2003; Rieffer, 2003). The reason, I suggest, is that considerable evidence has been abundant in many parts of the world where religion and nationalism are not always irreconcilable in the past decades. On the face of it, religious identity-motivated conflicts superseding secular ones are too numerous, as mentioned above.

In most cases, religious and national self-identification is frequently cooperative and even mutually supportive in that they appear intertwined while maintaining sufficient tension among themselves in other contexts. Religion's relationship with nationalism is thus complicated, requiring extensive empirical investigation because it is mainly context-dependent, historical, and changing. It is, therefore,

essential to note that the downward trend of secularization is not the whole story. Given the enduring belief in the liberty and autonomy of the individual relying on secular modernity, particularly in Western Europe and other parts of the world, it is worth stressing the theory of secularization, which still owns universal applicability to the real world. However, some scholars of religious studies, like Berger, quickly stress that we are now in the process of "de-secularization," and secularism is in retreat with religious revivalism. Unlike Berger, however, I doubt that secularism is on the decline. I suggest there can be a dual dynamism in secularization and religion with fluctuations.

It is true that religion is no longer on the retreat and is increasingly becoming more salient in the public sphere compared with the 19th or the first half of the 20th century. But it is not clear whether religion is re-emerging today or secularism is retreating in every corner of the world because different cultural and institutional patterns within a set of structural constraints of a particular society are directly affected by its own dynamics. New political trends in Saudi Arabia, which leads religious reforms though shallow in form, the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Islamic An-Nahda party in Tunisia, the decline of the popularity of the Islam-influenced AKP government in Turkey, "Lebanon's president's call for the proclamation of a secular state" (France24, 2020) are some examples that do not support the de-secularization hypothesis. These cases prove the existence and persistence of the secular political sphere. In short, it is impossible to accept that religion as the order-creating system has replaced the nation, which is the basis of individual and collective identity in the modern world.

Just as religion does not utterly lose its influence in a particular geography, so, too, the various forms of secularism confront new challenges and contestations. New modes of the secular state and state-society relationships that do not wholly remove religion from the public sphere but allow for a peaceful association with religion may also help understand the need for a reconceptualization of secularization and religiosity. In this respect, I agree with Berger and others'

conclusion that secularization is no longer a worldwide theory but a theory with limited application in the Western European context to the degree that people there do not display a high commitment to a specific religion. Secularization alone cannot adequately explain social reality, so science needs religion to address its role in change even though it remains ambiguous. Secularization does not imply a simple matter of declining religiosity or the disappearance of religion, which is underpinned by the distinctively French notion. Instead, it concerns the decline of religion's importance (not the absence) in public space.

In light of its historical and social complexity, let us now look at "the phenomenon of religious nationalism". Before analyzing its characteristics, we must first acknowledge that few studies offer a precise definition of "religious nationalism". It is a problematic concept that reflects a complex phenomenon that cannot be reduced to one set of immutable laws. It appears that "the discussion of religious nationalism" depends on the way it is used in religion and nationalism studies. What is meant by "religious nationalism"? Do we mean non-secular national identity but dominated by ethnic sentiments, like "conservative Turkish nationalism" characterized by religious rhetoric and motivation? Or a type of nationalism in which religion becomes ethnic characteristics against rival religions (religious identity as an ethnic attribute) such as Serbian, Bosnian, Armenian and Uyghur nationalism? Scholars of nationalism have had difficulty coming to terms with a consensual definition of "religious nationalism". Religious nationalism is a highly complex field involving a diverse range of nationalism theories, ways of understanding religion, and the relationship between religion and nationalism. Religion manifests itself as the main distinction, sometimes the only one, distinguishing a self-conscious ethnic group from others in some cases, while secular nationalism often uses it as an instrumental tool to pursue its political ends.

The spectrum is too large to make a simple definition. It is not clear that "religious nationalism counters with a model where religious identity supersedes or competes with secular national identity", as Soper&Fetzer refer

(Soper&Fetzer, 2018:8). The two forms of identification are not always mutually exclusive to be separated. The definition differs according to the social, historical and political context in which religion and nationalism work. Let me give an example. Hindu nationalism is entrenched in the presumption that a "real" Indian must be a Hindu, not a Muslim or Christian, but it may reflect a secular culture equally. One should not, therefore, be searching for an all-embracing definition. Rieffer presents a broad definition that articulates an integral bond between religion and nationalism, suggesting that "religious nationalism is the fusion of nationalism and religion such that they are inseparable" (Rieffer, 2003:225).

> Just as nationalism typically refers to the animating spirit of a community of people with an aspiration to be politi- cally self-determining… Religious nationalism builds on this conceptual understanding. It is a community of religious people or the political movement of a group of people heavily influenced by religious beliefs who aspire to be politically self-determining. In many cases, they desire some type of self-government for the national group and that their own independent political unit (state, region, and so on) be influenced or governed according to religious beliefs (Rieffer, 2003:205)

Yet it is a straightforward but unconvincing definition. It seems problematic to identify this kind of relationship as "religious nationalism" because some so-called religious nationalisms are, in fact, ethnic nationalism under the guise of religious discourses. Today, many nationalisms that we may easily name "religious" have no such religious gravity, as Greenfeld suggested (Greenfeld, 1996b). Although some national movements with religious motifs, such as Northern Ireland, Palestinians, Chechens, Aches, Filipino Moros, and Kashmiris, are cited as instances of "religious nationalism" in the literature, whether and to what extent the primary loyalties and political purposes are religious or secular is controversial. Rieffer falls into this error. The committed disciples of such nationalisms tend to be culturally eclectic without regard to the commandments of their belief that deceptively form their identity, renouncing its regulations and consistently violating its law. They may not do so on purpose or be fully aware of the substance of their religion or the religious importance of their actions even though they follow its rituals. In this relationship, religious views are likely

murky, serving as an external sign and symbol of their collective representation in the Durkheimian sense rather than an expression of revealed truth and an authentic inner personal conviction. Again, religion is often an essential and distinct feature, distinguishing a self-conscious community from others in religious nationalisms. Veer also sets out to develop a general framework of definition that focuses on diverse forms of religious nationalism. The term implies modes of consciousness combining discourse on the nation with the discourse on the religious community. Newman (quoted in Veer 1994, 1995) and Juergensmeyer (1993, 2006), on the other hand, attempt to develop a rudimentary typology of religious nationalism "as a form of resis¬tance to the secularization". Some others have tried to adopt a more rigid attitude to analyze religious nationalism, which "leads to a formal recognition of a religious tradition and multiple connections between that dominant tradition and the state", in contrast, secular nationalism distinguishes religion from the state minimizing formal contacts between them (Soper & Fetzer, 2018:10). We do not know there is a sharp distinction between the two phenomena. It is, therefore, a problematic definition that no longer appears sufficient.

Accordingly, we must embrace comparative-historical methods rather than a particular theoretical perspective to deal with the definitional problem. Religion can either promote or hinder emergence and strengthen national identity. Furthermore, one must frequently look at different cases that mirror the context in which they exist because the definition of the concept is problematic to understand and explain. For this reason, there have been controversial views of "religious nationalism" in the existing literature that encompass multiple meanings and practices. We thus encounter crawling literature on religious nationalism because of the difficulty of establishing causal connections between theoretical and empirical investigation. Pointing to the diversity and heterogeneity of movements, Veer is correct when he implies that scholars of religious nationalism, unsurprisingly, deconstruct historical and archeological arguments" that are pertinent to the specific local context. Veer nevertheless

adds that they are largely "confined to a narrative that attracts less and less support outside of scholarly circles" (Veer, 1994:163).

While acknowledging the perils of particularism, throughout this work, I have embraced a contextual-dependent approach that treats nationalism as "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated terms" (Brubaker, 2006:11). I favor this approach because each nationalism has produced different discourses, practices and actions regardless of what it claims to be doing in the name of the struggle for national survival and interest. Brubaker has provided an alternative way of studying the bond between religion and nationalism, offering four approaches for examining this relationship without giving a strict categorical framework. These are "religion and nationalism as analogous phenomena"; how religion helps explain the origin, power, or distinctive character of nationalism; religion as a part of nationalism; religious nationalism as a form of nationalism (Brubaker, 2012). I will not use these categories directly in my case study, but Brubaker's relational and context-dependent approach helps us comprehend the varying influence of religion on larger social, political, and psychological processes. Smith expresses similar views about the origin and emergence of nationalism. "Just as there are many types of nationalisms, so we can find the concept of the nation assuming different forms and national identities undergoing considerable change over time. There is nothing fixed or static about nations or national identities" (Smith, 2000:796). Marsh presents an argument that shares certain features with Brubaker and Smith. Religion can be "a force for unity" as a component of nationalism and an obvious primary source of division within a society in the process of nationhood. "Which way the pendulum will swing depends entirely upon the unique attributes and historical circumstances of each nation and potential nation" (Marsh, 2007:107). In short, no matter what form it takes, nationalism is not free from the context in which it may grow. In a similar vein, religious meanings also vary widely according to the interpretations, representations, and practices.

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To conclude, "neither religion nor nationalism is uniform." (Greenfeld, 1996b:170). Nationalism as a social phenomenon, like religion, does not form a monolithic category because nationalists do not all go the same way and act accordingly. Nations are composite entities in which collective social action is formed by the association of individuals but accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts, and ideological competition among its members. As we frequently encounter in Muslim majority societies, for instance, the idea of the nation being the synonym of the "people of the same religion" has accommodated diverse meanings and multiethnic dimensions. Thus, the relationship between religion and nationalism must be examined case by case to uncover the diversity and complexity of religious phenomena in particular social practices. Religion can become either the source and carrier of national identity or create a significant impediment to nation-building like religious transnationality in Hindu spiritualism and the Muslim ummah as simply rejecting secular modernity. Therefore, the fact that each nationalism can be articulated in various ways requires categorization/classifications that allow us a much more thorough examination of its interaction with religion. The distinctive feature of some nationalism is religion. "With nationalism, the heavens, so to speak, descend to earth; this world, the world of empirical reality and social relations, becomes the sphere of the sacred (Ibid.:173).

Religious and national identity is closely fused, as in Jews, Armenians, Iranians, Irish, Polish, Bosnians, Serbians, Uighurs, Tamils. Yet, these nationalisms can, though not always, draw tight social boundaries that exclude religion at the same time. The abundance of contradicting findings reflects the variability of the relationship between religion and nationalism. Even the substantive content of a particular religion has shaped the connection to the extent that it can influence "the nature of the emerging nationalism". It is pretty clear that "the circumstances of this emergence" in a considerable measure determine the existence and nature of nationalism (Ibid.). Let me give an example. Catholicism has been the constitutive element of national identity in Poland and Ireland, contrary to France. Hastings, though, argues the opposite (Hastings, 1997).

Polish and Irish national identity would force us to focus on the process of constant interaction between religion and the world in Weberian terms, which sets in motion from the spiritual to the material and from the material to the spiritual.

It appears that Catholicism does not fall into the Weberian category of "social action" in the French case because it did not serve as the basis for the formation of French national identity. Unlike Durkheim, Weber was preoccupied with the cultural origin and the construction of reality. Similar examples exist in other cases. While the Protestant Reformation occupied a unique place in the advancement of English identity on its road to national unity, it did not make possible the emergence of German nationalism, which was born three whole centuries later. But yet "an indigenous adaptation of Protestant principles, Pietism, was responsible for the conceptual and emotional framework of German national consciousness" (Greenfeld, 1996b:18). The development of nationalism in a particular society depends on the degree to which religion is open to it. For this reason, one finds that either religion does not exist separately but only through its association with the national sentiment, or it resists nationalism as the only legitimate source and fundamental organizing principle of the inter-state order.

On the other hand, the rise of global political engagement with religious rhetoric has affected secular nationalism in differing ways. Given the increasing salience of religion, especially in almost all parts of the developing world, even in some parts of the developed world like the United States, secular nationalism has become aware of the continuing importance of religion, adapting itself to new circumstances. Like religious nationalism, secular nationalism is today no uniform or monotype involving many expressions and various forms in terms of its association with religion. Despite the political role of religion as a part of national consciousness, one should again bear in mind that nationalism essentially refers to secular consciousness (Smith, 1991; Kedourie 1996, Greenfeld,1996b). Nevertheless, this is not to say that secularization is a must for

sharing a sense of common nationhood. If anything, there is a substantial overlap between secular nationalism and religious nationalism because secular and religious beliefs alike may contribute to the construction of national consciousness. The secular overlaps with the religious in certain aspects. For instance, "there are overlaps between the two – Islamists and Arab nationalists- notably in their similar stance of opposition against the West which has been experienced in the Middle East in the form of predatory nationalisms of the great powers" (Asad, 1999:196) even though the divide is absolute. More importantly, religious nationalism" does not always oppose "secular nationalism" but is a part of it. It may thus be helpful to look at the different cases to understand and explain religious nationalism. I suggest that it would be an oversimplification to make the all-embracing definition of religious nationalism without looking at the various instances that need to be examined in their historical evolution. We need to explore how particular nationalism relates to religion in order to uncover the intractable relationship between religion and nationalism.

3.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I tried to demonstrate that the modern theory of nationalism seems not to incorporate religion as a part of the national consciousness. Religion, however, has become an integral part of some contemporary nationalist movements and even a source of inspiration for the emergence of nationalism in certain pre-modern societies. Modern accounts of nationalism, consciously or unconsciously, have overlooked the impact of religion in the construction of national identity due to their reliance on the premise that nationalism is peculiar to modern times. For instance, Gellner's conception of nationalism pays much attention to the high culture while leaving "the notion of culture" vague because it could not establish a meaningful link between culture and religion. It reflects the engagement of modernity with the boundaries that separate culture from religion. Yet religion is socialized into a particular cultural context, even though it has substantive characteristics. In other words, religions are not only about truth claims; they are also about identity that takes shape in a cultural context.

Modern explanation of nationalism is built on the fallacy of the triumph of secular society over religion. Such a view incorrectly presupposes a divide between public and private then locates religion within the private sphere, requiring nationalism to substitute for religion. The trend toward secularization has reversed following a dramatic global religious resurgence worldwide and across religious movements. Secularization did not necessarily lead to the inevitable decline and disappearance of religion in all societies, or religious self-identifications will not entirely succumb to secular values, vice versa. Religion never disappeared, waiting there to be uncovered. With the limited retreat of secularization, the new frames examining the relationship between religion and nationalism have emerged, including "de-secularization of the world. In this respect, the Durkheimian view of religion for which the sacred is of great value as long as it can unite them around a common cause takes us beyond the conceptualization of nationalism as a merely modern phenomenon. I refrain from making a broad definition of "religious nationalism" because the patterns between religion and nationalism are miscellaneous and have much to do with the distinctive features of each nationalism. Neither religion nor nationalism is uniform. We must, therefore, embark on comparative-historical methods rather than a general theory to deal with the definitional problem. While admitting the risk of particularism, I have assumed a context-dependent approach that deals with the relationship between religion and nationalism in "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated," which allows a better understanding of the relevant topic with its distinct circumstances.

CHAPTER 4

TWO FORMS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

4.1. Introduction

This chapter opens with a consideration of why an explicit description of "religious nationalism" is misleading, as there are various forms of interactions between religion and nationalism. No single definition or model can adequately explain religion's complex relationship with nationalism. It changes according to circumstances and patterns in how religion and nationalism interact, whether religion or nationalism comes appear as individual order-creating systems, the framework of ethnic conflicts when the parties are religiously homogeneous or heterogeneous, or religion is the primary motive or supportive element of nationalism. Moreover, some instances contradict each other. Transnational Islamic movements and ethnic nationalisms under the guise of Muslim brotherhood are called religious nationalism at the same time. Nonetheless, the difficulty of conceptualization does not avert us from laying out a classification of the interplay of religion and nationalism. To shed light on that, I particularly turn my attention to the forms of interaction between the two. I mainly develop a binary approach because, I argue, there is either a symbiotic or competitive association between specific configurations of nationalism and religion. In other words, religion has both the capacity to promote (positive impacts) and hamper (damaging effects) the emergence and growth of national feelings. Much of the literature focuses on the encouraging role of religion on national identity and less say about the inhibiting aspects of faith on"the idea of the nation.

In the first section, I will present the competitive form of relationship between religion and nationalism in which the two have mutually exclusive goals as

contradicting order-creating systems. This model fits well into "Muslim nationalism" or "Muslim trans-nationalism". Islam, in particular, remains a source of motivation to create a political order for some self-conscious religious groups based on their collective action. In this framework, an image of society refers to the fundamental tenets of "religion" as an order-creating system rather than the nation. The second part examines the symbiotic interaction between religion and nationalism, dividing it into three parts. I will first consider the constitutive role of religion in the building and development of nationalism, that is, religion as an organic element of national consciousness that draws a more stable boundary between the group and "the other." I will then discuss the supporting role of religion as "a source of legitimation and reinforcement of national cause" rather than "a marker of ethnic identity". In the last part, I will briefly discuss to what extent nationalism can be treated as a kind of religion.

4.2. A Binary Approach to the Relationship between Religion and Nationalism

I refrained from a precise definition of "religious nationalism" in the previous chapter. There are diverse associations between religion and nationalism, which appear in several instances that do not allow simple theoretical generalizations. No single model can satisfactorily explain the relationship between religious and national loyalties. It has been problematic throughout history and in the contemporary world ranging from deep contestation to fusion (Soper, J.,& Fetzer, J.:2018). It does not, of course, prevent us from making a classification of the interplay of religion and nationalism, which I will endeavor to do in this chapter. The two may exist as two distinct social identities in competitive ways, whereas they correspond to the complementary or intertwined collective consciousness in some social arrangements. Their relationship reflects both cleavage and synthesis. As Marsh correctly notes, religion can be "a force for unity" as a component of nationalism and an obvious major source of division of a society on the road to achieving national unity at the same time. "Which way the pendulum will swing depends entirely upon the unique attributes and

historical circumstances of each nation and potential nation" (Marsh, 2007:107). Religion's relationship with nationalism must therefore be examined case by case to uncover the diversity and complexity of religious phenomena in particular social practices.

Many scholars refer to "religious nationalism," in which religious beliefs have strong connections with nationalism. Its main distinction from secular forms of nationalism is that religion has played a crucial part in the construction of nationhood, reinforcing the reification of ethnic groups with its distinctive role in history. The term "religious nationalism" thus may change according to the extent to which religion and nationalism are related, or religion can influence nationalism. It varies according to circumstances where religion and nationalism stand individual order-creating systems, the framework of ethnic conflicts when the parties are religiously homogeneous (or heterogeneous), or religion is the primary reason or supportive element of nationalism. Yet, attempts to define religious nationalism inevitably reflect a genuine or synthetic communication between religion and nationalism. My main argument is that there is either a symbiotic or competitive relationship between certain forms of religion and nationalism, claiming that faith may help foster national identity (even as an ethnic marker) or inhibit the emergence of national consciousness. Needless to say, there is now a small but growing literature on the nexus between religion and nationalism, but we do not have far-reaching theoretical frames to explain the diverse models of religion and nationalism, how those models are defined and can effectively be measured. Despite prolific research on religion and endless classifications of nationalism, little scholarship systematically addresses the association between the two. To overcome the theoretical limitations, I rely on a context-dependent approach that treats nationalism as "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated terms" (Brubaker, 2006) through case analysis.

In his pioneering work, Brubaker proposes "four ways of studying the relationship between religion and nationalism" without offering categorical

models. These are "religion and nationalism as analogous phenomena"; "religion as a cause or explanation of nationalism" or how religion helps explain the origin, power, or distinctive character of nationalism; "religion intertwined with nationalism or religion as a part of nationalism"; "religious nationalism as a distinctive kind of nationalism" (Brubaker, 2012). Throughout the study, I will not use these four ways of considering the relationship between religion and nationalism. However, Brubaker's relational and context-dependent approach allows us to understand the varying influence of religion on larger social, political, and psychological processes in unique cases. Furthermore, the last two particularly possess some features that directly concern the binary approach I have adopted.

In the first configuration, nationalism is presented as a new religion. It shares certain similar social structures and processes since it provides a way of social-cultural identification, a mode of organization," and "a way of framing political claims". Religion has the ability to unite the collective consciousness among its adherents for a common cause in a single moral community in the Durkheimian sense. In the second one, religion explains the origin and emergence of nationalism and the ways in which particular religious traditions linked with the nation have shaped certain forms of nationalism. Religion contributed to the development of English nationalism with the help of the dissident character of Protestantism and Puritanism with English nationalism (Greenfeld, 1992, 1993, 1996a, 1996; Hastings, 1997). Religious symbols, myths, motifs, narratives, and rituals were moved into the political domain and employed to construct nationalist claims through the concept of ethnic election or chosenness (Smith, 2000, 2003).

The third way treats religion "not as something outside nationalism" that helps explain it but as so profoundly intertwined or imbricated with nationalism "as part of the phenomenon rather than an external explanation" (Brubakery, 2012:8-9). It divides the intertwining relationship to two sub-category. One refers to the coincidence between religious and national boundaries as illustrated in Sikh and

Jewish nationalism. In contrast, religion does not necessarily define the nation's frontiers on the other, but it equips myths, metaphors, and symbols as in American or white Christian nationalism. Lastly, religious nationalism "as a distinctive kind of nationalism" does not present a category in which religious language, symbol, rhetoric, images are mobilized in the name of nationalist claim nor that nationalism and religion can co-exist and overlap in a symbiotic or intertwined relationship. Following Friedland, Brubaker states that this version of nationalism corresponds to "a distinctively religious type of nationalist programme that represents a distinct alternative to secular nationalism" (Friedland, 2001; Brubaker, 2012:12). Although I avoid defining "religious nationalism" above, I suggest that religious nationalism, within the competitive framework, adds up to the mobilization of religiously motivated people to satisfy "the need for change" and "the need for a new order" within a particular society and without. Within this framework, an intrinsically competitive interaction arises between Islam and modern nationalism, and Muslim nationalism exemplifies the "distinctly religious form of nationalism".

The existing literature, however, focuses explicitly on the impact of religion in the emergence and development of nationalism or the mutual attraction and affinity between religious and national claims. It also examines the ways in which contemporary national movements are heavily influenced by religious beliefs to achieve political purposes. Nevertheless, what is missing in the literature is the hindering potential of religion in the nascency of nationalism instead of supporting it. While the bulk of literature on the relationship between religion and nationalism admits that religion has played a productive part in forming ethnic and national identities, there is no much endeavor to explain the restraining facet of faith on the growth of "the idea of the nation. This lack of effort allows us to explore the contribution of religion to the non-existence of national consciousness and develop a bilateral framework for understanding how faith interacts with nationalism in the modern world.

I mainly, therefore, focus on the contending and compromising interplay between religion and nationalism from a comparative-historical philosophy. First, religion and nationalism, by their very nature, have been mutually exclusive and competitive in some social settings due to their incompatible characteristics. In other words, religious loyalty does not necessarily serve as a leading factor prompting the people to join the movements that have a nationalist dimension. Secondly, religion and nationalism can exist in a symbiotic or intertwined relationship in such a manner that allows religious and national identities to be coexistent and overlapping as a combination of the two. As Hobsbawm ironically noted, although religion is "a paradoxical cement for modern nationalism" in some instances, it may also constitute a challenge to "the nation's monopoly claim to its members' loyalty" on the other hand (Hobsbawm, 1990:68).

4.3. Competitive Form of Relationship

One should recognize that religion may have an encouraging role in the construction and reproduction (or consolidation) of national consciousness, as are Indians, Irish, Polish, the Palestinians, Tamils, Chechens, Filipino Moros, and Kashmiris. Yet we should not fall into the trap of assuming that such a linkage is equally accurate in all cases, and nationalism is often intertwined with other elements that have to do with religion. A glance at the existing literature on the relationship between religion and nationalism reveals that many scholars have tended to focus on symbiotic forms of religion and nationalism in which one reinforces the other. There also, however, occurs the opposite process, namely, the non-symbiotic-tendency model in which the two phenomena have an antagonistic connection. An emphasis on irreconcilable differences does not amount to a denial of accommodating interaction in that religion presents an additional impetus for nationalism in some instances. Yet it is equally valid that religion may also inhibit the pursuit of nationalist claims as exemplified in large sections of the Kurdish populations, including among the Berber people in North Africa, which we will see in more detail in the next chapter.

Religion has undermined the very idea of nationalism by supplying non-national and transnational forms of interaction, particularly in Muslim societies where the socio-political character of Islam has a dramatic impact on everyday life. Islam thereby still perpetuates its exclusively anti-ethnic and anti-national feature for some people. Christianity and Judaism, on the contrary, have been more tempting in the molding of nations, even of nationalism, or in the particularisation of each local ethnicity. There has, however, always been a strong universalizing trend or vein within Islam. It mainly stems from its theological origin but not independent realms of social life in the Weberian sense. Islam has theological, social and political motivations with particular doctrinal teachings and moral orientations to explain and control circumstances and events. Its universalizing spirit has been profoundly anti-national, providing a universalizing bridge in its networking with wider ethnic circles, even though it has failed to offer a stable political structure to hold its adherents together. Again, Islam has far-reaching effects on individual and collective behavior, providing prisms through which the meaning of the world is uncovered and social actions orienting toward reshaping the world by human design.

4.3.1. Religion as an Order-Creating System

To explore the dichotomy between religion and nationalism, we must focus on what basis "aspiration of creating an order" and "the need for change" lies at the root of the ideological contest between religion and nationalism. To put it more bluntly, does religion or nationalism prevail as order-creating systems? In this sense, Greenfeld's equation of "essentially secular nationalism" with "the transcendental religions" as order-creating cultural systems possessing specific characteristics that distinguish them from other social phenomena may help understand the trajectory of collective action. But, in her view, religion provided the sense of the order of countless societies in the past. Whereas the latter has represented "the modern image of order", leaving no room for the belief system in the modern world view. Nationalism as a secular cultural system fundamentally differs from transcendental religions in that it focuses on this

world and the world of empirical reality, making the mundane the source of its ultimate meaning, which implies its sacralization (Greenfeld, 2006c).

Yet Greenfeld misses a critical point that religions are concerned with meeting the needs of individual members while also dealing with the social and political issues of the society in which it exists even in a modern world. Although cultural values imply an essential ingredient of the political process in Greenfeld's conception of religion and nationalism as the distinctive order-creating cultural systems, I use the equation in the sense that religion and nationalism are both order-creating political systems (or ideals). I differ from Greenfeld on this. In her reformulation, nationalism has been an unrivaled source of "aspiration of creating an order" and satisfied "the need for order" in the wake of the substantial decline of "social consciousness of religion". Despite the structural similarities between the two phenomena and the fact that nationalism has its roots in the nature of religion, it turns into a secular cultural system with a particular focus on this world in time. Nationalism, in this way, inevitably reflects a matter of secular politics not because of its becoming a concomitant of the modernization processes, as modernists argued, but because of its nature, which is what distinguishes Greenfeld's from modern explanations of nationalism such as Gellner, Hobsbawm, Breuilly, Anderson, and Hroch.

Greenfeld's position differs from mainstream modernist theories of nationalism for two aspects. Nations and nationalism are not the products of modernization because they preceded "industrialization and institutionalization of capitalism." Instead, modernization, in itself, is a result of the emergence of national identity. Unlike the modernists, she re-reads the cause-and-effect relationship from a different angle, pointing to religion's role in forming national consciousness, as well. In her view, "nationalism emerged in a time of ardent religious sentiment...the time of Reformation. It was able to develop and become established owing to the support of the religion, and in many cases, it incorporated religion as a part of national consciousness (Greenfeld, 1993:48-49). Following Durkheim, Greenfeld argues that nationalism as a secular form of

consciousness "sacralizes the secular" (Greenfeld, 1996b). The reason why Durkheim chose to declare that "God is society" was also "modern sacralization of the secular through national consciousness" (Ibid.). That is to say, religion has no substantive and ontological value but draws its strength from the community.

I contend that religion has both meaning (ontological) and social (practical) dimensions. The two dimensions are not mutually exclusive in the sense that I attempt to combine Weber's ontological concern for meaning with Durkheim's emphasis on the social and Malinowski's stress on "individual psychology". More clearly, the persistence of the religion's influence does not just rely on its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also to unite the collectivity serving as a badge of group identity. Like Mitchell, I primarily suggest that religious meanings (Weberian) and behaviors (Durkheimian) rise to the surface and continue to influence both individual and collective identities during times of personal and social crisis (Mitchell, 2006:1138), which refers to "the social construction of the meaning systems" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Religious norms can somewhat be constructed from below rather than from above" without disregarding the guidance of elites.

Greenfeld was, however, correct to classify religion and nationalism as "order-creating cultural systems" belonging to the same general category of sociological phenomena despite "the images of the social order they imply are different and are created in different ways". Yet she was wrong to ignore that they can be simultaneous competitive forces in the framework of modern social consciousness. She was, at the same time, quick to conclude that "like great religions before it, nationalism which lies at the basis of individual and collective identity in the modern world, today forms the framework of the type of identity characteristic of the age" and it has replaced religion as the order-creating-system (Greenfeld, 1996b:170). Nationalism, by its very nature, implies the Enlightenment-inspired secular ideology of modernity and a fundamentally cultural system conflicting with religion.

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Like nationalism, however, religion still remains an active element (even the essence in some instances) of social reality in societies where it renders values and norms capable of guiding people in their actions. Religion and nationalism are thus equivalent in terms of their claims, namely, "the search for order". They are, therefore, alternative ideological hypotheses to each other. A set of religious norms and values guide the relations between the individual and political authority through various channels of social mobility for collective action-oriented toward a particular goal. Greenfeld's approach, implicitly or explicitly, conveys a strict separation of nationalism from religion in many ways, as some modernist theories of nationalism did. Perhaps, for this reason, Hastings criticizes Greenfeld for not going far beyond modern arguments and being still within the enterprise of the modernists. For instance, one of them, Benedict Anderson, also argued that nationalism became apparent when the two large cultural systems – the church and the dynasty- disappeared (Anderson, 2006), conceding nationalism as a functional equivalent to religion. Yet, as one emerges, the other disappears. They are, by their nature, mutually exclusive and competitive. Nationalism has won the competition and has not yet been transcended.

This point of view looks at the competition from a retrospective way and does not see it as a present or future reality. The difficulty with this approach is the presumption that nationalism is essentially secular and Westernized constructs, considering secularization as the dominant paradigm. But paradigms are bound to change. And not all societies follow the same pattern of identity formation in terms of religion, nationalism, political systems and social boundary-making processes because they undergo diverse pathways that can change over time and place. The different patterns of nation formation and non-nationalism attitudes in a particular society demonstrate the complex interaction between "the content of religion" and the context in which it is implemented and interpreted. While some religious individuals and groups embrace national boundaries with the growing awareness of dividing the world into motherland and foreign, others do not. The question of nationalism has been reinforced or challenged in non-Christian

societies was left unanswered by advocates of the secularization thesis, like Anderson and Greenfeld.

What's more, according to both scholars, nationalism has "replaced religion as the basis of individual and collective identity" at the cultural level in the modern world" (Anderson, 1983; Greenfeld, 1996b). Meanwhile, Spohn shares similar views. National identity has replaced religious one as the prior cultural mechanism of the modern age through secular and civic norms (Spohn, 2003:269). In other words, national consciousness has transcended religious one. In this respect, Greenfeld's and Spohn's stance is closer to that of Anderson. Nationalism, as a collective sentiment, has remained unrivaled within the new framework of the modernization paradigm. Whether "religion" as a cultural order-creating system has been wholly substituted by nationalism remains an open question. Even Gellner, another scholar who is strongly committed to modern processes in the construction of nations and nationalism, left doubt that nationalism has yet to be "the only force operating or an irresistible one" against its rivals in the modern world (Gellner, 1983:138).

Greenfeld, however, as an ardent advocate of what we are now in the age of nations, insists that "the concern for dignity and recognition", which lies at the heart of "national patriotism and commitment to national causes" (Greenfeld, 2006b), becomes irrelevant, insignificant or uninteresting in terms of religious orientations in the modern period. The new paradigm reflects the ascendancy of secular identity (or domain) over a transcendental allegiance. Accordingly, secular culture has a profound impact on the political consciousness and behavior of the modern man who will never give up their dignity through which they have acquired nationality. National identity differs from other types because it provides status with satisfaction to each nation member. But what if several people do not willingly wish to acquire such identification and do not see it as a worthwhile goal? According to Greenfeld, there cannot be ideological alternatives to satisfy people's need for dignity, such as liberalism, socialism,

conservatism, even including religion and globalization, to go beyond the reality of the modern national identity.

In brief, nationalism, along with its secular focus, has not yet been transcended. Unlike modernists, however, Greenfeld believes in "the role of religion in helping the emergence of national consciousness in pre-modern societies" and assumes that secularization is not a functional prerequisite for nationhood, while there is no fusion between religion and nationalism in modern societies. She acknowledges the religious sources of the nation, on the one hand, links national identity with dignity in the modern inter-state order framework, on the other, leaving no room for religious identity to have such a connection. "English nationalism" is a typical example of this. The unorthodox character of "Protestantism and Puritanism" were non-material means for "the justification of the very existence of the English nation" separating it from the rest of Christian world. "The definition of England" in the seventeenth century as an empire with the separation of the English Protestantism from Catholic Rome, namely as "a Protestant nation", inevitably led to a genuine identification of the Protestant and national causes for some time. Likewise, French national identity, though the limited contribution of the Catholic Church, was in one way or another influenced by religion, while Catholicism constituted the major source of the national identity in both Poland and Ireland (Greenfeld, 1996b).

Historically, nationalism, as an inherently secular form of consciousness, first emerged in England, subsequently spread to "the English settlements in America", then to France and Russia, and the rest of Europe, much of Asia and Africa (Greenfeld, 2006b). During the period of its formation, however, the national identity required "the necessary legitimation of religion" as then the supreme object of loyalty and the basis of collective solidarity. The religious identity that formed the framework of social consciousness in the pre-modern world was paramount in the Middle Ages. It was also a reflection of the dignity of the individuals, thus constituting a model of the social order. Greenfeld appears to confine religion and nationalism as "coexisting and overlapping

identities" at the birth of the idea of nationalism, which would later result in "the ascendancy of nationalism" and "the unseating of religion" within the framework of the modernization paradigm. The two phenomena have rapidly moved to separate spheres with the triumph of the secular domain over religion. This is the necessary and inevitable outcome,

> even where religion was a crucial factor in the development of nationalism and a source of its initial legitimacy (which insofar as nationalism in general is concerned was precisely the case), even where it played midwife at the birth of nationalism and protected it in its infancy, religion was reduced to the role of a handmaiden, an occasionally used tool, and came to exist on nationalism's sufferance (Greenfeld, 2006b:181).

In this way, nationalism no longer needed religious or other legitimation insofar as it became established as the new type of collective consciousness. The increased prominence of collective national consciousness as "a representation of social order" has been accompanied by the weakening of religion as a significant source of legitimation (Greenfeld, 1987). It is not to say, as modernists argued, that nationalism originated from "the prior disappearance of the religious spirit" given the functional equivalence of the two phenomena; on the contrary, it emerged in a world seething with great religious fervor. The national affiliation would lie at the center of the commitment to individual and collective dignity, not religion, along with reinforcement of "the secularization of the world view and culture". Although secularization requires "nationalism as a substitute for religion", it is neither a condition nor a cause for nationalism.

Furthermore, the religious context never determines the nature of nationalism where it may grow. Though often affected by this context, "the constraints of the immediate situations faced by the social groups" actively involved in building the national consciousness eventually demarcate the character of nationalism, and these constraints are "emphatically secular" (Greenfeld, 1996b). Greenfeld thus avoids defining "religious nationalism" or religion as an ethnic characteristic, for their association was provisional. Religious nationalism is, therefore, meaningless in the case of English nationalism and many others.

"Though instrumental in the development of nationalism, religion now exists on its sufferance and serves mainly as a tool for the promotion of nationalist ends, not vice versa" (Ibid.:169) Asad confirms and goes even further:

> the established church, which was an integral part of the state, made the coherence and continuity of the English national community possible. We should not say that the English nation was shaped or influenced by religion: we should see the established church as its necessary condition (Asad, 2003:190).

In this respect, it does not constitute "a separate type of nationalism," for it does not differ from civic nationalism in which nationality is a matter of choice "equated with citizenship". Even though "the idea of the nation" initially takes its roots from religious consciousness, it has ultimately created essentially secular consciousness because it refers to forging an earthly community that focuses attention on this world dethroning God. Behind this (national) community are the principles of "popular sovereignty" at the political level and egalitarianism" at the social one or "an image of a sovereign community of fundamentally equal members", and "egalitarianism" at the social one (Greenfeld, 2005). In Greenfeld's view, religion no longer functions to ordering the world or the identical evocative power, though it did in the past, as national identity does now, which does not fall into the Weberian category of "ontological concern for meaning" or substantive character of religion. Central to Weber's understanding is the conviction that a particular religious, ethical system or "the Protestant ethic" led to the emergence of the new norms of behavior and a set of economic orientations or "the spirit of capitalism" (Weber, 1995). Weber, of course, has emphasized the multi-causality and non-deterministic character of social reality, including religion. Yet "the content of a particular religion" has remained prominent to the extent that it influences both individual and collective behavior or the way that the changes in religious belief yield changes in behavior. Thus, religion becomes itself a cause of change in Weberian logic.

Nonetheless, a constant interaction occurs between religion and the world in two aspects: the spiritual to the material and the material to the spiritual. I assume that the interaction between religion and the context in which it is interpreted may guide individual and social action on the road to "the search for order" significantly. Greenfeld's approach to religion, for this reason, virtually reminds Durkheim's materialism which takes religion socially based or constructed as a whole. In this respect, religion is not concerned with individual responses to life crises; instead, it acts as "a cohesive social force" binding the members of society. It will continue to exist as long as it performs this task. What lies at the heart of modern society is the principle of nationality. "Society is God only if we make it so; the meaning of the world is not simply there to be uncovered" (Greenfeld, 1996b).

Religion has, however, additional dimensions. It provides psychological support to overcome life crises at the individual level and aspires to build "a system for ordering the world" based on its ontological assumptions about social reality through collective behavior. In other words, each religion reflects the multiple ways individuals give meaning to their inner lives and their physical relations with the world around them.Greenfeld's treatment of national identity as a modern form of collective consciousness replacing traditional religion as the order-creating system makes her a Durkheimian. The Durkheimian view takes religion as a set of premises through which the society becomes a moral community. The basic assumptions of the sacred texts, however, turn out to be demonstrably meaningless. The sacred here has no universal changeless or immutable essence but possesses functional attributes not held by the profane. While the meaning of religion comes to the fore in the Weberian conception of religion, social actors whose actions are products of their own experiences of objective reality are crucial in Durkheimian. Religion becomes a valid and reliable instrument as long as it serves as "a source of collective action" for the interest of society in the Durkheimian symbolist approach.

The need for immortality", "the need for ultimate meaning," and "the need for order" could be satisfied through "the nationalist enchantment of the world", which has also heralded "the age of science". There is no space for spiritual and mystical religion to understand and control the physical world. "The perception of the mundane as meaningful in its own right," Greenfeld notes, implies modern sacralization of the secular through the experience of national identity, adding "with nationalism, the heavens, so to speak, descend to earth; this world becomes the sphere of the sacred" (Ibid.:173). Durkheim's vision is also reflected in her description of religious nationalism. Most contemporary movements we call religious nationalism today are not, in fact, religious at all, which thereby do not constitute a distinct type of nationalism. Most religious nationalisms in which we perceive religion as the prominent character of the nation and "as the basis of its uniqueness" are, in fact, ethnic or civic nationalisms predicated on the essentials of this-worldliness. It is not surprising, therefore, that the term religious nationalism is a misnomer. It may, at the most, refer to "religious superficialism".

Greenfeld was undoubtedly correct to note that the salience of religious nationalism may be attributed to the use of religion as a boundary marker for national membership in many instances. Yet religion was reduced to a symbolic component (not a significant part) of social action. Religion was considered to envisage any change in the behavior of modern collective consciousness, for it does not remain a distinct norm and ideal to be systematically pursued. Thus, the collective imagination of a particular religion to construct a single order based on its tenets and doctrine becomes inconceivable in the modern age that does not allow a competitive relationship between religion and nationalism. It turns out to be a wrong inference when we demonstrate empirical evidence that religion and nationalism still appear "potential rivals" and "order-creating systems", so religion as a doctrinal basis has not yet been transcended in some societies. The two, by their nature, are mutually exclusive and competitive. According to Greenfeld, nationalism has won the competition and has not yet been transcended. Unlike Greenfeld, I suggest that religion persists not merely in

terms of its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also its power to unite the collective logic around a normative religious doctrine.

Religious nationalism, if any, corresponds to "the need for change" and "the need for a new order". There is, in particular, an inherently competitive association between Islam and nationalism, and some Islamic movements act like a "distinctly religious form of nationalism" (Friedland, 2001). I am not using the concept to call the forms of secular nationalism that are becoming more religious, as Juergensmeyer has ironically noted. I am using to label those who believe in Islamic identity promises more dignity than other ideologies, including nationalism, while ironically keeping some characteristics of nationalism. Interestingly, the commitment to Islam at the level of "collective dignity" appears peculiar to modern times as national identity does now, challenging the dominance of modernity through a rejection of its social and cultural order. At this point, "what agency did provide dignity with the people before the age of nationalism?" seems an entirely reasonable question. Many scholars would probably point to "religion" since it was then at the root of "order-creating cultural systems". In that case, how can religion and the people willing to make high levels of sacrifice readily give up their claims of the project of creating a world? Is it likely for history to course somewhere no trace of religion was not to be found? I do not think so. Upward and downward trends toward secularization take place simultaneously with fluctuations. As the trend toward secularization has developed, including in Muslim societies, it has not remained unchallenged, so too nationalism.

Indeed, Greenfeld's suggestion "the nation's worth has not yet been transcended" has proved resilient given "the greater salience of nationalist sentiments" and "re-activation of ethnopolitical conflicts" in many parts of the globe. But it would not be wrong to argue that some other alternative ideologies have come up to challenge it that Greenfeld disagrees. The efforts of the Islamic movements to "transcend the nation's worth" are not typical. Despite their failures, there are other non-national and transnational order-creating systems

such as socialism, global governance, and new supra-nationalism. Muslim nationalism stands out among them, as it aims for a more radical change within and without. Islam has a claim of constructing this world and mobilizes some of its followers' need for dignity around "the concept of the Muslim ummah". Then we must recognize that the more an identity is related to dignity, the more preferred it is. On the face of it, one can hardly resist the assumption that "the nation's worth has not yet been transcended" within the system of states. Still, some Islamic counter-nationalism mobilization in the Middle Eastern societies raises more questions about the trajectory of nationalism, at least in the region. Whether nationality or religiosity promises more dignity in the Kurdish context will be discussed in the details in the next chapter. Islam, in fact, contains contradictory and ambiguous forms of relationship with nationalism. One can observe either effectiveness of Islam in curbing nationalism or promoting social adaptation to national identity. Nonetheless, Islam has always had a theological vision of transnationalism that aims to reach a universal community of faithful in one nation; what I have ironically called this form of religious nationalism, Muslim nationalism[7].

Perhaps it is not entirely correct to dub it "Muslim nationalism" as it does not incorporate a vision of political boundaries based on national authorities that exclude other nationalisms. Rather, it is a term that reflects a modern response to the Western (or European) colonialism of the Muslim societies at the civilizational or transnational level. In other words, "the concept of the ummah"

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[7] Many scholars use "the concept of Muslim nationalism" to apply to the different cases in the literature. Some are as follows: Al-Ahsan, A. (1992). *Ummah Or Nation?: Identity Crisis in Contemporary Muslim Society* (p. 31). Leicester: Islamic Foundation; Zürcher, E. J. (1999). The vocabulary of Muslim nationalism. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *1999* (137), 81-92; Banerjee, A. C. (1981). *Two nations: the philosophy of Muslim nationalism.* Concept Publishing Company; White, J. (2014). *Muslim nationalism and the new Turks*. Princeton University Press; Friedman, I. (2017). *British miscalculations: the rise of Muslim nationalism, 1918-1925*. Routledge; Fogg, K. W. (2012). *The Fate of Muslim Nationalism in Independent Indonesia*. Yale University; Aktürk, Ş. (2018). One nation under Allah? Islamic multiculturalism, Muslim nationalism and Turkey's reforms for Kurds, Alevis, and non-Muslims. *Turkish Studies*, *19* (4), 523-551; Khan, Z. R. (1985). Islam and Bengali nationalism. *Asian Survey*, *25*(8), 834-851.

becomes an expression of political consciousness to which primary loyalty belongs to the Muslim community, excluding secular sections of the society within and members of other religions without. To reiterate, I have explained nationalism as a doctrine directed towards the emancipation or hegemony of self-conscious ethnic groups into political claims. Similarly, I will attempt to provide a brief definition of Muslim nationalism. Muslim nationalism consists of a community of religious people who are enormously affected by Islamic doctrines with an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious religious groups based on collective action for political purposes. What is ideologically different about these groups of people is that their primary loyalty belongs to "the ummah". Furthermore, political and social order should be underpinned by religious values rather than "materialist views of secular nationalism". My approach to "religious nationalism" builds on this conceptual division throughout the study.

Religion still serves exclusively as an order-creating social and cultural system possessing political aspirations through the collective action of its adherents. Like Greenfeld, Juergensmeyer (1993, 2006) also treats religion and nationalism as "competing ideologies of order," though he does not offer a theoretical framework. The image of a universal model of secular nationalism as the central feature of European Enlightenment has recently become highly debatable since it does not offer explanations even different forms of nationalism, let alone Muslim nationalism. In attempting to define religious nationalism, Juergensmeyer has primarily focused on "the failure of secular nationalism" that would later result in "the opportunity and the need for new nationalisms." To put it another way, a response of some religious elites to secular nationalism lies at the root of "religious nationalism," and it represents "the loss of faith in secular nationalism."

In this way, religious nationalism can be a subform of nationalism in which the secular version of nationalism is turning into a more religious one. At the same time, it can be a trans-national alternative form of nationalism as in some

religious movements that have a global agenda of their own, like Muslim Brotherhood, The Gama'a-i Islamiya group, al- Qaida, which are some examples. At first glance, Juergensmeyer seems to be particularly well focused on the symbiotic or intertwined relationship between religion and nationalism as a distinctive form of nationalism or "religious nationalism". After all, he implies how religious belief as "a system for ordering the society" can become a central object of loyalty and create collective solidarity. The second usage of religious nationalism is directly related to the competitive categorization in which religion and nationalism correspond to "two ideologies of order". Interestingly, the first categorization of religious nationalism would be eventually "the precursor of religious transnationalism" (Juergensmeyer, 2019). Religious nationalism has therefore often been at odds with the notion of nationalism which inherently meant secular nationalism, and has arisen where religiously motivated people design the faith as "a system for ordering the society."

Juergensmeyer does not, however, attempt to create a coherent theoretical framework. He is less concerned with developing a theoretical rationale than focusing on the instances of religious politics that react to the spread worldwide of secular modernity. He strives to develop a complex and multifaceted approach that would take religious nationalism "as a form of resistance to the secularization" by which religiously imagined communities emerge. Long before Juergensmeyer, John Henry Newman, who was the most famous convert of the nineteenth century, belonged to a tradition of dissent that claims the secular nationalism of the nation-state did not subsume religious identity, however (Veer, 2014). Newman's experience of conversion to Catholicism "as an act of both religious and political resistance" was in large part his invention of "a pre-Reformation popular Catholicism in his struggle against both the secularism and class elitism of the modern nation-state" (Ibid.:12). His combination of Catholicism of the popular imagination that was genuinely national with a Catholicism that was indeed a multinational force, far from being separatist, enabled him to establish a symbiotic link between Catholicism with the idea of the English nation. Newman was thus concerned with demonstrating that English

Catholics are, in fact, more English than any other Protestant Anglicans because they are more in touch with their national and religious origins (Viswanathan, 2014:97).

Like Newman's focus on English Catholicism "as a form of resistance to the secular state", Juergensmeyeyer's position rests on the same assumption that locates religion in the public sphere as a source of collective resistance. Religion is not thus solely a private matter for the individual, still occupies a unique place in the world of empirical reality and social relations. Juergensmeyer's thinking is, therefore, close to that of Newman. New religious movements whose goals and motivations are as national as religious have often targeted secularism. They are responses to "the insufficiencies of the secular nationalism" weakened by globalization. Friedland also agrees with Juergensmeyer that "religion is inherently a natural competitor to the nationalism of the secular state" (Friedland, 2001:128). Juergensmeyer inevitably restricts himself to particular forms of ethnic and religious politics, discourses and practices preyed upon the weakening state of secular nationalism on which his discussion centered. For him, the term "religious nationalism" represents a wide range of movements in which religion plays quite different roles to the extent that it ranges from national to the transnational alternative to political nationalism and even anti-globalism. It ultimately, however, arose in reaction to "the Enlightenment Project" with its homogenization of people around secular values.

Drawing on the distinction between religion and nationalism as competing ideologies of order-creating systems and Friedland and Brubaker's categorization of religious nationalism "as a distinctive kind of nationalism," I argue that the primary political goal of religious nationalism is to promote a social order based on religious doctrine. Then, it aims to establish a political order within and without to include trans-national supra-ethnic characteristics beyond the nation-state system. This definition makes religion the primary impetus for mobilization, aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a competitive model rather than the nation. Some trans-

national Islamic networks can be listed that fits this definition as follows: The Gama'a al-Islamiya group in Pakistan and Bangladesh, the branches of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle Eastern and North Africa, The Islamic State (ISIS), Hizb ut Tahrir (Party of Liberation), Al- Qaida and other unknown several organizations. Perhaps Taliban and Hamas can be added to this list. It may, of course, be questionable that some represent a crystallized competitive prototype diametrically opposed to nationalism. Still, they have the power to influence micro-Islamic organizations through transnational discourse and symbols, which I will discuss more in the forthcoming chapter.

4.3.2. Curbing Effect of Islam on the Badge of National Consciousness

Religious traditions are sometimes far less likely to generate or justify nationalistic claims for various reasons. Suppose we accept a close affinity between vernacular literature and religion for nationhood. In that case, the lateness of the translation of the Qur'an into local languages may have played a dilatory effect where many dialects pervaded not a single one. It is rather apparent that vernacular literature reinforces a people's self-consciousness for "ethnically-linguistically imagined nationalism". Kurdish literature, for instance, provides an example of a stunted nationalism in which a written vernacular has developed too late, despite a rich and extensive oral literature through the dengbej tradition. The more a vernacular develops written literature, the more durable it becomes, "the wider its ability to express current ideas, the larger the number of people who will understand one another better," thereby driving its speakers to create "a proto-nation" (Hastings, 1997:21).

When we look at Islamic history, however, one can evidently observe both theological origins and ensuing practices to discourage the translation of the Qur'an. The original Arabic text of the Qur'an is considered to be literally the dictated words of God by the overwhelming majority of Muslims. In contrast, the Christian's assertion of "divine authorship" is much more indefinite. Most Christian theologians, therefore, have affirmed that "the Bible contains the Word

of God rather than is the Word of God" (Markham, 2006:195-196). The Qur'an and hadiths, which are deemed the written sources of Islamic thought, consist of the Arabic language and are performed in religious rituals as in their original versions. The mainstream (Orthodox) Islamic schools have had an age-long reservation to translation of the Qur'an into the local languages in the belief that the meaning of the Qur'an would be distorted. Although the Qur'an does not give a precise answer of why God selected Arabic to deliver his message to humanity, it suggests that Arabic was deliberately chosen. Some relevant verses about as follows:

> "Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran so that you may understand" (12:2).

> "And so We have revealed it as an authority in Arabic" (13:37).

> "And We surely know that they say, no one is teaching him except a human, but the man they refer to speaks a foreign tongue, whereas this Quran is in eloquent Arabic (16:103).

> "And so We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran and varied the warnings in it, so perhaps they will shun evil or it may cause them to be mindful" (20:113).

> "in a clear Arabic tongue" (26:195).

> "Had We revealed it to a non-Arab, who would then recite it to the deniers ˹in fluent Arabic˺, still they would not have believed in it" (26:198-99).

> "It is a Quran revealed in Arabic without any crookedness, so perhaps they will be conscious of Allah" (39:28).

> "It is a Book whose verses are perfectly explained—a Quran in Arabic for people who know" (41:3).

> "Certainly, We have made it a Quran in Arabic so perhaps you will understand" (43:3)

> "And before this ˹Quran˺ the Book of Moses was ˹revealed as˺ a guide and mercy. And this Book is a confirmation, in the Arabic tongue, to warn those who do wrong, and as good news to those who do good" (46:12).

In addition to these verses, Arabic has always been a prime medium of worship in reading Scriptures and performing religious rituals. It isn't thus easy to distinguish Arabic from Islamic theology. According to Ahmet Kuru, "the late

adoption of the printing press delayed wide circulation of Qur'an translations", adding that the Ottoman ulema put extra barriers against the publication of the Turkish translation. Let alone its translation, the printing of the Qur'an was also blocked until 1873. The Ulema hampered the publication of a complete Turkish translation of the Qur'an until the disintegration of the Empire. A full Turkish translation of the Qur'an would wait to be published until 1924, a year after the foundation of the Turkish Republic (Kuru, 2019:211). There were, however, similar objections during the Republican Period of Turkey. Said Nursi, one of the most prominent representatives of the Orthodox School in the modern era, for instance, has harshly criticized translation attempts of the Qur'an and urged all Muslims to learn Arabic. For him,

> The wording of the Qur'an is in such a language that it cannot be translated thoroughly; perhaps it is impossible to do so. What they call translation is merely a very concise and imprecise version. Such an interpretation is far from the real meaning of the verses (Letters, 26th Letter, 1993).

> The accurate translation of the Qur'an is not attainable, and no other language can preserve the virtues and humor of the Qur'an, whose language is Arabic (lisan-ı nahvi), which is eloquent that adheres to literary rules and regulations[8] (The Words, 25th Word, 1993).

In a nutshell, there are reasons deriving both from the essence of the Qur'an itself and the conservative interpretations of religious scholars. Hastings, who relates "the sense of nation" to "a distinct language group", confirms Islam's restraining facet on the growth of "the idea of the nation", pointing to the historical, cultural, and political implications of Islamic theology, comparing the influence of Christianity on the development of vernacular literature with that of Islam. Nations largely arose from "the translation of the scriptures into the vernacular" that helped form a specific national consciousness among the local community within the European context. Islam, in itself, did not peculiarly contribute to "the construction of the nation", curbing the political formation of a linguistic and cultural community. In his own words,

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[8] Both quotes are my own translation.

The Arabic Qur'an and authoritative Christian translations of the Bible into a limited number of languages contributed profoundly to the universalisation of a single ethnic-religious-linguistic community in the Muslim case and to the distinction between major written languages and dialectic vernaculars in the Christian case. While the Islamic socio-political impact was thus in principle almost entirely anti-ethnic and anti-national, the Christian impact was more complex. Its willingness to translate brought with it, undoubtedly, a reduction in the number of ethnicities and vernaculars, but then a confirmation of the individual identity of those that remained: Christianity in fact helped turn ethnicities into nations (Hastings, 1997:179).

In Hastings's view, it is evident that linguistic and cultural boundaries determine the political structure of an ethnically self-conscious group. The transnational aspects of the Islamic paradigm have, however, made national consciousness unnecessary, particularly among the members of subordinate ethnic groups, including Kurds, Berbers, and Baloch people. For instance, the available documents indicate that the oldest Kurdish translation of the Qur'an was published in the newspapers and magazines in the early decades of the 20th century. Hasan Meayircî from Egypt, who conducted research in the field of translations of the Qur'an, also translated some verses of the Qur'an into Kurdish in a clear and understandable language. His translation was published in the 25th issue of the newspaper Pêşkewtinî Süleymanî in 1920. The first Kurdish translation of the Qur'an in Turkey would wait until 1994 to be published (Özdaş, 2019).

On the other hand, superordinate ethnic groups such as Turks, Persians, Arabs, etc., cannot readily be included in the competitive category even though they comprise non-national or transnational segments of society, late translation of the Qur'an as well.They already had the state apparatus before they became a nation. Political authority acted as a catalyzer on the nationhood process through which the nation was socially established as a reality. Indeed, the subordinate groups of people also have had a shared language and cultural identity composed of ethnic consciousness. Yet, diverse segments of those groups do not have political aspirations based on "national emancipation" or "hegemony". They display, on the contrary, a high level of commitment to Islam on which their

collective action for political purposes rests. Needless to say, all ethnic groups are composite clustering groups, accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts and ideological competition. No wonder some of its members might be unwilling to imagine "the nation" as the basis of a common political structure and cultural unity. But here, religious identity, in itself, renders national consciousness unnecessary.

In this respect, Islam has occupied a unique place in the social construction of reality to steer the pattern of the society, enabling some of its followers to re-constructing this world concurrently with its transcendent orientation toward truth "to cope with life's vicissitudes." Islam as a system for ordering the world manifests itself, of course, in various ways. Its transnational emphasis, which is, I suppose, originating from its substantive content, has influenced collective action though within the boundary of a specific span, geographical location, and historical and social circumstances. As already indicated, the substantive content of religion refers to an account of faith from within, not from without. But it does not preclude a constant interaction from the spiritual to the material and material to the spiritual (Weber, 2005). The word "nation" (millet) in the Qur'an is mentioned in fifteen verses, seven of which are "millet-i Ibrahim," one of which is attributed to Abraham, Isaac and Yakub, corresponding to "the community of believers" whose religious identity performs as a boundary marker. The rest carry negative connotations discrediting superstitious beliefs. A considerable amount of individuals and religious communities from the Middle East and elsewhere have lacked awareness of themselves as a distinct group except Islamic identity. They do not tend to regard themselves as an ethnically identifiable community to attain a political nation through a degree of consciousness and aspiration. In this configuration, Islam has formed "the framework of political consciousness" and "the source of unity," not a national identification.

Contrary to the modern accounts expected, nationalism has never replaced Islam as an order-creating system or the primary cultural mechanism of social

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integration, especially for those who perceive it as an offspring of secularism. A trans-national discourse and projection to the structuring of society have preponderated over "the claims of national sovereignty". Such a form of relationship between religion and nationalism can easily fit into what may be called the universal concern of religion for enabling it to order the world. In this tradition, "religion has an existence in its own right – an existence driven by the content of a belief system, or an ethic, that does not simply mirror the context in which it exists" (Davie, 2006: 174), transcending ethnocultural boundaries which define political boundaries. Whereas a particular religion has created a virtual identification of spiritual vision with national causes through Protestant Reformation in the Christian context, it has generated a search for universalization of a single religious community in the Muslim societies.Islam has, indeed, a dualistic response to secularization or modernization. It bolsters the national consciousness of the dominant ethnic group or at least does not constitute an obstacle, on the one hand, which I will discuss in the forthcoming section, it interrupts the political structuring of ethnic belonging of the subordinate group under the guise of a universal claim, on the other. Therefore, I have repeatedly argued that the connection between religion and nationalism is intractable. It requires extensive empirical investigation, mainly context-dependent, historical, and ever-changing, following diverse and complex patterns.

Furthermore, religion may sometimes even turn into mechanisms through which communities belonging to different belief systems are assimilated. Most modern Egyptian Muslims were Copts in genetically ethnic terms, belonging culturally to Coptic customs in the past. The Egyptian language they earlier used has disappeared, except as a Christian liturgical language, because of the enormous cultural force of Islam over the adoption of the Arab language, Hastings suggests. He goes further and concludes that "nations are not constructed by Islam but deconstructed. That is a fact of history, but it is a fact-dependent upon theology" (Hastings, 1997:201). In other words, some theological origins of Islam do not allow the faithful to pursue the nation as the basis of political

organization. Although this argument seems controversial given the current symbiotic models in which nationalism has flourished within Islamic culture, it explains the competitive form of interaction. Islam has theological obstacles that slow down the solidification of local communities around the idea of nationalism. Contrary to Islam's anti-ethnic or anti-national theological origins, "the construction of nations within the Christian world was not something independent of Christianity but, rather, something stimulated by the Christian attitude both to language and to the state" (Ibid., 201).

The impact of Islam on everyday life is not to the extent that Hastings depicted "Arabisation" as something that attracts peoples into a universal community of faith and a single community of language because such a collective cultural unity has never existed. Even though Arabic has been central to Islamic jurisprudence and worship, such a collective cultural unity has never existed. Most non-Arab Muslims have, for centuries, employed Arabic simply in their ritual practices without using it as a means of socialization. Even today, the greater part of devouts do not comprehend the meaning of the prayers (the sacred scriptures). They simply recite the verses of the Qur'an five times a day. It was also approximately like this in the past. Most people did not know Arabic, except for a handful of people. No ordinary believers needed to know Arabic to acquire the Islamic credential. When they sought the answer to the actual problems faced, they appealed to the faqihs who had higher education in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) in Arabic through madrasas. This tradition continues even today in many Muslim societies, albeit to a lesser extent.

Hastings somewhat exaggerates the impact of the Arabic Qur'an, going too far to claim that it has promoted a universalizing tendency to form a single ethnic-religious-linguistic community in the Muslim case", while the translations of the Bible into a limited number of languages contributed profoundly to "the distinction between major written languages and dialectic vernaculars in the Christian case". The importance of Hastings's argument stems from its crucial presumption that if religion supplies loyalty to vernacular language and

literature, it may influence the national consciousness, which does not exist in Islamic tradition. If any, Arab nationalism may be an exception to this. For some Arab intellectuals, like Abd ar Rahman Bazzaz, Islam has been the constitutive element of Arab nationalism since "Arabs cannot promote their identity without at the same time exalting Islam, which is the most abiding source of their pride, and the most potent stimulant of that identity down the ages" (Enayat, 1982:112).

Asad also concludes that the history of Islam, all in all, reflects the unification and triumph of the Arab nation", and the "Arabian Prophet" represents its spiritual hero (Asad, 2003:196). Indeed, a similar view was expressed by Ibn Khaldun centuries ago. For him, The invitation to Islam would not have reached its goal and would not have had the chance to be realized had it not been founded on the Arab asabiyyah in general, especially the Qurayshian one.

Even the secular Arab nationalists, who were encouraged by the fact that Islam was first revealed to the Arabs in Arabic, have attempted to establish a link between Islam and Arab nationalism. At first, some other pious Muslims endeavored to demonstrate that Islam and Arab nationalism are not mutually exclusive, but "they often end up confirming the Arabic identity of Islam". Even Hasan al-Banna, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, declared national feelings: "The Arabs are the mainstay of Islam and its guardians… and it is a duty of every Muslim to work for the revival and support for Arab unity" (Bishry qouted in Zubaida, 2004: 411). According to Mitchell, however, al-Banna inferred that the only nationalism that may be acceptable was "a religious nationalism in which Islam has played a foundational role in the political and everyday life", while secular forms of nationalism "impose a false consciousness upon Muslims, alienating them from their tradition and its divinely established social order" (Mitchell quoted in Kenney, 2014:267).

After all, perhaps ethnic groups other than Arabs did not become Arabise to the degree that Hastings claimed "the whole cultural impact of Islam is necessarily

to Arabise" despite the resistance of Iranians and Turks. Nonetheless, ethnic culture did not provide awareness of a distinct political group in some instances. The cultural exchange with Islam has the effect of both contrast and assimilation in such a way that while the autonomous structure of the folklore remains partially intact, it has also transformed to accommodate cultural convergence. Although Islam does not impose a crystallized cultural homogeneity on ethnic groups, its aspiration of creating a society (mefkûre) may have rightly motivated the political action of those who pursue faith-based goals and ideals even in the age of nationalism. Islam here acts as a fundamental source of intellectually satisfying explanations of human nature (or the ultimate meaning) and a cohesive social force that stimulates socio-political identification among the faithful community. Nonetheless, although Islamic theology has always aimed to create such a community, it has never come true. Yet this ideal has remained immensely powerful in cognitive and normative levels for those concerned with the Islamic mindset toward "ordering the world". If we refer to the classical distinction between utopia and ideology made by Mannheim, nationalism can be defined as a political ideology or worldview that bolsters the status quo, whereas Muslim nationalism is meant to change it as a utopia (Mannheim, 2013).

African nationalism virtually created out of wars of liberation is another example in which religion did not contribute vigorously to the nation-formation. Religion was not one of the constitutive elements of national consciousness and nation-making of African people in the second half of the twentieth century. There were two reasons for this. The Christian approach to enhance ethnicity at work in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was undermined by new European policies. Secondly, there was a need to grant hasty independence to arbitrarily constructed states regardless of their ethnic composition (Hastings, 1997). The impact of Islam on the development of national consciousness, in particular, is so scarce that "every genuine example of nation-construction one can find in Africa seems", if any, "dependent upon Christianity and biblical translation, never upon Islam" (Ibid.:159).

At first sight, Hastings's "conception of the nation" appears to be dependent on language, but the language here matters for creating a more self-conscious ethnic community of those who read it. In other words, language serves as an essential source, perhaps the most important one, of national consciousness. Such an inference, of course, may well explain symbiotic forms of relationship between religion and nationalism. For instance, Yazidism, which is related to but outside Islamic tradition, has sacred texts Kitab al-Jilwa (The Book of Revelation) and Mishafa Rash (The Black Book) (Omarkhali, 2019). The two Kurdish books have fostered a sense of shared local or national identity among Yazidi Kurds. Thus its cultural impact on the development of Kurdish national consciousness cannot be underemphasized. This is not what is meant by competing motivations of religion and nationalism.

To conclude, the stunted Kurdish nationalism, I suppose, confirms Hastings's allegation that Islam has become a quite profoundly anti-ethnic or anti-national force, whereas Christianity has historically shaped nations and nationalism. Islam has been and is still the most splendid rival ahead of Kurdish nationalism. Despite the significant role of religion as a part of national consciousness in the European context, one should again bear in mind that nationalism as a modern ideology essentially refers to secular consciousness (Smith, 1991; Kedourie 1996, Greenfeld,1996b). Nationalism has a profound secularizing effect on the ways of thought, convincing people that religion alone is hardly persuasive for their survival. Nevertheless, this is not to say that secularization is a must for sharing a sense of common nationhood. In this respect, Islam did not create a fostering effect of vernacular literature on the development of national consciousness in the Kurdish case. Kurdish nationalism is not a form of which religion is an ethnic marker. Kurdish population mainly belongs to the same religion, namely Islam, as the nationalisms with which it competes though they have different sects and schools of thought.

4.3.3. Muslim Nationalism as a distinctive kind of Nationalism

In my formulation of the competitive relationship between religion and nationalism, political consciousness oriented towards collective action, thus an image of society, refers to the fundamental tenets of "religion" as an order-creating system rather than the nation. Although it is difficult to measure political consciousness precisely, I will look at the core motivation of political elites for collective action. This approach allows us to distinguish different forms of relationship between religion and nationalism. It also helps explain political settings in which whether nationalist claims or religious rationales demarcate collective action. The role of the sacred through which the rituals are directed to create a political community depends on the real purpose of the society. From this perspective, Islam has been an influential agent for alleviating the national aspirations of subordinate ethnic groups while remaining far more antipathetic to national struggles at the popular level. Muslim nationalism does not merge Muslim identity with national cause within this framework. To be Muslim comes first, then ethnic identification with no political aspiration.

Religious identity, in itself, becomes a source of inspiration within a particular group who makes religion the backbone for their mobilization, political aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a competitive model rather than the nation. Such a form of religious identification categorically keeps its distance from aspiring ethnic or national unity while protecting ethnic identity in a non-national manner with anti-ethnic tones to a certain degree. I have, therefore, suggested, among other things, that religion bears an important place in the human enterprise to construct this world. Nevertheless, it is not necessarily true that this enterprise is all about the profane. Religion is both a mechanism focused on this world and a set of ideas that have satisfying explanations for the unknowns of the afterlife. In contrast, nationalism as an "essentially secular consciousness" makes the mundane ultimately meaningful. In this respect, Greenfeld was right. It is impossible to draw a sharp distinction between "the realm of the sacred" and that of the earthly as Durkheim

did. I argue that religion has both meaning (ontological) and social (practical) dimensions that are not mutually exclusive.

For this reason, "the concept of religious nationalism" as a distinctive kind of nationalism I have employed is Weberian in character, as there cannot be religion without belief, and theology is not merely about faith. On the other hand, religion reflects more symbolic functionalism in the Durkheimian sense. Accordingly, religion has no value in itself and is essential to the extent that it conforms to the interests of a particular society. It is merely a collective enterprise about the profane. Contrary to what he implied, religion is not about the separation of the sacred from the profane. Daily routines and activities such as attending work or school and maintaining an orderly living environment can well be parts of the sacred. The fundamental difference between Weber and Durkheim lies in their approaches to the origin and function of religion. The "change" comes with social action through the substantive meaning of religion in Weber, while in Durkheim, it takes place in a context where the society gives meaning to the religious beliefs and practices.

As Smith put it, "Durkheim's analysis tends to collapse the different levels and fails to grasp the complexity of the relations between religion and nationalism" because we often find the considerable rivalry between traditional religious doctrines and modern nationalisms (Smith:2000:798). In other words, Durkheim's functional approach to religion as a means of social power, which consists of rituals, myths and symbols, neglects the inherent capabilities of the belief system or whether it has political goals on its own. Substantive and functionalist approaches, of course, overlap to the extent that religious doctrines both concern certain kinds of substantive realities and certain kinds of functional benefits. Islam as a theological system has the power to conduct its followers' social and political motivations to attain the transcendent dimension of the cosmos and design the mundane. Religion thus matters. The persistence of Islam's influence relies not just on its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also to re-construct a collective identity as a source of

political power. It is mainly relevant to Islamic politics' historical and present capability on everyday life and state-society relations.

Concisely, the essential nature and substantive character of Islam in the Weberian sense prevent some Muslims from accommodating a secular ideology, nationalism, so that Islam provides a sufficient framework for political order. Universal rhetoric of Islam or Pan-Islamism as a political ideology is incompatible with secularization, integrating religion with the public sphere. Secular nationalism and its so-called illegitimate offspring - the nation-state - have posed significant ideological threats to the unity of Muslims as long as they are the dominant paradigm. Nationalism as a political ideology or system, " rooted in secular Europe and foreign to Muslim history and culture", goes against Islamic doctrine that involves a projection of community building based on "the words of God" (Ahsan, 1992: Asad, 1999; Kenney, 2014). The inter-state system founded on the secular nation-states was shaped after the Treaty of Westphalia, too, meant a sovereign earthly community as well. The modernist assumption that takes nationalism as an earthly community and a phenomenon that cannot reconcile itself with religion has proved true for those who represent Muslim nationalism.

Islamic theology has, of course, considerable anti-national or trans-national dimensions. One must not forget that religious meaning (Weberian) and behaviors (Durkheimian) influence both individual and collective identities in what is called "the social construction of the meaning systems" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Social order is eventually constructed "from below rather than from above" . Religion offers believers a moral roadmap to make this world with ultimate meaning. Hence, I agree with some scholars who suggest that Islam's relationship with nationalism is a modern phenomenon. Ironically, the commitment to Islamic cause at the level of transnational collective action can be peculiar to modern times, even though it challenges the dominance of secular modernity through a rejection of its social and cultural order. A modern

conception of "the idea of the ummah" lies at the heart of Muslim nationalism, as Marsh perfectly puts it,

> Historically, all members of the Muslim faith were conceived of as being united into one community of believers, the Ummah Wahida. In this ummah, one's particular ethnicity and place of residence were irrelevant, for the common faith in the teachings of Muhammad was what united Muslims together. This overarching, transnational identity lasted for centuries, and today the idea, though in a slightly altered form, remains a central goal of Islamists who seek to establish an Islamic state that will unite all Muslims in lands where they predominate and that were historically under the Islamic Caliphate. It was in the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent development of nation-states throughout the Muslim world that nationalism began its association with Islam [9](Marsh, 2007:105).

The concept of ummah in the Qur'an usually refers to a human community of faithful in a religious sense (Denny:1975). Its modern definition, however, has two elements. It first promotes the political order in a particular Muslim-majority society founded on Sharia law which implies "the words of the Creator and Judge of the world" and the re-production of the sacred texts through the sayings and doings of the Prophet Mohammad. Then, it has an aspiration, a projection of an ideal order in the inter-state system accommodating trans-national and supra-ethnic characteristics going beyond the boundaries that determine the current political structure predicated on the ethnically self-conscious communities. Religion and nationalism, therefore, appear competing ideologies of order. Religion here does not function as in the pervasive forms of "religious nationalism" in the literature that quarrels with secularism rather than nationalism and endeavors to take away the nationalism it monopolizes. On the contrary, religion has an ontologically contested nature that excludes nationalism. Thus I define Muslim nationalism "as a distinctive kind of nationalism" based on Islamic doctrine oriented towards the emancipation of self-conscious religious groups into political claims requiring collective action. Brubaker's characterization of religious nationalism as a fourth way of studying

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[9] Marsh, Christopher. 2007. "Religion and Nationalism." Pp. 99-110 in *Nations and Nationalism in Global Perspective: An Encyclopedia of Origins, Development, and Contemporary Transitions*, vol. 1, Guntram Herb and David Kaplan, eds. (ABC-CLIO).p.105.

the relationship between religion and nationalism can easily fit into what may be called Muslim nationalism. According to this definition,

> The claim is not simply that nationalist rhetoric may be suffused with religious imagery, or that nationalist claims may be framed and formulated in religious language. This is indisputably true. It is not simply a claim about a religio-national symbiosis or interpenetration, which no doubt often exists. The argument I want to examine here concerns not the rhetorical form of nationalist claims, or the language or imagery used to frame them, but the content of those claims. It is a claim that there is a distinctively religious type of nationalist programme that represents a distinct alternative to secular nationalism (Brubaker, 2012:12)

Brubaker properly does not imply the forms of relationship that religion influences nationalism or religious and ethnic boundaries overlap. Religious nationalism, here, is explained by reference to a political program with religious content that promotes "the ordering and regulating of public and private life, rather than on the religious inflection of political rhetoric". For example, Irish nationalism, one of the most frequently cited examples of religious nationalism in the literature, does not fit into this pattern. Northern Ireland is where religion played a crucial factor in the development and maintenance of nationalism through which "religious motifs", "images" and "symbols" have often inflected political rhetoric, and religion has been "the key marker that defines the parties to the conflict". Because "no major claims are made about ordering and regulating public life in a manner conforming with religious principles", the conflict is not about religion. It represents one of the typical examples of nationalist disputes, not "a distinctively religious kind of nationalism" (Ibid..12-13). In the Northern Ireland case, although religion describes group belonging and distinguishes the group from its traditional enemy, "the real root of the problem is ethnic rather than religious" (Mitchell, 2006:1142). Following Friedland, like Juergensmeyer, Brubaker cites some Islamic movements oriented to the religious, not the nation.

4.4. Symbiotic Forms of Relationship between Religion and Nationalism

I have previously defined "religious nationalism" as a distinctive kind of nationalism whose image of society directly refers to the fundamental tenets of "religion" rather than the modern idea of the nation. Religion acts as "an order-creating system" in a particular group of people's minds and compels them to heed religious doctrines. It fosters political consciousness that requires collective action towards the emancipation of self-conscious religious groups through political claims. The competitive model between religion and nationalism in which the two have mutually exclusive goals as contradicting order-creating systems seems to fit well into "Muslim nationalism" or "Muslim trans-nationalism". When it comes to "religious nationalism" in a symbiotic sense, I prefer to use the concept to the effect that religion and nationalism are intertwined and dependent on each other. In a way, religious nationalism equates "religious identity with national self-consciousness," combining their respective allegiances. Nationalism, however, remains ultimate "a matter of self-awareness or self-consciousness" in this relationship (Connor, 1978:389). This definition, in general, makes the nation, rather than religion itself, an essential source of mobilization, political aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a symbiotic model.

Tangible characteristics such as religion and language can be, at most, complementary elements of national identity in some cases, whereas religious identity constitutes the most crucial part of the nation in some other instances. Analysis of the intertwined relationship between religion and nationalism or the role of religion as a constitutive or complementary element in national causes will be longer and more detailed because it is comparatively much more discussed in the literature. When we look at the different usages of "religious nationalism" in the symbiotic sense, the sub-typologies become more apparent depending on the meaning of religion in its particularity and universality. The framework of ethnic conflicts when the parties are religiously homogeneous (or heterogeneous), or religion is the primary reason, or supportive element of

nationalism may also somewhat account for these versions of religious nationalism.

It is no wonder that religion has historically and currently influenced nationalism in many parts of the world. In some cases, it has been the constitutive element in the emergence of national identity as in English and Jewish nationalism, whereas it has strengthened the development of nationalism in other areas like Poland and Northern Ireland. Historically, what has persisted for millennia among Jews is perhaps "the oldest relationship between religion and national identity" (Marsh:2007:103). It is an organic part of self-consciousness in Judaism. In the case of Jewish nationalism, religion identifies the nation with the community of believers, and relates the community to the sacred-historic territory, namely Jerusalem, as the group's ancestral homeland, thereby making it "a sacred communion" (Oommen, 1997; Smith, 2000). In contemporary Europe, religion is more likely to become a component of collective identity when an ethnic group attaches to a particular religion that characterizes and distinguishes it from its surrounding context. It has thus played a prominent role in reproducing many national identities, even in so-called secular societies, as exemplified in Poland, Greece, Ireland, including Arab countries in the Middle East. As a more recent example, Polish political and religious elites have demonstrated "the power of organized religion" in post-communist Poland. Despite the secular character of the nation-state, they cooperated to build a "hybrid nationalism" comprising religious codes by alluding to the ancient and powerful linkages to the Roman Catholic Church. (Rieffer, 2003: Zubrzycki, 2006: Soper&Fetzer, 2018). Catholicism today appears as a distinctive marker of Polish society, whose nearly 90 percent of the population is Catholic.

Symbiotic forms of relationship between religion and nationalism often co-exist and overlap in a religiously uniform context where groups from different religious traditions tend to demarcate social-territorial boundaries and narrow down the diversity in-group identity. Religion has necessarily influenced competing Greece and Turkish nationalisms, considering that most of the

populations subscribe to Greek Orthodox and Sunni Islam, respectively. Even though religion does not always constitute "the fabric of ethnic and national identity", it can penetrate secular forms of nationalism as an element of supporting national identity. It is not easy then to distinguish religion from politics or "the profane" from "the sacred". That is to say, "the secularization thesis" according to which "religious beliefs and sentiments might be acceptable at a personal and private level" becomes hardly persuasive to understand diverse and complex patterns of political authority and its social relations with religion. If anything, nationalism as a secular fiction has undergone a rapprochement with religious world views and traditions. This section intends to examine the symbiotic interaction mainly in two respects, after condemning the "secular replacement model" for concluding the religious and the secular as irreconcilable or non-overlapping. I shall first consider the constitutive role of religion in the formation and development of nationalism, that is, religion as an organic element of national consciousness that draws a more persistent boundary between the group and "the other." I shall then examine the supporting role of religion as "a source of legitimation and reinforcement of national cause" rather than "a marker of ethnic identity." In the last part, I will briefly touch on the problematic comparison of nationalism with religion.

4.4.1. Co-existence of the Religious and the Secular

Some scholars rightly focus on the longstanding link between the faith and the nation regarding overlapping religious and ethnic identities. In this respect, Veer's influential book "Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India," which deals with the modern history of India and Pakistan, has an important place in the buildup of the term "religious nationalism". Lacking any theoretical background, like Juergensmeyer, Veer holds that secular accounts of nationalism are not able to describe and explain religious nationalism in which religion is "a visible marker of group identity" and collective action clearly demarcating Hindus from Muslims. Hindu and Muslim nationalism do not represent a classical version of two competing nations expected to have primordial

attachments but can be at best examples of "religious nationalism". It equates "the religious community" with "the nation as a secular self-awareness". It articulates "discourse on the religious community and the nation" by utilizing "modern historical and archeological discourse" so that one needs the other (Veer, 1994). It is thus difficult to separate the two. The design of Hindu and Muslim nationalism builds on "religious identity" and "religious modes of communication" constructed through ritual discourse and practice. Even though religion arises as a distinctive marker between Hindus and Muslims, the ideological blueprint of self-consciousness ironically remains essentially secular.

"The modernist secular replacement model" that precipitates that there can be no nation without secular trends and nationalism as a new primary carrier of identity has replaced religion can hardly account for the co-existence of religion and nationalism. Many students of nationalism, including Gellner Hobsbawm and Anderson, even Greenfeld, were sympathetic to this line of reasoning and strongly influenced by the idea of modernity which rests on the dichotomy between traditional and modern. Accordingly, nationalism as a sign of secular modernity came to substitute the traditional world, characterized by a religious worldview or by religiously imagined communities. National identity portrayed in a non-religious sense has become "the central object of political loyalty" and "the basis of collective solidarity", and it sacralizes this world or the secular with ultimate meaning. In modern societies, social identity requires loyalty "directly and exclusively to the nation", instead of religious or traditional solidarity networks based on a particular tribe or clan (Greenfeld, 1992, 1993, 1996a,1996b: Asad, 2003). If modernist scholars were correct, there could be no religious nationalism as secularism and nationalism are offsprings of the Enlightenment and can no longer be separated. For that matter, the nation-state must necessarily be a secular entity.

Gellner, for instance, treats nationalism as closely related to the distinctively industrial, growth-oriented economy and development of a common culture, that is, a shared language and education. Modern industrial society, which largely

depends on capitalism, urbanization, economic, cognitive growth and secularism, requires a "homogeneous high culture". Nationalism basically refers to the general imposition of this "homogeneous high culture" and holds together "an anonymous, impersonal society made up of mutually substitutable atomized individuals (Gellner, 1983:57). Following Gellner, Hobsbawm supplies a causal connection between nationalism as a historically recent phenomenon and the rise of territorial sovereignty in which nations emerge from economic and technological development brought by modernization (Hobsbawm, 1990). Modern theories that view industrialization as the fundamental element of nationalism saw religion as inessential to construct national identity, like all other primordial elements. In their respective examinations of the roots of modern nations, Gellner, Anderson and Hobsbawm largely overlooked how nationalism was influenced and penetrated by religion.

At this point, Veer correctly argues that "we have to get away from the tyranny of modernization theory" to understand religious nationalism, in general, Hindu and Muslim nationalism in India, in particular. Indian nationalism presents empirical evidence that rapid industrialization, which is supposed to bring about urbanization and the spread of educational institutions, has not produced a social base for secular nationalism. In this sense, India is an excellent example in which one can observe that modernization has been accompanied by a remarkable religious intensification, although it may often be latent. Over time, religious demand has been very stable, and "there is growing religious activism in politics" (Veer, 1994). This case tells us the dominant paradigm that modernization means secularization has collapsed in the Indian example. The prediction of the secularization thesis about the inevitable decline and disappearance of religion has proved false either. The view that secularization is a natural and perhaps necessary form of society in modernity has also failed.

Resistance against secularizing colonial powers and "the opposition of the religious to the dominance of the secular, not to itself" here too forms the basis for religious nationalism in which "ideological movements give a new

interpretation to "the nation". Religion here lies at the heart of nationalism so that it embraces "religious language" and "modes of communication" rather than secular values (Veer, 1994, 2014: Rieffer, 2003). In this type of nationalism, religious community appears to oppose secularism, not the modern idea of nationalism itself and thus attempts to take away nationalism in the hands of secularism. Thus, religious identity itself may be a product of modernity. To illustrate, religious identity emerged as "the point of entry to the more encompassing national identity" in the English case, whereas it became a driving force for resistance to a secularizing colonial power in India at the beginning of the 20th century (Veer, 2014:12). While Hinduism and Islam have become ethnic markers against each other in the post-colonial era, they aided as a source of power and symbol to legitimize identity in the face of the hegemony of the colonial state, respectively. This is an excellent example of how the meaning of religious nationalism changes depending on the context.

Veer's position is similar to Asad's perspective on the relationship between nationalism, religion, and secularism. The fact that nationalism has worldly attachments does not necessarily make it nonreligious. For Asad, "if the secularization thesis no longer carries the conviction it once did, this is because the categories of politics and religion turn out to implicate each other more profoundly than we thought…the concept of the secular cannot do without the idea of religion" (Asad, 1999:192). As Asad perfectly notes, "the secular should not be thought of as the space in which real human life gradually emancipates itself from the controlling power of religion and thus achieves the latter's relocation" (Ibid.:185). Modernity is, in fact, "neither a totally coherent object nor a clearly bounded one" (Asad, 2003:13). If one looks at modernity from this viewpoint, secularism refers not to any one thing but "a series of processes". It does not simply confine religious belief and practice to a space where they cannot undermine political stability or the liberties of free-thinking citizens. Asad is nonetheless fairly optimistic about the implications of secularism, contrary to those who view religion as alien to the secular. According to this argument, "secularism has produced an [more] enlightened and tolerant

religion". Although I do not agree with him on this point to some extent, his view is remarkably significant to grasp the divide between non-Western and Western societies regarding their relative secularity in the public sphere. Secularism may have produced a more moderate and tolerant religion in the West, whereas this is not always the case for the Muslim societies where religion is almost equivalent to a worldview. Religion and secularism are now more intertwined, and they are ever-changing.

Besides, as Asad argued, "the secularization thesis" has always been both "descriptive and normative" for presuming that society must first be secular to be modern. Even modern politicians and intellectuals frequently invoke religious beliefs, practices, and organizations that focus on the sacred objects because they have a tremendous unifying potential to achieve a consensus necessary for mobilizing the population. Religious references to a glorious national past or alleviating the national sufferings may convey symbolic images of the divine to highlight the need of everyone included in the national community. Regardless of its position on particular issues, religion has always been designed rather than remained unchanged. It is also a product of the interaction bridging the gap between human beings and the cosmos (or social reality). Such a conception of religion, like nationalism, is not free from specific historical circumstances in which it grows. It is not then surprising to treat religion not merely as an essential phenomenon for having immutable essence but as a constitutive process implying that symbols and discourses within it can be partly changed (even secularized) in contemporary societies.

In this respect, religion and nationalism are not necessarily contradictory and mutually exclusive. The two interact with each other in such a way that neither distinguishes itself from the other. As an essentially secular consciousness, nationalism has secularizing effects on thought and life patterns, convincing people that religion alone is hardly persuasive for survival. Nevertheless, this is not to say that secularization is a must for sharing a sense of common nationhood. Similarly, religion provides people with identity and enhances

solidarity and support at the collective level in the Durkheimian sense. As Asad perfectly notes, "for if we accept that religious ideas can be secularized, that secularized concepts retain a religious essence, we might be induced to accept that nationalism has a religious origin (Asad:2003:189). In this respect, most religious nationalisms have a secular character with religious content and do not constitute a distinct type of nationalism (Greenfeld, 1996b). Some Islamic movements, restrained by the constitution of the countries in which they are situated, appear to obsess with state power. It does not indicate their commitment to national claims but to "the modern nation state's enforced claim to constitute legitimate social identities and arenas" (Asad, 2003:191).

> No movement …in public can remain indifferent to state power in a secular world. Even though Islamism is situated in a secular world…Islamism cannot be reduced to nationalism. Islamism takes for granted and seeks to work through the nation-state, which has become so central to the predicament of all Muslims. It is this statist project and not the fusion of religious and political ideas that gives Islamism a nationalist cast. Although Islamism has virtually always succeeded Arab nationalism in the contemporary history of the Middle East and addressed itself directly to the nation-state, it should not be regarded as a form of nationalism (Asad, 2003:190-91).

Asad's view brings Durkheim's symbolic functionalism into mind in which religion acts as a source of collective action. I beg to differ, however, from his insistence on "the moral heterogeneity of modern society". For Asad, who formulates an ideal definition of modern society through its moral heterogeneity, "nothing can be identified as a national conscience or a collective moral sensibility" in modern, namely heterogeneous, society (Asad, 1999:187). Secularism in highly modern society has gone through many arguments and several irreconcilable aspirations. The West, for instance, does not represent "an integrated totality". The secular state has, of course, repeatedly demonstrated its inability to provide a unitary moral system for its modern citizens because heterogeneity lies at the foundation of the moral structure of contemporary society. Nevertheless, at the very most, this view can be applied to liberal pluralist democracies. If anything, the state-society relationship in an illiberal context may readily include a shared moral system depending on religious

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traditions. The question, here, is thus not the ways in which modern society perceives secularism but how the state establishes and maintains a connection with religion, even if it claims to be secular. If a society develops norms with the help of faith to strengthen the coexistence of the community members and then applies them in practice, it is, in fact, a move from heterogeneity to homogeneity. Modern society cannot be reduced simply to normative pluralism and multiculturalism because the nation-state, which treats its citizens as one fundamentally homogeneous entity, has become ideologically homogeneous over time. Hence, moral heterogeneity does not always become a defining characteristic of modern societies in many aspects.

Like Asad, Veer, one of the prominent opponents of the secularization thesis, points to the symbiotic interaction between "secularism" and "religion" or "secular nationalism" and "religious nationalism". It is true that secular nationalism as "a sign of modernity" is built on an ideological notion that equates community with a nation in the realm of profane. It is, however, certainly not dominant and constantly contested by other concepts like religious nationalism, which equates "religious community with national identity". But this does not suggest a clear boundary exists between the two or that secular organization and discourse have been replaced by religious nationalism. Instead, they continue to exist as two distinct, sometimes complementary or intertwined, individual and collective consciousness reflecting cleavage and synthesis. In other words, religion and "the idea of secular" do not always appear as separable and separate units because beliefs may differ significantly in their ability to conduct between the transcendent world and the mundane.

Indian context where religious belief constitutes a widespread worldview with secular implications is a good example.Indian and Pakistani national self-consciousness was shaped by antagonistic religious socialization of Hinduism and Islam, which can be characterized as constitutive elements of their respective national identities (Veer, 1994; Marsh:2007). Indian nationalism, notably, demonstrates that secularization and religiosity go hand in hand. Both may come

into play in practice. Indeed, the discourses of tolerance and secularism in Indian politics did not prevent the founding of Pakistan, but secularism is widely available even today. Despite the gradual weakening of secular nationalism, secularism is still viewed as a religiously neutral governmental policy that protects minorities in India at the present juncture. On the other hand, it is seen "as an evil force" in Pakistan (Veer, 1994). It shows that the extent to which different religious communities approach the same reality from their own angle. In this respect, there is indeed a contradiction between theory and practice.

One may easily find the coexistence of religious and secular values in Indian society, where "the most important imaginings of the nation continue to be religious, not secular, although secular nationalism does exist as an ideological force" ironically (Ibid.:22). One can go even further by acknowledging that secular nationalism slowly adapts itself to the newly proposed system of values in societies where the popular support that religious values should underpin the social order has been widespread. I do not, therefore, find Rieffer's treatment of religious nationalism as "a separate type of nationalism" along with "secular nationalism" convincing. A wide range of national movements emerges where religion plays quite different roles so that complex interactions exist between a particular religion and the societies of which it is part. National mobilization does not simply go through similar pathways or possess a series of similar experiences because they are patterned to interpret the world and act differently depending on their context. Therefore, they do not form a monolithic category for being shaped by different processes. On the contrary, they include composite clustering groups, accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts and ideological competition. It would then be possible to argue that multi-nationalisms exist even within each national context, with all ambiguities and tensions. National self-consciousness, therefore, remains essentially secular, though it does not form a monolithic category. Furthermore, secularization does not necessarily lead to nationalism, or not the way round, and thus is not a must for sharing a sense of common nationhood. After all, "the nation is not just an imagined political community" but "a sacred communion" that comprises a dual

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aspect of "a community of presumed ethnic descent" and "a community of the faithful" (Smith: 2000).

One may then readily accept that nationalism may incorporate religion as an ingredient of self-consciousness, the extent to which religious ideas and discourses can be secularized. Even secular nationalist movements are too increasingly aware of the enduring standing of religion and thus seek to bolster in-group bonds through religious self-identification, especially in religiously heterogeneous conflicts. Schmitt goes further and asserts that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of the [nation] state are secularized theological concepts" (Schmitt, 1985:36), which is open to discussion. Greenfeld was, I suggest, was right in claiming that "nationalism is essentially secular consciousness" based on the principles of "popular sovereignty" and "egalitarianism." Nationalism has "an image of a sovereign community of fundamentally equal members" (Greenfeld, 2005). Although it can be traced back to religious collectivity, it has ultimately created a secular consciousness because it projects this world. It attempts to construct an earthly community that focuses attention on the mundane, inevitably delimiting God's relation with the world. Some national movements with religious motifs such as the Palestinians, the Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus, Chechens, Aches, Filipino Moros, and Kashmiris are cited as instances of "religious nationalism" in the literature. But whether and to what extent their primary loyalties and political purposes are religious or secular is controversial. Rieffer falls into this error (Rieffer, 2003).

Religious identification of an individual does not "necessarily follow that there is anything particularly religious about their sense of self, the conception of group membership or understanding of the world" (Mitchell, 2006:1136). Most contemporary so-called religious movements primarily carry the banner of "ethnic" or "civic nationalism" with little authentic religious content (Gans, 1994; Greenfeld, 1996b; Demerath, 2000, 2003). According to Gans's conception of "symbolic religiosity," while seemingly religious affiliations generate religious socialization, they do not involve regular participation in

religious rituals, prayers, and worship (Gans, 1979). The substantive meaning of religion has, therefore, been diluted or eviscerated, evoking Durkheim's portrayal of symbolic functionalism in which religion acts as a social or moral force rather than the individual quest for life's meaning.

To give an example, it can be misleading to characterize the Northern Ireland conflict as religious because religion has a symbolic role there, and its significance is overrated. Some studies already indicate that religion is not at the core of the conflict, rather it feeds into nationalism (Bruce, 1995, 1996; Brubaker, 2012; McGarry&O'Leary, 1995, 2019). "It is an analytical mistake to endow the boundary-marker with more significance than the fact that there is a boundary. People belong to "religious communities" irrespective of their actual religious or nonreligious convictions" (McGarry&O'Leary, 1995:137). The members of a particular ethnic group retain cultural continuity with traditional faith called "cultural religion," which is devoid of substantive content. Cultural religion" enables its followers to identify themselves with a religious belief without regular religious attendance per se such as worship services, prayer, reading of Scriptures. Thus, it signifies "the penultimate stage of the secularization process" (Demerath, 2000:137). In this relationship between religion and nationalism, the religious label accommodates the national one. In both Indian and Northern Ireland case, religion is the key marker of nationalism.

As repeatedly emphasized above, religious engagement of a society will not ultimately lead to a total retreat of secularism, although it has increasingly come under attack in recent years. Moreover, nationalism may often tend to use religion for its political purposes to form national loyalty or influence state policy. Religious nationalism, despite its emphasis on religious discourse and mass-scale ritual practice in the political arena, attempts to re-build nationalism within the framework of the modernization paradigm. In this respect, it resembles secular nationalism in various ways. It has adopted modern modes of communication such as print media, radio, television, film, and the internet rather than traditional modes of religious thought. The contemporary popular

resurgence of religious symbols and meaning in the construction of identity has ultimately caused, either directly or indirectly, secular nationalisms to change its anti-religious position. At the same time, this has brought the two forms of nationalism closer together.

Traditional frameworks of collective consciousness were accompanied by political, economic, social and industrial transformations, which prompted the members of society to embrace "the national image of the world" or "the image of new social order". "The Western discourse of modernity", primarily confined to "the dichotomy between traditional and modern," has undoubtedly brought about a significant change in Indian society through the remarkable transformation of capitalism, making Indian secular nationalism possible. After all, one has to consider the "modern framework of the nation" together with traditional religious values and "a theory of the impact of colonialism and orientalism that does not deny agency to colonial subjects" in an attempt to understand religious nationalism. Indian nationalism forms an exciting hybrid between traditional (religion) and modern within this bifurcation. Veer, like Asad, does not regard the concept of tradition as the "antithesis of modernity" (Asad, 1999; Veer 1994, 2014). In this type of relationship, religion stands not in opposition to the secular but as a part of it. As Asad rightly points out, the secular concept cannot do without the idea of religion (Asad, 1999:192). Religion has, therefore, never been replaced by secular modernity. Secularism here refers not to a coherent or a bounded object but "a series of processes," including re-traditionalization. In this respect, religion has not remained confined to the private sphere. On the contrary, it has remained an unalterable attribute of collective identity.

4.4.2. Constitutive Role of Religion in the Construction and Development of Nationalism

Religion has been characterized mainly as "an ethnic marker" defining group belonging in this configuration. It distinguishes one group from the other along

religious lines, so national and religious identities overlap flawlessly. Like national identity, religious identity is historically constructed by particular social forces in "religious institutions that are in a constant process of transformation" (Veer, 1994:30). In other words, while religion as a meaning system concerns itself with the ultimate meaning of life in Weber's sense and as a social construct, individuals and social groups are active and cooperative actors that give it additional (or new) meanings in the Durkheimian logic. It is, however, essential to recognize that the source of group feeling can change according to the historical formations and circumstances in which they occur. In limiting himself to specific religious movements, Veer also presents a mirror image of Juergensmeyer's context-dependent or historical particularism approach because theoretical generalization's acceptability and analytical usefulness are not equally significant in all cases.

Veer, however, does not hold back from making a definition either. In doing so, he paid particular attention to the religious institutions "as a locus for self-awareness" since they have become new political arenas or central symbols for broader political mobilization. Religious beliefs, practices, myths and symbols through which "exclusive community boundaries are sharply drawn" are historically reproduced in religious institutions. "Religious nationalism draws upon that exclusivity" (Ibid.: 57). Given this definition, Veer conceptualizes religious identity as "a visible marker of group identity and collective purpose" while accepting the limited transnational character of Hindu spiritualism and the Muslim ummah. In the Indian case, however, religious transnationality appears to be what nationalism attempts to foster, reinforcing national and religious identity. Indian nationalism, characterized by a religious worldview, takes Hinduism as the constitutive element of group identity, "thereby relegating adherents of other religions to a secondary, inferior status" (Ibid.: 23).

Muslims in India, among other things, do not form a homogeneous community, are largely pluralized and fragmented, but Indian perception is quite different. The Muslim community is often seen as a homogeneous whole by the Hindu

majority. The image of Muslims as "a foreign element in Indian culture and society", which underlies Hindu nationalism, has induced Muslim nationalism to grow, ending up with the formation of Pakistan, demarcating the boundary between the two communities. The two nationalities have articulated themselves along similar lines so that the one needs the other. There is much reason to believe that a dialectical process has occurred between nationalism and transnationalism in the case of both Hinduism and Islam. As a source of both profane and the sacred, religion has evoked strong feelings among Indian and Muslim nationalists.

As we have seen, nationalism is primarily rooted in demographic homogeneity so that a group of people demarcated along territorial and cultural lines desires to have their political unit. Here, uniformity is not merely about self-awareness but includes "the construction of the other" as uniform. Hindu nationalism relies heavily on this Hindu-Muslim distinction and argues that Hindus, who form most of the population, should rule the country. Accordingly, the distinguishing characteristic of the state should become "the political will of the Hindu majority," and the Muslim minority should accept that as a political reality. As a result, "Muslims are always referred to as a dangerous foreign element, as not truly Indian" by Hindu nationalist movements, despite their long presence in India (Ibid.:10). Religion has played such an essential role in the formation of Indian nationalism that even Nehru's secular version of nationalism had to accept in one way or another the religious community "as the basis of the nation imagined". Still, the Hindu nationalist movement was composed of different compartments that did not wholly agree on standardization and homogenization, reflecting various levels of integration in Indian society. There was no homogeneous or uniform Hindu nationalism since moderate and radical tendencies manifested within mainstream nationalism. An extreme view of Hindu nationalism considered the nation as "the community of co-religionists," while the moderate view regarded "cultural pluralism", "tolerance," and "equality" among different religious communities within the nation necessary. Before the partition of 1947, Gandhi's moderate, pluralist version of Hindu

nationalism was predicated on a spiritual Hinduism that would include other religions.

In a nutshell, Veer's attempt seems to provide a Durkheimian analysis concerning "the ritual construction of group identity" as a product of organic solidarity. As often happens in identity formation, ritual construction refers to "a mode of communication" through which a person consciously formulates "a sense of identity" to attain a collective goal. It should be recalled from the previous section that "religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things…beliefs and practices which unite into one single community called a Church, all those who adhere to them", Durkheim says (Durkheim, 1995: 47). Religious nationalism, which equates the religious community with the nation, builds on "constructed religious identity" and "modes of religious communication" through religious institutions, drawing a symbolic boundary between us and "the other" (Veer, 1994). Veer implies that religion is a constitutive element in the formation of national identity in the case of both Hinduism and Islam. Based on the Indian context, Veer tried to develop a form of religious nationalism of which the discourse on the religious community and the discourse on the nation are intertwined (Veer, 1994; 2014). Religious identity here represents the constituent element of the national consciousness that restricts Hindus from Muslims in Indian politics even today. I argue that society must be religiously heterogeneous, regardless of the essence of the identity conflict, for a religion to be "an ethnic marker." Hence, symbolic boundaries among religiously imagined communities regularly emphasize the need to periodically reaffirm and renew the nation through ritual discourse and practice. Many studies in the literature confirm this. So is Veer's work.

In other words, the division of the population into religious communities helps us to account for a specific view of religion as the defining characteristic of the nation. Even sectarian (sub religious) identities within Hindu and Muslim communities make close links between religion and national consciousness, which makes the boundary between "us" and "the other" much easier to

maintain. Of course, centralization and homogenization are necessary for the political mobilization of a religious community. At the same time, they create their counterforces, as exemplified by the Muslim mobilization versus the Hindu majority in the Indian context. Nationalism, by definition, regardless of its secular or religious attribution, has to be promoted. Because nationalism does not exist by itself, it has to convince its members that they are part of the same group (Brubaker, 2006). Unsurprisingly, national consciousness reflecting the unity of religion has paved the way for "the ethnicization of religion," by which "transnationalism" has come to reinforce nationalism and national unity. In this way, Hindu- Muslim relations in India correspond to a reciprocal relationship since the populations of these communities embrace religion as "a part of the nation" or consider the nation as a collective representation of co-religionists".

Veer, too, follows the context-dependent path in describing and explaining "religious nationalism" in India that cannot be reduced to "the master narrative of European modernity" through Hindu and Muslim [trans]nationalist movements, discourses, and practices. The complexity and ambiguity of religious discourse in Indian society have their historical development, with specific characteristics of Indian nationalism and the socio-cultural exclusiveness of the Muslim community. More importantly, ideological movements are not monolithic among themselves. They are always, however, part of the constant process of transformation. The pattern of interaction between the organizations, ranging from extremist groups to moderate versions that manifest the tendencies within the mainstream religious nationalism, has complicated the picture. It thereby allows for negotiation, revision, and reinterpretation of the religious and national identity among the individuals and groups in everyday conversation. For Hindus and Muslims, including Sikhs in India, "nation-building is directly dependent on religious antagonism" or "issues such as the temple-mosque controversy" (Veer, 1994). Nationalism is thus often seen "as part of religion".

Veer is right in taking religious discourse and practice as constitutive elements of changing social identities, particularly "the historical construction of Hindu and

Muslim identities in India". His arguments can be summed up as follows: First, "religious identity is constructed in ritual discourse and practice". Second, religious and national "identities are not primordial attachments, inculcated by unchanging traditions, but specific products of changing religious organization and communication". Third, "religious nationalism articulates discourse on the religious community and discourse on the nation". Fourth, "Hindu and Muslim nationalisms develop along similar lines and that the one needs the other" (Veer, 1994: IX-X). As a result, religion has been a constituent (and essential) factor in the formation of the nation, and thereby religion has become a universal characteristic of Indian ethnicity. His analysis, unlike Juergensmeyer, does not only focus on the reactionary trend of religious movements against the radical secularist trend.

According to his argument, religious meaning and practice play a crucial role in forging a religious community on which religious nationalism builds. In other words, the historical construction of Hindu and Muslim identities in India is grounded in the homogenization of a religious community. And there have always been religious mechanisms for boundary-making and maintenance to create such a community. On the other hand, religious antagonisms, which have always existed, have fostered "political consciousness" and "the struggle for unity" that comes to dominate tribal diversity. While it is evident that religious discourse and practice did not become visible with "the politicization of religion" in the era of nationalism, it is also clear that political processes and social forces have historically produced religious identity. It is important to note that Veer has tended to overemphasize religious identity, thereby omitting the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood. His analysis of why and how religious identity aroused such deep attachments and generated widespread popular support remains unclear. More precisely, why are Hindus and Muslims in India involved in a political strategy around particular religious traditions rather than ethnic ones? For what reasons is political consciousness or will expressed through religious identity in a multicultural society where tribal and ethnic diversity prevails? Veer does not give straight answers to these questions.

With its particular focus on religious aspects of Indian nationalism, Veer's work offers an overview of the process of religious identification (or homogenization) that produces a national identity and culture.

There is another factor in creating a nation in Veer's view. It is "the element of resistance" in developing national identities in general and the impact of colonialism and orientalism on Indian nationalism. Although nationalism first occurred in Europe based on "a Western discourse of modernity" and "secularism derived from the Enlightenment", it has spread throughout the world via "colonialism" and "orientalism," which leading theories of nationalism tend to ignore. There is no doubt that "resistance against colonial domination" has also played a prominent role in precipitating "collective consciousness of community", which is perhaps most dramatically represented in the writings of Durkheim. Veer does not, however, seem to take "the colonialist view" as the only explanation of the origin of religious nationalism" for it simply overlooks the importance of Indian's political agency in creating their society. "The larger frameworks of reference" within local communities were already available in India before the colonial era. Religious nationalism builds on these earlier frameworks transforming social consciousness (Ibid.).

In short, it does not seem possible to build nationalism without religion in some cases where the latter has become its constitutive element. Characterization of religion as "the main component of national identity" offers a fundamental objection to establishing nationalism as "a modern phenomenon." As we saw previously at the beginning of the chapter, contemporary accounts of nationalism, including Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson, Breuilly, and Hroch, contended that there were no nations before modernity, situating nationalism within the context of secular modernity. In other words, there was no national identity before its invention and creation by modern entrepreneurs. Thus, for scholars like Asad and Veer, religious identity, though not manifested in modern discourse and symbols as it is today, was part of making and maintaining social

boundaries between the religious community and the others in the pre-modern era.

Hastings is another scholar who subscribes to the view that religious and national identities are coexistent and overlapping. In his famous book "The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism", Hastings traces the historical origins of "the idea of nationalism", centering upon the role of religion in creating a sense of English nationhood in the sixteenth century. Like Veer, Hastings follows the context-dependent path due to varying cultural and religious influences to which the nationhood is related. In reality, every nation is a unique socio-historical construct because of its inherent particularism. "The shaping of Dutchness, of Spanishness, of Irishness, has in each case to be examined in its own historical evolution, quite as much as Frenchness, Germanness or Englishness", he says (Hastings, 1997:25). If compared with Veer, I suggest he adopts a more radical stance on the nexus between religion and nationalism. For him, it is problematic to define national identity without considering the influence of religion on "the construction of nations" and its relationship to ethnicity. Unlike Veer, Hastings believes that religion functions both "as a constructor of ethnicities and nations" and challenges the modern assumption that the origins of contemporary nationalism may be found in a secular setting, claiming that nationhood may arise out of preexisting religious ties. Hastings takes such a radical position to claim that nation and nationalism could perhaps have never existed in the absence of "the Bible", including Christian interpretation and implementation (Ibid.) The most excellent example of this is English nationalism which has become a prototype of "the nation" and "the nation-state".

As a Roman Catholic priest, Hastings contributed to the comparative study of nationalism by citing a wide range of examples of the intrinsic connection between ethnicity, nationhood and religion in Britain and across Europe. His book briefly considers how Christianity has shaped English national identity and how religion has contributed to nation-construction and nationalism,

acknowledging Christianity and Islam's universalist and anti-national (or anti-ethnic) dimensions. Hastings's most important contention is that nations as well as nationalisms, though they may have spread more rapidly in the modern period, did not emerge at the time of the French and American revolutions…nor were they the product of modernity", writes Smith in his review of Hastings's contribution to the theory of nationalism (Smith, 2003:25). Hastings's central thesis is that modern nations can be traced back to the Middle ages when "the nationalization of the church" developed with "the crystallization of national identities" through language, literature and state formation. This is what distinguishes Hastings from modernists view of nations represented by Kedourie, Gellner, Hobsbawm, Breully and Anderson, including Greenfeld, who totally avoid reflection of the medieval evidence.

Modernist accounts overestimated the role of modernization in explaining nationalism, treating nation-states as products of the last two centuries. Kedourie, one of the most ardent advocates of this approach, describes nationalism as an invented doctrine in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century (Kedourie, 1996). In a similar vein, Gellner argues that nationalism as a modern phenomenon engenders nations and not the other way round (Gellner 1983). If Gellner and Kedourie's insistence on the impossibility of the roots of modern nations in pre-modern periods is correct, nation and nationalism cannot be related to pre-existing ethnic or religious ties. In a sense, if the nation were only invented or imagined, it would not be established as it is today. Hobsbawm, another notable and influential representative of modernist theories of nationalism, offers a similar explanation: "Nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round." (Hobsbawm, 1990: 10). The common denominator of these approaches is their conception of nationalism as a relatively new phenomenon about which we cannot somewhat speak before the late eighteenth century. In other words, the nation could appear almost invisible before the nationalism or nation-state. The reasoning behind this argument is simply that nationalism precedes the existence of nations as a collective unity, which in turn leads to the nation-state (Hastings, 1997).

Hastings rejects the basic order that modernists assume between "the ideology of nationalism" and "the nation-state" limiting these phenomena to the eighteenth century as insufficiently scientific. That is, the latter was the inherently natural part and production of the former. One may, however, see an explicit expression of national feelings in the texts from the old English state in the medieval ages, especially in times of war or under some real and imagined threat. There is evidence for a continuity of "modern English sense of nation" with "medieval English nationalism". It is pointless to discuss English nationalism without including the pre-Reformation history of the English nation because English national consciousness with the sense of political unity was already a reality in the fourteenth century. It was explicitly related to a distinct language group drawing primarily on biblical and Vulgate roots. In the English case, the Book of Common Prayer, with its refined Cranmerian style, was heard being read out every week of the year in every church. People also listened to the chapters of the English Bible at their compulsory weekly attendance each Sunday that ensured an everyday use of language and shaped the spoken language of the nation from the sixteenth century on (Ibid.) Through analyzing the relationship between language and religious society, Hastings demonstrated the correlation of national awakening with biblical translation within the European context in the Medieval ages. Nationalism, however, in his mind, does not necessarily imply a religious process. It often takes over from religion once established. In the later fourteenth century, English nationhood was ironically a secularising process that went parallel, not with any hostility to religion or piety, but with growing resentment towards its more powerful institutional forms (Ibid.:51).

For Hastings, it is not surprising that some scholars, including Greenfeld, refer to English nationalism as "the first nation in the world" for many reasons. But even Greenfeld, who claims that "the birth of the English nation was not the birth of a nation, it was the birth of the nations, the birth of nationalism" (Greenfeld, 1992:23), locates the emergence of national consciousness in England in the first decades of the sixteenth century. If Greenfeld claims that the first example of nation-making was England, she requires demonstration in medieval terms. Like

all other modernists, however, Greenfeld avoids serious consideration of medieval evidence and does not yet go nearly far enough to admit English nationhood closely bound with Protestantism, war with France, and acquisition of empire (Hastings, 1997). This is what leads Hastings to conclude that national identity as a decisive reality had existed before the rapid spread of nationalist ideology and the nation-state's formation, even before the Reformation. Therefore, Greenfeld's views are correct but incomplete. More importantly, the modern contention that nationalism was created by the French Revolution or could not have existed before has turned out to be meaningless, even though it needed the frenzy of the Revolution to realize itself. So nationalism does not inherently belong to modern times. Hastings's approach, Smith argues, differs significantly from that of Elie Kedourie and Conor Cruise O'Brien. These scholars recognize a view of the modernity of nations and nationalism within the Christian tradition context, while Hastings points to Christian origin as evidence of the presence of nations in the Middle Ages, using it as the basis for his radical critique of the modernist orthodoxy (Smith, 2003).

Suppose we want to understand the phenomena of nationhood and nationalism. In Hastings's view, we need to focus on two things: The influence of the Bible and religion more generally in medieval and early modern Europe; the pre-existent ethnicities from which the nation has been wholly or partially constructed. Nationalism is the synthesis of the two. A nation is explicitly grounded on a single central ethnicity and fixed literary language, though it may well include the control of a specific territory and statehood. In other words, nations grow out of certain ethnicities and religious divisions, affected by the literary development of a vernacular regularly employed for the production of literature and particularly for the translation of the Bible through the pressures of the state (Hastings, 1997). Once an ethnic group's vernacular becomes a language of literary writing and the subsequent production of literature, the transition to nationhood begins.

It reminds, at first glance, what Anderson calls "the coalition between Protestantism and print-capitalism," which quickly created extensive reading public and mobilized the masses for politico/religious purposes as a result of the standardization of vernaculars and the growth in literacy rates (Anderson, 2006:40). Hastings, however, somewhat differs from Anderson in that he offers no explanation about "the numerical growth of books already in the sixteenth century" and ignores the development of a mass book trade well before the print-capitalism. Long before the coming of mass print-capitalism, which alone made modern European nations possible for Anderson, one can see the impact of vernacular literature in molding the consciousness of communities. For example, early English nationhood was indebted to Catholic Christianity that endorsed vernacular languages in biblical translations on which nations would later be founded. The first Western vernacular Bibles printed were German in 1466, Italian in 1471, followed by a complete Bible in Catalan in 1478, then Dutch New Testament in 1522, and Spanish translation in the sixteenth century. The first English Bible was to be printed in 1539, although the translation of the complete Bible into English by John Wyclif's disciples already existed from the late fourteenth century (Hastings, 1997:22-24). Anderson was probably aware of these translations but what he meant by "print-capitalism" is perhaps the speed with which the vernaculars of Western Europe became more intense after the Reformation. In doing so, he seems to be convinced that the nation was unimaginable before "the advent of print capitalism".

Akin in his reasoning to Newman, who associates Catholicism with the idea of the English nation, Hastings places English nationalism closely tied to pre-Protestantism because it preceded the Reformation, for its liberation struggle against the papacy of medieval kings. "The church and leading churchmen did much to unite England and provide English people with a sense of their unity as a nation" in their way to be a peculiar people (Ibid.:51), which tells us that nationalism did not intrinsically bound up with Protestantism. English national consciousness of being a people distinct from others was already in existence in the Middle ages through its "linguistic", "religious" and "cultural tradition". This

does not, of course, imply that the English were themselves, at that time a nation as we understand the concept in modern terms, because the church had not still been intensely nationalist as they were in Protestant Revolution. Their ideological influence would undoubtedly become more intense after the Reformation and the increasing diffusion of Bible knowledge among ordinary people (Ibid.:18).

Nevertheless, Catholicism dominated the English medieval national spirit for more than a century until the establishment of "the Protestant Succession". The same is true for French Catholicism. Contrary to exponents of secularization thesis, the church there played an influential role in shaping the modern French nation in the seventeenth century through a broad shift in Catholicism's stance toward encouraging the masses to read the scriptures in vernacular, which laid the groundwork for nationalism and the Revolution (Ibid.). I do not agree with Hastings's view which makes a direct connection between Catholicism and French nationalism.

Catholicism can, of course, be an essential component of Irish or Polish nationalism because it serves as a significant line of demarcation between the Irish and the British, between the Catholic Poles and Orthodox Russians. Nevertheless, it is not clear that French nationalism has passed through the same category.

At the same time, Hastings's emphasis on the impact of vernacular literature is elusive and problematic because German nationalism would emerge in the late eighteenth century despite having a common language. It also differs from other forms in appealing enormously to its ethnic origin and "the idea of ethnic purity," let's say, more than the French and the English. One of the chief reasons for the relatively late arrival of German nationalism is that German-speaking people who were then disunited politically lacked "the unity of the state" and no

solid central leadership to hold them together.[10] Hastings's theory of nationalism related to a distinct language group does not satisfactorily explain why the German-speaking group opted out to rediscover the vision of its nationhood. German nationalism appears an exception to his thesis revolving around the medieval roots of nationalism dependent on biblical religion and the rise of vernacular literature, which influenced almost every European nationalism. But yet "the belonging to Germanness" among German Protestants was more popular than German Catholics. Despite the German exception, another example of the religious shaping of nationalism in which religion was more continually decisive was Spanish nationhood. Its position on the frontier with Islam through the medieval wars' character initially established it, thereby Spanishness and Catholicism seemed inseparable for centuries (Ibid.: 111-12).

Apart from developing a vernacular liturgy and translation of the Bible to shape one's national consciousness, Hastings also focuses on the way ethnicity turns nationhood in certain circumstances. When speaking of ethnicity, he refers to a group of people with a shared culture through a spoken language so that ethnicity and the spoken language go closely together. Nation is, however, "a far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity" because it encapsulates one or more ethnicities identified by a literature of its own and possesses or claims "the right to political identity" and "autonomy as a people," together with the control of specific territory (Ibid.:3). In this sense, Hastings concurs with Kedourie's view of self-determination in the Kantian sense, regarding nationalism as a self-conscious (but ethnically) community to attain its political claims. Kedourie traces the origin of the nation back to "the idea of self-determination", which is at the centre of Kant's philosophy, that "a good man is an autonomous man, and

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[10] For a discussion of the reasons why German nationalism appealed to ethnic origin and was doomed to wait the nineteenth century to flourish, see Hastings, A. (1997) The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Greenfeld, L. (1992). Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity, Harvard University Press.

for him to realize his autonomy, he must be free", thus "self-determination becomes the supreme political good" (Kedourie, 1996.:22).

Throughout this study, I assume nationalism as a political doctrine with an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups based on collective action for political purposes. Needless to say, it is not possible to suggest for any ethnic group to turn naturally into nations, but it is undoubtedly a necessary component to greater self-consciousness. Although every ethnicity did not become a nation, it is evident that many follow the route of nationhood as a wide range of examples in Britain, Europe and Africa illustrate well enough the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood. Hastings concludes that every ethnicity has a nation-state potentially within it, but its resources, economic, linguistic, ideological, and geographical, are too scarce to activate its potentials in most cases. That is because moving from ethnicity to nationhood can also take place in several ways depending on its human, economic and territorial resources, including historical evolution. Some ethnicities become nations while others do not, which is a quirk of history. Ethnicity along with religion provides a starting point for Hastings's theory of nationalism.

In short, Hastings does not take the nation as the offspring of modernity in that nations emerge out of pre-existing ethnic and religious ties through "the literary development of a spoken vernacular" and mainly English translation of "the Bible". It is hard to deny the mass impact of the English Bible in strengthening a common language, which constituted the origin or starting point from which the idea of nation is derived or developed, for the Christian world at least. Hastings further argues that "nations and nationalism could have never existed" in the absence of the Bible and its Christian interpretations. In his view, religion is particularly significant in the evolution of national identity when it takes the attachment to a group symbol and "myths of ethnic election or chosenness" (Hastings, 1997). Religion can then be a basis of ethnic identity and thus serves as a significant constituent element in the national consciousness in the pre-modern era as the source of English nationalism.

Hastings admits that it seems over-simplification to regard the vernacular Bible as the sole catalyst for language unification or the development of national consciousness, but the correlation between biblical translation and national awakening was evident across most of Europe. In other words, a sort of religious injection has produced national identity. Biblically literate people first imagined "the idea of the nation" extensively using vernacular literature, which lies at the basis of nationalism. Once an ethnicity's vernacular becomes a language identified by its literature, it creates a more conscious community of those who read it, forcing the ethnic group to cross the Rubicon on the road to nationhood. If it fails to pass that point, then the transformation from the category of an ethnicity towards that of a nation is almost sure never to take place (Ibid.) Hastings's conception of Christianity as the defining origin of the nation, which makes his work limited its scope to certain European nations, particularly England and its western neighbors, has not gone without criticism. According to Smith, Hastings's theoretical framework is built upon the assumption that nationalism is undoubtedly a European ideology and derived many of its roots from Christian source. Hastings offers no systematic explanation for why nations and nationalism are exclusively Judaeo-Christian, and European, phenomena. In Smith's own words,

> A more general sense of nationhood is not confined to Europe. There are the striking cases of Japan, especially in the Tokugawa period, and of Persia for much of its history. In the latter case, Hastings argued that Islam could not accommodate nations or nationalism because of its overarching ideal of the umma of believers, but in practice this ideal was undermined quite early on by the rise of separate emirates in Egypt, North Africa and Cordova, not to mention the later Shi'ite Savafid dynasty of Iran. Islam, for most of its history, was a federation of peoples and polities, and respected many of their pre-Islamic features (Smith, 2003:27).

Another criticism is concerned with his excessive emphasis on the literary development of a vernacular language. Let us, for a moment, assume Hastings's argument about the literary definition of nations to be true. Even outside Europe, one can find evidence from antiquity, such as Egyptians, Persians, diaspora Jews, Smith says. However, Hastings's position is not rigid, as Smith describes.

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He is willing to recognize Armenian national identity, which combines the Armenian Bible, liturgy, and related literature in the late third century. The Ethiopian case in Africa shaped by the Bible's self-consciousness is another example from the Medieval ages. These examples led him to conclude that Christianity and biblical translation remain the most influential and widespread single factor in the construction of nationhood across Europe and many parts of Christian Africa. Smith is, however, right to stress Hastings's confusion of nationalism (a political doctrine of self-determination) with the national sentiment (the feeling of belonging to a nation) (Ibid.).

As far as I understand, Hastings distinguishes between ideological origins and primordial properties of the nation while acknowledging nationalism as a political theory emanated from the nineteenth century. There is a temporal gap between ideology and action. Therefore, his understanding of nationalism is grounded more on "a reactionary form of nationalism" rather than the spread of the modern ideology of the nation, which is essentially a defensive response of the ethnically self-conscious group under threat against external threat. For all that, religion has constituted the central distinguishing element of many cultures in pre-national societies. It has produced the dominant character of the original model of the nation, namely, the Christian model in Hastings's theory of nationalism. Hastings's position rests on the acceptance of the role of religion in the formation and sustenance of the national identity, similar to Veer's. In this respect, religion is thus closely related to boundary mechanisms that distinguish a group of people from others, with its ethnic identity manifested through linguistic identity. That brings us to a point where we can further conceptualize religious identity that acts as a constitutive element or an ethnic marker of the national cause.

Characterization of religion as an ethnic marker, however, largely overlooks the substantive content of faith, focusing more on its social and cultural forms. It thus neglects the secularizing impact of nationalism in the long run. What's more, although religion has been linked to the emergence of British nationalism,

it is less necessary today than it was in the past. The secularization of British society and culture, the decline of Christian traditions and rituals, and "the gradual demise of the power of the Established Church of England" imply that Britain has moved to "a model of secular nationalism" (Soper & Fetzer; 2018:22). We have similar examples that typify the secularization trend. Even though the degree of pietism of Bosnian Muslims and Hui Muslim minority in China varies along a spectrum of religiosity, both populations are becoming secularized and not actively participating in Islamic practices despite sharing Islam as a distinctive identity marker (Stroup, 2016).

4.4.3. Supporting Role of Religion to Legitimize and Reinforce National Cause

Thus far I have attempted to tease out that religious identity represents the constitutive element of the national consciousness. There is, however, expanding literature that covers how religion "as a source of moral power" supports, reinforces, maintains, and legitimizes (ethnic) national identity. In this form of relationship, religion is not a founding element of nationalism but remains an identity marker. While ethnicity features the primary carrier of group identity, religion is used to foster national identity through its symbols, rituals, and organizations (Mitchell, 2006:1139-40). National leaders put religion at the disposal of nationalism due to its potential for sacralizing ethnic identity and mobilizing the population (Hanf, 1994; Chong, 1998). Religion does not only provide "an interpretation of complex reality" or the divine order of the cosmos, it also offers spiritual explanation and justification for ethnic considerations. Ethnic identity has primordially existed and is not formed from religion. Religion has the ability to protect it, but it is not an "active agent" in its construction or transformation (Mol, 1976).

In her article, Rieffer first treats "secular nationalism" as anti-religious, which is devoid of religious sentiment and overtones" and then distinguishes between "religious nationalism" and "instrumental pious nationalism". While religion and

nationalism are flawlessly intertwined in the cases of religious nationalism, such as English nationalism in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, later British nationalism, Indian nationalism in the 20th century, Polish and Iranian nationalism, "religion is a less dominant aspect of the national movement" in the cases of pious nationalism like Russian and Iraqi nationalism (Rieffer, 2003). In the second form of relationship, religion does not always occupy a central feature in the production of national identity. Religion is mainly used as a cohesive social force to gather public support and unify distinct groups of people. As a power resource, religion creates loyalty to the national movement. Religion plays a supportive but not leading role, and it is of secondary importance in instrumental pious nationalism. In a similar vein, Soper & Fetzer develop a contentious framework to explain diverse to understand religion's role in nationalism depending on each unique history, culture, and political context at the level of the state-based nationalism. They posit three models: secular nationalism, religious nationalism, and civil-religious nationalism.

> Secular nationalism is marked by weak to nonexistent ties to religious identity in national consciousness and a formal separation of religion from the state. By contrast, religious nationalism forges strong connections to a particular religious group both ideologically and institutionally. Civil religion lies somewhere between the two in that religion is supportive of nationalism, but it is not linked to a particular religious tradition (Soper & Fetzer, 2018:11)

"Civil-religious nationalism" differs from "religious nationalism" because religion does not play an essential role in the national movement. This form of nationalism manifests itself in that it "does not identify the majority religious tradition with the state, as in religious nationalism, it also does not jettison any religious values from the national story, as in secular nationalism" (Ibid.:9). It brings co-religionists together to favor the national cause, as in Rieffer's "instrumental pious nationalism". In their model, Soper & Fetzer's secular nationalism stipulates "a formal separation of religion from the state." On the contrary, civil-religious nationalism implies "no legal establishment or institutional form of religion in the public sphere. Nationalism is considered support for religion through its pluralistic accommodation rather than its

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opposite. The United States, where religion is not the basis for the constitutional order, but neither was it ignored nor opposed, is given as an example of "civil-religious nationalism". Israel, which declares itself as a "Jewish and democratic state" in its constitution, is shown as another example of this form of nationalism disputably because "the state recognizes multiple religious traditions".

Greece and Malaysia illustrate "the stable and unstable types of religious nationalism," respectively, where ideological and institutional connections exist between the state and a particular religion. While Greece is religiously more homogeneous, making it stable, Malaysia is religiously diverse with a dominant religious tradition, making it unstable. The constitutional order in both countries is associated with the main religious tradition, Christian Orthodox and ıslam, respectively. Finally, Uruguay and India represent the opposing end of the spectrum, namely, secular nationalism, which separates religion from the state minimizing formal institutional links. Another controversial result of this model is that Turkey's secular nationalism was challenged by Islamic politicians and religious leaders who desired to forge strong connections between religion and the state both ideologically and institutionally. Soper & Fetzer concludes,

> As Turkey democratized, a market emerged for religious nationalism and political leaders forged strategic alliances with religious leaders that undermined the state's commitment to secular nationalism. The result in Turkey and in India, therefore, is that the secular nationalism forged at each country's founding is in the process of transitioning to religious nationalism (Ibid.: 21).

The question of how secular or how religious Turkish nationalism is, in essence, is a very controversial issue. Nonetheless, I find both Rieffer and Soper&Fetzer's treatment of secular and religious (symbiotic) forms of nationalism as explicitly separable and standing as opposites to each other problematic. As an essentially secular consciousness, nationalism may have secularizing effects on political thought and life patterns, convincing people in a particular society that religion alone is hardly persuasive for survival. In other words, the group does not link faith with the survival of the ethnic community or the concern for dignity despite a shared allegiance to a set of religious values and

practices. It is, of course, related to the continuing trend of the secularization of politics. As Juergensmeyer has ironically noted, some secular forms of nationalism are "becoming more religious" (Juergensmeyer, 1995:383) without significant changes in the general social structure and the political system. Secular nationalisms, all too often, prefer a more accommodative and inclusive interaction with religion. Moreover, Soper's analysis does not explain stateless nationalist movements like Kurdish nationalism, as it examines state-based nationalism through institutions. Is it adequate to claim whether a state is secular or religiously nationalist by investigating the constitutional status of religion? The constitution is the body of the nation, but not the soul. More importantly, no formal constitutions accurately give the whole story, perhaps indicating at most one aspect. Yet, national movements and states are dynamic actors that give additional meanings to religion in the Durkheimian sense. Accordingly, religion has ontologically no value in itself and is beneficial to the extent that it coordinates with the interests of a particular society. In this respect, it is a collective enterprise about the profane.

On the other hand, some other scholars claim that although many identity conflicts do not appear primarily religious per se, they may have latent sacred dimensions that can become reactivated over time. In other words, religion does not simply act as an "instrument of mobilization" to support the national cause. While ethnic entrepreneurs use or instrumentalize religion, religious dimensions of ethnic identity are reactivated. Protestant identity in Northern Ireland suits this pattern by which Protestants do not simply utilize the Protestant faith and moral values to support their identity. They also reformulate "group belonging" through Protestantism, and thereby a dynamic two-way communication arises between religious and ethnic identity so that each activates the other. In this way, ethnic identity is reconfiguring with which religion plays a dynamic role to help "Protestant political superiority in Northern Ireland"

(Mitchell, 2006) Mitchel concludes that religion has predominantly been characterized either "as an ethnic marker" that neglects substantive content of

religion or "as something that supports the primary category of ethnicity" that downplays the role of religion in constituting ethnicity. Instead, religion often "constitutes the fabric of ethnic identity" or the way round. In short, a two-way causal interaction occurs between faith and ethnic identity so that each constitutes and stimulates the other. Religion does not simply function as an ethnic marker nor play a supporting role to unite the population in the national cause to help ethnic entrepreneurs.

Overemphasis on religion's legitimizing and sacralizing role pays much attention to the instrumental and interest-based relationship between faith and ethnicity, missing its constitutive effects in the construction of nationalism.

4.4.4. Is Nationalism a kind of religion?

A third approach to the relationship between religion and nationalism is associated with scholars who take nationalism as a religion, implying to "Durkheim's symbolic functionalism". According to this view, religious institutions were able to meet human beings' social and political needs in pre-modern societies. When it comes to modern times, these human needs and the "need for order" could not be satisfied by the religious world image that had to be replaced by nationalism, making it fundamentally a form of religion. As one of the most ardent proponents of nationalism as a religion, Carlton Hayes noted that "nationalism has a large number of particularly quarrelsome sects, but as a whole, it is the latest and nearest approach to a world religion" (Hayes, 1926, quoted in Asad 2003:187). This view ironically conflates the dichotomy between "the realm of the sacred" and that of the profane, which Durkheim did. Although analytically distinct categories, the religious and the secular image of reality resemble each other (Eastwood & Prevalakis, 2010:97). Based on Durkheim's definition of religion, " a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things…beliefs and practices which unite into one single community", Smith argues that nationalism can be regarded as "a particular form of religion". The nation amounts to "a sacred communion of citizens, a felt

and willed communion of those who assert a particular moral faith and feel an ancestral affinity" (Smith, 2000:792). Like religion, nationalism consists of "a moral community of believers" through collective rites that focus on sacred images and objects such as homeland, flag, and anthem. If one adopts a functional approach to religion, Smith suggests, the nation may be seen as an imagined community of the faithful to the nation.

To recall Weber, collective action and thus "change" comes through the substantive meaning of religion, with a motion from the spiritual to the material and from the material to the spiritual. In contrast, it takes place in a context where the society itself gives meaning to the religious beliefs and practices in the Durkheimian approach. That is to say, religion derives its strength from its ability to be used as a material force. Smith is correct in declaring that the "Durkheimian symbolist approach" brings us to uncover "the sacred properties of the nation," that is, how religious traditions create national mobilization and solidarity among those with the same values and objectives. Nevertheless, while Smith embraces this perspective to explain the "politicization of religion" or the influence of religious motifs, ceremonies, and traditions on modern national identity, he also acknowledges that "nationalism is wholly in and of this world, a secular and anthropocentric ideology of national autonomy, unity, and identity" (Ibid.:796-797). Although national elites often employ the prestige of religion in pursuit of their own political goals, the ideological blueprint of national consciousness remains essentially a secular ideology. As Kedourie indicates, "a secular doctrine of self-determination" is primarily rooted in nationalism, eventually making it an ideology (Kedourie, 1996).

While I agree with Durkheim, Kedourie, Greenfeld and Smith standing firm on the argument that secular consciousness constitutes the origin and very nature of nationalism, I do not attempt to pursue a generally mechanical, materialist view of religion. Even though religion is "a collective enterprise" at the level of social structure in many ways, it has a metaphysical core at the level of consciousness,

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that is, the belief. There is no religion without belief, but religion is not just about the faith. Religion is and historically has been vital for social change.

Religion, by definition, provides explanations about human nature and the ultimate meaning of the world based on supernatural assumptions (Stark, Hamberg & Miller, 2005). For example, the belief that a Supreme God has created and sustained the cosmos and "the belief in an afterlife" in three great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, offers believers ontological meanings to orient their existence. As the autonomous but not independent realm of social life, religion has particular doctrinal teachings and moral orientations to explain and justify circumstances and events. It concerns itself with substantive and procedural (social) aspects of reality. In other words, there is no clear distinction between the profane and the sacred. Furthermore, each religion has particular changeless essence, such as good versus evil, right versus wrong, the belief in the afterlife, etc. By this, I do not mean religious practices or rituals. What I mean is the premises on which religion is established. To illustrate more specifically, divine unity (tawhid), prophethood (nubuwwah), resurrection afterlife in Islam, Trinity and Incarnation in Christianity, "unlimited tolerance," and "God is ideal" in Hinduism are such examples. Despite having a theological spirit, religion may manifest itself with various interpretations through diverse influences of cultural effects on theology. In this study, I claim that religion includes a divine essence enabling human beings to make sense of the physical world's complexity and explain what is happening, while nationalism lacks this transcendental orientation.

The temptation to treat nationalism as a kind of religion, however, leaves no room for "a divine contact" between God and human beings since the image of God is, indeed, a projection and expression of society. This view fails to grasp the current forms of the intricate relationship between religion and nationalism as it takes the two phenomena to be mutually exclusive. It is unable to provide a substantive conceptualization of religion and categorization of the diverse types of interactions between the two phenomena. Another problem with this approach

is that "the sacralization of the secular" through national identity does not necessarily lead to the interdependence of secular and religious elements or undermine the multiple consciousnesses of religious believers. It thus overlooks the secular idea of progress in "the structure of collective representations" (Asad, 2003:194). Last but not least, although it is tempting to see "nationalism as a religion" for its sacralization of "the popular sovereignty" rather than divine sovereignty, the two phenomena are not interchangeable. Even in pre-modern times, God's sovereignty did not exist single-handedly but was accompanied or at least represented by the kingdoms and dynasties. In addition to this, overarching and transnational aspects of religion that enable adherents to go beyond the boundaries of a particular culture make religion more inclusive. National identity, on the contrary, exclusively tends to lean on tangible characteristics such as culture and language.

4.5. Conclusion

While religion and nationalism exist as two rival order-creating systems in a competitive form of relationship, they also correspond to the complementary or intertwined collective consciousness in some social structures. The association between the two reflects both cleavage and synthesis. Many scholars have tended to focus on symbiotic forms of religion and nationalism in which one reinforces the other. There also, however, occurs the opposite process, namely, the non-symbiotic-tendency model in which the two phenomena have an antagonistic connection. Thus, I mainly focused on the contending and compromising interplay between religion and nationalism. First, religion and nationalism, by their very nature, have been mutually exclusive and competitive due to their incompatible characteristics. In other words, religious loyalty prevents the people from pursuing a national cause. Religion and nationalism are thus equivalent in terms of their claims, namely, "the search for order." They are, therefore, alternative ideological hypotheses to each other. Drawing on the distinction between religion and nationalism as competing ideologies of order-creating systems and Friedland and Brubaker's categorization of religious

nationalism "as a distinctive kind of nationalism," I claimed that the primary political goal of religious nationalism is to promote a social order based on religious doctrine. Then, it aims to establish a political order within and without including trans-national supra-ethnic characteristics beyond the nation-state system. This definition makes religion the primary impetus for mobilization, aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a competitive model rather than the nation. On the other hand, religion and nationalism can co-exist in a symbiotic or intertwined relationship in such a manner that allows religious and national identities to be overlapping as a combination of the two. I prefer to use the term "religious nationalism" in a symbiotic sense to the effect that religion and nationalism are intertwined and dependent on each other. In a way, religious nationalism equates "religious identity with national self-consciousness," combining their respective allegiances. This definition, in general, makes the nation, rather than religion itself, an essential source of mobilization, political aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a symbiotic model. The ideological blueprint of national consciousness, however, remains essentially secular in this configuration, despite high levels of religious accommodation. Religious engagement of a community does not ultimately amount to a full retreat of secularism but incorporates somewhat religious superficiality. If anything, nationalism has clear secularizing impacts on thought and life patterns, convincing the group members that religion alone falls short of the survival and interest of the ethnic community.

CHAPTER 5

THE COMPETITIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISLAM AND KURDISH NATIONALISM

5.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to offer some reflections on Muslim Kurds' position vis-à-vis Kurdish national cause. The central question around which the relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationalism revolves is whether pious Muslim communities support, oppose, or are indifferent to the idea of nationalism. To answer this question, I shall now look at the perception of self-consciousness, core motivations for collective actions, and political goals and aspirations, despite the difficulties in measuring. Whether or not there is a dichotomy between nationalism and Islam remains a matter of concern that confuses not only Turkish Islamic circles but also Kurdish ones. My purpose in this chapter is to clarify how Islam has discouraged ethnic consciousness from turning into a national one and promoted a supra-ethnic identity that crosses over ethnic boundaries. The first section deals with the pious Kurds' view on self-consciousness, accompanied by the question that does Islam remain influential in constructing identity formation and mobilizing its followers around the imagined community. Given the definition of nationalism as a doctrine with the emancipatory or hegemonic aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups based on collective action for political purposes, whether nationality or religiosity impacts political mobilization in the Kurdish public sphere allows us to focus our attention on the cognitive dimension of nationhood.

The discourse of the Islamic Brotherhood deserves particular interest, for Islam does not merely correspond to subliminal consciousness metaphysically imagined but also indicates consciousness directed towards creating social and

political order. Islam is a religion with political purposes. Therefore, we see an ideological conflict between loyalty to the modern conception of the nation and nationalism and the transnational claims of Islam. In this view, nationalism requires essentially secular consciousness and cannot find an accommodation with Islam. How Muslim nationalists look at the Kurdish issue is limited to a matter of equal citizenship to a large extent, rather than political status-claiming emancipation, thereby leaving no room for an ethnopolitical definition for Kurdish nationalism. I will also discuss why Kurds who are devoted to Muslim nationalism do not accommodate the discourse of the national unity of the Kurds in the public sphere and do not actively participate in or remain indifferent to what is happening in the Kurdish geopolitics, particularly in Syria and Iraq. Last but not least, I will examine how Islam as an order-creating system has cultivated a transnational discourse and political aspirations that transcends "the claims of national sovereignty".

5.2. Muslim Nationalism (Ummah) vs Kurdish Nationalism

Thus far, I have tried to shed light on the theoretical implications, and now it is time to look at our empirical case, that is, Islam's relationship with Kurdish nationalism. The existing literature on Kurdish nationalism has little to say about the success of the discourse of Islamic brotherhood and Islamic political mobilization in suppressing national sentiments among Muslim Kurds in Turkey. The long-standing Kurdish support for Islamic organizations and Islam-influenced political parties has not been thoroughly analyzed through original empirical research. Some studies point to the drastic decrease of Kurdish votes of the ruling (so-called Islamic) AKP government through electoral performances (Günay&Yörük, 2019), while others indicate the declining effect of Islamic brotherhood among Kurds (Sarigil&Fazlioglu, 2013; Gurses, 2015; Türkmen, 2021) or see Islam as a medium of internal colonialism on Kurds (Kurt, 2019). In this section, I somewhat differ from these studies. For instance, my findings partially vindicate the Türkmen's findings that religion could not bridge between Sunni Muslim Kurds and Turks while somewhat rebutting on the

other hand. I argue that Islamic circles in the Kurdish community are diverse and not monolithic. Religion still serves as a unifying function for some who mobilize with Turkish Muslims under the Islamic moral system. In contrast, it ceases to be a hindering element on the route to Kurdish nationhood for some others.

As Aytürk rightly notes for Turkish Islamic circles, "whether or not there is a contradiction between nationalism and Islam has been a theological question that has occupied and divided" religious segments of the population (Aytürk, 2014:694); it remains a current topic that confuses not only Turkish Islamic communities but also Kurdish Muslim ones. The confrontation between the universalism of Islam and the particularities of Arab nationalism/ pan-Arabism has also been a significant focus of interest for some scholars of the Middle East and Islam (Tibi, 1997). In the preceding chapter, I have formulated the competitive relationship between religion and nationalism based on political consciousness oriented towards collective action, thus an image of society, refers to the fundamental tenets of "religion" as an order-creating system rather than the nation. In doing so, I will look at the political consciousness, core motivations for collective action, goals, and aspirations of elites in the Kurdish Islamic circles, despite the difficulties in measuring. Their attitudes towards Islam and the idea of the Kurdish nation and nationalism reflect the extent to which their political orientation rests on religion or nationalism. The two phenomena appear to be mutually exclusive because of their conflicting properties. The Sunni branch of Islam is related to my field of study.

5.3. The View on Self-Consciousness

An individual has many identities, such as religious, gender, class, occupational, ethnic, and national, to define his/her position in the social world. All forms of identities are not static but may vary and change over time or be reconfigured hierarchically. Not only a person but also human groups have been exposed to identity transformations through the constant process of identity formation that

has been occupied with some ontological questions as follows: Who am I? What should I do? Where do I belong?. First and foremost, I argue that our social identities often generate collective action motivated and sustained by our political loyalties.A person's quest for self-awareness, I suppose, revolves around the ordering between a fundamental identity that characterizes the very essence of the individual and other identities which are regarded as secondary or nonessentials (Greenfeld, 1996a). In other words, there is a strong correlation between the fundamental identity and "the sense of dignity". Then one must recognize that the more a fundamental identity is pertinent to the dignity, the more it is tied to a political cause. The concern for dignity" inevitably reflects "the perception of threat", which lies at the basis of the sense of belonging and collective solidarity. When a threat emerges, "individuals perceive their ingroup as more homogeneous and the self as more similar to the ingroup and more different from the outgroup" (Roccas & Brewer, 2002:99). In this sense, Islam still has a claim to constructing identity formation and mobilizes some of its followers' need for dignity around "the concept of the Muslim ummah". Whether nationality or religiosity promises more dignity in the Kurdish context has to do with the mobilization of Muslim Kurds against the perceived threat.

Almost all who define themselves as Muslim Kurds I interviewed frame religious identity as "a matter of individual choice," commitment, and obligation while considering ethnic identity as "a matter of biology" about human nature, utterly independent of religious beliefs. Some of them, however, distinguish between ethnic and national loyalties, which confirms my earlier conclusion that nationalism is a political doctrine with an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups based on collective action for political purposes. As Hastings has argued, a nation is "a far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity" because it possesses or claims "the right to political identity" and "autonomy as a people," together with the control of specific territory (Hastings, 1997). Kedourie's view of self-determination in the Kantian sense is also relevant to my definition of nationalism because he regards nationalism as a self-conscious community to attain its political claims (Kedourie, 1996). Although

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some interviewees regard themselves as an ethnically identifiable community, they do not make any political reference to Kurdishness.

If anything, Islam constitutes the framework of their political consciousness" and "the core motivation of collective action" rather than Kurdish national identification. Tayyip Elçi, a Naqshbandi cleric who is also the head of the Madrasah Scholars Foundation (MEDAV) in Diyarbakir, responds to the following questions: Do you define yourself first as a Muslim or as a Kurd? Does Islamic or Kurdish identity come first for you? Which is your primary identity?

> Allah has created me as a Kurd, so I do not consider myself inferior or superior to others. If my Kurdishness pushes me to see myself as superior to others, that would be racism anyway, and if I feel inferior, a second mistake will occur, such as not consenting to God's will. Being Kurdish is a requirement of my nature, and it is not my choice, whereas being a Muslim is one's own choice. It is out of the question that religious and ethnic identities neither favor nor contradict each other. One is an identity given to me by Allah, which comes from my natural disposition, which I am proud of, and the other is a choice I made with my free will, even though I found it ready in the social environment I was born in.

Of course, there seems to be no conflict between Kurdish ethnicity and Islamic identity in this hypothesis, but Kurdishness has no clear political attribution, mainly referring to the cultural traits. Although Islam does not impose a crystallized cultural homogeneity on ethnic groups, its aspiration of creating a society (mefkûre) may have rightly motivated the political action of those who pursue faith-based goals and ideals even in the age of nationalism. "Which identity do you think is under more threat?" I keep asking.

> My main task and primary goal are to serve my religion and win Allah's approval. As a result, the believer has to act focused on the hereafter. But this does not prevent me from defending the rights of the oppressed, and it is also a part of my doing a service to Islam.

Abdulkadir Turan, an intellectual affiliated with the Hudapar (The Free Cause Party) circles, adopts a more explicitly anti-national position.

> When asked who I am, I consider my religious identity far above my ethnic one. However, I find it weird that my ethnic identity is denied and covered up.

Murat Koç, head of Özgürder's (The Free Thought and Educational Rights Society) Diyarbakır branch, says similar things.

> First of all, I identify myself as a Muslim. I am a Muslim despite all my imperfections, weaknesses, and sins. Of course, I'm Kurdish, too. My priority is, however, my Islamic identity. Above all, I am a Muslim Kurd, a Muslim doctor, and a Muslim father.

What I have observed in some Islamic circles is not the dual commitment to the Islamic faith and Kurdish nationalism but rather a clear anti-national orientation. Nationalism, in its broadest sense, is supposed to encompass national consciousness and collective action based on the principle of nationality. They consistently imply that nationalism has been a secular form of consciousness that "sacralizes the secular". Thus the primary perceived threats are secular organisms, be it Kurdish, Turkish, or Arabic nationalism. The otherized subject or the rival is not a collective Turkish identity but a secular Turkish and even secular Kurdish one. Secular nationalism and its so-called illegitimate offspring - the nation-state - have posed significant ideological threats to the unity of Muslims. Abdurrahman Arslan, who is a staunch critic of secular modernity and a prominent figure among Islamic circles, lucidly argues that

> My belonging to an ethnic community does not give me a worldview and cannot affect how I live or think. Moreover, there is no political thought peculiar to Turks or Kurds. Ethnic markers can only be carriers of religious belief, whether Islam, Shamanism, or Zoroastrianism. Religion gives me the ability to understand and make sense of the world. Ethnic identity, on the other hand, does not allow me to make sense of the world. How can a biological marker do so? Islam can provide me with this opportunity, so my priority is, for sure, my religious identity. I make sense of the world through my religion. Again, religion and the nation are eventually contradicting elements and structures. For example, the expression that a nation will live forever is extremely annoying. In my opinion, no creator or community has eternity.

Arslan seems to regard ethnic identity as "a matter of biology". Although biological and cultural factors such as ethnicity, language, and sometimes even

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religion comprise different aspects of the nation, the doctrine of nationalism is more than these. National identity may require some tangible characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, language, etc., yet its essential component is self-consciousness or self-awareness. My theoretical frame of nationalism is therefore based on self-consciousness. However, modern theories of nationalism pay little attention to intangible characteristics. Instead of adopting an objectivist definition, I have embraced nationalism as a political doctrine with an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups based on collective action for political purposes. The most distinctive feature of nationalism or "the essence of the nation", as Connor pointed out, is "a matter of self-awareness or self-consciousness" (Connor, 1978:389). The tangible characteristics such as language and religion may, at most, become complementary elements, while self-consciousness is the most crucial part of the nation. Drawing on Connor's emphasis on the intangible dimension of the nation, I assert that we cannot speak of nationalism if the ultimate source of social mobilization is not national awareness or if self-consciousness exists without political mobilization and collective action.

Renan's main focal point was "the will", too. Nationalism, be it modern or primordial, ethnosymbolist or post-modern, is essentially a doctrine of self-determination or self-realization, thus an emancipatory aspiration from all forms of political oppression of the other. In his own words, "there is something in man which is superior to language, namely, the will" (Renan, 1996: 50), even though he does not sufficiently explain how, when and under what conditions the will of the members of a nation emerges. Cultural components are, on their own, insufficient to constitute a nation despite being perhaps one of the most critical parts of national identity. Müfid Yüksel, an independent researcher and the son of the renowned Kurdish Islamic scholar Mele Sadreddin Yüksel, objects to the characterization of the antagonistic relationship between ethnic identity and Islam. His views, however, vindicate my claim that Kurdishness, which has a competitive relationship with Islam, is not politically driven and does not rightly motivate political action.

> There is no such a relationship. The Islamic circles, for example, have protected the Kurdish language and culture more than secular ones. Ethnic belonging must, however, be at the folkloric and cultural level. I think this is the main issue. If you create ideological consciousness from your ethnic identity, it is something different and constructed, which I disapprove of.

However, a nation is "a far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity", and the phenomenon we call nationalism necessarily requires an ideological formation. In this sense, religion and nationalism are inescapable ideological alternatives. Suat Yaşasın, Deputy Chairman of İttihad-ul Ulema (Union of Islamic Scholars) linked with Hüda-Par circles, plainly explains the boundaries of ethnic identity and hints that ethnically consciousness of a group of people does not necessarily convey political implications.

> There is an approach among the madrasah-based ulama class that puts the ummah ahead of the nation. Since I come from the same tradition, I did not experience such a problem. One must not forget that the Kurdish language and culture have been preserved in the madrasah. The lectures are still given in Kurdish. Considerable attention has been paid to the use of local languages. An individual who grows up and receives Islamic education in the madrasa culture knows that he is Kurdish and speaks Kurdish. Yet it is just limited to knowing what ethnicity you belong to, not more. You do not give an extra value or political attribution to your ethnic identity.

Today, it is highly controversial that the medium of instruction in madrasahs in the Kurdish-populated region is Kurdish along with Arabic. Even in the madrasah to which Yaşasın is affiliated, the exams given to the students under the placement test and the madrasah completion examinations in 2022 are Turkish.[11] Based on my long observations in the field, I can say that it is difficult to claim that madrasas are places where the Kurdish language is preserved and developed. In another madrasah whose name I do not want to give, I came across a lecture by an elderly mudarris (a madrasah scholar) to two young and middle-aged people on "the etymological differences between şükür (gratitude) and hamd" (blessing). The lecture was totally in Turkish. The listeners did not ask

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[11] For the placement test, see https://ittihadululema.org/31-mayis-2022-sts-soru-kitapcigi-ve-cevap-anahtari-yayinlandi/. For the madrasah completion exam, see https://ittihadululema.org/22-haziran-2022-tmbs-soru-kitapcigi-ve-cevap-anahtari/ .

any questions during the lesson. It was a lesson that lasted about 20 minutes. It was clear from his Turkish accent that the mudarris was Kurdish. However, interestingly, he was teaching the class in fluent Turkish, albeit with an accent, which shows that he was familiar with teaching Turkish. Abdulhakim Beyazyüz, an Özgür-der affiliated intellectual, embraces an attitude that prioritizes Islamic identity on the one hand and makes a realistic assessment on the other.

> My Islamic identity is very clearly and unequivocally ahead of my ethnic identity. Islam is decisive in my worldview in all aspects. However, I have recently undergone a significant change in the ideal of Islamic brotherhood. Previously, I was more committed to the ideal project of an Islamic state, thinking that it would come and solve all of our problems. But then I got to the point that even the most excellent doctrines may not be able to be enforced thoroughly in the hands of human beings. Again, I am still committed to the principle of Islamic brotherhood at the doctrinal level.

Maruf Çelik, the head of Davet ve Kardeşlik Vakfı (Invitation and Brotherhood Foundation), affiliated with the Jama'at al- Ikhwan al-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood), points to the overarching role of Islamic identity while disapproving of the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood.

> In my opinion, Islamic identity encompasses all areas of a person's life, while all other identities must also exist within it. My Islamic affiliation incorporates my ethnic one. I do not, however, find my ethnic belonging as nationalism-oriented.

Ömer Vehbi Hatipoğlu, who originally comes from Necmettin Erbakan's Milli Görüş Movement (National View) and has done considerable research on the Kurdish Question, also takes priority over all other identities he retains. Muslim nationalism is expressed very clearly and embodied in his ideas.

> My primary emphasis has always been my Islamic consciousness and Islamic values. I consider a Muslim person as a brother without questioning all other identities because Allah has declared me as a brother to all Muslims in the Quran. Moreover, I do not have the right to choose my family, relatives, and ethnic origin, but I have the right to single out my fellows for a common cause. What and whom I have chosen of my own will is always more valuable than what and whom are bestowed upon me out of my choice. I am, of course, delighted and proud of my ethnic identity, but I do not take it as a reference when it comes to shaping my worldview.

Religion here acts as a worldview that provides its believers ontological meanings to orient their existence and offers a political frame of reference by which they can navigate a complicated world. Muhammed Emin Yıldırım, the founder of the Siyer Foundation, suggests a hierarchical relationship between religious and ethnic identity, stressing that Islam never contradicts other belongings an individual maintains.

> I define myself first as a Muslim and then as a Kurd. I believe my faith constitutes my fundamental identity. But I do not think my belief requires me not to see, deny or suppress my ethnic identity. This is how I understand the Prophet's calling Suheyb as Rumi, Bilal as Abyssinian, and Salman as Persian. Languages and colors are the verses of Allah. The refusal of a race or ethnicity means the denial of Allah's verses. But after all, my primary identity is Muslim. Ethnic belonging comes after that and is just the motivation for meeting distinct groups.

Another interviewee rightly criticizes the persistence and durability of ethnic ties, pointing to the constantly shaping of ethnic consciousness,

> People are, of course, born with a specific ethnic identity. You can change your religion whenever you want, but it is more difficult to change your ethnic essence. Therefore, ethnic identity is more primordial. But just because it has existed for a long time doesn't mean that it has not changed. It has also changed with wars and occupations and has not remained intact, mixing with other elements.

This view confirms Kedourie's belief in the mutability of ethnic and national affiliation.

> the historical record indicates that ethnic identity is not an inert and stable object. It has over the centuries, proved to be highly plastic and fluid, and subject to far-reaching changes and revolutions…Thus, for instance, the pagan Roman citizen of North Africa becomes, through his biological descendant, the Christian subject of a Christian emperor; then a member of the Muslim umma, and today perhaps a citizen of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria or the Libyan Jamahiriya (Kedourie,1993:141).

As is seen, ethnically self-consciousness of a human group is not adequate for nationhood because a nation amounts to "a far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity". Nationhood claims "the right to political identity" and

"autonomy as a people," together with the control of specific territory (Hastings, 1997:3). Nationalism virtually adds up to the political aspiration for the sovereignty of a national group over a particular territory it considers to be its homeland. It is primarily rooted in demographic homogeneity so that a group of people demarcated along territorial and cultural lines desires to have their political unit. At this point, I would like to reiterate that I have explained nationalism as a political doctrine oriented towards the emancipation or hegemony of self-conscious ethnic groups into political claims. Islamic belief influences the identity formation of the Kurdish population playing a universalizing role by diminishing the salience of ethnic identity in favor of a religious one. In this view, ethnic identity equates with cultural identity and has no political implications. Cultural affiliations are seen as the continuation of biological characteristics. More importantly, the other does not correspond to a collective Turkish identity but secular Turkish and even secular Kurdish one.

5.3.1. The Prevalence of Islamic Brotherhood

Islam is "a system for ordering the world" in the Weberian sense as an autonomous but not independent realm of social life. It has a particular moral orientation and doctrinal teachings to explain and justify circumstances and the world. In other words, there is no Islam without belief, but Islam is not just about faith. In this regard, it shuttles between this world and the afterworld. Islamic identity does not merely correspond to subliminal consciousness metaphysically imagined but also indicates consciousness aimed at creating a social and political order among human groups. The imagination of being Muslim as a civilizational identity and the perception of Sunni Muslims as a monolithic community lies behind this religious world image, or what is called the idea of Muslim nationalism. I have previously described Muslim nationalism as an ideology of a self-conscious religious people enormously affected by Islamic doctrine with an emancipatory aspiration based on collective action for political purposes. It affects a significant segment of the Kurdish population at the level of consciousness and collective action.

Muslim nationalism merges Muslim identity with ethnic identity under the umbrella of Islamic civilization. That is to say, to be Kurd is to be a Muslim. Muslim nationalism does not merge Muslim identity with national cause within this framework. To be Muslim comes first, then ethnic identification with no political aspiration. In this view, Islamic brotherhood is presented as an antidote to the degeneration of modernity and the problems raised by all ideological isms, such as socialism, communism, capitalism, and secular nationalism, regardless of Turkish, Arabic, or Kurdish nationalism, but ironically it does not see itself as an ideology. Zubaida stresses the sentiment and rhetoric widely shared by Muslim circles that Islam is under attack from "a totalized hostile West," which is thought to divide and weaken the ummah. External interventions in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kashmir, Bosnia, and Chechenia exemplify this hostility. (Zubaida, 2004). Secular nationalism and its so-called illegitimate offspring - the nation-state - have threatened the unity of Muslims as long as they are the dominant paradigm.

Yet, the discussions on the relationship between Islam as an order-creating system and the images of nation or nationalism are not new. A century ago, these discussions were held by some prominent figures such as Jamal- ad-Din Afghani, Abd- al Rahman Kawakibi, and Babanzade Ahmed Naim. The fact that the controversial debates are still being held today reveals the actuality of the issue implying that there can be ontological rivalry between the two concepts. In the early years of the 20th century, Babanzade, for example, fervently believed that the only bond that holds Muslim nations together is Islamic brotherhood through creating a faithful community. For him, it is equally necessary to put theory into practice to strengthen this brotherhood. Babanzâde, in his article titled "Da'vâ-yı Kavmiyet in Islam," published in Sebilürreşad in 1914, claims that Islam rejects leading the national causes (Babanzade, 1916). In his view, the ideal of "Islamic brotherhood" is believed to function as the glue that holds Kurdishness and Turkishness within the framework of the ummah. Abdulillah Fırat, the grandson of Sheikh Said, makes a similar definition of this ideal,

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The principle that all Muslims are brothers must lie at the root of political and social ties among Muslims. God says the believers are but one brotherhood, so you should make peace between your brothers. The brotherhood means the ummah. It refers to the nation of Islam and marks itself as a single nation, not as different. Therefore, we must unite on the nation of Islam and never distract from it.

Fırat here gives a clear definition of Muslim nationalism that serves as a distinctive nationalism. The competitive model between religion and nationalism in which the two have mutually exclusive goals contradicting order-creating systems seems to fit well into "Muslim nationalism" or "Muslim trans-nationalism". Nurettin Zeybek from the Ihvan- Der "the Association for Wisdom, Moral and Brotherhood" implies the moral and political primacy of Islamic identity over ethnic or national consciousness.

An individual retains various identities, such as clan, tribal and ethnic ones. Our real sense of belonging is the Islamic brotherhood which is superior to all our other identities. It does not, of course, imply that we forget our ethnic identity. The Islamic bond is the fundamental identity that merges us all in one pot. Our priority is always Islamic brotherhood.

Yet the idea of the Islamic Brotherhood is not free of difficulties. Vahdettin Kaya, the director of the Kurdish Issue department at İHH (Humanitarian Relief Foundation) and still an ardent supporter of the Islamic brotherhood, highlights the complexity to re-establish the brotherhood without losing his hope. He concludes that the actors, not the idea of the Islamic brotherhood, have lost their convincingness and credibility.

The rhetoric of Muslim brotherhood has been unfortunately eviscerated. After all, Islamic brotherhood does not lose its significance because it is eternal and the order of Allah. But it has dwindled when someone uses it for their purposes and interests. When we say we are brothers to someone, he rightly answers that if we are going to be brothers and sisters, we must first be equal. This is the real brotherhood. Of course, if this does not happen, the rhetoric and politics of brotherhood are circulated. The concept has thus been eviscerated. What's more, no matter who comes out with the claim that "we will bring the Muslim brotherhood and society together" today, I don't think they have too much power to do this.

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Nevertheless, Muslim Kurds' emphasis on the true Islamic brotherhood is, I suppose, more robust than many other Muslim communities who were long subjected to Western colonialism or under non-Islamic affiliated rules. It has distinctively anti-national orientations, sometimes even anti-ethnic tones. In the modern sense, anti-colonialism or anti-imperialism lies at the basis of "Muslim nationalism," which Turkish Muslims lack such an experience. Historically, the re-configuration of the ummah was backed mainly by the Muslim anti-colonial struggle that shaped Muslim self-perception and enabled the adherents to perceive the entire Muslim world as a unified religiopolitical community vis-à-vis the colonial West, with its ties to Christendom (Soleimani, 2016:35). If anything, Turkey was established on the remnants of the Ottoman Empire that had an imperial vision extending its rule across the Arab world and into Eastern Europe until its collapse after the First World War (Moghadam & Mitra, 2014:153). Since Turkey's Muslims do not have a long-standing anti-colonial struggle, the sentiment of Muslim nationalism remains superficial and is stuck on constructing "the other".

"The characterization of the other" through the intrinsic hostility of the West to Muslim unity remains weak despite the wars with the West in history. In contrast, Muslim nationalism in Egypt, Iraq, and Palestine is more authentic based on the substantial colonial experience. The construction of Muslim nationalism in Turkey has been directly linked with Abdulhamid II's Ittihad-i Islam (the unity of Muslims) efforts to mobilize Muslim solidarity under the leadership of Muslim Turks to reinvigorate the Ottoman state, and it is still uncertain whether this policy constituted the fostering of an Ottoman-Muslim nationalism or instead a kind of proto-nationalism (Zürcher, 2014:275). For Yavuz, Abdulhamid II sought to create a political consciousness of a collective goal and sense of unity" through the adoption of pan-islamic ideology in the face of threats from within and without. Islam, in practice, "was subordinate to the state and acted primarily as a shield for its preservation" (Yavuz, 2011:34). "The definition of us and the other" along religious lines was central to Ittihad-ı İslam, particularly with strong anti-imperial, anti-Greek, and anti-Armenian

feelings. As Zürcher implies, although it reached its apogee under the reign of Abdulhamid II, its influence has continued among the non-secular segments of Turkish society during the Republican period. The strong political commitment to Islam and the sentiment that compartmentalization around micro-national identities will harm Islam has been the leading motivation behind the Islamic idea of unity being widespread and intense among the Kurds. It is such an optimistic belief that while it sees the national tendencies of the community with which it cohabits as an incidental quality, it is normatively conditioned that the primary orientation of the overwhelming majority is still Islamic creeds. According to one of the attendees,

> There is a strong belief in Muslim unity in most parts of Anatolia. You won't find widespread nationalist feelings around there. The most powerful bond between Kurds and Turks is Islam. If you are a pious Muslim, you will see that you have something in common and are fused. I even stayed side by side with very rigid Turkish nationalist families whose members are active politicians in the MHP (Nationalist Movement Party). I have never felt the need to disguise my identity. You come together much more quickly over the Islamic identity. On the other hand, many leftist national sections make a hierarchical stratification in the context of national identification (here underlines disintegration with those who are secular or not Islamic).

What Kurdish Muslim nationalists cannot name is, in fact, something like Ottoman-Muslim nationalism. It is not new and has also existed in history. During the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, some Kurdish groups, even those who identified themselves as nationalists, in reality, pushed for a more inclusive and non-nationalist state that embraced the multiple groups within its borders (Klein, 2007:147). Some Kurdish movements did not own nationalist aspirations in classical terms. Klein calls these groups non-nationalist Kurdish movements. For my part, they represented the branch of Muslim nationalism. The dream of a political community where Muslim ethnic groups were perceived as the fundamental element and non-Muslim elements (Greeks, Armenians, Assyrians etc.) were recognized as "the other" lies behind Muslim nationalism. It was an aspiration based on shared Muslim identity and mobilization. Some Kurdish organizations now have a vision similar to the Abdulhamid era. As Renan

maintained in 1882, Ottoman Empire did not seem to fit the Western model of the nation due to a lack of fusion among its ethnic elements. It is, of course, not possible to claim that the Ottomans lacked unity if there was no fusion between its components. If Ottoman Empire was not, in the modern sense, a nationalistic state, what was it like to be? What was the cohesive bond that provides identity to members of ethnically distinct populations in Ottoman territorial sovereignty? Islam was frequently employed as a coherent social force to unify different groups of people, excluding non-muslims. For the Ottoman Turkish elites, Islam acted as an institution to re-establish hegemony over other Muslim ethnic groups. It classically represented the Durkheimian approach to religion that derives its strength from its ability to be used as a material force. The idea of Muslim nationalism was promoted by integrating religiously homogeneous ethnic groups into the Ottoman system when the need to create order and unity became paramount, particularly in the 19th and 20th centuries. Islam was explicitly an apparatus of collective action in the Durkheimian sense regarding its functional ability to bind people together. Those who remained out of the Muslim ummah had no other choice but to comply with political and social order reinforced by religious values, taking advantage of limited freedom and tolerance.

Kurds advocating Muslim nationalism articulate a consciousness of ummah based on the Quran, the Sunna, and hadiths (records of the saying and doings of the Prophet), which provides theological justification and legitimation for their collective actions. "The concept of the ummah" becomes an expression of political consciousness to which primary loyalty belongs to the Muslim community, excluding secular sections of the society within and members of other religions without. It originally denotes a universal community of believers regardless of ethnicity or nation of its constituents, just as the Prophet united the rival Arab tribes within a monolithic community that was not confined to the Arabs. In this respect, Islam is a universal belief system that goes beyond ethnonational differences (Tibi, 1997:17). The Ideal of ummah rests on the identification with co-religionists beyond the borders of a particular nation and

thus is more significant than one's loyalty to the nation-state (Özdalga, 2009; Soper & Fetzer, 2018). The primary loyalty of these groups of people belongs to "the ummah". Islam, in this way, fulfills political motivation in some terms and satisfies some of its followers' need for dignity around the "concept of the Muslim ummah. One must recognize that the more an identity is related to dignity, the more preferred it is.

Despite some difficulties in practice, there is a strong sense of Islamic brotherhood in Kurdish Islamic circles. For this reason, some scholars have concluded that the universal and transnational aspects of Islam have accommodated the nation and nation-state because it has no practical use (Aspinall, 2007; Zubaida, 2004). I argue that the disagreement between Islam and nationalism is not, however, over. My fieldwork confirms this. Similarly, Tibi notes the incompatibility of Islamic universalism with the modern secular nation-state, particularly pointing to the contest between Islam and Arab nationalism (Tibi, 1997:226). Some pious Kurds believe that the bond of Islamic brotherhood can ever be activated if wished because it is flawless in theory while recognizing the difficulties in implementation. Accordingly, the brotherhood of Kurdish and Turkish communities has repeatedly been performed against non-Muslim rivals throughout history, particularly against the Western powers after World War I and the threat of Communism during the Cold War. I totally agree with Zürcher on the description of the period of the national independence movement (between 1918 and 1920) and the subsequent war of independence (between 1920 and 1922) as "the zenith of Ottoman Muslim nationalism" (Zürcher, 2014:221). Muslim nationalism holds true even today. Even today, confrontations with the West continue to reinforce the marker of Turkish identity with Islam. When Turkish nationalism is in a crisis with its Western or non-Muslim rivals, Muslim nationalism quickly comes to aid by mobilizing the Kurds. This policy is much more effective than we thought that the symbol of Quds goes far beyond the image of Kurdistan. While the sacred is attributed to the sovereignty of the first, the second is far from being acknowledged as a legitimate territory.

An important thing that caught my attention in the field is that the discourse of Islamic brotherhood is quite authentic among those who sincerely believe in it and defend it at the level of a political cause. It can thus be called a romantic tendency in which the people have sought to reinvigorate a political ideology in recent decades. On the other hand, one could also claim that the actual political agendas of these people have remained far more limited and pragmatic. It is, therefore, the political motivation of those who do not wish to attract the attention of the Turkish state or government in terms of providing a shield of protection from the Kurdish nationalism mostly labeled with the PKK. Of course, it isn't uncomplicated to distinguish them in precise ways. Nevertheless, awareness and emphasis on religious identity at the expense of national identity make it possible to pinpoint social action with religious enthusiasms. Being a nation and being an ummah are seen as alternatives to each other, resulting in the non-existence of the national consciousness, if any, being inferior to the consciousness of the ummah.

5.3.2. Two Ways of Interaction between Ethnicity and Islam

We see, however, two different tendencies or orientations in Kurdish Islamic circles in terms of the ethnic frame. While one trend appears more anti-ethnic (or perhaps non-ethnic), the other seems to have a strong ethnic consciousness but with no political aspiration or functioning as a source of mobilization. The most important contention of the first category is that Turks and Kurds are considered one nation or one political entity. Although Turks and Kurds are ethnically diverse groups, they are implicitly one holding a shared historical experience and a common destiny. Accordingly, ethnic identity has merely instrumental value but no substance.Those who belong to the non-ethnic category adhere strictly to the notion of an eternal state in which the state is conceptualized as a sanctified entity (in Turkish, Devlet-i Ebed-Müddet). The effectiveness of the traditional Turkish state for this psyche comes from the fear of dismemberment of the empire by the non-muslim forces within and without, a process that has been in progress over the last 200 years of the empire's existence (Sakallıoğlu, 1998:77).

The segments that endeavor to weaken the Turkish state inside have been perceived as extensions of the foreign threats.

Not only Muslim Turks but also Muslim Kurds came to accept the survival (bekâ) and the territorial integrity of the Turkish state as the guarantee of the collective unity of Muslims living in these lands. Although these Kurds are frequently critical of the radical secular policies of the Turkish state since the founding of the Republic, they have never aimed the breakdown of the state and the ethnic disintegration of the Turkish society. The image of ethnic conformity with the Turkish state and society led to their lack of intellectual support and elite representation in the Kurdish public space. They have long remained in the shadow of Turkish conservative political thought and discourses. They have constantly maintained an uncompromising loyalty to Turkey's traditional center-right or Islamic-referenced parties and socialized into pro-state associations, distancing themselves from all versions of Kurdish nationalism. Based on my observation in the field, I argue that the anti-ethnic Kurdish population is composed of a considerable amount of Zazaki-speaking individuals, including Kurmanji-speaking ones to no less than a degree. The anti-ethnic segment of the Kurdish population does not, however, find a remarkable place at the level of elite representation as the Kurdish question has dominated the political agenda. Ironically, its visibility in Kurdish society continues to increase over time on an individual basis due to the gradual assimilation or integration of the Kurdish population into Turkish society.

What's more, some of them support the security policies of the Turkish state in the Kurdish political sphere, and they are even indifferent to the Kurdish issue to a large extent. The most extreme section of Turkish nationalism, however, admits that the Kurds exist while categorically rejecting the Kurdish issue's reality (Coşar, 2011:185). Clearly, those included in the anti-ethnic category do not feel they are part of the Kurdish issue and do not compete with Turkish nationalism. Kurdishness exists at the level of cultural practices, but it does not turn into a distinctive cultural identity. Instead, it is considered deeply associated

with Turkishness in political terms. The result is a widespread ethnic alienation and apathy which leads to the a high degree of ethnic unconsciousness. I claim that these Kurds are not dissatisfied with their subordinate position vis-a-vis Turkishness as the dominant or superordinate identity within a defined border. Tekdemir calls this group pragmatist/opportunists that hold obedience unconditionally to the state authority (Tekdemir, 2018:600). Pragmatism alone does not explain this trend. Traumatic fears in the wake of painful experiences with the Turkish state in the past, a suspicious approach to secular Kurdish nationalism, and, more importantly, the assumed close association between Turkish identity and the representation of Islam discourage them from engaging in political action with Kurdish nationalists. My field observations demonstrate that the long-constructed alliance between Turks and this category of Kurds is considerably based on a shared destiny that goes beyond economic gains. After all, compared to classical Muslim nationalism, which holds a more idealistic vision, the anti-ethnic category is more pragmatic with this-worldly orientation. It is also more prone and receptive to the trend of secularization while remaining passive and inactive in the political processes.

The second category tends to regard themselves as an ethnically identifiable community, but they do not intend to attain a political nation through a degree of consciousness and aspiration. In this configuration, Islam has formed "the framework of political consciousness" and "the source of unity," not a national identification. When viewed from this aspect, Hastings's stress on cultural identity, which displays a strong correlation between national claims and cultural community, does not work for ethnically conscious Muslim Kurds. These Kurds do not possess national aspirations even though Kurdish identity culturally feeds them. To remind, it is evident in Hastings's view that linguistic and cultural boundaries would eventually determine the political structure of an ethnically self-conscious group. The transnational forms of political, social, and cultural interaction of the Islamic paradigm have, however, made national consciousness unnecessary among some Kurdish Islamic circles. As one interviewee has argued,

> Perhaps Turkey could not establish or impose Turkish nationalism in the region where Kurds predominate, but Islam in itself did not allow Kurdish national consciousness to flourish.

The main point I want to underline is that ethnic consciousness does not turn into the national consciousness with a view that it will divide and weaken the larger Muslim community or ummah that already faces many troubles. In this sense, Islamic identity draws a stable boundary between the in-group (Muslims) and "the out-group (non-Muslims). Yet those who sincerely believe in Islamic brotherhood know that being an ummah is getting increasingly complex. Hence, it is difficult to say that awareness and consciousness of the ummah are on the march. Murat Koç hints at the exploitation of the ideal of the ummah by hypocritical Muslim organizations

> Those who constantly mix Islam with their respective nationalism have, in practice, damaged the ideal of the ummah. Unfortunately, neither many organizations in Turkey nor other Muslim societies have made a real effort to accomplish this vision. Most of Turkish Muslims are, for instance, not free from Turkish nationalism and statism. Islamic brotherhood and Ummah spring to their mind only when it comes to the rights of the Kurds. Most Islamic groups think and act through modern standards and codes and thus do not go beyond the level of discourse. Yet, nationalism is the greatest enemy of the ideal of the Ummah.

Another interviewee points to the need for a new process of trust-building among different segments of the Muslim population.

> There is a trust relationship at the core of the Islamic brotherhood. As long as there is trust, it's worth it. Improper practices potentially threaten to undermine the confidence, and it will harm even the religion itself, let alone that. When the rhetoric of Muslim brotherhood is not implemented accurately, it can create opposite results strengthening nascent national feelings.

Despite the growing complaints about the secularization of the mind of Muslims and their unwillingness to provide a running overarching Islamic identity that transcends ethno-national borders, there is an insistent belief in the principle of Islamic brotherhood. Hüda-par, for instance, claims that it has placed Islamic

doctrine at the center of its political action. Halef Yılmaz, Deputy Chairman of Hüdapar, defines his political party as an Islamic Brotherhood organization.

> HUDA PAR is an Islamic brotherhood organization. The common bond that binds us together is not a sheik-disciple or not a manager-officer relationship. There is neither a boss-worker nor landowner-cropper relationship at all. Our organizations are based on the Islamic brotherhood. Like the teeth of a comb, everyone is only a servant to Allah, a brother to believers, and a companion to the cause.[12]

5.3.3. The View on the Nation and Kurdish Nationalism

For the most part, those who fall within Muslim nationalism regard the phenomenon of nation and nationalism as artifacts of modernity and even as a new religion in itself. According to this view, modernity has appreciated the general distinction many people make between the human and the divine, the profane and the sacred. Muslim nationalists see nationalism as not simply a counter-force to religion but also a way of life that constructs its own "moral community of believers" through collective rites that concentrate on sacred images and objects such as homeland, flag, and anthem. Such a secular worldview is inevitably associated with a functional approach to religion in the Durkheimian sense. In other words, the nation is perceived as an imagined community of the faithful to the nation rather than religion. Indeed, many authentic Muslim nationalists have overwhelmingly recognized that nationalism requires essentially secular consciousness and cannot find an accommodation with Islam. Thus, the view on the idea of nationalism is unfavorable to a large extent. There is, however, a tendency to define nationalism in two ways, positively and negatively, among these circles. I have observed that when it comes to describing nationalism, more references are made to the racist and malicious versions of nationalism. Nationalism is, knowingly or unknowingly,

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[12] Hüda-Par [@HurDavaPartisi]. (2022, August 1). *HÜDA PAR bir kardeşlik teşkilatıdır. Aramızdaki bağ; şeyh-mürid, müdür-memur ilişkisi değildir. Patron-işçi veya ağa-maraba ilişkisi hiç değildir. Teşkilatlarımız İslam kardeşliğini esas alır. Bir tarağın dişleri gibi herkes sadece Allah'a kul, müminlere kardeş, dâvaya yoldaştır.* Twitter. https://twitter.com/HurDavaPartisi/status/1554162165548023811

confused with racism. In this view, nationalism rests on a group of people's sense of superiority over other ethnic groups and political attributions based on a particular race. The bifurcated explanation of the nation indeed originates from Said Nursi's characterization.

> Nationalism is of two kinds: one is negative, inauspicious, and harmful; it is nourished by devouring others, persists through hostility to others, and is aware of what it is doing. It is the cause of enmity and disturbance…Positive nationalism arises from an inner need of social life and is the cause of mutual assistance and solidarity. It gives rise to a beneficial strength, and is a way of reinforcing Islamic brotherhood (Said Nursi, 1993: 373-375)

Through positive nationalism, Nursi originally promoted the Islamic brotherhood based on ethnic diversity and recognition in light of this definition. Nursi's mind has no idea of the nation in the modern sense. He categorically emphasized the crucial importance of Islam as a source of collective action in the period of Constitutional Monarchy (Meşrutiyet).

> Since sovereignty belongs to the nation in the Constitutional Monarchy, it is necessary to establish the presence of the nation. Our nationality is only Islam because the bonds that bind Arabs, Turks, Kurds, Albanians, Circassians, and Lazs are nothing but Islam. How do Muslim ethnic groups separate into the several small states and revive nationalism (kavmiyetçilik) which was in force in the period of ignorance (Jahiliyya) thirteen centuries ago?"(Cited in Nursi, S., & Resulan, O. 1994:49)[13].

Muhammed Emin Yıldırım shares the same views with Nursi.

> The concept of nation in the modern sense is never mentioned in the Qur'an by referring to an ethnic group or tribe. Instead, the idea of a nation (millet) refers to a community of the faithful. From the perspective of the Qur'an, we need to transform this view into its original form. The prophet says the one who pursues tribalism, racism, and ethnocentrism is not one of us. When asked to the Messenger of Allah if it is discrimination for a person to love his own people, he says no. That's where man originates. Tribalism or racism implies that even when the tribe you belong to does injustice to another, you back your group just because you are bound up. If someone remains silent on his group's persecution of others, he is racist.

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[13] It is my own translation.

Zekeriya Yapıcıoğlu, the chairman of Hüdapar, follows the same tradition, quoting the Prophet's words on tribalism and racism.

> Ethno-nationalism is a concept designed and made by human beings after the French Revolution based on nation-states. If we describe nationalism in a positive sense, that is, nationalism is to love one's own nation, seek the well-being of one's nation, and try to help them, then nationalism is not something un-Islamic. Positive nationalism does not disagree with Islam. Loving and serving one's nation is a natural process. Defending your people even when they do injustice, helping your ethnic group when they persecute others, sharing in your group's oppression, exalting in-group members to the detriment of others, insulting other nations while praising yours or considering yourself superordinate are attitudes that Islam categorically rejects. If these are the intention of nationalism, we call it racism. In that case, this is negative nationalism, and it is void in the eyes of Islam.

One thing that draws my attention in these circles is the prevalence of the description of racist-like forms of nationalism, which brings a categorical refusal of national sentiments. The theme of justice, however, stands out. The notion that whoever is subjected to persecution because of one's race or ethnicity, Islam is on the side of the oppressed regardless of his identity, not the oppressor, often comes to the forefront. What is meant by positive nationalism is mostly ethnic identity and culture rather than national sentiments. After all, while ethnic identity is regarded as given, natural, organic and unmutable attachment, nationalism is seen as a synthetic enterprise about the earthly. Abdurrahman Arslan categorically rejects both positive and negative meanings of the nation, adding that such a distinction allows rapprochement with the idea of the nation in the modern sense at the end of the day. In his view, "the modernist secular replacement model" that precipitates that there can be no nation without secular trends and nationalism as a new primary carrier of identity has replaced religion has proved to be true.

> You need two things to build a nation: race and land. Islam does not accommodate a vision of race and land. The image of social order in Islam does not attribute to one's ethnic identity through a specific territory. Moreover, the concept of the motherland was invented later. In this sense, Nursi's depiction of positive and negative nationalism is incorrect. He both accepts nationalism in the western mentality and opposes nationalism at the same time. There can be no such thing. The Muslim nation (millet) corresponds to the community of

believers, while the modern nation refers to the community of shared racial group consciousness. As a result, the invention of the nation as a constituent element plays a destructive role. It is indeed a religion.

It is seen that there is no homogeneity and consensus over the idea of the nation among those who believe in Muslim nationalism. According to this approach, however, nationalism constantly feeds and activates counter-nationalism, confirming that the nations are invented. There is a contemporary trend in which emerged-nationalism generates counter-nationalism due to a reactionary process. In other words, nationalism has no timeless or immutable essence. Furthermore, industrialization, secularization, capitalism, rate of literacy, etc., are not must to construct new nationalism, contrary to what modern theory of nationality suggests. One can perhaps call this "reactive nationalism," which appears in how sequences of patterns are repeatedly observed. To illustrate, Turkish nationalism emulates French nationalism, and Kurdish nationalism replicates Turkish nationalism etc. It is, however, certainly not straightforward to predict which nationalism started first. Yet, there is hardly any agreement about which nationalism reacts to what, let's say, imperialism or any other nationalism.

As Arslan has implied, followers of Muslim nationalism lack a real territorial homeland because of the overarching character of Islam. Anywhere can potentially be homeland. "The earth belongs to God alone (Quran 7:128). Islam, therefore, disagrees with the nation at the ontological level for not emphasizing a specific territory. Besides, the classical distinction between Dar al-Islam (House of Islam) and Dar al-Harp (House of War) does not exist in the sources of the Qur'an and Hadith. These are, in reality, the formulations developed by the Abbasids in an effort to find legitimacy for their war with Byzantium (Bulaç, 2004:483). Its advocates has consistently religious attitudes toward nationalism. Conflict of loyalties then becomes more visible in this category. Nationalism is somehow perceived as "a child of the Enlightenment" and represents an "imported solution" to the social problems created by modernity (Yusuf Qardawi quoted in Tibi, 1997).

Consequently, an ideological conflict exists between the loyalty to the modern conception of the nation and nationalism and the transnational claims of Islam. This ideological competition may ostensibly be related to the structural crisis of the so-called secular regimes in predominantly Muslim societies. Nevertheless, there is not solely opposition to secular versions of nationalism but also an objection to religious forms of nationalism in which the two have a more peaceful coexistence. When the idea of Muslim nationalism first emerged in the earlier decades of the twentieth century, the most prominent Islamic intellectuals such as Banna, Qutb, and Maududi had unhesitatingly tended to stand against all forms of nationalism, ethnic, civic etc (Enayat, 1982:115). According to Al-Banna, modern nationalism has undermined the ideal of the ummah because it designated fictional borders among the Muslims. For him, the only nationalism that may be acceptable was "a religious nationalism in which Islam has played a foundational role in the political and everyday life", while secular forms of nationalism "impose a false consciousness upon Muslims, alienating them from their tradition and its divinely established social order" (Mitchell quoted in Kenney, 2014:267). What he meant by religious nationalism was Muslim nationalism. At the time, it was perhaps more feasible to declare that nationalism is incompatible with Islamic universalism because Arab Muslims aspired to Islamic unity much more than today, rather than preoccupying with Arab unity or local Arab nationalism. The attitude of the Arab elites, which they gave up a century ago, is still standing today by a significant part of the Kurdish Muslim elite. Mele Sadullah Ergün made striking claims at our meeting in his self-funded madrasah, where he taught pupils, confirming my former suggestion that Muslim Kurds' emphasis on Islamic brotherhood is, I suppose, more robust than many other Muslim communities.

> Compared with Arabs, Turks, Persians, and Berbers, the Kurds have the most strong consciousness of the ummah and desire it genuinely much more.

The strong political consciousness of ummah and the sentiment that compartmentalization around micro-national identities will harm Islam have

been widespread and intense among the Kurds. Müfid Yüksel acknowledges this and shares his belief that the Kurds will undertake the potential leadership of the Ummah in the future.

> I imagine an ummah project in which the Kurds are at the forefront, just like the Turks were pioneers before. The Turks lost their spearheading role with Kemalism. The Kurds have no other way out of the ummah. Either they will suffer extinction, or they will make such an exit. The trend will become evident over some time.

One could argue that perhaps being nationless and stateless lies behind the strict commitment to the ideal of the Islamic brotherhood in that process of nationhood will inevitably undermine the Islamic model of the Ummah. Islamic transnationalism prevents even some ethnically conscious Kurds from accommodating a national consciousness in fear that the doctrinal irreconcilability between Islam and nationalism will eventually knock on the door. Islam and nationalism have, therefore, largely tended to be considered separate entities and alternative ideological hypotheses to each other. In this sense, some Kurds are undoubtedly anti-nationalists. Aydın Usalp, one of the leading figures of the Association for Radical Change (Köklü Değişim Derneği) affiliated with Hizb ut-Tahrir (Party of Liberation), a trans-national and pan-Islamist political organization that aims to unite all Muslims and establish an Islamic caliphate state governed by Shari'a rules, makes a strict distinction between ethnic identity and ethnonational claims.

> My ethnic affiliation is a biological one and not contrary to the universal teachings of Islam. The idea of nationalism, on the other hand, is based on superiority over other human groups and is mainly aimed at designating a nation-state, thus contradicting Islamic principles. The sense of belonging to an ethnic group, being loyal to it, and maintaining social relations in a cultural framework is undoubtedly not nationalism. A sense of superiority or privilege is directly linked with the concept of nationalism, not socialization around blood ties or kinship relationships. If I unconditionally support those with the same ethnic background as mine, even when they are wrong, I am stuck in the quagmire of nationalism. Ethnic identity is not my choice. As a Kurd or Zaza, I did not choose it. I boast about Kurdishness, but I do not identify or mark it as my primary identity. Yes, I say I am a Kurd, but what defines my life, worldview, and action is the faith I believe in. I look at the world through the lens of Islam.

In the competitive form of the relationship, the substantive content of faith plays a more influential role in constructing group identity. As an eternal and universal message, Islam provides its adherents with ontological meanings to orient their existence. In contrast, the materialist and secular nature of nationalism is seen in opposition to the universal spirit of Islam (Al-Bazzaz, 1954:201). Nationalism is perceived as "a time-bound set of principles related to the qualities and needs of a particular group of human beings" (Enayat, 1982:112), which is the root cause of the fundamental contradiction. In this view, nationalism attempts to make an earthly community that focuses on the mundane, inevitably narrowing down God's relation with the world willingly or unwillingly. Nationalism, as a political ideology and a modernist political movement, contradicts religion and even includes strong anti-religious dimensions. It has thus competed directly against religion for the commitment of the people.

Furthermore, nationalism and nation-states are modern phenomena alien to Islamic history and have become alternative sources of the object of loyalty and collective identity. The idea of nationalism rests on popular sovereignty and egalitarianism as the organizational codes for the nation-state (Tibi, 1997; Greenfeld, 2005). Nationalism, "an image of a sovereign community of fundamentally equal members," has created a secular consciousness because it projects this world. In other words, nationalism is not only a design to be established at the level of the system of states but also implies a concept with ideological baggage. So it is a phenomenon that has both sociological and international dimensions. While the sociological content of nationalism requires internal analysis, internationalization does the external level of study. Within the framework of Muslim nationalism, a reference to the divine sovereignty of God is still made. The realm of politics is not considered autonomous of God, so it does not accommodate nationalism as "a secular image of reality". The substantive content of Islam correlates sovereignty with the will of God, whereas sovereignty descends to the earth through nationalism, as we saw in Greenfeld. In Islamic theology, social reality is not autonomous in its own right. Some verses of Qur'an that support this argument are as follows:

"Unquestionably, He (Allah) is the judgement, and He is the swiftest of accountants" (6.62)

"Exalted is Allah, the True King!" (20:114)

"Blessed is the One in Whose Hands rests all authority. And He is Most Capable of everything" (67:1)

"He (Allah) shares His command with none" (18:26).

Meanwhile, the secular modernity and its reflection of religious forms of nationalism in the Durkheimian sense are also completely unwarrantable, whether Turkish or Kurdish nationalism. In the cases where nationalism and religion are intertwined, the first has dominated the latter, at the end of the day, becoming a kind of political religion. So nationalism is seen as a religion. Such so-called religious views serve as external signs and symbols of modern collective representation in the Durkheimian approach rather than an expression of revealed truth and an authentic inner personal conviction. It renders secularization and nationalization of religions that are normatively concerned with ultimate realities such as eternity or the meaning of life. Islam and nationalism are two different systems of thought that contradict each other and have different spirits and goals. While Islam aims to build an order based on faith and moral foundations, national aspiration appeals to the temporal enthusiasm of a narrow ethnic group. No matter which nationalist movement we look at, all these are far from Islam because they construct a new religion.

Ironically, the idea of Muslim nationalism somewhat confirms modernist accounts that overestimate the role of modernization in explaining nationalism and treating nation-states as products of the last two centuries. Accordingly, religion was politically crucial in the premodern and pre-nation state world until the Westphalian system that would later subordinate religion to the state (Soper & Fetzer, 2018:3). For early modernists, religion was seen as an obstacle to progress, a source of backwardness. Thus, it could not find a place for itself in the image of modern society based on the progress and advancement of the nation. The claim of classical Muslim nationalism is that the rise of nationalism

and the emergence of artificial nation-states in the Muslim-predominated region have led to a hybrid religious-national identity, say, Turkish Muslims, Kurdish Muslims, Egyptian Muslims, Saudi Muslims, etc. These all are essentially secular attempts to divide the ummah into sub-political groups as it renounces the doctrine of the universal divine order (Tibi, 1997:17).

Accordingly, a true Muslim should respond to the current wave of nationalism and move beyond the boundaries of the nation-states with a view that "the Islamic idea of community as the political unity is incompatible with the territorial nation state" (Zubaida, 2004:407). It may not, in practice, be possible anywhere and anytime. Ethnonational claims will disappear unless there is much emphasis on the ethnonational identities under the ummah (Sakallioğlu, 1998: 81). It somewhat simplifies the complex situation and ignores the root causes of the emergence of national sentiments in Muslim societies. The view on the idea of nation and nationalism is thus unfavorable to a large extent. Arab nationalism is, for example, "a Western import, encouraged by orientalists and colonialists… to separate Arab from Turk and demolish the caliphate. (Zubaida, 2004:412). For Tibi, Arab nationalism was also "a challenge to the political order of Islam as embodied in the Ottoman Empire" (Tibi, 1997:X). One must consider that the breakaway of Arabs from the Ottomans might also result from the long-standing de-Islamization or secularization of Turkish rule. We cannot wholly know which activated which. In the early stage when Arab nationalism developed in the 19th century, it was asserted that Arabs were the true representatives and protectors of Islam. From a Muslim nationalist perspective, the substantive character of Islam does not feed into the national aspirations of subordinate or superordinate ethnic groups while remaining far more antipathetic to national struggles at the popular level. Muslim nationalism does not merge Muslim identity with national cause within this framework. To be Muslim comes first, then Kurdish identification with no political aspiration.

5.3.4. The View on the Kurdish Issue

According to Islamic organizations and NGOs, one of the most vital opponents in Kurdish-populated area is the PKK and its affiliated political parties or groups, which are thought to be linked with secular nationalism. Apart from ideological rivalry bursts between these two distinct trends, one can easily observe the struggle for sovereignty among these actors in the Kurdish public sphere, which creates an effect that makes collaboration difficult in the short run. The marking of representatives of Kurdish nationalism as secular and non-religious actors automatically causes avoidance of taking collective action with them. Using one of the interviewees,

> Just as Muslim Turks have come to these days by surrendering to Kemalism and taking on the statist and conservative form of nationalism over time, which is really disturbing, I am worried that if the Kurdish secular movement comes to power one day, we will suffer the same as a Muslim what we went through under the Kemalist rule.

Yapıcıoğlu goes further to imply that the secular Kurdish movement (particularly pro-PKK political parties) aims to secularize Kurdish society under the guise of Kurdish nationalism.

> So-called Kurdish nationalists are just exploiting the national feelings of our naive Kurdish brothers. There is nothing Islamic anyway, but they also try to use Islam. They primarily desire to spread their secular ideological ideas in society.

In this study, I claim that the notion of Islamic brotherhood enables locating Muslim Kurds against secular Kurdish nationalism, thereby automatically constraining Kurdish ethno-national claims. The supremacy of Islam on Kurdish identity inevitably triggers a more ambivalent approach to the Kurdish issue that is mainly characterized as a subject related to civil rights, law, and justice rather than the manifestation of Kurdish national claims. It even pushes some Muslim Kurds to adopt an apolitical tendency regarding the Kurdish issue. Islam has thus

been an influential agent for alleviating Kurdish national aspirations. A director of an Islamic NGO in Diyarbakir made the following striking statement:

> The Kurdish issue is not our main agenda, but it may be part of it at the most. Our main agenda is the Islamization of society.

He chose not to answer the question I asked about whether religious people's distance from the Kurdish issue has reinforced the secularization of the Kurdish society and whether this creates a vicious circle while remaining silent. He implied that Muslims faced black and white zones when they were aware of the Kurdish issue adding that they did not want to be seen on the same front as the illegal organizations. It is a prevalent belief that bringing the Kurdish issue to the political agenda may cause them to be perceived as if they are in line with the illegal PKK and its offshoots. This expression is critical in explaining why some Islamic circles currently remain indifferent to the Kurdish issue. It was also noteworthy that he criticized some religious Kurdish actors and organizations for being too nationalistic and breaking off Islam. Accordingly, subjects relevant to the national claims yield a shift from the Islamic agenda to the mundane that cannot be acceptable for a genuine Muslim. The primary goal should be the Islamization of Kurdish society. If the Kurdish community returns to the ideals of Islam, the Kurdish issue will disappear. Therefore, it should not be the main concern for political action.

Yapıcıoğlu also underscores the aim of Islamization of society,

> If an Islamic society is formed, the system will also change (it suggests evolution, not a revolution at the political level). If we make the members of the society say that we are Muslims and want to be led by Muslims, we have been successful politically. Our cause is not to get the power but to ensure that justice triumphs and the system is correct. We wish for an Islamic brotherhood in which justice prevails. We are ready to serve whoever does this.

I could not help to ask. So why did you then establish a political party? If you wanted to change and Islamize society from the bottom up, you could also be an Islamic NGO. He replied,

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You are telling the truth. Currently, the overwhelming majority of Turkey says it is Muslim. We want to make the people state that we are Muslims, and Muslims can govern us. That is all. The same result does not come out when I put it on the scales to see whether we can achieve this goal more efficiently as a non-governmental organization or a political party (suggesting that the way to reach the goal is through the political party).

When İshak Sağlam, the former Hüdapar leader, was asked what the most painful problem of Turkey is, he answered,

Our approach to tackle the problems is hidden in the slogan that humanity first, justice is at the top of the list. The main reason for all the issues is the lack of a just order.[14]

One thing that caught my attention was the distinction between the anti-ethnic and ethnically self-conscious categories over the definition of the Kurdish issue. Even if the people in the first category accept the existence of the Kurdish issue, they do not see themselves as a part of the issue. They thus consider themselves outside of the problematic zone while acknowledging it. Kurdish citizens, who have anti-ethnic tones, establish a more loyal relationship with the Turkishness and the Turkish state. I have already said that this segment of the Kurdish population lacks intellectual support and elite representation in the Kurdish public space, but some names periodically stand out. Mehmet Metiner, originally a Kurdish member of Parliament of AKP, may be one of them. In his owns words,

Some idiots ask me: "Are you a Turk that you support the Turkish nation?" My answer is that I am not ethnically/racially Turkish. I am a Kurd. The definition of "Turkish Nation" is not, however, ethnic/racial but the common denomination of Muslim communities that are proud of Islam. That's why I'm a member of this nation. No racism![15]

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[14] Hüda-Par Medya [@HudaParMedya]. (2022, November, 26). *HÜDA PAR'a göre Türkiye'nin en can yakıcı sorunu nedir? "Önce insan öncelik adalet' aslında sorunlara bakış açımız bu sloganımızda gizlidir. Sorunların temel nedeni adil bir yönetimin olmayışıdır.* Twitter. https://mobile.twitter.com/HudaParMedya/status/1331967819441971201

[15] Mehmet Metiner [@MetinerBasin]. (2020, December 27). *Bana bazı densizler soruyorlar: "Türk müsün ki Türk milletini savunuyorsun?" El-cevap: Etnik/ırki anlamda Türk değilim,*

Abdurrahman Kurt, on the other hand, a member of the central executive committee of AKP and mainly represents the ethnically conscious category, objects to such an overarching definition of the Turkish nation and argues,

> If the concept of "Turkish nation" is the common name of the nations honored with Islam, do the Arabs, Persians, Malays, and all the Muslim elements in the world know this too? Or is it a cunning attempt to camouflage racism? If so, that is how we understand it; it shouldn't be a part of it.[16]

The second category calls out the Kurdish reality in the cultural framework of Kurdishness without making any political references. However, the Kurdish issue is mainly described as a result of the policy of Turkish denial, therefore, as a reactionary form of nationalism. Hüseyin Yılmaz, Vice President of Hüda Par, emphasizes the reactionary character of Kurdish nationalism and argues,

> Hüda Par embraces the Islamic solution to the Kurdish question. There must be an Islamic solution since Turks and Kurds share a common Muslim identity. Any kind of nationalism is not legitimate in our faith. In other words, if the Turks leave state-based Turkish nationalism, we will already take a crucial step because Kurdish nationalism is a matter of action and reaction for the Kurds.[17]

According to the Muslim nationalism perspective, the Kurdish issue is mostly a matter of equal citizenship rather than political status-claiming emancipation. In this view, Kurdish nationalism has an accidental character and does not have historical continuity. In other words, Kurdish nationalism has no substantive

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KÜRDÜM. "Türk Milleti" tanımı, etnik/ırki değil, İslam'la şeref bulmuş toplulukların ortak tanımıdır. O yüzden bu milletin bir ferdiyim. IRKÇILIĞA HAYIR! Twitter.https://twitter.com/MetinerBasin/status/1343199075978641408

[16] Abdurrahman Kurt [@ab_kurt]. (2020, December 28). *Türk milleti kavramı İslamla şereflenmiş milletlerin ortak adı ise Araplar,Farslar,Malaylar vs yeryüzündeki tüm müslüman unsurlar da bunu biliyor mu?Yoksa bir fitneye ırkçılığa kılıf uydurmanın şirinleştirme hamlesi olmasın.Öyle ise kibiz böyle anlıyoruz bunun parçası olmamalı.* Twitter. https://twitter.com/ab_kurt/status/1343315415905271808

[17] HÜDA PAR: Türkiye'nin en büyük meselesi Kürt meselesidir, (2021, October 7). *Independent Türkçe.* Retrieved from https://www.indyturk.com/node/421261/siyaset/hüda-par-türkiyenin-en-büyük-meselesi-kürt-meselesidir

character or essence, thereby no room for ethnopolitical definition. Mahmut Eminoğlu, a member of the Hüda-Par General Administrative Board, emphasizes that Kurdish nationalism is an outcome of Turkish nationalism.

> One of the greatest disasters that have occurred in this country is Turkism. As long as Turkism exists, it will be a productive environment for Kurdism that feeds on it. If we want true unity and solidarity, the laws centered on Turkism should immediately be abolished.[18]

In these circles, we are witnessing a discourse with predominantly Islamic tones on the solution to the Kurdish issue. Abdulillah Fırat proposes a truly Islamic state,

> The resolution to the Kurdish Question is possible with the establishment of an Islamic State that treats all peoples equally.

It is wrong to presume that Islam can no longer be an antidote to Kurdish ethnonationalism, contrary to what Sarıgil and Türkmen argued (Sarıgil, 2018; Türkmen, 2021). Although Islam and the promotion of Islamic brotherhood do not completely discourage the formation of Kurdish national consciousness, they serve to maintain a strong collaboration between Turks and Kurds. Hüda-Par, in this sense, deserves a particular focus on fostering religious identity in opposition to national identity linking Islamic references and everyday politics. The party has repeatedly attributed to the Islamic principles at the institutional and collective level and relates the sphere of religion with that of politics. It even identifies itself with the earliest and the purest version of Islam, thus establishing a historical continuity between principles of Islamic ideals and modern societies. Sağlam argues,

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[18] Mahmut Eminoğlu [@MahmutEminoglu]. (2021, August, 1). *Bu ülkenin başına gelmiş en büyük felaketlerden biri de Türkçülüktür. Türkçülük var oldukça ondan beslenen Kürtçülük için gelişme ortamı olacaktır. Ülkede gerçek manada bir birlik ve beraberlik isteniyorsa Türkçülüğü merkeze alan yasalar kaldırılmalıdır.* Twitter.
https://twitter.com/MahmutEminoglu/status/1421733224250814470

> Our Party, which has entered its 9th year, will continue on its way unwaveringly with its fourteen-century schedule. We know the system is the leading cause of all injustice, unlawful, and other deep-rooted problems. Turkish state mechanism, which takes almost all of its legal and constitutional foundation from outside, is built on the continuity of the political issues.[19]

Elsewhere Sağlam acknowledges that Hüda-Par pursues nostalgic Islamism that generates a radical challenge to the modern idea of nationalism and the modern nation-state in various ways.

> *The concept called nostalgic Islamism is a model for us. We do not look at the social problems with a secular materialist approach but with a belief system. We design our political program, work, and principles on Islamic values.[20]*

The current leader of Hüda-Par, Yapıcıoğlu, also points out that Islam is their primary source of reference in politics and implies that Kurdish demands for autonomy or statehood are not their main concern.

> *HUDA PAR is a party that endeavors to make politics along Islamic lines. Perhaps a significant part of the executive staff consists of Kurdish nationals. Still, we appeal not only to the Kurds but also to various ethnic groups in this country, and hopefully to represent them properly if they give us the mandate. In this sense, I think it is incorrect to name HUDA PAR exclusively a Kurdish party.[21]*

Hüdapar has undergone a significant transformation in recent years. For many reasons, it has brought the Kurdish issue to the agenda more than ever. Its

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[19] Genel Başkanımız Sağlam: Kararlı bir şekilde yolumuza devam edeceğiz, (2020 August 19), *HüdaPar.* Retrieved From https://hudapar.org/web/1282/genel-baskanimiz-saglam-kararli-bir-sekilde-yolumuza-devam-edecegiz.jsp

[20] Hüda-Par Medya [@HudaParMedya]. (2022, November, 26). *HÜDA PAR, nostaljik İslamcılık çizgisinde mi siyaset yapıyor? Meselelere seküler materyalist bir yaklaşımla yaklaşmıyoruz. Bir inancımız ve bir medeniyetimiz var. Biz programımızı, çalışmalarımızı ve ilkelerimizi bu inanç ve değerler üzerine kuruyoruz.* Twitter. https://mobile.twitter.com/HudaParMedya/status/1331967802551447553

[21] Hüda Par Genel Başkanı Yapıcıoğlu, iktidar vaatlerini sıraladı, (2021, September 19), *Doğruhaber.* Retrieved from https://dogruhaber.com.tr/haber/780479-huda-par-genel-baskani-yapicioglu-iktidar-vaatlerini-siraladi/

leading figures have lately moved to a more realistic position politically. More importantly, they have realized they could not compete with secular Kurdish politics without embracing the Kurdish issue. Yapıcıoğlu underlines that Turkey has still not resolved its Kurdish issue.

> In our opinion, the Kurdish question continues to exist and is one of Turkey's most painful political problems waiting to be resolved.[22]

Like Yapıcıoğlu, Müfid Yüksel points to the need for an urgent solution to the Kurdish issue.

> There is still a Kurdish Question/Problem in Turkey, which is the Ummah's problem. If not resolved peacefully, it will deteriorate. However, even when most Muslim Turks say that Kurds are our brothers, they look down on the Kurds. First of all, we must solve this problem immediately.

Furthermore, Hüdapar, for the first time, has manifested the Kurdish issue as the biggest challenge that Turkey has been dealing with for a long time.

> The Kurdish Question is the biggest of the current political problems of Turkey waiting for urgent solutions. It is wrong to see it as a matter of security or economic and social backwardness.[23]

It has thus now clear recommendations for the resolution of the Kurdish Issue. The main ones are as follows: *"Fundamental rights should not be negotiated; social problems should be addressed through justice; Kurdish language should be the second official language; the right to education in Kurdish should be*

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[22] Genel Başkanımız Yapıcıoğlu: Bize göre Kürt meselesi vardır ve çözülmemiştir, (2021, September 25), *Hüdapar*. Retrieved from https://hudapar.org/web/1434/genel-baskanimiz-yapicioglu-bize-gore-kurt-meselesi-vardir-ve-cozulmemistir.jsp

[23] Hüda-Par Medya [@HudaParMedya]. (2021, October, 1). *Kürt Meselesi; ülkenin acil çözüm bekleyen daimi meselelerinin en büyüğüdür. Meseleyi bir güvenlik sorunu ya da ekonomik ve sosyal geri kalmışlık olarak görmek yanlıştır.* Twitter. https://twitter.com/HudaParMedya/status/1443878014266363914. For another supporting evidence, see HÜDA PAR: Türkiye'nin en büyük meselesi Kürt meselesidir, (2021, October 7). *Independent Türkçe*. Retrieved from https://www.indyturk.com/node/421261/siyaset/hüda-par-türkiyenin-en-büyük-meselesi-kürt-meselesidir

guaranteed; the current definition of Turkish citizenship based on ethnic Turkishness in the constitution should be abandoned, etc." Yet the shift in political discourse does not necessarily reveal that the party has Kurdish nationalist aspirations or embraced nationalism as a doctrine. At this point, I would like to reiterate that I have explained nationalism as a political doctrine oriented towards the emancipation or hegemony of self-conscious ethnic groups into political claims. Although the characterization of the Kurdish issue as the greatest of all political problems appears like track change initially, it does not indicate that Hüdapar circles have nation-based motivations. This attempt, however, involves an element of risk for themselves: The shift to Kurdish nationalism. As much as it gears up on the Kurdish issue, its divorce from Islamic movements in Turkey will speed up. Yet, it is hardly possible to say they are at a crossroads for now. Hüdapar's efforts for an alliance with the Turkish Islamic groups continue. Their main agenda is still the Islamization of Kurdish society and even that of Turkish society. At the annual meeting of Islamic scholars organized by İttihad-ul Ulema (an offshoot of Hüda-Par), Yapıcıoğlu noted that they see "the division of the ummah" as the most crucial problem in Muslim societies.

> The Islamic world has many issues and troubles, but the primary one is the division of the ummah.[24]

In the final declaration of the same conference, the following was articulated about the Kurds through the emphasis on their inseparability from the ummah.

> As an essential part of the Islamic Ummah, the Kurds have contributed to Islam and the entire corpus of Islamic culture throughout history. Thousands of scholars, from Ibn Salah to Ibn Esir, from Amidi to Ibn Taymiye, and from

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[24] Hüda Par [@HurDavaPartisi]. (2021, October, 16). *Online 6'ncı Alimler Buluşması*. Twitter. https://twitter.com/HurDavaPartisi/status/1449362162456145922

> Babanzada Ahmet Naim to Said Nursi in the modern age, have carried and will continue to carry the flag of Islamic knowledge.[25]

As a result, the other is not a collective Turkish identity but a secular Turkish one and even a secular Kurdish one in the mindset of a Kurd whose Muslim identity overweighs. Islam is the remedy to all problems, including the Kurdish issue of Muslim nationalism. By its very nature, Islam emancipates the individual; thus, there is no need for another human ideology like nationalism. While the anti-ethnic category of Muslim nationalism does not see itself as a part of the Kurdish issue, those belonging to the ethnically self-conscious category demand more political change regarding Kurdish collective rights. The first category's avoiding political action oriented towards Kurdish ethno-nationalism keeps them in a more comfortable zone. It is more indifferent to the Kurdish question and loyal to the Turkish state. There could be many reasons why they act this way. One of the main motives is not to attract the attention of the Turkish state or government in terms of providing a shield of protection from the Kurdish nationalism mostly labeled with the PKK. They are, of course, more susceptible to Turkish assimilation. On the other hand, those who fall into the ethnically self-conscious community simultaneously accommodate Islamic and Kurdish identities. The strongest one is, however, Islamic identity. Accordingly, The Kurds must seek their rights within the Islamic framework, not in Kurdish nationalism. In this view, Kurdish nationalism is a modern secular project designed to cut the Kurds' ties with Islam. One can see that nationalism is characterized as an ill-advised phenomenon to be avoided and most often used in a pejorative sense. As illustrated in the Qur'an, a Muslim can only belong to one nation, a community of all faithful Muslims. Muslim identity eventually trumps all other identities. Kurdish issue, too, must be addressed through the unifying feature of Islam on which equality is based, rather than the modern framework of the nation.

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[25] İttihadul Ulema [@ittihadululema]. (2021, October, 16). *6'ıncı Alimler Buluşması Sonuç Bildirgesi*. Twitter. https://twitter.com/ittihadululema/status/1449367659657809923

5.4. Core motivations for Collective Action

In the previous chapter, I have defined Muslim nationalism in which religious identity becomes a source of inspiration within a particular group that makes religion the backbone for their mobilization, political aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a competitive model with the nation. Such a form of religious identification categorically keeps its distance from aspiring ethnic or national unity while protecting ethnic identity in a non-national manner with anti-ethnic tones to a certain degree. I have, therefore, suggested, among other things, that religion bears an important place in the human enterprise to construct this world in the Weberian sense. Unlike Durkheim, Weber does not distinguish between the worldly and other-worldly but postulates a collective consciousness and interaction between theological and sociological. Considering Weber's ontological concern for meaning or treating religion as a system for ordering the world, Islam has frequently been a significant motivating force behind the widespread expressions of Kurds in Turkey. Islam has influenced both the individual and collective behavior of many Kurds. These Kurds have provided Islamic theological justification for their collective action. I take collective action as one of the core mechanisms of political and social change" (Van Zomeren & Iyer: 2009). In order to explain the orientation of the collective action of Muslim nationalism, I will mainly look at the ways in which these Muslim Kurds mobilize in the public sphere, how they see Turkish Islamic Synthesis or Turkish Islamic communities, including tariqats and cemaats, and how they regard secular Kurdish politics.

Let me begin with the definition of the "other" in the minds of ordinary Muslims in the Kurdish public sphere. Muslim nationalism fundamentally evokes the sense of belonging and solidarity around the concept of Islamic brotherhood to gain strength against "the other". More importantly, the Kurdish context is not the same as religious nationalism in Pakistan, where Islam is transformed into a political ideology and employed to mobilize Muslims against Hindus (Kedourie:1993). The other is not a collective Turkish identity but secular

Turkish and even secular Kurdish one. The rivals range from secular Turkish and Kurdish nationalisms that exclude religion from the public sphere or impose control over religion within Turkey to the Western governments, as in the protests against the political cartoon of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, to Israel over the cause of the liberation of Quds. Thus, it has internal and external dimensions. They mainly correlate Palestinian nationalism with the holy place of Jerusalem because of Palestine's unique Islamic character, not with Arab nationalism. The national struggle of Palestine is directly linked with the broader framework of the Islamic struggle against invaders, colonizers, and infidels (Vicente, 2014:812).

Accordingly, Palestine could be liberated from Israeli control only through Islamic modes and instruments. Islam has thus become an organic source of mobilization of Muslim nationalism. The main agendas of Islamic mobilization, however, are ever-changing given the dynamic character of political processes in the post-cold War world. Some other actual challenges and agendas are as follows: Support for Anti-Assad Islamic groups in Syria, the struggle for the East Turkestan Muslims in China, the suppression of opposition (particularly the Muslim Brotherhood) in Egypt's authoritarian rule under Sisi[26], the future of Taliban in Afghanistan (a successful or failed transition) and what is happening in Libya and Yemen, etc. Most Diyarbakir-based Islamic non-governmental organizations, for instance, regularly organize protest demonstrations on similar issues. Özgürder comes to the fore as an Islamic organization that fits well into the idea of universal and trans-national Muslim nationalism. It was declared from the Twitter account of the Özgürder Diyarbakır branch on January 28, 2019, over the US recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

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[26] Diyarbakir Islamic NGOs held a press statement on the 18th of June in 2021 in front of the Grand Mosque of Diyarbakır after the Friday prayer to protest the death penalty for 12 Muslim Brotherhood members in Egypt. Mazlumder Diyarbakır Şubesi [@MazlumderDbakir].(2021, June 18). *Diyarbakır İslami Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları olarak bugün (18.06.2021) cuma namazından sonra Ulu Camii önünde Mısır'daki idam kararlarını protesto amaçlı basın açıklaması düzenledik.* Twitter. https://twitter.com/MazlumderDbakir/status/1405884606180737032

> We don't mind what comes out of the mouth of a madman (Donal Trump, then the president of the US). Jerusalem is ours as Muslims. Either we will take Jerusalem, or we will be martyrs. There is no way. After the Friday Prayer, we will organize a support rally for our Palestinian brothers in front of the Diyarbakır Grand Mosque. We will not leave our brothers alone.

These demonstrations, frequently held after Friday prayers in mosques, especially in the Grand Mosque in Diyarbakır, are not in the form of well-organized mass meetings or constant actions but are short-term ones, usually not exceeding 1-2 hours. After a short press statement with the crowded shouting slogans against the party concerned, everyone leaves the area. These gatherings have now turned into a ritual to relieve the masses in despair and hopelessness. More importantly, almost none of these kinds of actions were confronted by the public authority during the AKP rule. On the contrary, it has been encouraged to make Islamic politics visible in the Kurdish public space while throwing secular Kurdish politics into disarray. Nonetheless, religious rituals have become the instrument of mobilization, primarily through the demonstrations after the Friday prayers. As Mitchell put it, "the institutions and ritual practices that religion provides may enhance community organization and political mobilization. Even when people use [religious places] instrumentally, to provide a meeting place or foster cultural identity, this can have unintended *religious* consequences" (Mitchell, 2006:1149). In this way, religious issues have come to set the agenda of even ordinary people that do not have religious-based political aspirations.

In this respect, mosques set an example of where religion blocks the development of a particular national identity. While Turkish nationalism is constantly built and strengthened with symbols such as homeland, nation, flag, and prayer in Friday sermons in the mosques, Kurdish national identity, on the contrary, does not flourish or remains stunted. Even if the language of worship is Arabic, all other religious rituals such as sermons and prayers in the mosques are performed in Turkish and are in line with Turkish national values, which inevitably leads an ordinary Kurdish pious to alienate his language and culture in the public sphere and believe that there is no a fusion between religion and nationalism. That the symbols of Kurdish culture do not exist in the sacred areas

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in which Kurds are intensely located is what causes a Kurd not no make a definition of "the other" over ethnic consciousness. Moreover, the one who is heavily exposed to his propaganda is his Muslim Turkish brother. It is where ethnic indifference develops. Despite their core issues, the Palestinian cause lies at the heart of the political activism of Muslim Kurds. It is such a critical agenda topic that it is regarded as the primary reason for all political problems in the Middle East. According to Mehmet Eşin, the Hüdapar Deputy Chairman,

> The Palestinian cause is not a race's territorial cause but a common cause of the whole ummah.[27]

The head of Ittihad-ul Ulema (Union of Islamic Scholars), Enver Kılıçaraslan, goes even further claiming that defending al-Quds is obligatory (a religious duty) for every Muslim.[28] For that matter, International Quds Week was declared by a global initiative called Friends of al Aqsa to support the Palestinian people, like the Quds day was initiated in Iran after the Islamic Revolution. The initiative aims to remind the Muslim societies' responsibilities toward Quds and the Palestinian cause by mobilizing them through such actions and organized programs. Peygamber Sevdalıları Vakfı (The Prophet Lovers Foundation), which has close ties with Hüdapar and organizes Prophet Muhammed's birthday rally in Diyarbakır each year, is among the founders of this initiative along with Ittihad-ul Ulema (Union of Islamic Scholars). The two organizations are directly associated with Hüdapar. Yahya Oğraş, the deputy chairman of the Prophet's Lovers Foundation, clarifies what their objective purpose should be.

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[27] Mehmet Eşin [@MehmetEsin_]. (2020, November 29). *Kudüs, salt bir ırkın toprak davası değildir. Kudüs bütün ümmetin ortak davasıdır.* Twitter. https://twitter.com/MehmetEsin_/status/1333106447392116741

[28] İttihadul Ulema Başkanı Kılıçarslan: Kudüs'ü savunmak Müslümanların üzerine farzdır (2022, March 3), İlkha,
Hüda Par Genel Başkanı Yapıcıoğlu, iktidar vaatlerini sıraladı, (2021, September 19), *Doğruhaber.* Retrieved from https://ilkha.com/roportaj/ittihadul-ulema-baskani-kilicarslan-kudus-u-savunmak-muslumanlarin-uzerine-farzdir-188752

> The cause of Quds (Jerusalem) is the common cause of all Muslims. It is one of the causes that will exalt the Ummah (Islamic World), realize unity among Muslims, and will bring humiliation on the most brutal enemy of the Ummah. It is obligatory for all Muslims to defend Quds, to put the cause of Quds on the top of the World's agenda, to work for the liberation of it. The cause of Quds is a matter of honor for all Muslim peoples[29]

On the other hand, the regime change in Afghanistan in 2021, in particular, has received considerable attention among some Kurdish Islamic circles. Although Islamic organizations have not yet built strategic partnerships with the Taliban, mainly because of the Taliban's unpreparedness to export its ideology, an Islamist organization is welcome to come to power, and its anti-western discourses are appreciated unconditionally. Deputy Chairman of Ittihad-ul Ulema, Suat Yaşasin, had official meetings with the Minister of Invitation and Guidance in Afghanistan, Mevlana Muhammed Halid, and Deputy Prime Minister of Afghanistan, Mevlevi Abdusselam Hanafi, after the Taliban came back to power.[30] Hüda-Par Secretary General and Party Spokesperson Şehzade Demir, in a press conference on the prominent issues of the domestic and foreign agenda, has told that the first messages of the Taliban regime raised hopes for the future[31]. Another example of political mobilization is the remembrance of the conquest of Mecca on the first day of each year as opposed to the Christmas celebrations. Islamic NGOs in the Kurdish region participate in celebrating this annual event. This campaign aims to increase Islamic awareness and make a collective action with the theme that a genuine Muslim should not celebrate Christmas.

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[29] International Quds Week to kick off on Friday, (2022 February 24), *İlkha.* Retrieved from https://ilkha.com/english/analysis/international-quds-week-to-kick-off-on-friday-15867

[30] İttihadul Ulema [@ittihadululema]. (2022, March 17). *Genel Başkan Yardımcımız Suat Yaşasın hoca beraberindeki heyetle Afganistan'da Davet ve İrşad Bakanı Mevlana Muhammed Halid ile bir görüşme gerçekleştirdi*. Twitter. https://twitter.com/ittihadululema/status/1504391244750929923

[31] HÜDA PAR: Taliban yönetiminin ilk mesajları, geleceğe dair umutları artırmıştır, (2021, August 16). *Independent Türkçe.* Retrieved from https://www.indyturk.com/node/399876/siyaset/hüda-par-taliban-yönetiminin-ilk-mesajları-geleceğe-dair-umutları-artırmıştır

In recent years, celebrations of the Muslim conquest of Diyarbakir have been added to this under the sponsorship of the AKP government in the same week as the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul. Islamic NGOs in the Kurdish political sphere have been largely integrated into Turkish conservative right parties, mainly AKP and Felicity Party, or mild Islamic tendencies such as Ensar Foundation, IHH (Humanitarian Relief Foundation), Anatolian Youth Association (branch of National View ideology), Mazlum-der (The Association for Human Rights and Solidarity for the Oppressed). They harshly differ from some Kurdi organizations (those acting with national motivation) in terms of their political agenda, as we will see in the next section in detail. In this respect, the overwhelming majority of Kurdish Muslim nationalists are in group solidarity with Turkish Islamists over the agenda of the Islamization of society and unite them around a common ideological field. Now that the idea of Muslim nationalism is already pioneered by the Muslim Turks within the boundaries of Turkey, Muslim Kurds do not possess a relatively autonomous agenda and have become integrated into the conservative Turkish politics or Istanbul-based Islamic movements.

Günay&Yörük point out that AKP has integrated the Kurds into a larger society on class-based and ethnic-based inclusion. Ethnic inclusion has been widely implemented through "Islamic brotherhood," "critique of the secular state," and "the peace process"; class inclusion has been put into action via "social policies," "anti-elitist mobilization," and "clientelism" and "patronage networks" (Günay&Yörük, 2019). Their ethnographic study in İstanbul, which relies on an anthropological two-and-a-half-year survey, reveals that Islamic orders and communities constituted the grassroots institutional base for garnering Kurdish support paving the way for the de-ethnicization of the conflict between Kurdish and Turkish youth "under the banner of the unity and solidarity of the Islamic ummah" (Ibid.:24-25).

It is not, however, uncommon for Kurdish Muslim nationalists to come together with Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalists. Uninterestingly, commemorating the

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Halabja tragedy has become one of the rare events in which almost all Islamic NGOs and foundations are in accord with the Kurdish nationalist political circles. Another example of shared collective action is appreciating Sheikh Said's rebellion and commemorating him through his Islamic identity.

> The abolition of the Caliphate and the enactment of Tevhid-i Tedrisat (the law of the Union of National Education) undoubtedly mark the greatest persecution in this region. Fortunately, we are committed to the covenant with God. We neither gave up on the ummah ideal nor forgot what the Sheikh Said. (Suat Yaşasın)

Last but not least, a significant part of Muslim nationalists is capable of affecting micro-lives such as aid campaigns to the orphans, the delivery of the meat of Qurban animals, and offering of health care in Gaza, Afghanistan, and Idlib. Although they have political goals at the macro level, they keep their motivation active by touching micro lives through social interaction. They do not evidently pursue nationalism as a doctrine of an emancipatory or hegemonic aspiration oriented towards political purposes through collective action. As noted above, nationalism virtually amounts to a political ideology with an emancipatory aspiration or sovereignty of a self-conscious ethnic group over a particular territory it considers to be its homeland. Muslim nationalists do not accommodate the discourse of the national unity of the Kurds in the public sphere. Furthermore, they do not actively participate in or remain indifferent to what is happening in the Kurdish geopolitics, particularly in Syria and Iraq. Within this framework, ethnic consciousness does not turn into collective action based on national consciousness due to the potential dividing and weakening effects on the larger Muslim community or ummah. I also maintain that we cannot speak of nationalism if the ultimate source of social mobilization is not national awareness or if self-consciousness exists without political mobilization and collective action. In this sense, Muslim identity draws a stable boundary between the in-group (Muslims) and "the out-group (non-Muslims). The idea of Muslim nationalism involves the complex and sophisticated politics of Hüdapar circles about Kurdish nationhood. An actual example is Hüdapar's ambivalent approach to the independence referendum held in the Kurdistan region in 2017.

Although it called for the respect of the will of the people of Iraqi Kurdistan, it did not offer unconditional support to the independence attempt due to its implications on the current situation of the larger Muslim society.

> We believe that it is crucial for all the elements that make up the ummah to come together and unite under the banner of the Islamic order based on justice rather than the separation and division into smaller parts. Regardless of ethnic backgrounds, sects, and language, all Muslim societies must unite around Islamic ideals and goals and form a larger political unit instead of dividing them into smaller ones. Excellent examples of this have also existed in the history of Islam.[32]

Kurds in Muslim nationalism circles acknowledge that Turkish nationalism under the leadership of AKP (the ruling party) has become an eclectic ideology with strong Islamic connotations. They see the AKP as connected with the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis (TIS). TIS refers to a doctrine in which Islam is fused with Turkish nationalism and even an inseparable part of it, thereby constructing Sunni Muslim identity as one of the constitutive elements of Turkishness (Zürcher, 2014: Coşar, 2011). Islam has constantly been mobilized by Abdulhamid, the Young Turks, the Kemalists, the neo-Kemalists, and conservative nationalists (AKP, MHP, BBP, and so on) for the survival and interest of the state, respectively. It indicates the structural continuity between the late Ottoman Empire and the republic in exerting Islamic language and symbols. I agree with Zürcher altogether. For Çetinsaya, TIS as a political vision was first implemented during Democratic Party rule in the late 1950s and early years of the 1960s with the increasing number of Imam Hatip schools and the establishment of Ülkücü Hareket (the nationalist Grey Wolves organization) (Çetinsaya, 1999). His thinking overlooks the continuity between the late Ottoman state and the Republican period regarding Turkish nationalism's complicated link with Islam. Soleimani's work also vindicates this (Soleimani, 2016).

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[32] Kürdistan Referandumu - Partimiz Siyasi İşler Başkanlığı; Kürdistan Referandumu ve buna bağlı olarak yaşanan gelişmeler üzerine yazılı bir açıklama yayımladı, (2017), *Hüdapar Genel Merkez.* Retrieved from https://hudapar.org/web/13/kurdistan-referandumu.jsp

Muslim Kurds involved in Muslim nationalism are in solidarity with Turks in Turkish nationalism as long as it bears the same meaning as Muslim nationalism. Nevertheless, they disapprove of Turkish nationalism being directed toward the Kurdish population. Perhaps the most crucial factor in this is the common belief that Islam is the constitutive element of the Turkish national identity. Although ostensibly secular in character, the Turkish nation-building project was dramatically influenced by the legacy of the Ottoman Empire as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious polity where Islam was a psychological reference point (Lord, 2017:53). The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis has made Turkishness and Islamic identity mutually constitutive and inseparable (Uzer, 2016:220). As Yavuz rightly puts it,

> Turkish nationalism has vacillated between two poles with regard to the place of religion in Turkish national identity and culture. The first trend sought a closer synthesis between Islam and nationalism, arguing for a reinterpretation of Islam to cope with modern challenges. The second trend sought to divorce religion from nationalism and create a secularist ethnolinguistic nationalism. (Yavuz, 2003:52).

In this way, Turkishness has become at the intersection of Islam and nationalism. It was constructed by a project of radical secularization and a homogeneous ethnopolitical design on one side; it constantly reacted to the process of Westernization and secularization on the other, thereby allowing secular and Islamic patterns to coexist in competition. For the Muslim Kurds, too, Islam and Turkishness are almost inseparable. Turkishness has, however, been tightly controlled by the secular elites for their struggle for power and prestige. The problem is with the motivations and perceptions of the actors, not the idea of Turkish nationalism. This distinction is crucial to explaining the difference between Muslim nationalism and Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism, as we will see in the next chapter. As long as Muslim Turks maintain religious sentiments and discourses concerning Turkishness under the banner of Islam, it will not pose a big problem because Islam would eventually curb collective action based on race and ethnicity. Muslim nationalism, as a distinctive kind of nationalism, here substantially serves as a boundary marker against the non-

Muslim elements and secular segments of Turkish and Kurdish societies, respectively. Yet, it sometimes may be directed against Muslim societies, such as an ideological barrier to Shiite Iran or Islamic fundamentalist movements like ISIS, Al Qaeda, etc. Although the overwhelming majority of Muslim Kurds acknowledge that Islam has been subordinated to Turkish nationalism in Turkish-Islamic synthesis and deviated from its primary purpose, it can be reformed and headed to the leading destination.

Those included in the Muslim nationalism category, whether antiethnic or ethnically conscious, do not get involved in the classical debates on Kurdish nationhood in the public sphere to a large extent. They do not struggle for the broader use of the Kurdish language in the public sphere. Even if they demand a political solution to the Kurdish issue, they do not speak out loudly in the public arena. They are not included in the general discussions on the present status of Kurds in Iraq and Syria in the public sphere. They act as if they are not part of Kurdish geopolitics. Above all, these Kurds do not have an urgent agenda for Kurdish national unity. Hüdapar may be an exception due to its increased visibility on relevant topics. Still, its attempts fail to mobilize Kurdish national sentiments, let alone it does not possess explicit national aspirations and embrace nationalism as a doctrine.

5.5. Aim & Aspirations

In this chapter, I have formulated the competitive relationship between religion and nationalism based on political consciousness oriented towards collective action; thus, an image of society refers to the fundamental tenets of "religion" as an order-creating system rather than the nation. Islam still serves exclusively as an order-creating social and cultural system possessing political aspirations through the collective action of its adherents. Contrary to the modern accounts expected, nationalism has never replaced Islam as an order-creating system or the primary cultural mechanism of social integration, especially for those who perceive it as an offspring of secularism. A trans-national discourse and

projection of the structuring of society have outshined "the claims of national sovereignty. Drawing on the distinction between religion and nationalism as competing ideologies of order-creating systems and Friedland and Brubaker's categorization of religious nationalism "as a distinctive kind of nationalism," I argue that the primary political goal of religious nationalism is to promote a social order based on religious tenets. Then, it aims to establish a political order within and without including trans-national supra-ethnic characteristics beyond the nation-state system. This definition makes religion the primary impetus for mobilization, aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a competitive model rather than the nation.

According to the idea of Muslim nationalism, Islam has been deactivated by the process of secularization of politics and society under the name of modernization. For Tibi, Islam receded politically to give way to the modern nation-state with "the dissolution of the last universal Islamic order of the Ottoman Empire" (Tibi, 1997:219). Arab nationalism was, for instance, "a challenge to the political order of Islam as embodied in the Ottoman Empire". The discussion of how much of an Islamic or secular regime the Ottoman Empire was is not within the scope of this study. But we know that Renan's conception of the nation, for instance, does not include the Ottoman system, where "Turks, Slavs, Greeks, Armenians, Arabs, Syrians, and Kurds are as distinct today as they were upon the day that they were conquered" (Renan, 1996:44). Ottoman Empire did not accommodate the modern nation due to the lack of fusion among its ethnic elements. It does not indicate that the Ottomans lacked unity if there was no fusion among its elements. It does not indicate that Ottomans lacked unity if there was no fusion among its elements. Islam has often been used as a cohesive social force to unify distinct groups of people, excluding non-muslims. The promotion of Muslim identity through integrating religiously homogeneous ethnic groups into the Ottoman system was brought to the agenda when the need to create order and unity became paramount, particularly in the 19th and 20th centuries. As Marsh put it,

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> Throughout almost its entire history from the 13th to the early 20th centuries, the Ottoman Empire was ordered along religious lines, not national ones. In fact, there was no national identity per se, with all Muslims enjoying the same rights and privileges no matter what their ethnic background, Turkic, Arabic, Slavic, or so on. All non-Muslims (dhimmi) in the empire, meanwhile, were placed by the Sublime Porte into a confessional community, or millet. This system provided a high degree of tolerance for ethnic differences and even religious diversity and worked well for hundreds of years. (Marsh, 2007:101).

Today, those who act with Islamic motivation are primarily concerned with "ordering the world". As an essentially secular consciousness, nationalism has ceased the historical epoch of Islamic transnationalism. In this view, the main aim should then be to re-Islamize what has been secularized and to create an order based on Islamic tenets. Islamism may, of course, have many faces and versions and does not correspond to a single political line. No ideological movements are monolithic among themselves. Some scholars go one step further and argue that Islam is fundamentally plastic and there are varieties of Islam" (Bouhdiba qouted in Moghadam, 2014:152). Accordingly, the relationship between Islam and society illustrates important variations in framing religiosity, ranging from enormously orthodox in Pakistan to syncretic and flexible in Indonesia and non-religiosity in most of Kazakhstan. Although the insistence on Islam being plastic appears exaggerated in part, it is obvious that there is not a single Islam but many Islams. That Quran has been interpreted differently over time and space indicates "the social construction of the meaning system".

In an attempt to provide a comprehensive framework to understand Islamism, I mainly focus on two points regarding the project of building order—Shari'a order within Muslim societies and transnational interaction abroad. The second is, ultimately, associated with the idea of Pan-Islamism, which aims at an all-around political organization that Muslim communities to act autonomously under an Islamic system without a hierarchical structure. Muslim nationalism necessarily promotes pan-Islamism due to its reliance on transnational values. Although the territorial nation-state has become the only concrete political reality of modern times, pan-Islamism has been a dream and aspiration (Zubaida, 2004:413). On the other hand, the name of the imagined order does not have to

be Shari'a. More importantly, Shari'a here does not necessarily equal a full-fledged or well-defined system of rule. Instead, it refers to a spectrum of thought and action ranging from mild Islamic inclination to the most extreme type of radical (jihadist) Islamism. Still, it essentially amounts to a form of Islamic order (İslam Nizamı). When Shari'a is mentioned, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) often comes to mind. The imagined Islamic order, however, goes beyond the individual level of religious commitment because Shari'a has political, economic, and social implications over all areas of society.

In my definition of Muslim nationalism, religious performance at the discourse level is insufficient to meet all requirements. There must also be an aspiration for the basic principles of the order to be founded on Islam. Muslim nationalism is a spiritual, political, and cultural movement composed of Muslims seeking to build a Muslim society (a community of the faithful) grounded in the Quranic worldview. Therefore, religion and politics are inseparable in the classical mind of a Muslim nationalist, and there should be no contradiction between theory and practice when referring to the idea of a worldwide Islamic community and the principle of "din wa-dawlah" (the divine state order). It implies that Islam is concurrently involved with a Muslim community's religious and political affairs. Accordingly, Islam has not left any questions about humans and society unanswered. Nothing that concerns them is outside the sphere of religion. It obviously fits into Weber's explanation of religion on two levels: "the inner realm of individuals" and "the foundation of the world". Islam emphasizes two points: constructing the individual and designing a system for ordering the world. When viewed from this aspect, Gellner also implies that Islam conforms to the Weberian conception of meaning. "Islam is the blueprint of a social order. It holds that a set of rules exists, eternal, divinely ordained and independent of the will of men, which defines the proper ordering of society" (Gellner, 1981:1). For Zubaida, Gellner admitted that "the Islamic idea of the community as the political unit is incompatible with the territorial nation-state" (Zubaida, 2004:407). According to Gellner, the rapid and early political success of the first Muslims and the notion that the divine message is complete and final displays

Islam's difference from other religions. Unlike Islam, Christianity, for example, was moved to accommodate the secular political order that would never be under its control. Gellner adds,

> Judaism and Christianity are also blueprints of a social order, but rather less so than Islam. Christianity, from its inception, contained an open recommendation to give unto Ceasar that which is Ceasar's. A faith which begins, and for some time remains, without political power, cannot but accommodate itself to a political order which is not, or is not yet, under its control.(Gellner, 1981:1)

Abd ar-Rahman al-Bazzaz, too, agrees with the idea that Islam does not accept a narrow view of religion by restricting it within the limits of religious rituals such as worship, prayers, and reading of Scriptures. Contrary to Christianity and Buddhism, Islam aims to devise social order and generate a system of economic rules and government, including philosophy of life. Bazzaz cautiously concludes: "Islam does not necessarily contradict Arab nationalism unless their political aims differ, but this is unthinkable precisely [because of the] substantive links between the two" (quoted in Enayat 1982:113). Indeed, Russell noted that Islam was a political religion from its very beginning before Gellner and Bazzaz. He underlines the differing ontological claims of Christianity and Islam in their substantive content.

> It is typical of the difference between Islam and Christianity that the caliph combined within himself both temporal and spiritual authority… whereas Christianity, by its non-political character, was led to create two rival politicians, namely, the Pope and the Emperor (Russell, 2013:13)

Christianity attaches more importance to the individual while not referring to the political organization. On the contrary, even the prophet of Islam was a leader and statesman as much as a social reformer and religious teacher (Kedourie, 1953:180). As a political and socially-oriented religion, Islam permeates the life of the individual and society altogether. It is, therefore, a human enterprise to construct this world, but it is not necessarily true that this enterprise is all about the profane. Christianity does not aim to influence the public sphere as much as Islam does. Let me give a present example. Today, Islamic finance takes its

place in the global capitalist economy. Why is there Islamic finance, whereas Jewish, Christian, or Buddhist finance does not exist? In this respect, Islam is a religion with political purposes. Although it cannot overthrow capitalism, some Islamic approaches seek to modify it. So does this apply to Christianity, Judaism, or other religions? I do not think so. Perhaps, if available, it may be at a marginal level. Islamic finance has, however, turned into a large-volume market that includes countries such as Turkey, Malaysia, UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, which displays the effect of Islam on economic life.

I argue that Muslim nationalism is not a political ideology quite distinct from the substantive content of Islam. In other words, Islam has substantive and ontological significance and does not draw its strength from the community. In his Memoirs, al-Banna defines Islam as worship and leadership; a religion and state; a spiritual and practical; a prayer and jihad; obedience and government; a sacred text and sword; each can never be separate from the other" (Al Banna, 2007:266). This consciousness has penetrated the cells of not a few Muslims. Islam has a claim of constructing this world and mobilizes some of its followers' need for dignity around "the concept of the Muslim ummah". Islamic identity promises more dignity than other ideologies, including nationalism, while ironically keeping some characteristics of nationalism. Although the emphasis on order in Islam appears confined to social life, it also includes political connotations as it proposes a model for social organization. In other words, Islam becomes an indirect source of political order, even if it is not a direct one. Moreover, a substantial part of Muslims expects Islam to be adopted as an explicit component of the political order in Muslim societies. Murat Koç makes a definition of the Islamic community similar to that of Hasan al-Banna.

> Islamic way of thinking, as a whole, refers to faith, worship, morality, philosophy, politics, law, and education. It represents a collective thought and action to guide our personal lives and to save Muslims and the Islamic world from Western exploitation, cruel and despotic rulers, slavery, imitation, and superstition with a rational method.

A significant part of the interviewees highlighted that they envision a political order based on Islamic tenets and values and that the existing political systems, including democracy, did not bring justice and freedom to Muslims. One of the main agendas of Kurdish Muslim nationalists is the re-Islamization of the Kurdish society on the road to the building of the Islamic order because more than 90 percent of its inhabitants are Muslim. They fervently believe that when the Muslims (mainly Kurds) are Islamized, a truly Muslim nation will naturally come into being because social order is constructed "from below rather than from above". Yapıcıoğlu, the leader of Hüda-Par, expresses the inherent link between Islam and politics.

> We cannot keep a distance between Islam and politics. Those who do this should know that they are depriving politics of ethics. We, Hüdapar, are a political movement that has embraced Islam as a high standard to be achieved and has concentrated on gaining the approval of God. (Ibid.:1).

The most vital obstacles Hüdapar has faced are constitutional and legal restrictions on freedom of expression and propaganda, especially the Turkish penal code, to enunciate the Islamization agenda. Some other Muslim Kurds desire a more radical change in terms of the relationship between religion and politics. Usalp, a prominent figure of the Association for Radical Change (Köklü Değişim Derneği), points to the need for the re-establishment of Khilafat.

> We want to reinvigorate the Khilafat in which sovereignty belongs to Shari'a, namely the words of God. Not to the Ummah. Shari'a is what God says, not the majority. The political authority, however, may belong to the Ummah that gives it to the Caliph it has chosen.

Mahmut Kar, the general media coordinator of the same organization, comes up with more direct implications of the Islamic order (referring to the caliphate) in the Muslim societies and the modern nation-state system.

> When the Caliphate is founded, the Ummah will regain what they lost. Prosperity and development will come to Muslim lands again. The global

capitalist system will disappear into the blue. The Caliphate will rise to the position of the world's most powerful state again.[33]

When asked if you have an aspiration for an Islamic society or a state ruled by Shari'a and what model do you desire in terms of state-society relations, Vahdettin Kaygan replies,

> I absolutely have such an ideal. I am a Muslim, and my primary goal is to live within a political order where Islam pervades, the rules and regulations set by God sway, the border between halal and haram is clear and, more importantly, is built on justice.

Islam remains a source of motivation to create a political order for most Muslim Kurdish organizations and prompts their collective action. In this framework, their image of society refers to the project of controlling the world in accordance with the principles of Islam as an order-creating system rather than the nation-state, thereby rendering Islam and Kurdish nationalism "competing ideologies of order." Political authority cannot be founded on glorifying a nation but on the will of God because God's relations with the world also include political affairs. These organizations advocating transnational political, economic, social, and cultural interaction among Muslims have embraced a more explicitly anti-secular position. In their ways of approaching social reality, religion is the only solution to the political and social crises created by secular modernity in the hand of secular national elites. In this way, it seems hardly possible to accept that nation as the order-creating system has replaced religion in the imagination of Kurds, as it continues to affect the individual and collective identity in the Kurdish public sphere.

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[33] Mahmut Kar [@mk_mahmutkar]. (2021, March 6). *Hilafet kurulunca ümmet kaybettiklerini geri kazanacak, bu topraklara yeniden bolluk bereket ve refah gelecek. Küresel sömürgecilik sistemi yok edilecek ve Hilafet yeniden dünyanın birinci devleti konumuna yükselecek.* Twitter. https://twitter.com/mk_mahmutkar/status/1368170962517188620

5.6. Conclusion

Now that Islam and nationalism have been mutually exclusive and competitive due to their incompatible characteristics in some Islamic circles in the Kurdish context, it does not generate a dual commitment to the Islamic faith and Kurdish nationalism but rather a clear anti-national orientation. This segment of the Kurdish population brands nationalism as a secular form of consciousness that "sacralizes the secular." Above all, nationalism is characterized as an ill-advised phenomenon to be avoided and most often used in a pejorative sense. It is even, willingly or unwillingly, confused with racism. Religiosity promises more dignity and becomes a source of motivation in the mobilization of Muslim Kurds against the perceived threat of secular organisms, whether Turkish, Arabic, or Kurdish national identity. More bluntly, the other is not a collective Turkish identity but a secular Turkish and even secular Kurdish one. To be Muslim comes first, then ethnic identification with no political aspiration. In the cases where nationalism and religion are intertwined, the first has dominated the latter, ultimately becoming a kind of political religion. So nationalism is seen as a religion, and even religious forms of nationalism are thus entirely unwarrantable. The Kurdish question has also been regarded as a subject of equal citizenship rather than political status-claiming emancipation.

Consequently, Kurdish nationalism has an accidental character and lacks historical continuity. Despite all the deficiencies in practice, a true Islamic brotherhood is assumed to be an antidote to the degeneration of modernity and the problems raised by all ideological isms, including secular nationalism. In this view, Islam emancipates the individual and society; thus, the aim must first be (re)Islamization of the Kurdish society and then create an order based on Islamic tenets. Such a group feeling, however, locates Muslim Kurds against secular Kurdish nationalism, thereby automatically constraining Kurdish ethno-national claims. Islam has thus been an influential agent for alleviating Kurdish national aspirations. Consequently, Islam influences the identity formation of the Kurdish population by playing a universalizing role by diminishing the salience of ethnic

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identity in favor of a religious one. In other words, ethnic identity equates with cultural identity and has no political implications. The contradiction between Islam and nationalism is not, therefore, over. My fieldwork confirms this. We see, however, two different tendencies in Kurdish Islamic circles in terms of the ethnic frame. While one trend appears more anti-ethnic, the other seems to have a strong ethnic consciousness but with no political aspiration or functioning as a source of mobilization. Whether anti-ethnic or ethnically conscious, those included in the Muslim nationalism category are not socialized into the agenda relevant to the Kurdish nationhood in the public sphere.

CHAPTER 6

SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISLAM AND KURDISH NATIONALISM

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I intend to examine how religious identity influences national consciousness and ethnopolitical claims within the Kurdish context. The primary question is whether and to what extent Islam reinforces the Kurdish national struggle. On what basis can it be argued that the long-standing contradiction between Islam and Kurdish nationalism no longer exists? Is it possible to talk about Kurdish Islam in which a fusion between the self-consciousness of religious identification with that of nationalism has been a distinctive feature? What role does Islam play in the legitimizing the idea of a nation and the ethnicization of political mobilization oriented toward nationhood? Does it have a primary or secondary role in uniting the ethnically conscious community around a common goal? Although it is difficult to measure the political orientation of a particular population, the way to answer those questions is to investigate the perception of self-consciousness, core motivations for collective actions, and political aspirations. The complex trend of political mobilization allows us to distinguish diverse types of relationships between religion and nationalism. It also helps explain the premises of group solidarity in which nationalist claims or religious motivations demarcate collective action.

In the first section, I will examine how Islam-influenced Kurdish national circles frame their ethnic identity. Do they consider it only as a matter of biology of human nature or more than that by transforming ethnic affiliation into a national cause? Subsequently, I will briefly discuss national consciousness around two things: A description of the Kurdish cause concentrated on the emancipation of

Kurds and the sense of belonging to a territorial imagination, Kurdistan. In this respect, the view on the nation and nationalism and formulation of the Kurdish issue around national survival, security, and dignity are worth exploring. To shed light on this category, I will analyze how pious Kurds determine political agendas around which they mobilize in the public sphere. To what extent are they in solidarity with Turkish Muslims or not, and how do they see Turkish Islamic Synthesis or Turkish Islamic communities, including tariqats and cemaats, and approach secular Kurdish politics? The last part of the chapter elaborates on how Islam ceases to be an obstacle to awakening national claims and aspirations in the minds of pious Kurds. It attempts to draw attention to the bifurcation shaped by the interaction between religion and nationalism as order-creating systems within the Kurdish context.

6.2. Islam-Influenced Kurdish Nationalism in the Making

In the previous chapter, I suggested that "the idea of Muslim nationalism" as a distinctive kind of nationalism is in complete opposition to ethnopolitical sentiments and aspirations, which can be called a competitive relationship between religion and nationalism. Within this framework, the two have mutually exclusive goals and contradicting order-creating systems. Accordingly, political consciousness oriented towards collective action, thus an image of society, refers to the fundamental tenets of "religion" as an order-creating system rather than the nation. Such a conception makes religion the primary impetus for mobilization, aspirations, core motivations, and collective action rather than the nation in what I have called the competitive model. In the Kurdish context, the primacy of Islamic identity does not allow to embrace of desiring ethnopolitical goals or taking collective action around the concept of the nation, mainly the vision of national unity, while protecting ethnic identity in a non-national manner and even with anti-ethnic tones to a certain degree. I have, therefore, suggested, among other things, that Islam still maintains an essential role in the minds of Muslim Kurds to construct this world.

Nevertheless, I mainly develop a binary approach because, I argue, there is either a competitive or symbiotic relationship between nationalism and religion. In other words, religion has both the capacity to promote (positive impacts) and prevent (slowing effects) the emergence and growth of national feelings. In this configuration, Islam slows down the consolidation of the Kurdish nation-building process on one side, facilitating national consciousness and unity on the other. I prefer to use the symbiotic form of relationship to the extent that religion and nationalism are intertwined and dependent on each other. In this way, religious nationalism equates "religious identity with national self-consciousness," merging their respective allegiances. Such a description, however, makes the nation, rather than religion itself, an essential source of mobilization, political aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a symbiotic model. I am using this concept in that secular nationalism is becoming more religious, as Juergensmeyer did (Juergensmeyer, 1995:383). That religion and nationalism can co-exist in a symbiotic relationship do not necessarily indicate an absolute retreat of secular nationalism. I claim throughout this study that secular perspective and culture contribute to the construction of national consciousness, and nationalism enables the sacralization of the secular the way round. Yet, secularization is not a requirement for sharing a sense of common nationhood. You do not need to be a full-fledged secular to feel a strong emotional attachment to your nation, or you can become a nationalist without being secularized instantly. Let us now look in more detail at the coexistence of Islam and Kurdish nationalism as an example of the symbiotic form of relationship between religion and nationalism.

Before proceeding to the ways in which the idea of nationhood and national consciousness has become widespread among Kurdish Islamic circles in recent years, it may be well to remark at the outset that we have entered a new stage in the study of Kurdish nationalism. I conceptualize and present this process as the intertwining of Islam with Kurdish nationalism by which pious Kurds, with their subordinate position vis-a-vis Turkishness as the dominant or superordinate identity, come to feel that they belong to a distinct national community and call

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this unequal representation a pattern of collective oppression. Religion here has a supporting role in legitimizing and reinforcing the national cause through words, images, and symbols. Religion is no longer an obstacle for the ethnically conscious group to equate religious identity with national self-consciousness. It even sets up a framework in which religious community equates with national identity. Kurdish context, however, does not resemble other national movements with religious motifs such as the Palestinians, Bosnians, the Sinhalese Buddhists, Tamil Hindus, Chechens, Aches, Filipino Moros, and Kashmiris that are cited as typical examples of "religious nationalism" in the literature. Religion has been characterized mainly as "an ethnic marker" defining group belonging in this configuration. It distinguishes one group from the other along religious lines, so national and religious identities overlap flawlessly. "Religious nationalism draws upon that exclusivity" (Veer, 1994:57). In other words, religion constitutes the most important part of the nation, as illustrated in the construction of Pakistani and Indian national identities, respectively.

Unlike these cases, however, Kurdish nationalism does not epitomize religious nationalism in which religion is an ethnic marker. Islam has not created a particular effect on the formation and development of national consciousness in the Kurdish context in terms of the linguistic and cultural community. Furthermore, significant segments of the Kurdish population belong to the same religion, namely Islam, as the nationalisms with which it competes though they have different sects and schools of thought. Islam, therefore, does not lie at the heart of Kurdish nationalism. Although Islam does not constitute the fabric of the Kurdish ethnic and national identity, it penetrates secular Kurdish nationalism fostering nationhood. Resistance against the hegemony of Turkish nationalism and secularizing trends here forms the basis of this kind of religious nationalism in which ethnically conscious Muslim Kurds give a new interpretation to the nation. In this respect, Islam and Kurdish nationalism are not necessarily contradictory and mutually exclusive. The two interact with each other in such a way that neither distinguishes itself from the other.

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Nevertheless, "nationalism is an essentially secular form of consciousness" because it focuses exclusively on this world (Greenfeld, 1996b). It has, therefore, secularizing effects on thought and life patterns, convincing people that religion alone is hardly persuasive for the survival of the community to which they belong. Indeed, secularization is not necessary for sharing a sense of common nationhood, but national consciousness inevitably goes along with a decline in religiosity. In this way, religion provides people with identity and reinforces a sense of collective solidarity from the Durkheimian perspective. As Asad notes, "religious ideas can be secularized" and that secularized concepts, like nationalism, may contain a strong religious ingredient (Asad:2003:189). Greenfeld was also right in claiming that most religious nationalisms actually have a secular character with religious content and do not constitute a distinct type of nationalism (Greenfeld, 1996b). In his brief study of the relationship between religious practices and the construction of ethnic identity in Hui Muslim communities, Stroup reaches similar findings. Even though religious practices play a crucial role in forming and maintaining ethnic boundaries, one can see the relatively secularized status of Islam with the Hui becoming secularized and not actively practicing Islam (Stroup, 2016). The same argument can be applied to the Muslim Bosnian population, which is not actively participating in Islamic practices despite sharing Islam as a distinctive identity marker.

When it comes to the Kurdish case, which is the focal point of our study, it is a tough task to correlate the presence of religiosity with the degree of consciousness of nationhood. I have, therefore, based my position throughout the study on a context-dependent approach that treats nationalism as "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful, and disaggregated terms" to overcome the theoretical limitations. As Greenfeld also notes, "neither religion nor nationalism is uniform." (Greenfeld, 1996b:170). Nationalism as a social phenomenon, like religion, does not form a monolithic category because nationalists do not all go the same way and act accordingly. Above all, nations are composite entities in which collective action is undertaken by the organization of individuals but accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts, and ideological competition

among its members. We see two tendencies or orientations in Kurdish Islamic circles regarding the impact of secularization and the vulnerability of religiosity. One trend appears more robust in religiosity but not crystallized. It is unclear whether and to what extent primary allegiances and political aims are based on Islamic doctrine or Kurdish nationalism.

This segment of Kurdish Islamic circles shares certain features with that of Weber from a substantive perspective and Durkheim from contextuality. Accordingly, religion refers to a system for ordering the world, but it is not free from specific historical circumstances in which it grows. It is not then surprising to treat religion not merely as an essential phenomenon for having immutable essence but as a constitutive process implying that symbols and discourses within it can be partly changed (even secularized) in contemporary societies, which can also be called "the social construction of the meaning systems". On the other hand, the second category is more susceptible to the influence of secularization as much as its national awareness increases. It also represents a more unmixed Durkheimian approach to religion in which the social power of the faith stems from its ability to serve as a driving force. The substantive explanation of religion amounts to an understanding of religion from within, while the functional view focuses on the capacity of religion to act as social influence. Those who subscribe to the second wave tend to distinguish between the realm of the sacred and that of the profane. At this point, I should highlight that the fundamental difference between Weber and Durkheim lies in their approaches to the mobilization of religiosity. The "change" comes with collective action through the substantive meaning of religion in Weber, while in Durkheim, it takes place in a context where society gives importance to religious beliefs and practices. National movements are dynamic actors that give additional meanings to religion in the Durkheimian sense. Accordingly, religion has ontologically no value in itself and is helpful to the extent that it conforms to the interests of a particular group of humans. In this respect, it is a collective enterprise about the profane.

I do not, however, attempt to treat religiously motivated Kurdish nationalism as a distinct type of nationalism apart from secular nationalism. I borrow the concept of "instrumental pious nationalism" from Rieffer to a certain degree to explain the nascent Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. In her article, Rieffer first takes "secular nationalism" as anti-religious, which is devoid of religious sentiment and overtones" and then distinguishes between "religious nationalism" and "instrumental pious nationalism". Although I do not find it convincing to draw such a distinction, her approach helps understand the limited role of religion in spreading religion. Needless to say, nationalism, in one way or another, requires secular consciousness. Still, it does not necessarily replace traditional religious forms of consciousness as the primary cultural mechanism of social integration. Although religion here does not play a primary role in the construction and development of nationalism, it is difficult to argue that it may only be employed as an intact instrument. Therefore, I do not prefer to use the instrumental phrase, and I would say pious nationalism. Pious nationalism refers to the cases where religion does not always occupy a central position in mobilizing a nationalist movement or is not the primary basis for a process of becoming a nation. Yet, it comes into play as a supporting element that can unite the population (Rieffer, 2003). Religion becomes an additional source of motivation to unite its members around a common goal and encourages collective action.

In this way, religion provides people with identity and enhances solidarity and support at the collective level in the Durkheimian sense. Thus, the persistence of the religion's influence does not just rely on its capacity to direct and guide individuals in their daily lives but also to unite the collectivity serving as a badge of group identity. Religion acts as a cohesive social force to increase solidarity for different sectors of the population. As a power resource, it may strengthen loyalty to the national identity and reinforce the national consciousness. As a result, religion plays a supportive but not leading role and is of secondary importance in pious nationalism. In a similar vein, Soper&Fetzer's conception of "civil-religious nationalism" differs from "religious nationalism" to the extent

that religion does not play a primary role in the formation of national consciousness and arousing political mobilization. Belonging to the faithful community allows co-religionists to come together to favor the national cause, as in Rieffer's "pious nationalism."

6.3. The View on self-consciousness

While Kurdish Muslim nationalists I interviewed frame ethnic identity as "a matter of biology" about human nature, Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalists do not distinguish between ethnic and national affiliation, confirming my assertion that nationalism falls upon self-conscious ethnic groups through collective action directed towards political claims. In the first unit, ethnic identity equates with cultural identity without political implications, and cultural affiliations are seen as the continuation of biological characteristics. Ethnic consciousness does not turn into the national consciousness with a view that it will divide and weaken the larger Muslim community. Ethnically self-consciousness of this segment of the Kurdish population does not generate Kurdish nationhood. In the second, however, the group possesses a higher level of commitment to ethnic identity with the awareness that a nation represents "a far more self-consciousness than an ethnicity". Such a group feeling ushers nationhood claims "the right to political identity" and "autonomy as a people," together with the control of a particular territory (Hastings, 1997).

The prevalent view among the pious Muslims that nationalism is in complete opposition to Islam appears deceptive for these Kurds. In other words, Kurdish nationalism does not contradict Islam. It reflects a fusion of religious ideas with Kurdish ethnopolitical aspirations. Although we may not be able to say that authentic Kurdish Islam is in the making in the Kurdish political sphere, we may easily observe a scattered mobilization of religiously motivated Kurdish nationalism, which grounds and legitimizes its political aspirations on Islam. Despite no clear-cut political movement or collective action on the ground, there is a mobilization on the level of individual and thought. Besides Islamic identity,

these Kurds have a strong sense of national consciousness. They concentrate on the Kurdish national cause and the emancipation of Kurds from all kinds of oppression, thereby making an emancipatory definition of Islam. Just as Kurdish nationalism has been misconstrued, so has Islam. Kurdish nationalism, in this view, has nothing to do with racial segregation or chauvinism and thus is not contrary to the universal spirit of Islam. In the Muslim nationalism framework, if anything, the idea of nation and nationalism has strictly been characterized as an ill-advised phenomenon to be avoided and most often used in a pejorative sense. It is even, willingly or unwillingly, confused with racism. Nonetheless, the participants close to Weberian thinking often refrain from using the term nationalism because of its pejorative connotation, which does not necessarily mean that they do not have nationalist feelings. As noted earlier, the more a fundamental identity is pertinent to survival, security, and dignity, the more it is tied to a political cause taking priority over all other identities. The concern for survival, in particular, reflects "the perception of threat," which lies at the basis of the sense of national consciousness. Abdullah Şahin, a prominent figure from the Diyarbakır branch of Zehra Foundation and Nubihar Association, equates religious identity with a consciousness of belonging to a nation in response to my question, "do you define yourself first as a Muslim or as a Kurd? Does Islamic or Kurdish identity come first for you? Which is your primary identity?

> The same question is mentioned in Bediüzzaman's work, Hutbe-i Şamiye. He states that religion and national identity are not mutually exclusive and inseparable in response to whether religious or national attitudes should be in the foreground. I completely agree with him on this. I will express it through Bediuzzaman's definitions of positive-negative nationhood. The negative model feeds on destroying "the other." It does not give the right to the other that it considers legitimate for itself. On the other hand, the positive one does not aim to eliminate others while protecting the natural social environment.

A similar point is made by Hafız Ahmet Turhallı, the head of Civaka İslamiya Kurdistan (Kurdistan Islamic Movement), emphasizing the preservation of Kurdish national identity against the hegemony of the Turkish nationalist project.

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> My position is close to that of Bediuzzaman, who distinguishes nationalism into two categories negative and positive. God says we have distinguished you so that you may know each other, not to dominate one another. From our point of view, within the framework of the Qur'an, this is the correct definition. The struggle to attain superiority over another nation is against the principles of the Qur'an. We do not have to call it nationalism. It is about retaining your identity, which also conforms to the divine will.

Which identity do you think is under more threat?" I keep asking.

> The way my self-consciousness and ideals are shaped is, of course, developed by my culture. Religious identity, however, takes second place after my ethnic or racial identity in that the former is subjected to selection, while the latter is not subjected to selection. The attempt to change national identity is to oppose and even ignore the divine will.

Mele Süleyman Kurşun underlines the overlapping religious and ethnic group boundaries in articulating a distinct Kurdish national identity. The Kurdish national consciousness without Islam remains weak and inauthentic within this framework. In other words, although Islam is not the constitutive element of Kurdish nationhood, it is tightly bound to it.

> I'm Muslim, and I'm Kurdish. The question of priority between my Islamic and Kurdish identities is philosophical. There is no problem as long as the two do not contradict in practice. If they do so, all belongings are sacrificed to Islam. But if my people are oppressed, defending them does not require abandoning my religion. I am a Muslim, and I protect my Kurdish belonging. More importantly, Allah placed the Kurds among the other Islamic nations, Turkish-Arab-Persian-Urdu. Kurds have a particular understanding of Islam, ranging from taking advantage of the Hanafi sect of the Turks, influenced by the Safavid-Iranian Shiism, and being affected by the language, customs, and culture of the Arabs. When viewed as a whole, Islam can manifest itself in the Kurds.

His realist approach demonstrates that the Muslim world is too vast and diverse to have a distinct Muslim nationalism as different Muslim ethnic groups are situated in various socio-political and cultural contexts. It also presents an argument that shares certain features with that of Weber and Durkheim. He also adds by implying that group survival is inconceivable without representation.

> Turks, Arabs, and Persians are the great demagoguery and manipulate the ideal of the ummah. I would like to exist independently and freely with my identity, language, geography, and other attributes.

Fikri Amedi, one of the Kurdish translators of the Quran, noting that he broke away from all the seemingly Islamic communities, responds to the following questions: Do you define yourself first as a Muslim or as a Kurd? Does Islamic or Kurdish identity come first for you? Which is your primary identity?

> Let me first say that the red-covered Qoran that President Erdogan waved at rallies is mine. I don't know whether I'm fortunate or not. It happened without my knowledge. As for your questions, if you had asked me these in the 1990s, my immediate answer would have definitely been Islamic identity as a privileged one. Then, I was under the influence of the Islamist movements and believed them fervently. For us, national identity did not matter a lot. We were even barely able to express that we were Kurds. When we brought up the Kurdish issue, we tried to justify ourselves by voicing other problems (he implies that he could not embrace an autonomous attitude). We used to merge the situation of Kurds into the Palestinian cause and the Chechnya case timidly.

Another interviewee, Ahmet Kaya, the former mayor of Ergani, a district of Diyarbakır Province, removed from office by the Turkish government, talks about the division of humanity into nations and the enduring character of national identity, referring to the Quran, Surah Hujurat. "Indeed, we created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may get to know one another" (Quran, 49:13).

> If different nations come into being, as indicated in the Qur'an, there are also members of these nations. In other words, membership in a nation includes some features that differ from membership in another. The Qur'an also says so. Just as nations are a natural phenomenon, belonging to national collectivities is natural and normal. For example, I am a Kurd and a part of the Kurdish nationhood, and I feel this belonging. Therefore, I am a nationalist with this sentiment. I embrace all the commonalities I share with Kurdishness.

This verse is the most widely used reference among those pious Kurds, who are more resilient in religiosity and seek Islamic theological justification for Kurdish nationalism. Such an Islamic understanding can find accommodation with Kurdish national claims. In line with this effort, Zeybel Abidin Arikele, an

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author of the sermon (khutba) and tajweed of the Quran book in the Kurdish language, also emphasizes the positive meaning of the nation in self-definition.

> First, we are human, then we are Muslims. Likewise, first, I am a Kurd and then a Muslim. God first created me as a human, sent me as a Kurd, and then bestowed his religion on me. The Arabs have a phrase. "One cannot be condemned for parental love." I mean, I'm a Kurd and proud of being a Kurd. I love Kurdishness. It is about my nature and is my right. But If I tell you that there are no more invaluable and superior people in the world other than the Kurds, that the Kurds are excellent, and everyone should serve them, or that Kurdishness is a superordinate identity around which different ethnic groups gather. In that case, it is not a positive nationalism but racism.

This self-conscious subgroup within the Kurdish population seeks to raise national consciousness. They are also well aware that being a nation differs from being a community of faithful. In this sense, my fieldwork supports Sarıgil's suggestion that there is a more accommodative and inclusive understanding of Kurdish nationalism among some Muslim Kurds (Sarıgil, 2018). Despite difficulties in measuring the rise of Kurdish nationalism among pious Kurds, it is clear that national feelings permeate their attitudes and threatens the status quo within and without, as in many other nationalisms (Bieber, 2018:519-540). As might be expected, the nationalist discourse is supposed to demand a sociological homogeneity even though it is unattainable and hardly imaginable in practice. For this reason, the nation-building processes (even in civic forms) do not often make room for pluralism. Within the Kurdish context, however, the nationalist Muslim Kurds claim they are pluralists, presumably due to their awareness of the homeland's internal diversity and heterogeneity. They may also pretend to represent a civic type of nationalism in which membership is equated with citizenship. We cannot know whether and to what extent this claim is accurate. Above all, Kurdish national consciousness encompasses a territorial imagination, namely, Kurdistan, which belongs to those in it, not only the Kurds. "The term Kurdistan" lies at the heart of Kurdish national consciousness, bringing secular and pious Kurds together. Kürdistanilik (sense of belonging to Kurdistan) is a clear manifestation of collective national sentiments and is directly related to the emancipation of Kurds or the Kurdish cause. "Kurdish

Cause" and "Kürdistanilik" are mostly used to emphasize the group's capacity to make its self-definition instead of using the term, Kurdish Question, manufactured by external actors.

In the category of Islamic-influenced Kurdish nationalism, those who are becoming secularized more rapidly in the process of nationhood and those who adopt a more pious attitude while being receptive to the Kurdish national sentiments see themselves as part of the Kurdish Question and demand a change in their political status in terms of collective rights. It follows strong and visible advocacy of the idea of emancipation from the hegemony of superordinate ethnic groups or competing nationalisms. Another important point that drew my attention in the field is that the participants refrain from using the concepts of Kurdism (Kürtçülük) and Kurdish nationalism. These concepts are thought of as having negative connotations, perhaps due to the fear of the label of racism. Instead, as I said earlier, the terms Kurdî-Kurdistani, and Welatparêz (the patriot) are mostly used when expressing self-consciousness, as illustrated in Sıdkı Zilan's words, the founder of the Azadi Movement, who later resigned.

> Kurdism is a negative term. Rather, we consider the Kurdish cause as the struggle for Kurdistan. We are not Kurdists but working on the manifestation of justice. In this sense, I prefer to use the concept of Kurdi when describing myself, although I am ethnically Zaza. It is an umbrella term used to describe the Kurdish cultural communities. The Kurds do not form a homogeneous society and represent a different and rich diversity in language, religion, and sect. Being a Kurdi means being aware of your own separate identity, language, and culture vis-à-vis the outsider nations. It includes a territorial vision through the Kurdistanilik with all its colors, voices, and sovereignty.

Generally speaking, the fear of being labeled with racism and appearing pro-PKK makes them uncommunicative. Mele Sadullah Ergün tells that

> Before speaking to both Turkish and Kurdish people during our meeting, I start my speech after presenting our acquittal with words such as I swear that racism is a bad thing and that a true Muslim cannot be racist. I don't know how convincing it is, either. No one wants to see other nationalisms. Nobody talks at all. But when nationalism brought agenda, the Kurds immediately come to mind.

Nonetheless, many of the respondents highlighted a moderate and pluralist vision of the Kurdish nation and Kurdistan. When it comes to Kurdistan, some participants especially underscore what kind of Kurdistan they do not want rather than what type of Kurdistan they desire. Their appeal to universal themes, such as justice, human rights, and the rule of law, in particular, drew my attention. I explain this through the crackdown of the Turkish law system and penal code on freedom of expression. One interviewee, for instance, told anonymously in his answers as follows:

> My vision is not only about the Kurds. Rather, it is about humanity. (The syndrome of running to universal themes regarding sensitive points). But let's assume that the Kurdistan we dreamed of has been established in one way. If any human groups, Armenians, Jews, Christians, Circassians, or Laz people, are persecuted, such a Kurdistan must collapse. I do not want such a Kurdistan and even accept the boundaries. I do neither have negative feelings toward any religion. Religions also are not hostile to each other. Neither sects nor people are enemies of each other. Politicians and autocrats pit people against each other. The poor only die in wars. Our goal should, therefore, be humanity. I do not want a cruel Kurdistan.

The theme of justice stands out in Muslim nationalism as well. The prevalent view among its followers is that whoever is subjected to persecution because of one's race or ethnicity, Islam is unconditionally on the side of the oppressed regardless of his identity, not the oppressor. Here, the theme of justice is related to Islam but can transcend it, including secular worldviews. For Muslim nationalists, positive nationalism is mostly about ethnic identity and culture rather than national sentiments. More importantly, ethnic identity as a given, natural, organic, and unmutable attachment does not turn into nationalism which is seen as a synthetic enterprise about the earthly. For Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalists, the ethnic consciousness of Kurdish people necessarily conveys political implications within the framework of the modern international system. In this view, if Kurdishness does not acquire a political character, its ethnic nature would also melt away in the long run through the assimilation and integration of the Kurdish population into the Turkish system. The hallmark of

Kurdish nationalism was also made exceedingly clear by the following statement by Musa Anter, a renowned Kurdish writer and intellectual, many years ago.

> I am a Kurdish nationalist, but my nationalism is a kind of nationalism that aims to emancipate my oppressed and persecuted nation, not one that regards the other ethnic groups as inferior and sees itself as having the right to oversway them, like the Nazis, Fascists, and Pan-Turanists in Turkey.[34]

As a result, the key difference between Kurds who advocate Muslim nationalism and Islam-influenced nationalist Kurds is their attitude towards religious belief and ethnic identity. In the first category, ethnic identity corresponds to a matter of biology, not more than a social reality about human nature. In addition, Islam constitutes the framework of political consciousness" and "the core motivation of collective action" rather than Kurdish national identification. If anything, those in the second category equate ethnic identity with national consciousness. They do not distinguish between the two, which confirms my earlier conclusion that nationalism is a political doctrine with an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups based on collective action for political purposes. Although biological and cultural factors such as ethnicity, language, and sometimes even religion contain different elements of the nation, the doctrine of nationalism is more than these. National identity may require some tangible characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, language, etc., yet its essential component is self-consciousness or self-awareness. My theoretical frame of nationalism is therefore based on self-consciousness. Whereas Kurdishness has no political attribution, mainly referring to the cultural traits in the former, it includes political content and vision in the latter. I have observed the dual commitment to the Islamic faith and Kurdish nationalism in ethnically self-conscious Islamic circles, unlike religiously self-conscious ones with an explicit anti-national orientation. Muslim nationalists perceive their Islamic identity as more threatened than their ethnic identity. Those with Islam-influenced Kurdish

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[34] Kürt Tarihi- Kürt milliyetçiliği, *Argeşizm,* retrieved from
https://web.archive.org/web/20210902205818/https://argesizm.com/kurt-milliyetciligi/

nationalistic feelings see Kurdishness under more threat. A participant who did not let his name be used in the study shares his views on the comparative threat perception among his Islamic and Kurdish identities as follows:

> My Islamic identity was always the most important thing in every aspect of my life. From time to time, however, there are circumstances in which your priority changes when your particular belonging is under threat. Currently, I obviously see my Kurdish identity as more under threat. Indeed, it is also an Islamic necessity (legitimation effort for national identity) because I consider it a religious imperative and a human need to express the denial or incompleteness of an existential or divinely given identity.

Those who focus on the national consciousness are opposed to what Muslim nationalists claim that religion and nationalism are necessarily mutually exclusive or competitive. They argue that there is no sharp distinction or a clear-cut boundary between the two phenomena. The two sense of belonging can exist in a symbiotic or intertwined relationship, allowing Islamic and Kurdish identities to coexist and overlap as a combination of the two. They often suggest that "nationalism is not necessarily a secular form of consciousness that sacralizes the secular," contrary to what Greenfeld and others such as Renan, Gellner, Kedourie, Hobsbawm, and Anderson suppose. Unlike Muslim nationalism, in which the other or the primary perceived threats are secular organisms, Turkish, Arabic, and even Kurdish nationalism, the otherized subject or the main rivals are the collective Turkish, Arabic, and Persian nationalisms for pious Kurds who are full of national enthusiasm. They do not exclude secular Kurds but rather call for solidarity around a more authentic Kurdishness in harmony with Islam. Kurdish nationhood takes preeminence over the unifying ideals of Islam.

6.3.1. The View on the Nation and Kurdish Nationalism

In chapter four, I found out that the proponents of Muslim nationalism explicitly locate themselves against the concepts of nation and nationalism. They consider the two phenomena artifacts imposed by modernity and even a new kind of

religion. In their formulation, there cannot be good nationalism, for all nationalisms inherently distinguish between the human and divine, the realm of profane and that of the sacred. Such a conceptualization of nationalism attributes itself as a counter-force to religion and a secular way of life that constructs its own "moral community of believers" through collective rites that concentrate on sacred images and objects such as homeland, flag, and anthem. In other words, nationalism is fundamentally irreconcilable with religion, and the nation is perceived as an imagined community faithful to the polity. Above all, nationalism is essentially secular consciousness and cannot find an accommodation with Islam for the supporters of Muslim nationalism. It is, therefore, unfavorable to a large extent. More importantly, references are made to the racist and vicious versions of nationalism in their attempts to describe it. Above all, nationalism corresponds to an essentially secular consciousness and cannot find an accommodation with Islam. It is, therefore, unfavorable to a large extent. From this point of view, Islam appears to divide rather than unite the Kurds. According to Van Bruneissen, the main reason for cleavage is sectarian differences among the Kurds. "The majority are Sunni Muslims adhering to the Shafi'i school ...but there are Shii Muslims…Alevi Kurds constitute only a minority among the Alevis of Turkey, and they often feel closer to their Turkish speaking co-religionists than the Sunni Kurds" (Bruneissen, 2006:25-26). My study, however, shows that Islam may not be able to have a unifying role even among Sunni Kurds, who are mostly from the Shafi'i school.

Those embracing Kurdish nationalism or sympathetic to Kurdish national claims relate national consciousness to the group's struggle to survive. In this view, the route to the Kurdish nationhood passes through national unity. Nationalism comes to the fore as a political doctrine, like Muslim nationalists regard Islam the same way. Unlike the Kurdish disciples of Muslim nationalism, who lack a real territorial homeland due to the overarching character of Islam, those who are devoted to Kurdish nationalism have a strong vision of a territorial homeland. As Gellner puts it explicitly, "nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (Gellner,

1983:1). In light of this definition, Kurdish nationalism virtually adds up to the political aspiration of the Kurds over a particular territory they consider their homeland. Kurdish nationalism is founded on the imagination that the Kurds demarcated along territorial and cultural lines should have their own political unit. More importantly, the nation has become "the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time" and "a norm for the legitimacy of political units in the modern world" (Anderson, 1993: Gellner, 1983). Kurds are, too, not free from this trend. In this view, Kurds can only be free when they belong to a national community that overrides all other loyalties because the nation has become the ultimate source of sovereignty and legitimacy. In this respect, Muslim Kurds' political imagination is well suited to Smith's definition of nationalism as a political doctrine that consists of four assumptions.

> 1.The world is divided into nations, each with its own individuality, history and destiny. 2. The nation is the source of all political and social power, and loyalty to the nation overrides all other allegiances. 3. Human beings must identify with a nation if they want to be free and realize themselves. 4.Nations must be free and secure if peace and justice are to prevail in the world. (Smith, 1991:74).

For the Islamic-influenced Kurdish nationalism, nationalism is not inherently an alternative ideology to religion. It is inevitably a phenomenon linked with the real setting of the modern international system. While Islamic transnationalism prevents even ethnically conscious Kurds from accommodating a national consciousness in fear that the doctrinal paradox between Islam and nationalism becomes unavoidable in the case of Muslim nationalism, there is no such concern in the case of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. Islam and nationalism are not, therefore, necessarily deemed separate entities and alternative ideological hypotheses to each other. Considering Tibi's findings on Arab nationalism, "prior to the 19th century there never existed such an Arab nationalism…prior to the adoption of the European idea of nation, Arabness was an ethnic rather than a national bond (Tibi, 1997:14-15). I assume a similar case about Kurdish nationalism. For this reason, I have explained nationalism as an aspiration oriented toward emancipation based on political claims. Within this framework, it is no wonder that the nation-state is a model of political order.

Among other things, Kedourie was right in tracing the origin of the nation back to the idea of self-determination, which is at the center of Kant's philosophy, that "a good man is an autonomous man, and for him to realize his autonomy, he must be free," thus "self-determination becomes the supreme political good" (Kedourie, 1996:22). What's more, it is meaningful to distinguish between good (or positive) and bad (or negative) nationalisms. Therefore, those sympathetic to the Kurdish nationhood in Islamic circles draw a clear line between nationalism and racism.

I have observed no bifurcated loyalty between devotion to the Islamic norms and values, on the one hand, and commitment to the nation, on the other hand, among these Kurdish Islamic circles. They rather intertwine Islam and Kurdish nationalism. Although we call it a form of religious nationalism, it does not eventually constitute a unique form of nationalism that can be distinguished from secular ones by the ways of thinking and behavioral propensities (Greenfeld, 1996b). Within the Kurdish context, "secular" and "religious" coexist at the level of individual and collective consciousness despite reflecting both synthesis and cleavage. "Religious" and "the secular" does not always seem like bifurcated phenomena and separate units, although they may differ significantly in their ability to conduct between the transcendent world and the profane. In this respect, the intertwining of Kurdish nationalism with Islam is not a distinctive kind of nationalism. On the contrary, this attempt seeks to have a foothold in the spectrum of Kurdish nationalism with secular consciousness. It is, at the most, infused with religious implications. Accordingly, there is no contradiction between religious and national identity. The two are complementary rather than equivalent to each other. Religious affiliation makes sense to the extent that it contributes to the group's self-consciousness and serves to unify members of society as a social or moral force, thus requiring collective practices to exist. The pursuit of freedom is at the heart of the aspiration to be a nation. Mücahit Bilici clarifies it as follows in our interview.

> The search for freedom in human beings comes before faith, and it should come, and the basis of human beings is not faith but the emancipation that makes that faith feasible. That's why only emancipated people have national competency.

As noted above, the concept of Kurdish nationalism is ironically not welcomed among some respondents due to its negative connotation. I assume it is related to the fear of the label of racism appearing pro-PKK. Mücahit Bilici must have also seen this problem because he comes up with a suggestion for the reconceptualization of the nation. For him, Kurds should prefer the term "milliyetlilik" (the principle of nationhood)[35] when describing their group uniqueness rather than appealing to nationalism. I had the opportunity to ask him why he needed to make such a conceptualization, but his answer was nothing more than the distinction between positive and negative or civic and ethnic nationalism. It confirms the toxic and dangerous implications of the concept of nationalism in the subconscious minds of most Kurdish Islamic circles.

> Both nationhood and nationalism have self-awareness and self-consciousness in-group identification. The distinction is that you are blind to other identities and fall in love with yourself when protecting and nurturing your national identity in nationalism, ranging from indifference to the more aggressive forms. In the nationhood, however, I am self-conscious but aware that others also are. I can imagine justice outside of the in-group. In nationalism, there is only a balance of power created by selfishness and egoism in line with international politics in which sovereign actors behave to the extent of material capabilities. Nationalism is a self-constructing armor that recommends self-love and self-establishment. But if you can't get out of that armor, you're trapped inside it. You can defend yourself with this armor in the nationhood, but you can also go beyond. For example, I don't have to be hostile to the Turks to be Kurd. In addition, a Kurd may cease to be a Kurd. Being Kurdish is not a necessity. When a Kurd says he is a Kurd, he becomes a Kurd. I am not an essentialist but a voluntarist.

In Bilici's thought, a person with national feelings loves the people to whom he belongs. A nationalist, on the other hand, hates others more than he loves his people. His explanation does not, however, account for what constitutes inclusion and exclusion criteria in defining in-group and out-group attitudes. Collective ethnic sentiments inevitably need to categorize along two axes, the

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[35] The translation does not quite do justice to the complexity of Bilici's ideas.

level of inclusion and exclusion. An ethnic sense of belonging, even if it has no political aspirations, unavoidably needs to categorize along two axes, inclusion and exclusion, at the collective level of self-definition (Bieber, 2018). Yet, Bilici is right in underscoring the importance of subjective elements of nationhood. In this respect, his observations remind me of Renan, who declines objective characteristics such as race, language, material interest, religious affinities, geography, and military requirements for making a nation. The most distinctive feature of nationalism or "the essence of the nation", as Connor pointed out, is "a matter of self-awareness or self-consciousness" (Connor, 1978:389). The essence of the nation is thus a psychological bond of sentiment among the members with subconscious conviction. Connor also rightly defines the nation as "a self-aware ethnic group," noting objective characteristics are not adequate for creating a nation. It is not then surprising to treat the nation as a constitutive process implying that symbols and discourses within it can be partly changed and even intertwined with religion rather as an essential phenomenon for having immutable essence, which can be called "the social construction of the meaning systems". Like Bilici, Menice Rümeysa Gülmez, Deputy Chairman of the Human and Freedom Party (İnsan ve Özgürlük Partisi)[36], makes a distinction between positive and negative nationalism.

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[36] The Turkish Ministry of Interior does not allow the establishment of the People and Freedom Party for security reasons since 2018. The party is claimed to have Kurdish ethnopolitical aspirations. The articles in the party's bylaws "to protect the education and cultural rights of the Kurds in their mother tongue" and "respect the right of self-determination of the Kurdish people" were found to be contrary to the provisions of the Constitution. Other articles include "the Kurdish issue is the main reason for political instability in Turkey, and the party believes that there can be no political solutions to further problems without dealing with the Kurdish issue," "The Turkish state does not recognize the individual and collective rights of the Kurds, who are still deprived of their basic human rights", "the legitimate demands for education in the mother tongue, the right to self-rule, and social justice are terrorized with oppression and violence by the political authority", "The party considers it an obligation to defend the cultural rights of the Kurds and the right to education in Kurdish ", Like every other people, Kurdish people have the right to self-determination ranging from autonomous units to the federation and even independence" were found violating the Turkish Constitution. Mahkemeden İnsan ve Özgürlük Partisi Kararı, 2021 May 27, Rudaw. Retrieved from https://www.rudaw.net/turkish/middleeast/turkey/270520217

It is undoubtedly destructive if we accept nationalism as a self-centered ideology that denies or suppresses other nations. But if we take nationalism as a principle of protecting its own nation and respecting the rights of other nations, yes, I am a nationalist according to this definition. I am fulfilling a religious obligation by defending my national identity in line with the verses of the Qur'an. In other words, it is an order of my religion. Islam thus favors a person's struggle for survival and resistance against different forms of subversion and assimilation.

As I noted earlier, Kurdish Islamic circles have two tendencies in accommodating nationalist claims and aspirations. One concentrates more on religiosity while oscillating between Muslim nationalism and Kurdish nationalism. It does not form a crystallized structure because it is still ambiguous whether and to what extent primary allegiances and political aims are based on Islamic doctrine or Kurdish nationalism. This category already consists largely of people who have lost their faith in Muslim nationalism. It is, therefore, in the making, for it enhances group solidarity and legitimatizes Kurdish collective rights and political aspirations through Islam. Although it doesn't seem straightforward to talk about authentic Kurdish Islamism, the first category will turn into the religiously motivated Kurdish nationalism in parallel with the decline of the power of Islamism in Turkey. As long as the claim of embracing all ethnic groups, one of the greatest catalysts of Muslim nationalism, weakens, the ground for the Kurds to develop an individual approach becomes concrete. It also includes a section that does not explicitly refer to the national unity of Kurds and the vision of Kurdistan (the imagined community of the Kurdish nation), remaining to the universal Islamic values and principles but has the potential to transform it into Kurdish Islam. This category is mostly filled with individuals from Muslim nationalism. There is an opposition to a sterile Islamic interpretation that has been carefully purified from Kurdish history, language, and culture.

On the other hand, the second category has become increasingly connected with national claims while more susceptible to the influence of secularization. It results from secularizing impacts of national consciousness on individual life patterns and group behavior, convincing people that religion alone is hardly

persuasive for the survival of the community to which they belong. In all, Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism is an approach that embraces Sheikh Said, on the one hand, and Seyid Rıza, on the other, namely religious and secular Kurdish actors. The belief that a pious Turk, Arab, etc., is more privileged than a secular or non-religious Kurd in Muslim nationalism has been replaced by an approach that rests on a conscious collective Kurdish identity and the shared destiny of the community. It follows that the preservation, development, and prosperity of the Kurdish language and culture have become the main motivation for the struggle for survival and growth of Kurdishness. Necat Zivingî, a lawyer and ardent Kurdish nationalist with an Islamic background, implies the manipulative actions of the followers of Muslim nationalism on Kurdish nationalism

> The way to minimize the manipulation of the attempts under the name of Muslim nationalism and its Kurdish supporters, which aims to distort Kurdish nationalism, is to make the Kurdish language the basis of the Kurdish claims and aspirations. Those committed to religious-political aspirations are in the process of cultural alienation and cannot even use the Kurdish language thoroughly. Kurdish nationalism should not turn into the murky water.

The idea that Turkey has suppressed many Kurds through Islam lies behind this feeling of distrust. In other words, when Kurds have become conscious of national identity and have national demands, their actions are presented as breaking away from religion. The perception that those who persecute the Kurds today are none other than their Islamic brothers results in the otherization of the Turkish identity. One respondent clearly explained it as:

> The Turkish state is pioneering Turkism by leaving aside the Islamic understanding of freedom, justice, and law. In Diyarbakir, state officials use the word "millet" in Islamic terminology instead of the Turkish nation. But when one removes the veil on the so-called Islamic brotherhood, we see Turkish nationalism against Kurdishness rather than Muslim nationalism.

A fruitful relationship with religion is not unique to Turkish nationalism. Many nation-states with mostly Muslim populations, including Turkey, find Islam more or less helpful in various ways: "to strengthen national identity, reinforce the legitimacy of policy choices, and maintain or modify political attitudes"

(Lee, 2014:74). Nationalism may thus readily incorporate religion as an ingredient of self-consciousness, the extent to which religious ideas and discourses can be secularized. Even secular Kurdish nationalist movements are too increasingly aware of the enduring standing of religion and thus seek to bolster in-group bonds through religious self-identification. Given that Islam still exerts a strong influence in the Kurdish public sphere, it has become an effective instrument of legitimation at the hands of both Turkish and Kurdish nationalism to foster unity and consciousness. A secular mindset that pretends to be a religious form of nationalism in the Durkheimian sense is also available in the case of both Turkish or Kurdish nationalism.

For Muslim nationalism, therefore, even nationalisms acting under the auspices of religion are seen as a kind of religion insomuch as in the cases where nationalism and religion are intertwined, the first has ultimately overwhelmed the latter, becoming a kind of political religion at the end of the day. Accordingly, national movements are far from Islam because they construct a new religion. Consequently, the substantive content of faith plays an influential role in the non-existence of ethnopolitical aspirations in that nationalism attempts to make an earthly community that focuses on the mundane, inevitably narrowing down God's relation with the world. For Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism, such an ontological assumption is false. Nationalism does not necessarily contradict religion and may even include strong religious convictions. Within this framework, nationalism has good and bad models or has positive and negative sides. Suppose nationalism prioritizes "the struggle for emancipation or resistance" for the subordinate ethnic groups. In that case, it is legitimate, but it isn't acceptable if it represents a tendency to establish hegemony over other groups of people as a superordinate.

In this way, nationalism is not necessarily a secular attempt to divide the ummah into sub-political groups like Turkish Muslims and Kurdish Muslims. The ummah was already separated and will remain so. The community of the faithful as a political unity is regarded as an unrealistic goal for its incompatibility with

the international system based on territorial imagination. It does not appear, in practice, viable anywhere and anytime. Ethnonational claims will not disappear unless the structure of the international system changes. The view on the idea of nation and nationalism is thus favorable to a large extent. Huseyn Siyabend describes the prevalence of nationalism in the region where Kurds are densely populated as an inevitable outcome of policies followed by their neighbors.

> The Kurds have no other choice but nationalism. The present policies of the nation-states in the Middle East are designed to undermine the existence of collective Kurdish self-consciousness. New procedures under the guise of democratization are mostly related to the balance of power, which abandons the fate of Kurds and Kurdistan to the initiatives of the states in the Middle East. The current situation of the abandoned Kurds is also evident, and no further explanation is needed.

Within the Kurdish context, Islam supports the legitimation and reinforcement of the Kurdish national cause through spiritual words, images, and symbols. It is no longer an obstacle for the ethnically conscious group to equate religious identity with national self-consciousness.

The traditional distinction "to be Muslim comes first, then Kurdishness but with no political aspiration" in Muslim nationalism has become meaningless in Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. Unlike Muslim nationalism, the substantive content of Islam ceases to be a barrier to slowing down the political mobilization of Kurdishness around the idea of nationalism. Contrary to Islam's anti-ethnic or anti-national theological origins, a more functional approach that is more sympathetic to the national struggle at the popular level is constructed.

6.3.2. The view on the Kurdish Issue

I have before indicated that the Islamic organizations and NGOs representing Muslim nationalism, except for Hüda-par circles, are reluctant to engage in collective action about the Kurdish issue for fear that they would be perceived as

nationalist and seen on the same front as the opponent and even unlawful organizations. Strictly speaking, there is no single Kurdish issue as Çiçek puts it:

> Although most actors commonly use the notion of the 'Kurdish issue,' in reality, there is not a single Kurdish issue, but the various 'Kurdish issues' of different Kurdish groups, which have different social imaginaries, ideological and political orientations, interests and institutions (Çiçek, 2016:246).

Considering the Kurdish issue as claims that include acceptance and recognition of Kurdish national demands, most Kurdish adherents of Muslim nationalism remain indifferent to it because bringing it to the public sphere may cause them to be perceived as pro-PKK. Moreover, the Kurdish issue is framed within the context of the Islamization of the Kurdish and Turkish communities. In other words, if the Kurds and Turks return to the ideals of Islam, the Kurdish issue will disappear anyway. Therefore, it should not be the main concern for political action. Among the segments of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism, however, Islam in itself does not prevent linking the Kurdish issue with the Kurdish national consciousness. The understanding that Islam is the remedy to all social problems, including the Kurdish issue, in Muslim nationalism holds good for these segments, with one exception. Whereas Muslim nationalists fervently believe that Islam emancipates the individual and society, and there is thus no need for another human ideology like nationalism, the advocates of Kurdish nationalism place special emphasis on the emancipation of Islam which comes before Islam emancipates. An unemancipated Islam cannot emancipate.

The Kurdish issue is not thus framed within the context of the Islamization of the society. Those sympathetic to the Kurdish national sentiments set themselves the primary task of saving Islam that has been nationalized and regularly used in the service of nationalism. It does not, however, indicate that the pious Kurds let the Islamization of the society alone. It is a dual process both involves the Islamization of the Kurdish society and the imagination of Kurdish national unity. Unlike Muslim nationalism, transnational discourse and projection of the structuring of society in line with Islamic guidelines have not preponderated over

"the claims of national sovereignty." Kurdish national demands are not, ironically, seen as antithetical to Islam. Such a form of interaction between religion and nationalism can easily fit into what may be called the symbiotic model to the extent that religion as a universal concern for enabling it to order the world and nationalism are intertwined and dependent on each other. The aim must first be the emancipation of Islam and then (re)Islamization of the Kurdish society. One respondent puts it,

> We first need to emancipate Islam from the domination of supposedly Muslim clerics and institutional tutelage of nation-states. Islam has now been imprisoned and captured by power groups, nationalist identities and governments. When we look at the history of Islam, almost all scholars like Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafii, and 12 Imams of Shiites were killed because they opposed the system of power.

Another participant adds,

> A considerable proportion of the current Islam(s) is politics. For instance, the backgrounds of ISIS, al-Nusra, and al-Qaeda go back to 1979. They have nothing to do with Islam. When Russia invaded Afghanistan, the Taliban first emerged, then al-Qaeda from it. Al-Qaeda came to the Middle East afterward and has been called as Al-Nusra. Then ISIS broke away al-Nusra and recruited more than 30.000 militants within six months. So, where is Islam in this arrangement? Like many nation-states, these organizations are not related to Islam and are not designed for and by Muslims. Ironically, they consider themselves the leader of the Islamic world. Although many Muslims sincerely participate in such organizations, I do not think they act in accordance with the spirit of Islam.

Ahmet Kaya says similar things about the emancipation of Islam.

> In its current form, Islam is a burden on the Kurds under the auspices of the state organization.

Furthermore, the individuals and organizations who make up this category view themselves as a part of the Kurdish issue and demand structural change beyond collective Kurdish rights confined to cultural content. They have explicit national claims and aspirations from which the Kurdish issue results. To recall, I have placed nationalism corresponding to the political aspiration or the sovereignty of a national group over a particular territory it considers to be its

homeland. Here, too, we observe that the Kurdish issue is associated with the attainment of political sovereignty. One respondent characterizes the Kurdish issue by implying national self-determination debates as follows:

> The Kurdish issue is a question of political sovereignty and a reality associated with the self-rule of the Kurds. It may thus be called the Kurdistan cause. Although it emerged due to the Ottoman Empire's centralization policies, it gained momentum in the Republican Period. It is still on the march. Turkish imperial ambitions lie at the root of the issue. To confine it to wrongful acts of Kemalism and balance of power among the great powers is to divert our attention and engage in the establishment.

Sıdkı Zilan confirms this statement and distinguishes between the legitimacy of Turkish nationalism and Kurdish nationalism.

> Turkism (Türkçülük) is a fact, but Kurdism (Kürtçülük) is an allegation. Turkishness is an instrument of domination, whereas Kurdishness struggles to exist. Turkishness assimilates or annihilates other ethnic groups, while Kurdishness is searching to prove itself and receive approval. Would they ever be the same?

Another important point is the variety in how pious Kurdish nationalists approach the Kurdish issue. In this respect, this category is not monolithic and should not be treated as such. Some respondents take a more liberal view in which they find the protection of the fundamental rights of Kurdish citizens in Turkey in light of the international conventions sufficient. İlyas Buzgan, the head of the Association for Democracy Promotion (Demokrasiyi Güçlendirme Derneği), points to the struggle for hegemony of Turkishness while claiming that Turkish nationalism gave birth to the Kurdish issue.

> Ethnic nationalism, which has been nourished, protected, grown, and aggravated by the Turkish state, lies at the basis of the Kurdish question. The problem will remain unresolved if Turkey does not give up on the current policies relevant to the Kurds.

Hüseyin Sarıgül, too, underlines that it is unrealistic to deal with the Kurdish issue through the imagination of Kurdî-Kurdistanilik for the Kurds who embrace both Islamic and Kurdish identities adding that

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Ethnically conscious Muslim Kurds are not organized.Coming together around the basic principles requires a culture of democracy, compromise, and institutionalism that the Kurds lack. Some efforts are underway to cope with the problem of Kurdish national unity. When I was asked about the future of Muslim Kurds, I proposed not to establish a Kurdi-Kurdistani political party. Politics is real. You have to act on facts, not ideals. One-third of the votes of the Kurdish population in Turkey go to HDP (The Peoples' Democratic Party). The remaining part does not have national demands based on Kurdish identity. How much can you convince the one-third? In my opinion, if the Kurds want to achieve their rights and freedoms, they can accomplish this by aspiring to rule tr. I suggest they form a self-sufficient Kurdish party. I do not recommend that they go to and engage in mainstream parties.

Nonetheless, as these segments retain demands for the collective rights and freedoms of the Kurds, they can ultimately be considered emancipation-oriented. It is thus difficult to argue that they are loyal to the Turkish state. Yet, they reasonably believe that a sense of cultural distinctiveness may not turn instantly into political rupture from the Turkish political, economic, legal and education system. One of the main motives behind this is that they are well aware of the strength of Turkish nationalism both in the institutional and community settings. It goes without saying that the individual and collective actions to articulate the Kurdish national claims in the public sphere are readily linked with terrorism by the Turkish state, particularly in times of crisis, preventing them from discussing the right to Kurdish national self-determination. The long-held assumption among pious Kurds that Kurds must seek their rights within the Islamic framework and the strong emphasis on Muslim unity around the concept of Islamic brotherhood seems to lose its significance. Instead of Muslim unity, the discourse for Kurdish national unity has been on the rise. Although this segment refers to Islam and highlights the contradictions with Islamic principles when formulating the Kurdish issue, they mostly conceptualize it as a national problem rather than a matter of protecting fundamental human rights. The Kurdish issue is ultimately a matter of nationhood oriented toward statehood ranging from autonomy, decentralization, or devolution to full independence (Al, 2009).

6.4. Core motivations for Collective Action

In the section on Muslim nationalism, I contended that some religious individuals and organizations in the Kurdish public sphere have fundamentally located themselves against secular formations, especially opposite pro-PKK political actors, parties, and associations labeled nonreligious than representative of Kurdish nationalism. The conviction that what is profane is inherently nonreligious is embedded and strong among those who advocate Muslim nationalism. It is what creates an ideological cleavage and rivalry between so-called secular nationalist rhetoric and the classical Muslim mind, paving the way for the struggle for sovereignty. It also has a result that does not leave room for cooperation among the two trends in the immediate future in that so-called Kurdish nationalist actors are seen as secular and non-religious, automatically pushing Muslim nationalists' avoidance of taking collective action with them. For many Muslim Kurds, Islam is an inseparable and constitutive element of Turkish national identity and thus cannot be divorced from Islam.

As noted earlier, I take collective action as one of the core mechanisms of political and social change (Van Zomeren & Iyer: 2009). The determining factor of their collective action is framed within the boundaries of Islam in the face of non-Islamic societies depending on the definition of "us" and other" along religious lines. In this sense, the idea of Ittihad-ı Islam with strong anti-imperial, anti-Western, anti-Greek, and anti-Armenian feelings holds sway among some sectors of the Kurdish population. Therefore, Muslim Kurds who belong to Muslim nationalism stand shoulder to shoulder with Turkish nationalism as long as it carries the same meaning as Muslim nationalism. However, they consistently renounce a form of Turkish nationalism directed toward the Muslims, mainly the Kurds. Perhaps the main reason for this is the long-standing presumption that Islam remains the constitutive part of the Turkish national identity. The followers of Muslim nationalism distinguish between a form of Turkish nationalism tightly controlled by the secular elites and a religious form of Turkish nationalism that mobilizes the masses under the banner of Islam.

Accordingly, Islam curbs collective action based on the national consciousness, thereby acting as a boundary marker against the non-Muslim and secular segments of the society. Such a form of religious identification categorically keeps its distance from aspiring ethnic or national unity while protecting ethnic identity in a non-national manner with anti-ethnic tones to a certain degree.

To highlight certain aspects of the collective action of those in the category of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism, I look at the ways in which they mobilize in the public sphere, whether they are in solidarity with Turkish Muslims or not, and how they see Turkish Islamic Synthesis or Turkish Islamic communities, including tariqats and cemaats, and approach secular Kurdish politics. Above all, I suppose the distinction between "us" and the other frames individual and collective action. For these Kurds, Islam does not play a pivotal role in making Turkish national identity under the current circumstances. If anything, it has transformed into a secular phenomenon as a reaction to the failure of the idea of Ittihad-ı İslam and Ottomanism. In this view, Islam has become an instrumental tool in what is called as Turkish-Islamic synthesis and lost its ability to form and represent a transnational civilization and culture. The pious Kurds have little possibility to engage in collective action with the Turkish national identity.

Ethically conscious pious Kurds display two tendencies regarding collective action. The political agenda of those more religiously inclined overlaps that of Turkish Muslims to some extent. The political agenda of those more susceptible to the influence of secularization has remained far more self-reliant and pragmatic.Those who subscribe to the second wave tend to distinguish between the realm of the sacred and that of the profane in the Durkheimian sense. Its fundamental difference from the Weberian approach lies in its handling of the mobilization of religiosity. The "change" comes with collective action through the substantive meaning of religion in Weber, while in Durkheim, it takes place in a context where society gives importance to religious beliefs and practices. National mobilization gives additional meanings to religion in the Durkheimian sense. While the first group legitimizes the Kurdish cause by consulting Islamic

sources in line with Weber's substantive meaning of religion, the second approach refers to the general principles set by Islam about the course of humanity, implying that particular human communities fill the content. In this way, those in the second converge with Durkheimian thought as religious belief lends power and depth to the national identity. The first category does not distinguish between the profane and the sacred and proposes a collective consciousness and interaction between theological and sociological. It fits into Weber's ontological concern for meaning or treating religion as a system for ordering the world. In this respect, Islam retains its central position in these circles' political motivation and mobilization. Islam continues to influence these Kurds' individual and collective behavior to a large extent. They often appeal to the Islamic theological justification for their collective action. Mele Süleyman Kurşun reflects complex feelings remarkably well.

> Our Turkish Muslim brothers did not care about us in any way. Again, we agree on some agendas, such as the opening of Hagia Sophia and the construction of a mosque in Taksim, including the right to wear a headscarf in public and school spheres. But other than that, our paths diverge. For the most part, our Turkish Muslim brothers did not even make a single statement about the oppression of the Kurdish people. As for Palestine, Arakan, Kashmir, Moro, Bosnia, Chechnya, Eritrea, Syria, etc., they call for humanitarian aid to support the Muslim people and take action on issues in the Muslim lands.But they did not raise a single word about the land of the Kurds, Kurdistan. Well, of course, an (in)action creates a reaction. The universe consists of cause and effect. As a result, some Kurds rightly say that we should not put the situation of the oppressed outside of Kurdistan on our political agenda. They even get angry when the topic of legitimate rights of the Palestinian people comes up. I disapprove of this view. How can I disregard China's oppression of the Uyghur people or Myanmar's military regime's ethnic cleansing campaigns against the Rohingya people? Although Palestine is hostile to the Kurdish national claims, the Palestinian cause is legitimate. I will also make the necessary effort for the Kurds to achieve their rights.

Whereas one can easily observe full support for the Islamic brotherhood in the Kurdish Muslim nationalist circles, there is a limited and scattered focus on the political agenda of Turkish Muslims in the Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalist circles. While the Palestinian cause is almost at the center of Muslim nationalism, such an obligation is not felt from the heart in the second. It even correlates the national struggle of the Palestinian cause with Arab nationalism,

not with the framework of the Islamic battle against infidels, even if the holy place of Jerusalem symbolizes a remarkable Islamic character. More importantly, "the other" does not contain secular Kurdish actors despite reservations about the right to criticize their political orientation. Kurdishness has thus become a fundamental source of mobilization of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. Kurdish mobilization is concerned with the main agendas of Kurds in the geopolitical context, Kurdish areas of Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran, including Kurdish diaspora communities in the Western countries. Nationally conscious Kurds are not much interested in what Muslim nationalism brings to the agenda, such as aid for Anti-Assad Islamic groups in Syria, the struggle for the East Turkestan Muslims in China, the suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt's authoritarian rule under Sisi, Afghanistan, Libya, Yemen, etc. Distrust of the Islamic brotherhood vision discourages this portion of the Kurdish population from taking collective action with Islamic-motivated organizations. Necat Zivingî harshly criticizes Muslim nationalism and emphasizes the need for a religiously motivated Kurdish mobilization.

> I don't find the political mobilization of Muslim nationalism authentic. For example, Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, highlights that Arab nationalism is one of their fundamental principles. He harmoniously combines the Islamic cause with Arab nationalism. So is Hamas. Its main aim is the liberation of Palestine. Still, it does not just declare that it will establish a state based on Shari'a. What can religious groups in Kurdistan explicitly articulate that the emancipation of Kurdistan is one of their main aims? They do not even have such a term on their agenda. What do they say? Sharia will come and solve all problems. Do they tell the Kurdistan cause deserves cause, and we will fight with religious motivations to bring it to a fair conclusion? For once, Islam does not have a formulation of the state. Islam does not fit into a particular state. Islam is about truth, meaning, wisdom, and morality. It's not about the state. It can intervene by guiding individuals spiritually, leading them to justice. There is no such thing as an Islamic state. Islam is not a republic, either. Does an Islamic movement emerge in Kurdistan and say that we will liberate Kurdistan? No, at least in the modern era. There is no Islamic movement suitable for the Kurdistan cause. Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri is an exception among religious Kurds that separates himself from Arab, Turkish, and Persian identity (consciousness) and says we are a separate nation. He does not say that we are all Muslim brothers.

Zubaida also insists on reiteration of national sentiments by Hassan al-Banna, similar to Rida, namely, "the Arabs are the mainstay of Islam and its guardians" and "it is a duty of every Muslim to work for the revival and support for Arab unity" (Zubaida, 2004:411). Dallal goes one step further in his umma article in the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World and argues that

> The earliest forms of nationalism…appropriated the Islamic concept of umma…they did not challenge the theoretical authority of the concept. Moreover, the symbols of Arab nationalism retained their religious weight, in contrast to the Turkish nationalism of Mustafa Kemal who dissociated Turkey from its Islamic tradition (Quoted in Tibi, 1997:207)

Muslim nationalism in Turkey, too, emerged out of Abdulhamid II's Ittihad-i Islam efforts to mobilize ethnically diverse Muslims under the leadership of Muslim Turks to reinvigorate the Ottoman state. It may be correct that the intertwining of Islam with Turkish nationalism was interrupted in the early Republican period, but it began to re-activate in the 1950s and 60s. Many religious Kurds are well aware that both Arabs and Turks put the idea of Muslim Unity at the disposal of the Arab Unity and Turkish Unity. Kurdish proponents of the Islamic brotherhood, however, I claim, sincerely believe in it and defend it as a political cause. It can be thus called a romantic movement in which the people have sought to revitalize a political ideology. The idea of Muslim nationalism in the Kurds is not similar to Abdulhamit's mobilization to protect the Ottoman state, nor does Banna's bid to unite the Arabs under the banner of Islam. In the Kurdish context, Muslim nationalism is regarded as the only requirement for coexistence with other ethnopolitical groups. It is even more essential than political citizenship. Hence, the image of the Islamic brotherhood has ongoing prestige among Kurds with national consciousness, although it has lost its ability to implementation. Perhaps this is why Muslim Kurds do not tend to attach to the pre-Islamic heritage and don't make it a part of their consciousness, as Egyptians did it to the Pharaonic, the Lebanese to the Phoenician, the Tunisians to the Carthaginian, and the Iraqis to the Babylonian (Enayat, 1982:124). Yet, there is an objection to Islam's being as a reference and

source of collective action in the political sphere. One respondent points to the invalidity of political aspirations through the Islamic creeds.

> Islam has no claim to make a nation nor even a claim to establish a state. The idea of the ummah is also an artifact and invented phenomenon. It essentially means the community of the faithful. Islam does not proclaim that Muslims should create full-fledged political cooperation. What could be more realistic than for a family to govern itself? What could be genuine for each society to rule itself? I acknowledge that solidarity among Muslims is a legitimate action, but the right of a Muslim nation to govern itself is no less than the notion of Islamic brotherhood. Muslims do not have to form a single political structure and live together. Even Prophet Muhammad did not impose political sovereignty on the kingdoms to which the Islamic message was offered. In Islam, you have the right to self-rule. The claim to be Muslim is not necessarily a political claim to political sovereignty.

Therefore, the view on the Turkish-Islamic synthesis in which Turkish national and Islamic identities are so closely fused is broadly unfavorable among a large number of devout Kurds. It is just a new form of Turkish nationalism. The religious discourse in which Turkish nationalism employs Islam as the common bond does not go beyond Turkish national interests. Despite the universalist religious and anti-Western slogans, the political attitudes of Islamists are nationalistic. Like any other nation-state, the foreign policy of Islam-influenced governments is determined by what is usually defined as the national interest (Soleimani, 2016:39). In other words, the nation is a strong phenomenon in the current world system, so it does not only encompasses a self-reflective agent. One cannot ignore its structural impact on individuals and political units. One respondent based in Europe portrays Turkish-Islamic Synthesis as an apparatus of the official ideology of the Turkish state.

> The Turkish-Islamic synthesis amounts to take Islam as a substitute for Turanism and submerge Turkish nationalism in the color of religion. If we look closely at the interaction between the two, all the so-called Islamic Turkish organizations in Europe are at the service of Turkish intelligence. They don't even bother to hide it. Why do official Turkish authorities regularly meet with the top administration of the National View and the so-called Turkish Islamists in Europe? I wonder how the survival of the Turkish nation-state can become the agenda of those who call themselves Islamists.

Another participant expresses his views on the TIS as follows:

Turkish state herds the Kurds through the Turkish-Islamic synthesis. Since it well knows that the Kurds will not directly engage with the Turkish system through nationalism, it incorporates them in the guise of Islamic brotherhood. Turkish Islamism is a continuation of the Committee for Union and Progress (İttihad ve Terakki, notoriously known as a representative of ethnic Turkish nationalism after the failure of Ottomanism). It conceals Turkish nationalist aspirations under the banner of Muslim nationalism or the idea of the ummah. It looks at the Kurds the same way as it considers the Greeks and the Armenians. Their gaze toward us becomes softer as long as we remain religious and do not emphasize our ethnic identity. It is a fact. Let's not fool ourselves. The religion of the overwhelming majority of Turkish Islamists is Turkishness.

Under such perceptions, the claims of Turkish nationalism and Turkish-Islamic Synthesis contradict Islamic universalism. Günay & Yörük's study also reveals that the pattern of pious Kurds and Turks diverges. They present AKP's stance during the battle of Kobanê in 2014 as the most important breaking point in the shift of religious Kurds' votes.

(Devout) Kurds came to think that the Turkish nationalism implicit within Islamic solidarity had become much more visible during the battle of Kobanê, undermining the very idea of equality among the Muslim members of Islamic communities…the participation of Kurdish members in Sufi orders and religious communities had fallen drastically during the harshest moments of the Kobanê conflict… After the battle of Kobanê, Kurds came to believe that Turkish national supremacy was being reproduced under the guise of Muslim/Islamist brotherhood. (Günay & Yörük, 2019:29)

As this study shows, a deep distrust towards the tariqas (Sufi Orders) and cemaats (faithful communities) in Turkey is in the making among pious Kurds, as illustrated by one respondent.

The existing tariqas and communities predominantly do not have a universal Islamic cause. They regularly participate in religious rituals, prayers, and worship and are excessively interested in Islamic jurisprudence, but they do not understand what the Islamic cause means. It is not thus difficult for them to integrate into the state. Almost no organization works in the name of Islam.

More importantly, pious Kurds more prone to secularization have a more skeptical tendency toward the concept of the Islamic Brotherhood and the ideal of the Ummah. Accordingly, before coming to power, many Muslims

proclaimed that our constitution is the Qur'an, adding that we would solve every social problem by consulting to the Qur'an and Sunnah. They do not, however, go beyond a general formulation. After they came to power, they even began to pronounce that the solution to the problems created by modernity cannot be wholly expected from Islam. Such an untrustworthy arrangement of Islamic organizations and communities leads to limited collective action on particular issues. Therefore, the minds of these Kurds are somewhat confused. When they ask themselves what kind of Islamic society they wish for, they do not have a straightforward answer. "The image of the ummah", which carries transnational dimensions, becomes anachronistic as it no longer fits into the political structure under the current circumstances. In addition, each Muslim nation does not transcend its own national context. As Smith puts it, "the nation has become an indispensable part of the international political order and a necessary component in its popular legitimation" (Smith, 2000:795). The nation is presented as the emancipation of self-consciousness within the Kurdish context. One can go even further by saying that the Ummah may not have existed at all in practice, except for the first appearance of Islam in Mecca and Medina. The Ummah is ultimately a projection for a political purpose. It finally requires the unification of the overwhelming majority of Muslims under a single political structure, which is against the pluralistic frame of societies about religious identity. Subgroups in a particular community may have diverse orientations.

On the other hand, whereas religious rituals have become the instrument of mobilization in Muslim nationalism primarily through the demonstrations after the Friday prayers, they do not help solidify support among the adherents of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. On the contrary, mosques, where religious sermons and prayers are not allowed in the Kurdish language, set an example of where faith discourages the growth of Kurdish national identity. While Turkish national identity is reproduced and strengthened with symbols such as homeland, nation, flag, and prayer in Friday sermons in the mosques, Kurdish national identity, on the contrary, does not flourish or remains stunted. The non-existence of the Kurdish language in the mosques inevitably feeds the

alienation process in which an ordinary Kurdish pious Muslim alienates his language and culture in the public sphere and acknowledges that there is no fusion between religion and nationalism. Since the symbols of Kurdish culture do not have a part in the sacred areas in which Kurds are predominantly located, a Muslim Kurd disregards making a definition of "the other" over ethnic consciousness. The one who is extremely exposed to his propaganda is his Muslim Turkish brother. The mosques ironically turn into sacred places in which counter-consciousness develops against oppression in the guise of Islamic veiling.

The only exception to this was "Civil Friday Prayers" accompanied by Kurdish sermons held in Kurdish-majority provinces in Turkey during the Peace Process, which have served as religious rituals to promote collective action among secular and religious Kurds. The "Democratic Islam Congress", which was established at the suggestion of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in 2014, was also a result of how the secular Kurdish movement welcomed Islam. In this way, Islam ceases to be an obstacle to arousing Kurdish national aspirations in the minds of religious Kurds. Nationalism as a political doctrine has flourished among many Muslim Kurds and has turned into a manifestation of the secularization of the "Muslim mind" in the modern period. The Kurdish (Kurdistan) cause outweighs the Palestinian cause, which lies at the heart of the political mobilization of Muslim nationalism and is considered the mother of all problems in the Muslim lands. One interviewee makes an interesting remark on the Palestinian issue and changing attitude on the sacredness of Jerusalem.

> The Palestinian issue is just one of the hundreds of political crises worldwide. It is probably not the worst. Besides, the Palestinians now have much more collective rights and guarantees than the Kurds. I believe Palestine or Jerusalem has no sacredness because they are not among the religion's obligations. The fact that it has commemorative value for all religions does not necessarily make it sacred.

Perhaps the Palestinian cause is not completely out of the agenda of the Muslim Kurds, but it no longer draws the attention it once had. The Kurdish

ethnopolitical claims, defined within the emerging geopolitical context, particularly after the Syrian civil war, are now on the rise. It manifests with a motto that the Kurds have no friends but themselves. Such a strong group feeling paves the way for a convergence of Muslim Kurds with secular Kurdish politics around the Kurdish ethnopolitical demands, although it includes some reservations. Despite the limited representation, we have recently seen alliance attempts between some Islamic groups and HDP. Human and Freedom Party emerged from Hereketa Xwenas- Öze Dönüş Hareketi (The movement for Return to Essence) and Partiya Azadi[37] are some examples of the limited collaboration for collective action. The prospects for cooperation have not completely removed the cleavage between religious and secular Kurds, however. One respondent portrays the fragile relationship as follows:

> The problematic relationship between secular Kurdish politics and pious Kurds stems from the intellectual inadequacy of both sides and the inability to adequately grasp the Kurdish national cause, which is supposed to be the main purpose of both sides. Secular Kurds are strictly ideological. For example, a pious Kurd can have national zeals in the eyes of a secular Kurdish politician because they frame Kurdish national sentiments ideological. Kurds are frequently pushed to choose between their religion and national identities. We need to get out of this imposition, and I object to such an unjustified demand.

Nonetheless, the contradiction between secular nationalists and pious Kurds who act with a national motivation is gradually diminishing. The most important reason for the overlapping of secular and religion within the Kurdish context is the deep distrust of Muslim nationalism and the belief that other nationalism such as Turkish, Arab, or Persian ones lie behind it. Therefore, the religious Kurds are not able to come together with Muslim nationalism about collective action on many issues. Even if pious Kurds do not share similar views with secular actors on how national attitude should be and do not agree upon some concepts, emphasis on Kurdish group feeling in identity construction takes precedence over religious mobilization. They mostly see Kurdish ethnic identity

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[37] The original Azadi movement was divided into two organizations with mass member resignations in 2015. The movement consisted of Partiya Azadi and Hereketa Azadi during the writing process of this thesis.

as threatened and seek to mobilize co-ethnic solidarity rather than co-religious solidarity that sees religious identity as threatened and takes action with his Muslim brothers. The search for building the ummah is declining, and more importantly, being a nation and being an ummah are no longer seen as alternatives to each other. In this view, the political attitudes of the adherents of the ummah who have their own nation-states are essentially nationalistic. Even those who are stateless organizations are nationalistic. Although Hamas represents an example of the intertwining of religion and nationalism, for instance, it is still "committed to the nation and nationalist goals" while "privileging religious symbols, concepts, and identifications". It can thus be described as "a blend of the national liberation movement and Islamist religious group" (Perez, 2014:807). Islamic organizations and political Islamists could not offer alternative realistic models to the nation-state. They are thus so-called Muslims, while stateless Kurds are not like that. The definition of so-called Muslim is made by a participant as follows:

> Hypocritical so-called Muslims see Egypt, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Palestine, and Syria but do not see Cizre, Sur, Kobani, Serekaniye, Gre Spi, Afrin, Kirkuk, and Mahabad. The so-called Muslims raise money to build mosques in Turkey and other parts of the world while they support the oppressors who burn down historical mosques and temples in Kurdistan.

The profound distrust of Muslim nationalism includes the regional Islamic movements as well. While the regime change in Afghanistan in 2021 tempted some Kurdish Islamic circles since an Islamic organization, the Taliban, came to power, the same feelings do not apply to Kurdish nationalists with Islamic leanings. Huseyn Siyabend underlines the obscureness of regional and global Islamic movements, implying that they do not represent true Islam.

> With all its dimensions and forms, Islamism has knowingly or unknowingly served the interests of Europe and the Western system at the ideological and movement levels. The Taliban is no exception.

For this reason, the aim must first be the emancipation of Islam, and then (re)Islamization of the Kurdish society may be brought to the agenda after Kurds

attain political sovereignty. Another example of a challenge to the political mobilization of Muslim nationalist Kurds is the celebration of the Muslim conquest of Diyarbakir, which has been organized in recent years under the sponsorship of the AKP government in the same week as the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul. Most Islamic NGOs in the Kurdish political sphere regularly celebrate this annual event, which aims to reinvigorate the idea of Islamic brotherhood and increase Muslim consciousness. Those who represent Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism, however, severely differ from these Islamic NGOs. They do not tend to embrace group solidarity with Turkish Islamists over the agenda of the Islamization of society and come together around a common ideological field. They are well aware that the Muslim Turks have pioneered the notion of Muslim nationalism. Muslim Kurds do not even have a relatively autonomous agenda within this configuration. In doing so, they have wholly become integrated into the conservative Turkish politics or Istanbul-based Islamic movements. Sıdkı Zilan shares his views on the implications of the conquest of Diyarbakir.

> What they do is nothing but use Islam for political purposes. The Arab-Kurdish joint army took Diyarbekir from Byzantium Empire. Arabs and Kurds ruled together for a long time. It also remained under the rule of the Kurdish political authorities, Marwanids, between 980 and 1090. The celebration of the conquest of Diyarbekir with the Turkish flag is aimed at the assimilation and Turkification of the Kurds.

Another controversial topic about collective action is "International Quds Week," which was particularly adopted by Hüdapar circles to support the Palestinian people. This celebration was originally initiated in Iran after the Islamic Revolution. There is now a global initiative to awaken Muslim societies' consciousness toward Quds and the Palestinian cause by mobilizing them through such actions and organized programs. Peygamber Sevdalıları Vakfı (The Prophet Lovers Foundation), which is affiliated with Hüdapar and regularly organizes Prophet Muhammed's birthday rally in Diyarbakır, is also among the founders of this initiative along with Ittihad-ul Ulema. One respondent criticizes

the resurrection of Quds Day and expresses his dissatisfaction with the political maneuver to move it into the Kurdish public sphere.

> No Islamic organization or institution that celebrating Quds Day in the Islamic world has remained, except for the Iranians. In Kurdistan, Hüdapar acts as a proxy of Iran by undertaking this mission.

In other words, Palestine, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Syria and other Muslim lands are not the major political agendas for collective action in the eyes of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalists. Such issues are often seen as a matter of humanitarian aid and are not included in the core issues of Kurdish group solidarity. They pursue Kurdish nationalism as a doctrine of an emancipatory aspiration oriented towards political purposes through collective action. To reiterate, nationalism amounts to a political ideology with an emancipatory aspiration or sovereignty of a self-conscious ethnic group over a territory it considers to be its homeland. They primarily accommodate the discourse of the national unity of the Kurds in the public sphere. For this purpose, they actively participate in what is happening in the Kurdish geopolitics, particularly in Syria and Iraq. In this way, ethnic consciousness turns into collective action based on national consciousness due to the urgent need to sustain Kurdishness, thereby rendering resistance against different forms of subversion and assimilation. In the case of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism, the core motivation of political mobilization is national awareness or self-consciousness that turns into collective action despite its shortcomings. One participant stresses the significance of the Kurdish national consciousness by paying attention to its fragile nature.

> National consciousness is the most important factor that prevents compartmentalization and ensures alliance among Kurds. The long-standing antagonism between Islamic identity and ideological Kurdishness among Kurds in Turkey has also damaged Kurdish national consciousness. We still suffer from it. While the Kurds withered in the Republican era as they threw away Islam, the Turkish state, on the contrary, has become stronger with the support of religion. The tolerance shown towards the AKP's coming to power is already the result of Turkish-Islamic Synthesis.

Within this framework, Kurdish ethnopolitical consciousness marks a boundary between the in-group (Kurds) and the out-group (other ethnopolitical groups). It is, however, infrequent for Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalists to unite with Kurdish Muslim nationalists. As noted earlier, commemorating the Halabja tragedy has become one of the rare events in which almost all Islamic NGOs and associations are in harmony with the pious Kurdish national circles. In addition, the organization of Sheikh Said's rebellion commemorations sets another example of the shared collective action among the two sections. Whereas Muslim nationalists, however, focus their attention on the pro-Islamic attitudes of Sheikh Said, the other group considers him as a historical representation of the Kurdish cause along with Islamic content like other national figures such as Ehmedê Xanî, Melayê Cizîrî, and Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri.

As a result, whereas Kurdish followers of Muslim nationalism are in solidarity with Turkish nationalism as long as it bears the same meaning as Muslim nationalism, Kurds who are inclined to nationalism categorically reject even such a form of Turkish nationalism. Unlike most Muslim nationalists, they do not regard Islam as a constitutive element of the Turkish national identity, which leaves no room for the possibility of engaging in collective action. Accordingly, Islam has no place in constructing modern Turkish identity, and Islam has become nationalized for the national interests of the Turkish state. Although Turkishness is seemingly situated at the intersection of Islam and nationalism, such an interaction is entirely in favor of the latter. For Muslim nationalism, if anything, the point is not the idea of Turkish nationalism but the core motivations and perceptions of the Turkish political elites. Islam and Turkishness or Kurdishness are almost inseparable in this equation, which explains the distinction between Muslim nationalism and Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism.

Boundary markers against the non-Muslim elements and secular segments of Turkish and Kurdish societies have formed collective identity and action in Muslim nationalism. In contrast, pious Kurds with national feelings concentrate

on changing their subordinate position vis-a-vis Turkishness as the dominant or superordinate identity. Belonging to a distinct national community and the unequal representation stemming from Turkish collective oppression lies behind their national orientation. Restoring the Turkish-Islamic synthesis in which Islam has been subordinated to Turkish nationalism and revitalizing the Islamic brotherhood under the current circumstances is no longer possible. Nationalism, essentially a secular ideology that differs from transcendental religions, has turned out to be the core motivation of thought and collective action for these Kurds. Although it does not amount to secularism or purely secular, it will inevitably have secularizing effects on pious Kurds in the forthcoming years as it focuses on this world and the world of empirical reality, making the profane the source of its ultimate meaning, which brings its sacralization (Greenfeld, 2006c). I argue throughout this study that secular culture and attitudes contribute to the reinforcement of national consciousness, and nationalism fosters the sacralization of the profane the way round.

6.5. Aims &Aspirations

In the previous section, I argued that the overwhelming majority of antiethnic or ethnically conscious Muslim Kurds do not participate in the main debates and issues relevant to the Kurdish nationhood in the public sphere to a large extent. Let alone ethnopolitical affairs; these Kurds have no orientation and visible collective action for ethnocultural mobilization. They are not enthusiastic about the broader use of the Kurdish language in the public sphere. Although the ethnically conscious ones invariably demand a political change regarding the Kurdish issue, they have no strength to persist on it. They thus refrain from speaking out loudly on the Kurdish issue in the public area. For the most part, they avoid getting involved in larger debates on the present status of Kurds in Iraq and Syria and the future of Turkey's Kurds. They act as if they are not part of Kurdish geopolitics and do not explicitly have an urgent need to take action on the national unity of the Kurds. Hüdapar circles are somewhat an exception to non-Kurdish politics due to their changing policies on relevant topics. In this

study, however, I do not take Hüdapar as a representative of Kurdish national demands and aspirations, as explained above. More importantly, I have observed the preeminence of the anti-ethnic political stance in Hüdapar and its affiliated organizations, particularly at the administration level. One can easily witness that the Turkish language is predominantly used as a language of collective action in most of the activities organized by Hüdapar circles. One can easily witness that the Turkish language is predominantly used as a language of collective action in most of the activities organized by Hüdapar circles.

Let me give two examples. Thousands of children who successfully complete the instruction for the prayer (salat) parade along the downtown and perform collective prayers in the Great Mosque of Diyarbakır to draw attention to the significance of the five-time prayer in an organization held by the Platform for Quran Generation (Kuran Nesli Platformu) at the end of each summer carry slogans written in Turkish in their hands. One cannot find even a single slogan written in Kurdish. One can easily witness that the Turkish language is predominantly used as a language of collective action in most of the activities organized by Hüdapar circles. Let me give two examples. Thousands of children who successfully complete the instruction for the prayer (salat) parade along the downtown and perform collective prayers in the Great Mosque of Diyarbakır to draw attention to the significance of the five-time prayer in an organization held by the Platform for Quran Generation (Kuran Nesli Platformu) at the end of each summer carry slogans written in Turkish in their hands. One cannot find even a single slogan written in Kurdish. Likewise, personal details and prayers on the graves of the martyrs of Hüdapar circles (Hizbullah members included) are mostly Turkish or Arabic. You can't come across Kurdish often. In this sense, while Hüdapar and its affiliates still have not found a way around the ethnopolitical immobilization, how would they mobilize Kurdish national feelings? Like others, it does not reflect explicit national aspirations and does not embrace nationalism as a doctrine. Their image of society refers to the fundamental tenets of "religion" as an order-creating system rather than the nation.

The prevalent belief that Islam and nationalism are contradictory and nationalism is material and un-Islamic since it weakens and divides the ummah remains behind in the case of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. Unlike Muslim nationalism, Islam has a limited ability to mobilize or is unable to mobilize these Muslim Kurds around "the concept of the ummah", despite its claim of constructing this world. Whereas Muslim nationalists enthusiastically believe that Islam already emancipates the individual and society, and there is thus no need for another human ideology like nationalism, the advocates of Kurdish nationalism come to acknowledge that the emancipation of Islam comes before "Islam emancipates". An unemancipated Islam cannot emancipate. Most of the current forms of Islamic representations are, indeed, oppressive ones. This view attempts to make sense of nationalism as the struggle for emancipation or resistance for subordinate ethnic groups. The nation is, therefore, presented as the emancipation of self-consciousness within the Kurdish context. The national identity implicitly promises more dignity than the Islamic identity. As nationalism is doomed to distinguish between constituents of the nation, the in-group, and others, the out-group, religious Kurds face a self-definition problem or who(s) are included and who(s) are excluded. The other comprises the collective Turkish, Arabic, and Persian nationalisms. The inclusion, if anything, contains secular Kurds, accompanied by the preference for solidarity around a more authentic Kurdishness in harmony with Islam. In this way, Kurdish nationhood takes preeminence over the unifying ideals of Islam.

Although the idea of national self-determination remains elusive in this part of the Kurdish population, there is at least support for the alliance for Kurdistan, which lies at the heart of political mobilization. Of course, the claim for acceptance and recognition of Kurdish ethnopolitical identity encompasses political representation in the current inter-state order based on the organization of the nation-states. The prevailing pattern in which Islam requires a homogeneous political entity is harshly criticized with the view that more than fifty states with a Muslim majority population have already incorporated into the interstate order. The imagination of Muslims as a civilizational identity and the

perception of Sunni Muslims as a monolithic community lies behind the religious world image in Muslim nationalism; Islamic civilization corresponds to the variety of autonomous cultural systems along with the illusion of Islamic order within Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. The illusion of a greater Islamic order in our age of the interstate system is founded on premises that no longer exist in the modern world, leading to the rise of nationalism among certain proponents of the ideal of the ummah. The illusion of a greater Islamic order in the existing interstate system is founded on premises that no longer become available in the modern world, leading to the rise of nationalism among certain Kurdish proponents of the ideal of the ummah. Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalist projects have thus often emerged from the social background of Muslim nationalism. Piscatori calls those who submit to the reality of the inter-state order based on the nation as conformist, whereas those Muslims who insists upon making an alternative civilizational Islamic order are called nonconformists (quoted in Tibi, 1997: 26).

The lack of Islamic theological understanding of the nation and a modern view of Muslims of the nation-state fosters the competitive relationship between Islam and nationalism. As mentioned above, Islam still serves as a source of motivation to create a political order for most Muslim Kurdish organizations and prompts their collective action. Their image of society refers to the principles of Islam as an order-creating system rather than the nation-state, thereby rendering Islam and Kurdish nationalism "competing ideologies of order". A transnational discourse and the project to create an Islamic society have preceded "the claims of national sovereignty. Such a conception makes religion the primary impetus for mobilization, aspirations, core motivations, and collective action rather than the nation in what I have called the competitive model. In this sense, nationalism has never replaced Islam as an order-creating system or the primary cultural mechanism of social integration. In parallel, political mobilization aims to (re)Islamize Kurdish society in which the overwhelming majority of its inhabitants are Muslim on the way to the Islamic order. Accordingly, a true Muslim nation will naturally come into being as much as Muslim Kurds stick to

Islamic rules and values. The idea of Muslim nationalism has further reinforced the political ambition of creating a new order in the global system based on transnational supra-ethnic characteristics going beyond the nation-state system.

On the other hand, those who act with Kurdish national zeals follow complex attitudes regarding ordering the world. As noted above, there is no single pattern in how Muslim Kurds engage with the nation. No model explains the relationship between Islam and nationalism. Kurdish Islamic circles have mainly two tendencies in accommodating national aspirations. One strand still concentrates on religiosity in political behaviors while oscillating between Muslim nationalism and Kurdish nationalism, consisting of those who are somewhat in despair about the emergence of a true Muslim society. It is thus not crystallized as it is still unclear whether and to what extent primary allegiances and political aims are based on Islamic doctrine or Kurdish nationalism. Islamization of the society is, for example, still one of the major political agendas among this segment of the Kurdish population. These Kurds have, however, divorced themselves from their Turkish co-religionists as the renowned Kurdish Naqshbandi leader, Sheikh Ubeydullah, who insisted upon the distinction between Kurdish religion and that of the Turks as early as 1880, did (Soleimani, 2016:76). Seyda Süleyman Kurşun alludes that the Kurds' adherence to Islam differs from that of other Muslim societies and points to their potential leadership of the ummah in the long term. To remind, Müfid Yüksel shared similar views on the potential leadership of Kurds. Unlike Yüksel, Kurşun places a particular emphasis on the distinction of the Kurds. According to him, Kurds will stand out as the nation that most accurately represents Islam.

> Kurds have suffered long-standing oppression by other Muslim ethnic groups with whom they live. They have persecuted Kurds in the guise of Muslim brotherhood. God willing, the Kurdish people will lead other Muslim communities in the Middle East due to their loyalty to true Islam and being a faithful community.

Those in the second strand are more crystallized in their attitudes towards national claims and aspirations while more susceptible to the influence of

secularization. Although they do not acknowledge it, they willingly or unwillingly become secularized. Since nationalism is an essentially secular consciousness, it inevitably impacts individual life patterns and group behavior, convincing people that religion alone is hardly persuasive for the survival of the community to which they belong. For both inclinations, however, national consciousness is oriented toward attaining political status (a broad spectrum ranging from decentralization to independence) and the national unity of the Kurds. One respondent underlines the importance of aggregation under Kurdishness as supra-identity rather than Islamic identity.

> What unites the Kurds is not a particular religion or ideology but Kurdishness. An invisible hand infiltrates the Kurds and divides them into fractions along religious or ideological lines. Some organizations propel the Kurds to pursue international leftist activism or transnational Islamic claims while Kurds' own political cause stands over there. For the emancipation of our people, our thoughts and actions should be oriented toward Kurdishness. Our main issue is concerned with the achievement of the Kurdish people. All Kurdish political parties and movements should make politics on behalf of Kurdish national consciousness rather than religious or ideological orientation. I do not find it convincing to disagree on religious and political issues while our nation has not yet attained emancipation.

A strong emphasis on the Kurdish national unity is also found in Necat Zivingî.

> Every self-conscious Kurd, whether secular or religious, must defend the followings: The right to self-rule of the Kurdish people and a free Kurdistan. An awareness that membership in the Kurdish nation comes before tribal, religious, and sub-community affiliations. The support for the unity and solidarity of the Kurds while avoiding hostility toward Kurdish political actors and setting national interests above religious or ideological motivations.

Another respondent explains the lack of national unity with poor (low-grade) national consciousness and the prevalence of factionalism in Kurdish politics.

> The greatest impediment to the national unity of Kurds is being incarcerated in factionalism. A national movement that cannot overcome factionalism cannot fulfill the requirements of national struggle. The national consciousness's weakness and the collective action's inadequacy lie at the root of failure.

The attitude of another respondent reveals the degree to which pious Kurds come closer to secular Kurds while diverging from Muslim Turks.

> We, the Kurds, must unite around Kurdish national values. It is of no use to enhance the contradictions among the secular and religious Kurds. Of course, the Kurdish nation encompasses a greater diversity of social and cultural geography than most other nations do. Individual and sub-group differences are of great value, but it is more important to create unity in differences. Our point is clear. It is the national unity and political integration of Kurds in four parts. Political crises, conflicts, and uncertainties will also continue in the forthcoming years. During this chaotic process, no part of Kurdistan will be able to achieve no results on its own. Kurds will either unite their power around a national strategy or lose.

The national unity of the Kurds, like the unity of Ummah, is a type of idealism that is very difficult to establish. One thing that drew my attention in the Islam-influenced Kurdish national circles is that the imagination of national unity has unremittingly been kept on the political agenda like a magic phrase to demonstrate the motivational orientation in self-definition. Nonetheless, concrete steps still need to be taken regarding the roadmap and how to implement it. There is no such political leadership to do this. Despite the vision of national unity, no visible collective action has been taken toward it. The idea of national unity is, however, put on par with national consciousness. In other words, its nonexistence equates to the lack of Kurdish national consciousness. In these discourses, Kurdish national unity is typically deployed as a justification for national consciousness and a sign of loyalty to the Kurdish cause. Among other things, Kurds in this category have increasingly become concerned about national consciousness but have yet to make it into a mass movement. A strong conviction that makes them feel they have lost the ability to represent the Kurdish issue for a long time suffuses the subconscious minds of most devout Kurds.

Another important finding in the Kurdish context is the confluence of Muslim Kurds with secular Kurdish politics around the Kurdish ethnopolitical aspirations, although it includes some difficulties. Kurdistani Alliance Initiative,

in particular, manifests itself at the organizational level, which consists of the Democratic Society Congress (DTK), Democratic Regions Party (DBP), Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), Azadi Party, Revolutionary Democratic Kurdish Association (DDKD), Human and Freedom Party (PIA), Kurdistan Communist Party (KKP), Kurdistan Democrats Platform (PDK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party-Turkey. The co-existence of the secular and religious has converged the relevant actors around a common cause. The need for Kurdish unity has produced a more moderate and tolerant religion toward nationalism in the Kurdish society, where religion is often equivalent to a worldview. Those more focused on religiosity follow a political approach that possesses certain features with that of Weber and Durkheim in which religion becomes a human enterprise to construct this world. In contrast, those who subscribe to the second wave tend to distinguish between the realm of the sacred and secular in the Durkheimian sense. As a social construct, religion provides people with identity and reinforces collective action. Individuals and social groups are more active, giving it additional (or new) meanings. In this respect, Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism has a secular character despite its religious content, and it does not constitute a distinct type of nationalism.

Those who adopt a more pious attitude while being receptive to the Kurdish national sentiments remain faithful to the claims of Islam as a political order-creating system, while those who are becoming secularized more rapidly in the process of nationhood tend to consider religion a cultural system rather than an order-creating political one. The former category oscillates between Muslim nationalism and Kurdish nationalism, as it still holds political aspirations to establish a Muslim society founded on the Quranic view, albeit limited. The second, on the contrary, explicitly renounces the aim of creating the Islamic community and the principle of "din wa-dawlah" (the divine state order) in which religious and political affairs are interrelated. Accordingly, the inextricability of religion and politics or state is not based on the sacred texts of Islam. Moreover, there is no specific and detailed form of state in the Qur'an. It is a historically constructed argument as a result of power relations. Obviously,

there is no single form of Islam, but we face many Islams. That Quran has been interpreted differently over time and space indicates the social construction of the meaning system. When asked if you have a political aspiration for an Islamic society or a state ruled by Shari'a and what model you want in terms of state-society relations, one respondent replied,

> I had an image of political authority based on Islam in the past, but I don't believe it today. An ideal state is founded on justice and the rule of law. I dream of such a state, whether it is named Islamic, socialist, liberal, or secular, but built on the freedom and equality of its constituents, who also receive compensation for their work. People give meaning to political thoughts, values, and religion. If you hand Islam into the hands of ISIS, al-Nusra, or some Turkish Muslim communities, Islam would be like the Soviet regime, *the Francoist dictatorship, or the Pol-pot rule. Our view of religion relates to how* we perceive and construct the world.

While shari'a implies an order based on religious norms and rules in the hands of public authority in Muslim nationalism, it corresponds to a call for universal justice within a multicultural context and performing the religious practices along with freedom of religion and conscience in Islamic-influenced Kurdish nationalism. Islam emancipates the individual and society in the first, whereas the emancipation of Islam is preferential in the latter. Kurds in the second category concentrate on the Kurdish national cause and the emancipation of Kurds from all kinds of oppression, thereby making an emancipatory definition of Islam. Just as Kurdish nationalism has been misconstrued, so has Islam. Kurdish nationalism, in this view, has nothing to do with racial segregation or chauvinism and thus is not contrary to the universal spirit of Islam. Another respondent implies the collapse of the ideal of ummah in the Kurdish Muslim mind, calling the attempts to revive it unrealistic.

> Each Muslim ethnic group is a natural part of the Ummah, taking place in it with its own national identity. The Ummah, however, no longer exists in our age of inter-state order based on the nation. It is an ideal design with a particular form of essence, but no organization or society exists to represent this content thoroughly. The Kurds do not exist in the Ummah of which they are a part, with their collective identity. Being a part of a whole without individuality is a contradiction.

The same person then shares the following view on what the political goals of the Kurds should be.

> Statehood is a means of prosperity and wealth. Statelessness is, on the other hand, the opposite. The state is the name of the legal entity of a nation or a union of nations organized in political life. It ranges from the smallest organizational form to the largest one. Today, some political movements criticize the nation-state as a corrupt organization. While doing this, ironically, they propose a new form of political authority, a quasi-state. In any case, statelessness is against human nature. Kurds have, of course, the right to statehood as other nations have. Deferring the right to statehood under the name of creating an ideal design is ridiculous for those who do not still have the attainment of political sovereignty. The Kurds now demand statehood irrespective of the name under which it can take form. Kurdish people have the right to self-determination running from autonomous units to the federation and even independence.

Kurdishness and the national aspiration for political sovereignty have become the motivational source of mobilization of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. This mobilization is mainly concerned with the emancipation of the Kurdish collective identity from the domination of Turkish nationalism within the boundaries of Turkey, then the related agendas of Kurds in the geopolitical context, Kurdish areas of Iraq, Syria, and Iran. It is an attitude that aims to acquire a new political status for the Kurds in the current regional geopolitical order made up of Turks, Arabs, and Persians. In their political imagination, the advocates of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism do not make political reference to Islam and propose an Islamic model for social organization. In other words, Islam mostly acts as a cultural system in which religion loses its ability to attach greater weight to the orientation of political order. If anything, national consciousness has become a motivation to create a political order and prompts collective action. Within this framework, the image of society takes nationhood as a reference under the banner of political units organized along national lines. In this way, the realignment of political organization does not allow Islam to function as an order-creating system, thereby disabling Islam and Kurdish nationalism from competing ideologies of order. Kurdish individuals and organizations in this clustering do not accommodate a clear-cut anti-secular position, despite much criticism toward secular Kurdish politics. There is no

sharp distinction or a clear boundary between the religious and secular segments of the Kurdish population in terms of overlapping and intertwining national goals. Nationalism as the order-creating system has replaced religion in the political imagination of pious Kurds, as it continues to influence self-consciousness and collective action in the Kurdish public sphere. It also contains ethnocultural mobilization. One respondent correlates with cultural consciousness and political aspirations implying that the two form an inseparable whole.

> We strive to protect, develop and improve Kurdish culture and language. It is an integral part of the national struggle for survival. The path we follow is that of Ehmedê Xanî. If Turkey were a state of the Kurds, the Kurdish language would not be in such a bad situation.

Unlike Muslim nationalism, Islam ceases to be a barrier to slowing down the political mobilization around Kurdish nationalism. Contrary to Islam's anti-ethnic or anti-national theological origins, a more functional approach that is more sympathetic to the national struggle at the popular level is on the rise. A symbiotic relationship, therefore, occurs between religion and nationalism to the extent that they are intertwined and dependent on each other. Although the former plays a supportive but less dominant role in the latter, the two are not inseparable.

6.6. Conclusion

Whereas religion makes itself the primary impetus for mobilization, aspirations, core motivations, and collective action rather than the nation in what I have called the competitive form of relationship between religion and nationalism, Islamic identity does not prevent embracing ethnopolitical goals or taking collective action on behalf of the nation as group solidarity in the symbiotic model. It is thus difficult to say that a unique Kurdish Islam in which a fusion between the self-consciousness of religious identification with that of nationalism has been a distinctive feature has emerged. Nevertheless, a nascent

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Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism is in the making among some pious Kurds in the Kurdish political sphere, with a disorganized political mobilization legitimizing its aspirations through Islam. I conceptualize the intertwining of Islam with Kurdish nationalism as Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism in that Islam has a supporting role in legitimizing and reinforcing the national cause rather than the leading one. In this sense, the Kurdish case is different from some national movements in which religion becomes the marker of ethnicities, such as the Palestinians, Bosnians, the Sinhalese Buddhists, Northern Irelands, Tamil Hindus, Chechens, Aches, Filipino Moros, and Kashmiris that are cited as typical examples of "religious nationalism" in the literature.

On the other side, even Kurdish Islamic circles in this category do not form a monolithic or static population. Rather, they are miscellaneous because nationalists do not all go the same way and act accordingly. However, I have reduced this complexity to a bifurcation that depends heavily on changing political attitudes on the interaction between Islam and Kurdish nationalism. I have found two tendencies or orientations within Kurdish Islamic circles regarding the impact of secularization and the vulnerability of religiosity. One trend appears more robust in religiosity but not crystallized in accommodating national aspirations while oscillating between Muslim nationalism and Kurdish nationalism, consisting of those who are somewhat in despair about creating a true Muslim society. It is still unclear whether and to what extent primary allegiances and political aims are based on Islamic doctrine or Kurdish nationalism. The second is more crystallized in their attitudes towards national claims and aspirations while more susceptible to the influence of secularization. The first category adopts a more pious attitude being receptive to the Kurdish national sentiments and remaining faithful to the claims of Islam as a political order-creating system. In contrast, the second is more inclined toward secularization in the process of nationhood. Religion acts as a cultural system rather than an order-creating political one to form a society.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This dissertation attempted to understand and explain the complicated relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationalism. It is well aware that various interactions between religion and nationalism appear in several instances that do not allow simple theoretical generalizations. Furthermore, no single model can alone explain the nexus between religious and national loyalties. Based on empirical findings from the fieldwork through semi-structured elite interviews, this study displays that a bifurcation occurs where Islam and Kurdish nationalism interplay. It thus designs a binary approach and concludes that there is either an overlapping or contradictory relationship between specific configurations of religion and nationalism. In other words, two opposing tendencies in Kurdish Islamic circles come to exist simultaneously, which reflects both cleavage and synthesis. In some cases, religion is "a force for unity" as a constitutive or supporting element of national sentiments. Nevertheless, it also becomes an obvious major cause of the division of a community on the road to attaining national unity. Therefore, religion's link with nationalism must be studied case by case to uncover the variety and complexity of particular social arrangements. Whereas one trend largely treats Islam and ethno-nationalism as mutually exclusive and contradictory, the other sees no tension or disagreement between the two phenomena.

I call the first tendency the competitive relationship between religion and nationalism in which the two correspond to the contending order-creating systems with conflicting goals. This model conforms well to "Muslim nationalism" or "Muslim transnationalism," by which the image of a Muslim nation transcends ethnonational claims. In the eyes of some Muslims, Islam still acts as a source of motivation in their collective action to create political order.

In this framework, an image of society implicitly attributes to the fundamental tenets of "religion" as an order-creating system rather than the nation. The existing literature, however, largely ignores how religion has undermined the idea of nationalism by supplying non-national and transnational modes of action, particularly in Muslim societies where Islam dramatically affects daily and sociopolitical life. The substantive content of Islam, the scriptural texts and its interpretation, including jurisprudence or fiqh re-produced by Islamic scholars, still perpetuates its exclusively anti-ethnic and anti-national marker on those faithful who see it as a way of life. Most of the literature focuses on religion's influence on the emergence and development of nationalism or the mutual attraction and affinity between religious and national claims.

If anything, this dissertation argues that Islam has a strong universalizing tendency or stream among its adherents. It emanates from its theological roots but not independent realms of social life in the Weberian sense. Islam provides a framework for social and political motivations with particular doctrinal teachings and moral orientations to explain and control circumstances and events, including political attitudes. Although Islamic texts do not have a full-fledged political order formulation, their universalizing spirit has been profoundly anti-national, enabling a bridge in networking with wider ethnic circles. Islam has far-reaching implications on individual and collective behavior, supplying prisms through which the meaning of the world is uncovered and social actions orienting toward reshaping the world by human design. At this point, the study appeals to Weber's definition of religion on two levels: "the inner realm of individuals" and "the foundation of the world". Weber, in fact, underscores the multi-causality and non-deterministic character of a particular social reality, including religion. Yet "the content of a specific religion" has been significant to the extent that it influences individual and collective behavior on its own. Central to Weber's understanding is the conviction that a particular religious and ethical system, "the Protestant ethic" gave rise to the formation of new norms of behavior and a set of economic orientations or "the spirit of capitalism". Accordingly, religion cannot be without belief, but it is not merely about faith.

Although a constant interaction occurs between religion and the world, which sets in motion from the spiritual to the material and from the material to the spiritual, most faiths are not something out there but can be initially observed and experienced from within.

Following Weber's design, the study implies that Islam deserves to be treated from a substantive perspective. Moreover, focusing only on its otherwordly promises is not satisfactory for an all-encompassing definition. Islam also has a say in this world. It is a religion with a political purpose, at the heart of which the image of ummah lies. The concept of ummah in the Qur'an usually refers to a consciousness that believers see themselves as members of the faithful community. Some verses of the Quran explicitly emphasize a supraethnic identity based on the brotherhood of believers. Quran states, "*hold firmly to the rope of Allah, and do not be divided. Remember Allah's favor upon you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so you became brothers*" (Quran; 3:103). In another verse, brotherhood is defined. "*The believers are but one brotherhood, so make peace between your brothers"* (Quran; 49:10). The discourse of the Islamic Brotherhood deserves particular interest, for Islam does not merely correspond to subliminal consciousness metaphysically imagined but also indicates consciousness directed towards creating an ideal social and political order via the brotherhood. As a result, an ideological contention between loyalty to the modern conception of the nation and nationalism and the transnational claims of Islam inevitably comes true. In this view, nationalism requires essentially secular consciousness and cannot find an accommodation with Islam. Ummah" becomes an expression of political consciousness to which primary loyalty belongs to the Muslim community, excluding secular sections of the co-ethnic society within and the members of other religions without. It virtually symbolizes a distinctive community of believers regardless of ethnicity or nation of its constituents, just as the Prophet united the rival Arab tribes and non-Arab elements within a monolithic community that was not confined to the Arabs.

Thus, I define Muslim nationalism "as a distinctive kind of nationalism" based on Islamic doctrine oriented towards the emancipation of self-conscious religious groups into political claims requiring collective action. Most religious Kurds advocate Muslim nationalism and articulate a consciousness of ummah based on the Quran, the Sunna, and hadiths (records of the saying and doings of the Prophet), which provides theological justification and legitimation for their collective actions. Muslim nationalism in the Kurdish context has two pillars, I argue. It aims to establish an Islamic political order founded on Shari'a rule under God's Judgement of the world," along with the doings and sayings of the Prophet Mohammad. Shari'a here does not necessarily equal a full-fledged or well-defined system of rule. Instead, it refers to a spectrum of thought and action ranging from mild Islamic inclination to the most extreme type of radical (jihadist) Islamic political imagination. It includes, albeit minimally, a projection of a form of Islamic order (İslam Nizamı). When Shari'a is noted, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) often comes to mind. The imagined Islamic order, however, goes beyond the individual level of religious commitment because Shari'a has political, economic, and social implications over all areas of society.

Secondly, Muslim nationalism upholds a political aspiration oriented toward a change in the current inter-state system. It maintains transnational and supra-ethnic characteristics going beyond the boundaries that determine the existing political order predicated on ethnically self-conscious communities. In this sense, Muslim nationalism aims for a more radical change within and without. Those who follow Islamic ideals have a claim of re-constructing this world by mobilizing around the ummah or the Islamic brotherhood. Its aspiration of creating a society may have rightly motivated the political action of those who pursue faith-based goals and ideals even in the age of nationalism. This definition makes religion the primary impetus for mobilization, aspirations, core motivations, and collective action in what I have called a competitive model rather than the nation. Islam holds a contradictory relationship with nationalism, which exemplifies the role of Islam in curbing nationalism. Islam has a theological image of transnationalism to attain a community of faithful what I

have ironically called this form of religious nationalism, Muslim nationalism. Muslim nationalism, as a form of religious nationalism, articulates "the need for change" and "the need for a new order". I am not using this concept to specify cases of religious nationalism in which secular nationalism is becoming more religious. Rather, I am using this to attribute those who believe Islamic identity promises more dignity than other ideologies, including nationalism, while ironically keeping some characteristics of nationalism. Interestingly, the commitment to Islam at the level of "collective dignity" appears peculiar to modern times as national identity does now, challenging the dominance of modernity through a rejection of its social and cultural order.

On the other hand, although Islam does not impose a crystallized cultural homogeneity on ethnic groups, it also influences culture in some terms. The Qur'an and hadiths, the written sources of Islamic belief, are composed in Arabic and performed in religious rituals as in their original versions. Apart from this, the mainstream Islamic schools had an age-long reservation about translating the Qur'an into the local languages for the possible distortion of the meaning of the Qur'an. When one relates national consciousness to "a sense of distinct language group" or compares the impact of Christianity on the development of vernacular literature with that of Islam, Islam acts as a restraining force on the evolution of "the idea of the nation", excluding the Arab nation. Maybe ethnic groups other than Arabs did not become Arabise to the extent that Islam penetrated the whole culture, but their ethnic culture did not contribute to the awareness that they are a distinct political group. Nations largely arose from "the translation of the scriptures into the vernacular" that helped form a specific national consciousness among the local communities within the Western context. Islam, however, did not peculiarly contribute to "the construction of the nation", curbing the political formation of a linguistic and cultural community. The transnational view has made national consciousness unnecessary, particularly among the members of subordinate ethnic groups, including Kurds, Berbers, and Baloch people. Nationalism has never replaced Islam as an order-creating system or the primary cultural mechanism of social integration for those who perceive it as an offspring

of secularism. A transnational discourse and projection to the structuring of society have preponderated over "the claims of national sovereignty". Such a relationship between religion and nationalism can easily fit into what may be called the ontological concern of religion for enabling it to order the world in the Weberian sense. The "change" comes with collective action through the substantive content of religion in Weber, while in Durkheim, it takes place in a context where society gives meaning to religious beliefs and practices. Islam manifests a transnational framework for ordering the world to influence collective action, which stems from its substantive content.

In the second configuration, one can observe a symbiotic interaction between Islam and the Kurdish national cause. One may easily find the coexistence of religious and secular values in Kurdish society, where religious ideas and discourses can ironically be secularized over the image of the Kurdish nation. Secular Kurdish politics, too, is willing to accommodate religious groups to enhance wider popular support.The study does not, however, find the awakening national consciousness of pious people or Islamic organizations that come together around the Kurdish national cause alongside secular actors as "a separate type of nationalism". Despite many confrontations among themselves, a strong group feeling paves the way for a convergence of Muslim Kurds with secular Kurdish politics around the Kurdish ethnopolitical claims. The dissertation, therefore, knowingly refrained from using the term "religious nationalism" in the Kurdish case. Furthermore, it does not take secular nationalism as anti-religious, which is devoid of religious sentiment and overtones" or does not distinguish between "religious nationalism" and "secular nationalism". Kurdish national mobilization does not simply go through similar pathways or possess a series of similar experiences because its members are patterned to interpret the world and act differently depending on their ways of perceiving the world. Hence, it does not form a monolithic category for being shaped by diverse processes. On the contrary, it includes composite clustering groups accompanied by power struggles, interest conflicts, and ideological competition. National self-consciousness, however, remains fundamentally

secular because it focuses on this world and the world of empirical reality, making the profane the source of its ultimate meaning, which requires its own sacralization.

The traditional distinction "to be Muslim comes first, then Kurdishness but with no political aspiration" in Muslim nationalism has become meaningless in what I call Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. Unlike Muslim nationalism, the substantive content of Islam ceases to be a barrier to slowing down the political mobilization of Kurdishness around the idea of nationalism. Contrary to Islam's anti-ethnic or anti-national theological origins, a more functional approach that is more sympathetic to the national struggle at the popular level is constructed. It is directly related to the fact that nationalism, in one way or another, requires secular consciousness, which brings to mind Durkheim's distinction between the realm of the sacred and that of the profane. Those more resistant to secularization follow a political approach that possesses certain features with that of Weber and Durkheim. In other words, religion is a human enterprise to construct this world, but it is not necessarily true that this enterprise is all about the profane. In contrast, those susceptible to secularization stand closer to Durkheim's interpretation of religion in which individuals and social groups are more active, giving it additional or new meanings. In this respect, Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism has somewhat of a secular character despite its religious content, and it does not constitute a distinct type of nationalism. One should remember that national movements are dynamic actors that give additional meanings to religion in the Durkheimian sense.

Islam maintains its substantive and ontological significance but draws its strength from the community and efficiently accommodates the national aspirations of ethnopolitical units in which it existed from a Durkheimian perspective. Therefore, I combined Weber's ontological concern for meaning – religion as a system for ordering the world - with Durkheim's functionalism – faith as a source of collective social action because religion has social dimensions, which refers to "the social construction of the meaning systems"

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where Islamic and national identities overlap. Nonetheless, since the nationalisms that contain Kurdish nationalism are more engaged with Islam, it does not readily incorporate Islam as a part of consciousness. Since Islam does not give the Kurdish national cause a distinctive character, there is no "religious nationalism" in the Kurdish case. It can, at most, play a secondary or supporting role in legitimating and reinforcing Kurdish national claims. Islam does not, particularly, create a fostering effect on the development of national consciousness in the Kurdish case. Accordingly, Kurdish nationalism is not a form in which religion is an ethnic marker because the Kurdish population mainly belongs to the same religion, namely Islam, as the nationalisms with which it competes despite sharing different sects and schools of thought. I also refrained from using the concept of ethnoreligious when describing Kurdish nationalism as it does not fit well into the classical examples that religion may have an encouraging role in the construction and consolidation of national consciousness, as are Indians, Irish, Polish, the Palestinians, Armenians, Tamils, Chechens, Filipino Moros, and Kashmiris. The constitutive element of the Kurdish identity against the competing nationalisms is not Islam. Islam does not uphold Kurdish nationalism, unlike religion's roles in the nationalism mentioned above.

Throughout the study, I also argued that modernization would not necessarily lead to religion's inevitable decline and disappearance as the process of secularization has been neither monolithic nor linear in every corner of the world. Despite its myriad counter-movements, however, secularization has been irreversible since it has become one of the "unintended consequences of modernization". Then I offered a narrow definition of nationalism. Accordingly, although national identity requires some tangible characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, language, etc., its essential component is self-consciousness or self-awareness. My theoretical frame of nationalism is based on self-consciousness. Instead of using an objectivist definition, I embrace nationalism as a political doctrine with an emancipatory aspiration of self-conscious ethnic groups through collective action for political purposes. Although it seems

problematic to measure consciousness precisely, I looked at the primary motivation of political elites, which allows us to distinguish different forms of relationship between religion and nationalism. It helped explain political settings in which, whether nationalist claims or religious grounds guide their collective action.

The main conclusion from the fieldwork is that Kurdish political orientations have been represented by at least two competing tendencies regarding the relationship between Islam and nationalism. In other words, religion has the ability to foster and hinder flourishing national sentiments simultaneously. Within the Kurdish context, Islam slows down the consolidation of the Kurdish nation-building process on one side, encouraging national consciousness and national unity on the other by referencing egalitarian justice. In this respect, religion plays a dual role. The field is, however, more intricate than the bifurcation the dissertation proposes. We need more sub-typologies that are not strictly separated from each other. There may also be exceptions to these categories, but I would argue that these are the main trends in the Kurdish public sphere. In the Kurdish case, religion and nationalism are equivalent in their claims of being the basis of political order. They are thus alternative ideological hypotheses to each other. Muslim nationalism aims to establish a political order within and without going beyond the nation-state system, which makes religion the primary source of mobilization, aspirations, and collective action in what I have called a competitive model rather than the nation. On the other hand, religion and nationalism can co-exist in an intertwined relationship in such a way as to allow religious and national identities to be overlapping as a combination of the two.

The findings show that two sub-tendencies, at least, co-exist within Kurdish Muslim nationalism circles in terms of approach to ethnicity. While one trend appears more anti-ethnic, the other seems to have a strong ethnic consciousness but with no political aspiration or functioning as a source of mobilization. The most important distinction of the first category is that Turks and Kurds are

considered one nation or political entity. Although Turks and Kurds are ethnically diverse groups, they are implicitly one holding a shared historical experience and a common destiny. Accordingly, ethnic identity has merely instrumental value but no substance. The anti-ethnic segment of the Kurdish population does not find a significant place at the level of elite representation, as the Kurdish question has dominated the political agenda. Ironically, its visibility in Kurdish society continues to increase over time on an individual basis due to the gradual assimilation or integration of the Kurdish population into Turkish society. The security policies of the Turkish state mostly receive support from those included in the antiethnic category, as they are largely indifferent to the Kurdish issue. They do not feel they are part of the Kurdish issue and do not compete with Turkish nationalism. Their Kurdishness exists at the level of cultural practices, but it does not turn into a distinctive cultural identity. It even conforms with Turkishness in political terms. It also leads to widespread ethnic alienation, apathy, and a high degree of ethnic unconsciousness. These Kurds are not disappointed with their subordinate position vis-a-vis Turkishness as the dominant or superordinate identity within a defined border. The main features of this sub-typology are as follows:

Anti-Ethnic Muslim Nationalism

It is a category that seeks to find a place within Turkey's Islamic networks and the center-right political parties. Those within the anti-ethnic category are mainly situated in Turkish Islam and strictly embedded in Turkish Islamic organizations and movements. Traditionally, they have been the core voters of the center-right parties in Turkey, including consecutive parties of the "National View Movement" and "the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP)", despite changes in voting behavior. In this way, the anti-ethnic category has been subordinated to the Turkish Islamic synthesis about discourse, political mobilization, and agenda setting. The unconditional support for and orientation with pro-Islamic Turkish governments has generated a more passive position toward Turkish Islam among its constituents who see themselves in a common destiny with Turkish Islam and thus take no action against it. It has a strategic

alliance with Turkish Islamic circles, particularly against imperial powers, including secular Turks and Kurds, because the definition" us and the other" is made along religious lines in line with the principle of Ittihad-ı Islam, with strong anti-imperial, anti-Greek, and anti-Armenian feelings.

On the other hand, ethnicity or Kurdishness has no political connotation while referring to a sub-identity in which Turkish ethnic hegemony is reproduced. Rather, Kurdishness is perceived as a folkloric element of group identity. Moreover, Kurdish culture and language have no market value for these Kurds. Therefore, it is not worth being or not being the direct carrier of this culture. Kurds in this category do not possess distinctive political claims and aspirations based on Kurdishness or straightforward objection to Turkish nationalism intertwined with Islam on a rhetorical and practical level. They do not have group feelings over Kurdishness nor demand autonomy over their thoughts and actions, making them dependent upon Turkish Islamic circles. In this respect, an implicit integration with the Turkish national community through an emphasis on Islamic solidarity and brotherhood occurs. It demonstrates a strong perception towards intertwining Turkish nationalism with the commitment to Islamic identity. In other words, identity formation surfaces with Islam, not the promotion of the nation-state.

Accordingly, Islam maintains its functionality between Turkish and Kurdish societies, thus continuing to act as a bridge and reinforcing Kurds' ties with the rest of Turkey. It remains a strong bond between Turks and Kurds. The anti-ethnic category constitutes the most hidden stratum in Kurdish society since it has limited opportunities and potential for representation at the level of elite and civil society sectors. The members of this group do not destructively feel the Kurdish issue and thus do not bring it to the forefront. The Kurdish Question does not emerge as the primary one, but it can, at most, be one of the many social issues. They do not, however, become visible in the public sphere, for the Kurdish issue and related agendas overwhelm the public space. In this view, as long as life goes on, problems will continue to exist. There is no obvious

challenge against the status quo or demand for significant change in the public realm. Compared to classical Muslim nationalism, which holds a more ideological vision, the anti-ethnic category is more pragmatic with a this-worldly orientation, which makes it more prone and receptive to the secularization trend. Last but not least, those who take part in it are aware that they are ethnically Kurds but without political aspirations founded on it. Consciously or unconsciously, they have been entrenched in Turkish Islam and culture. The agenda-setting of Turkish Islam smoothly becomes the agenda-setting of this populace.

A second category is a form of religious identification that keeps its distance from aspiring ethnic or national unity while protecting ethnic identity in a non-national manner. This group tends to regard themselves as an ethnically identifiable community, but they do not intend to attain a political nation through a degree of consciousness and aspiration. In this configuration, Islam has explicitly formed "the framework of political consciousness" and "the source of political mobilization," not a national identification. These Kurds do not possess national aspirations even though Kurdish identity culturally feeds them. The transnational forms of political, social, and cultural interaction of the Islamic paradigm have made national consciousness unnecessary among these circles. Ethnic consciousness does not ironically turn into national consciousness, for it would divide and weaken the Muslim ummah, which already faces many crises. In this sense, Islamic identity draws a stable boundary between the in-group (Muslims) and "the out-group (non-Muslims). Let us now turn to its main characteristics.

Ethnically Conscious Muslim Nationalism

It is a category in which Islam becomes the most constitutive part of identity formation under the title of "Muslim nationalism", which corresponds to a "distinctly religious form of nationalism that amounts to the political mobilization of religiously motivated people to satisfy "the need for change" and "the need for a new order" within and without. An intrinsically competitive

interaction arises between Islam and nationalism in this relationship. Its proponents have an image of a faith-based political community rather than a nation-based one—a more ideological commitment to the religious vision of ordering and regulating public life. The concepts of nation and nationalism are blamed for dividing Muslim societies among these Kurds, who point to the need for an unequivocal resistance against modern political constructions founded upon these phenomena, like the nation-state. This category has political demands for radical change, including the abolition of the nation-state model. Nationalism is seen as a political projection to destroy Islamic brotherhood, and the nation-state is, too, artificial. All political imaginations based on nationhood are seen as un-Islamic, as nationalism is essentially secular consciousness. An objection to the political structures based on Turkishness or Kurdishness is thus equally necessary. Since nationalism is presented as "a child of the Enlightenment" and symbolizes an "imported solution" to the social problems created by modernity, it locates itself against Turkish and Kurdish nationalisms, marking them as secular order-creating systems. Inherently, an ideological conflict exists between loyalty to the nation and the transnational claims of Islam. Nationalism, as an essentially secular consciousness, cannot find an accommodation with Islam. Islam and nationalism are alternative ideological hypotheses for each other and order-creating systems. The prevalent belief is that nationalism inevitably leads to moving away from Islam and the Islamic agenda. Let alone national sentiments and movements have no place in Islamic theological sources. The contradiction between Islam and nationalism is not, therefore, over.

At the same time, it is a category connected to Turkish Islam but aims to direct it towards a more supra-national vision. It does not tend to adopt a passive role in its relationship with Turkish Islam due to its pursuit of a self-reliant sense of consciousness, albeit limited. Within this context, Turkish Islam cannot lead the Islamic world with current political approaches as much as it pursues national ideas. It is on the wrong way but can be restored if it returns to true Islam. Under the current circumstances, the bridge between Muslim Turkish and Kurdish brothers is not working, waiting to be reactivated. The activation of the bridge

depends on the return to true Islam. Otherwise, the Turkish-Kurdish relationship would wholly deteriorate. For this reason, all Turkish and Kurdish Muslims must unite and restore the bridge. Even though Muslim nationalism in the Kurdish public sphere has the potential to go beyond the boundaries of Turkish Islam led by the ruling AK Party, it cannot do it because its material capabilities in the field are with ups and downs in proportion to the good relations it keeps with the AKP and its affiliated communities. Due to its concurrent ties with Turkish political power, it has become popularized to a limited extent.

According to this tendency, despite difficulties in installing Islamic brotherhood, one must reinvigorate the ummah's spirit. Ummah consciousness predominates over other sense of belongings. Support for integrating transnational Islamic networks within and without built on brotherhood, solidarity, and Muslim unity constitutes the source of political mobilization. Islam, itself, serves as the identity marker that provides mobilization. Ironically, it sees nationalism as a modern ideology while unaware that Islam has turned itself into another ideology in which it has constructed its own political doctrine. Nonetheless, a high degree of ummah consciousness does not automatically bring about a high level of collective action with transnational Islamic organizations due to various encountering barriers. Despite all the misrepresentations, Islam emancipates the individual and society; thus, the aim must first be (re)Islamization of the Kurdish community and then create an order based on Islamic doctrines. If Islam prevails in all political areas and social life, the problems stemming from ethnic disputes will be solved by themselves. Islam also provides a solution model to the Kurdish issue. If Islam is applied, the problem will disappear as it becomes a religion of justice. Unsurprisingly, traditional and customary codes have as much influence on this segment of the Kurdish population as religious tenets, provided that ethnic consciousness and visibility exist but are not framed politically. In this view, ethnicity matters as a social reality but does not necessarily contain political imagination. Such an image is not legitimate and does not conform to Islamic precepts. Ethnic identity may, at most, become a source of cultural mobilization. Compared to the anti-ethnic group, its components are more

conscious of Kurdishness and are more intertwined with Kurdish culture but with no political reference to Kurdishness. In other words, despite its ethnically conscious structure, it has an anti-national character and an anti-national state imagination. Although its constituents do not have a political imagination based on the nation, they are not explicitly anti-ethnic. They are openly against the Kurdish policy of the Turkish state.

Ethnically conscious pious Kurds who follow Muslim nationalism acknowledge the Kurdish issue as a fact, which does not guarantee that it is within the coverage of the top political agenda, being at most one of the agendas. They are familiar with the Kurdish national claims and demands, which do not represent a priority and urgent agenda. The final agenda is the Islamization of Kurdish society. For them, the primary issue must be secularized superstructure and society that requires immediate destruction through a bottom-up Islamization of the state and society. A Turk, Arab or Persian, with Muslim national feelings, is seen as closer than a secular Kurd. For instance, the disapproval of ISIS or other radical Islamic organizations' methods does not mean the approval of the PYD's statehood in northern Syria due to the antagonistic relations with the PKK and its offspring. Whereas these Kurds embrace Kurdish historical figures such as Ehmede Xani, Meleye Ciziri, and Sheikh Said, they also accommodate Turkish figures with Islamic inclination, such as Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Necip Fazil Kısakürek and Sezai Karakoç, but there is absolutely no room for Seyit Rıza or Nazım Hikmet here. It is almost impossible for Kurdish representatives of Muslim nationalism to come together with secular Kurdish nationalism because of their incompatible political aims. According to this category, the mainstream secular Kurdish political movement does not represent Kurdish nationalism, for the attitude they adopt and the policy they pursue has nothing to do with the Kurdish cause. Furthermore, the secular Turkish mindset has created the Kurdish issue that has become more evident with Turkification efforts. If this psyche is eliminated and no emphasis is made on Turkishness, the Kurdish issue will ease to a large extent. Ethnic conflicts will come to an end as Turkish-Kurdish society and political authority become Islamic, respectively. Islam corresponds to a big

cluster in this configuration, while Kurdishness amounts to a small bunch within it.

While the anti-ethnic category of Muslim nationalism does not see itself as a part of the Kurdish issue, those belonging to the ethnically self-conscious category demand more political change regarding Kurdish collective rights. The first category's avoiding political action oriented towards Kurdish ethno-nationalism keeps them in a more comfortable zone. It is more indifferent to the Kurdish question and loyal to the Turkish state. They are, of course, more susceptible to Turkish assimilation. On the other hand, those who fall into the ethnically self-conscious community simultaneously accommodate Islamic and Kurdish identities. The strongest or the primary one is, however, Islamic identity. Accordingly, these Kurds must seek their rights within the Islamic framework, not in Kurdish nationalism. In this view, Kurdish nationalism is a modern secular project designed to cut the Kurds' ties with Islam. Among these circles, nationalism is characterized as an ill-advised phenomenon to be avoided and most often used in a pejorative sense. A sincere Muslim deeply devoted to Quran can only belong to one nation, a community of all faithful Muslims, regardless of whether nationalisms use Islam. Muslim identity eventually trumps all other identities. Kurdish issue, too, must be addressed through the principle of Muslim unity on which egalitarian equality is based rather than the nation.

Whether anti-ethnic or ethnically conscious, those included in the Muslim nationalism category are not socialized into the agenda relevant to the Kurdish nationhood in the public sphere. Those who fall within Muslim nationalism consider the phenomenon of nation and nationalism as artifacts of modernity and even as a new religion in itself. According to this approach, a particular nationalism feeds and activates its counter-nationalisms, indicating that the nation is a human invention. Hence, nationalism does not possess primordial or immutable essence. One can call this "reactive nationalism," which appears in how sequences of patterns are repeatedly observed. In other words, Turkish nationalism led to the emergence and growth of Kurdish nationalism. For most

of these Muslim Kurds, Islam and Turkishness are almost inseparable. Turkishness has, however, been tightly controlled by the secular elites in their struggle for power and control. The problem is thus with the motivations and perceptions of the actors, not the idea of Turkish nationalism. Moreover, the other is not a collective Turkish identity but a secular Turkish one and even a secular Kurdish one in the mindset of a Kurd whose Muslim identity overweighs. Islam is the remedy to all problems, including the Kurdish issue of Muslim nationalism. Islam emancipates the individual and society. For this reason, there is no need for another human ideology like nationalism. To conclude, as mentioned above, these categories are not mutually exclusive but interrelated. There are instances where they are intertwined and separated from each other.

Whereas Islam curbs the consolidation of Kurdish nationhood within the context of Muslim nationalism, it fosters national consciousness and unity in the symbiotic model to the extent that Islam and nationalism are intertwined and dependent on each other. Such a relationship renders the nation, much more than religion itself, a fundamental source of mobilization, political aspirations, and core motivations of collective action. Secular nationalism is becoming more religious in the symbiotic model, implying that there is no retreat from secularism. On the contrary, a sense of common nationhood does not require secularization. One does not need to be a full-fledged secular to feel a strong emotional attachment to your nation, or one can become a fervent nationalist without being secularized instantly. Nationalism as a political doctrine has flourished among many Muslim Kurds and has turned into a manifestation of the secularization of the "Muslim mind" in the modern period. The dissertation conceptualizes and presents this process as the intertwining of Islam with Kurdish nationalism by which pious Kurds, with their subordinate position vis-a-vis Turkishness as the dominant or superordinate identity, come to feel that they belong to a distinct national community and call this unequal representation a pattern of collective oppression. Islam here has a supportive role in legitimizing and reinforcing the Kurdish national cause through words, images, and symbols.

It is no longer an obstacle for the ethnically conscious group to equate religious identity with national self-consciousness.

Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism does not manifest a form of religious nationalism in which Kurdish ethnicity draws on religious exclusivity. Islam did not particularly contribute to ripening national consciousness in the Kurdish context, enabling the linguistic and cultural community. If anything, it has curbed a significant segment of the Kurdish population from orienting towards national sentiments with the thought that nationalisms with which it competes, Turkish, Arabic, and Persian, do not ultimately represent the Muslim peoples within. In this view, nationalism is a top-bottom project. In Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism, Islamic identity does not avert embracing ethnopolitical goals or taking collective action for the survival and interest of national identity. The more a fundamental identity is pertinent to survival, security, and dignity, the more it is tied to a political cause taking priority over all other identities.Nonetheless, it is early to argue that a unique Kurdish Islam in which a fusion between the self-consciousness of religious identification with that of nationalism has been a distinctive feature has emerged.

A nascent Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism is, however, in the making in the Kurdish political sphere. It largely corresponds to a disorganized political mobilization of religiously motivated individuals on the road to Kurdish nationhood that legitimizes its political aspirations through Islam. It is still not crystallized and urgently awaits its peculiar political doctrine and leadership. It is thus a stunted mobilization at the organizational level while beginning to be more influential at the individual level. I consider it possible for a potential Kurdish Islam to emerge to the extent that the Turkish state's detente policy towards the Kurdish issue, as well as the space that mainstream secular Kurdish politics, has made room for it in the public sphere. In other words, the more the Kurdish area under Turkey's state of emergency normalizes, the more likely it is that a consolidated Kurdish Islam will flourish. Ironically, its public visibility diminishes during crisis escalation on the Kurdish issue because the Turkish

state and secular Kurdish politics dominate the Kurdish public sphere more at such times. Thus, a correlation takes place between Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism and violence. As violence increases, it becomes more invisible. It is currently unclear whether and to what extent primary allegiances and political aims are based on Islamic doctrine, Kurdish nationalism, or a combination of the two. Let us now look at the main characteristics of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism under the impact of secularization and the vulnerability of religiosity.

Islam-influenced Kurdish Nationalism Prone to Secularization

This category includes those who can no longer remain within Turkey's Islamic circles, thinking that Turkish Islam has turned out to aid Turkishness. It places itself completely against Turkish Islam, whereas it stands more prone to the wave of secularization in the Kurdish public sphere. It demands a more tolerant and modest religiosity compatible with modern norms and values such as citizenship, liberty, equality, and political representation, including national sentiments. In this configuration, Islam finds accommodation with these principles. Among its constituents, Islam is no longer seen as an order-creating system or a belief that imposes political authority but as a faith-based philosophical creed and social construct simultaneously. They are emotionally disconnected from Islamic politics in the public sphere, remaining closer to cultural Islam while staying away from political Islam. Accordingly, the substantive content of Islam has difficulties answering modern social problems, which does not mean completely abandoning Islam at the end of the day. Rather, supplemental meanings and new interpretations are given to Islam. In this way, religion turns out to be a source of motivation from which nationalism invokes spirituality.

This tendency, of course, comprises secularization in different tones and scales. In other words, being under the influence of secularization also brings distance from religiosity to a certain extent. It is located at the nearest line (or borderline) between Islam and secularization. It combines secular and Islamic explanations

for national ideas, positioning itself against Turkish nationalism with a high degree of Kurdish consciousness and nation-oriented claims. It looks for ways to engage with and holds sympathy for secular Kurdish nationalist actors, rendering the prospect of cooperation and alliance possible. A considerable transition from Muslim nationalism networking into this category in recent years has taken place due to the ever-intertwining of Islamism and Turkish nationalism and the upheaval in Kurdish geopolitics. One can observe a more reactive attitude among this segment of the Kurdish population toward what is happening on the ground concerning Kurds in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran, particularly after the rise and fall of the Islamic State (ISIS) or other radical Islamic organizations, which has precipitated the secularization and disengagement with Islamic actors in the field. Interestingly, enlarging the secular realm becomes a catalyst and result of national awakening. Secularization thus serves a dual function. These ethnically conscious Kurds are willing to participate in the main debates and issues relevant to Kurdish nationhood in the public sphere to a large extent. Their national consciousness is oriented toward an image of society in which the nation is an order-creating system rather than religion. They also have explicit orientation and visible collective action for ethnocultural mobilization.

Islam-influenced Kurdish Nationalism Resistant to Secularization

It is a category called efforts to Islamize the Kurdish cause, or one seeks to harmonize Islamic norms and values with the Kurdish cause. It infrequently includes some Kurds who believe Islam is the constitutive element of Kurdish identity. It is argued that Islam, the constitutive element of the Kurdish identity, is ignored in the evolution of the Kurdish national consciousness. It is rather a catalyzer of the Kurdish movements and rebellions in history. In line with this idea, it seeks to build its pathway autonomously independent of mainstream Turkish Islamic actors and organizations. Its main political aspiration aims to emancipate Islam and the Kurds, respectively. The emancipation of Islam means its salvage from all forms of misunderstanding, misrepresentation, and misinterpretation that also leads to the spread of secularization of the Kurdish mindsets. That Kurds have no collective rights and no political status in the

current Islamic order-society imaginations of Muslim nations has alienated Kurdish generations from Islam. Although political Islam here does not take place at the level of discourse, it is unclear where it will evolve in the coming years. But one of the main focal points is the emphasis on the secularization of the Kurds, which is thought to be a reactive process against so-called oppressive Islam and the misrepresentations of Islam.

There is a prevalent criticism that secular Kurds are also trying to overwhelm the Kurdish public sphere rather than trying to understand different Kurdish segments other than themselves. To the extent that secular domination is to be abandoned, Kurds can achieve unity through constructive dialogue. Secular Kurdish politics sacrifices national consciousness for the sake of its ideology. It degenerates the Kurdish population, who mostly belong to Islam, demonstrating the limits of cooperation among secular and pious Kurds. An intention to unite with secular Kurdish formations exists but with several disagreements in their ideological orientation. What is urgently needed is that secular and pious Kurds must come together. They have a common share for not coming together. According to some, secular actors are more responsible than religious Kurds because they have more power and control over the Kurdish population. Secular Kurdish politics has long described Islam as an official Islam that has been constructed bottom-up in the hands of political elites, ignoring its impact on civil society. Moreover, pious Kurds are considered not adequately represented in secular Kurdish politics, but despite this, there is a shared belief in collective action. Notwithstanding, group feeling includes non-religious Kurds who felt closer than religious Turks due to a lack of trust in Turkish Islamic formations and networks.

Understanding of "True Islam" lies at the heart of this inclination. It thus competes with all nationalisms that do not represent true Islam and rather constructed a new religion that benefits political power. There is a strong belief that free and true Islamic thought and action exist in theory, but current presentations of Islam are a burden on all Muslims. It is thus necessary to return

to the essence of Islam. Accordingly, power does not lie at the core of Islam. The goal of attaining true Islam unavoidably requires the reconstruction of Islam to accommodate Kurdish nationalism. An attempt to build its own Islam as a marker of ethnopolitical identity follows. Nationalism here has a narrow definition. It corresponds to the protection of ethnic identity, which conforms to the will of the divine power itself. Such nationalism cannot be defined as aggressive or oppressive nationalism. In this view, it is not nationalism unless it employs its identity as an instrument of domination over others. Protecting the survival of Kurdishness and society and defending Kurdish interests in line with Islamic creeds without harming or dominating others is perceived as a positive and natural development. That is how this category describes itself.

In this framework, the conviction that is Kurdish national cause is an un-Islamic movement or has no place in Islam is a fabrication produced by Turkish, Arabic, and Persian nationalisms that manipulate Islam for the sake of their claims. Unemancipated Islam is under the control of the nationalism with which Kurdish nationalism competes. It is also deemed a mechanism for the assimilation and integration of the Kurdish population into relevant communities. Therefore, it tries to redefine Islam that would emancipate itself and the Kurds. A fusion of Islam and Kurdish nationalism emerges in which being Kurd is inseparable from being Muslim. The assertion of the indivisibility of Islam and the Kurdish cause is based on the view that Kurdishness without Islam is unimaginable in this arrangement. In other words, there seems to be no contradiction between Islam and the attainment of legitimate Kurdish rights. If anything, Islam becomes a reference for legitimizing and reinforcing Kurdish national sentiments and even a potential ally. One finds an effort to formulate a political attitude through an Islamic vision that distinctively incorporates Kurdish national identity. It attempts to construct Kurdish Islam vis-a-vis Turkish Islam that does not represent such an Islamic imagination. It implicitly locates Kurdish nationalism against Turkish nationalism, which is supposed to exploit Islam.

The Turkish-Islamic synthesis, whose main purpose is oriented toward reinforcing Turkish nationalism, supposedly aims to establish hegemony over co-religious subordinate ethnic groups. In this way, Islam becomes a field of contestation between competing Turkish and Kurdish nationalisms. For the most part, Kurds' tie with Islam is seen as focused on worship and prayer; on the contrary, Turks' link with Islam is seen as more focused on politics or authority. For some, Turkish Islam even has a Hanafization project. For this reason, strict adherence to the Shafi'i school is crucial to maintain distinctiveness. Shafiism stands out as a distinguishing element of Kurdishness. Therefore, coexistence with Turkish society under the banner of Islam has become problematic. The Islamic bond between Turks and Kurds has been seriously damaged. Unless concrete actions to restore the Islamic bond are not taken, there will be no common cause with other Turkish Islamic circles.

It perhaps matches up to the most heterogeneous category, ranging from Islamists who are ardent followers of the ideal of the ummah to those who interpret Islam modestly. Nonetheless, the primary and urgent issue is the achievement of the rights of the Kurds, which does not mean that the Islamic agenda is subordinated to the Kurdish cause. Islam and the Kurdish cause are intertwined in this configuration. Islam itself inspires natural division among human groups. It demands egalitarian justice for Muslim ethnopolitical units. For instance, it interprets or adds new meanings to the well-known hadith "You cannot be a true believer unless you desire for your brother what you desire for yourself". Among these circles, the most quoted verses of the Quran are "we created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may get to know one another" (Quran, 49:13) and "one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your languages and colors (Quran, 30:22) On this basis, a relationship based on mutual recognition with competing nationalisms is requested. In other words, Islam recognizes the right to be a nation, and it is even considered un-Islamic to cease to be a nation. This category differs from the classical Muslim nationalists in that it does not see the remedy to the Kurdish issue in the unification of the ummah but with the

recognition of the Kurds. It sees Ittihad-i Islam as an operational and nakedly political project without credibility or reliability. Certain nation-states, particularly the so-called Islamic countries, which have minority issues, are behind the marketing of the image of the ummah.

Consequently, the unity of Muslims is expressed in theory, but in practice, it has no meaning. Islam and the discourse of the Muslim Brotherhood are frequently manipulated. Muslim unity is possible if true Islam is rebuilt in society and brought into action. What has happened so far is the outcome of the faulty construction of Islam. Islamic revivalism does not, however, seem feasible under the current circumstances. The Kurds are consistently assimilated under cover of Islamic brotherhood, which yields disapproval of the oppressive understanding of Islam and Islamism. In addition, Islam provides a faith-oriented obligation, while ethnicity attributes to more primordial bonds and requires strict adherence. In this equation, Islam may, at most, be complementary, not constitutive in the Kurdish national identity. Interestingly, those who belong to the Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism want to be called neither Kurdish nationalist nor Islamist, as nationalism and Islamism have been tarnished and most often used in a pejorative sense. They are dissatisfied with the status quo and demand considerable changes to include territorial designs. In this respect, Islam no longer acts as a bridge between these Muslim Kurds and Turks. The role of Islam as a unifying bond has dramatically been ruined, and it seems difficult to restore it under the current circumstances. If a new bridge is to be built, a new modality based on mutual recognition and acceptance of the parties is needed first.

Concluding Remarks

This study found various interactions between Islam and nationalism, looking at consciousness, mobilization, political aspirations, and core motivations of collective action of pious Kurdish elites in the Kurdish public sphere. It has, however, reduced this complexity of the relationship into two different but interrelated pathways by devising a binary approach in which there is either a

competitive or symbiotic relationship between Islam and Kurdish nationalism. In other words, religion can both promote (positive effects) and prevent (slowing effects) the formation and consolidation of national sentiments. The competitive interaction offers religion and nationalism as contradicting order-creating systems with mutually exclusive goals. This model fits well into "Muslim nationalism" as a distinctive religious nationalism. Here, Islam remains a source of the imagination of political order for self-conscious religious individuals and organizations by framing their collective actions. According to Muslim nationalism, Islam in itself emancipates the individual and society. Thus, the aim must first be the Islamization of the Kurdish society and the creation of an order based on Islamic tenets to remedy all socio-political problems. Such an interpretation of religion has placed Muslim Kurds against secular Kurdish nationalism, thereby automatically constraining Kurdish ethno-national claims. Islam has thus been an influential agent in alleviating Kurdish national aspirations.

In the symbiotic or intertwined interaction, unlike Muslim nationalism, Islam ceases to curb the political mobilization oriented toward Kurdish nationalism. The proponents of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism equally emphasize the emancipation of Islam and Kurdishness from all forms of political oppression of hegemonic powers, thereby making the emancipation of Islam and Kurdishness dependent on each other. In other words, an unemancipated Islam cannot emancipate. Contrary to Islam's anti-ethnic or anti-national theological origins, a more functional attitude that is more sympathetic to the national struggle at the popular level is constructed. Islam plays a supportive but less dominant role in the Kurdish cause in this configuration, but the two are not inseparable. Whereas those more resistant to secularization follow a path that combines substantive content of religion and functionalism, those more prone to secularization pursue a more active belief system that accommodates national feelings. On the other hand, what has happened in Kurdish geopolitics in recent years has dramatically contributed to the secularization of pious segments of the Kurdish population due to the misunderstanding, misrepresentation, and misinterpretation of Islam,
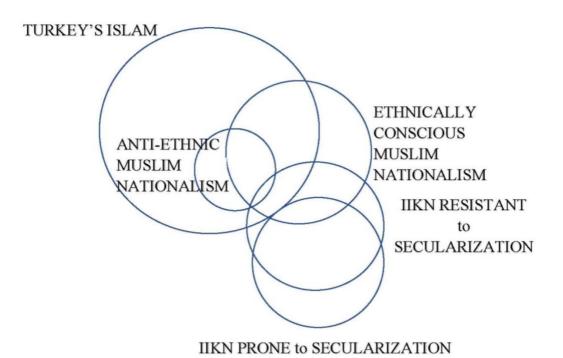
particularly in the hands of competing nationalisms. Thus, one can observe a hidden increase in favor of the secular realm, which has fostered the Kurdish national awakening. Secularization, therefore, serves a dual role.

These categories are, however, neither fixed nor static. They are interrelated in such a way that they overlap and diverge. The most visible shift emerges between the category of ethnically conscious Muslim nationalism and that of Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism. The folks involved in this change are on their way to cultivating a strong national consciousness without being secularized instantly. This study, however, argues that this trend ultimately leads to the secularization of Kurdish Muslim society, albeit not full-fledged, for nationalism essentially requires secular consciousness. While those more insistent in religiosity find Islamic theological justification and legitimation necessary for Kurdish nationalism, the quasi-secular category is more unwilling to justify Kurdish national claims with Islam, acknowledging that nationalism retains its secular content. The first category sees secularization as an unpleasant phenomenon, for it would harm Islamic creeds, thus remaining more faithful to the ontological foundations of faith in the Weberian sense. The second category regards Islam as a faith-based philosophical and social construct rather than an order-creating system or a political doctrine, thereby embracing a more Durkheimian perspective of religion. Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism harshly criticizes Muslim nationalism, for Islam is abused and manipulated in this arrangement. It is composed of individuals who have disorganized political mobilization and lack the leadership to overcome this issue. Such leadership may catalyze the Kurdish Islamic circles, cultivating a new doctrine through a blend of Islam and Kurdishness. Hence, it is still in the making and has not crystallized while awaiting its distinctive political ideology and leadership.

This study concludes that the Kurdish society in Turkey is not homogeneous and fixed. Some religiously motivated Kurds consciously keep their distance from national identity and attitudes, while other pious Kurds seek to fuse ethnopolitical claims and aspirations with an Islamic orientation. In the former,

political imagination through consciousness and collective action invokes the fundamental tenets of Islam as an order-creating system rather than the nation. In the latter, being a Kurd essentially means being a Muslim, even though Kurdish society encompasses disparate heterodox communities like Alawis and religious minority groups such as Yazidis and Assyrians. In this way, Islam acts as a sense of belonging to equate religious identity with emerging national self-consciousness. It supports the legitimation and reinforcement of the Kurdish national cause through words, images, and symbols based on egalitarian justice, thereby becoming no longer an obstacle to national awareness for ethnically conscious Kurds. The need for Kurdish survival and unity has thus produced a more moderate and tolerant Islam toward nationalism in the Kurdish society, where religion is often equivalent to a worldview and confines political action.

INTERACTION DESIGN

TURKEY'S ISLAM

ANTI-ETHNIC
MUSLIM
NATIONALISM

ETHNICALLY
CONSCIOUS
MUSLIM
NATIONALISM

IIKN RESISTANT
to
SECULARIZATION

IIKN PRONE to SECULARIZATION

1. **Anti-Ethnic Muslim Nationalism**: A category completely within Turkey's Islam or religiosity while interacting with Ethnically Conscious Muslim Nationalism.

2. **Ethnically Conscious Muslim Nationalism:** Both inside and outside of Turkey's Islam. It aims to transform Turkey's Islam into a more transnational structure while interacting with the anti-ethnic group and those more resistant to Islam-influenced Kurdish nationalism.

3. **Islam-Influenced Kurdish Nationalism Prone to Secularization:** It is completely divorced from Turkey's Islam, both mentally and physically. It is in an intense relationship with those resistant to secularization in Kurdish nationhood.

4. **Islam-Influenced Kurdish Nationalism Resistant to Secularization:** An approach largely disconnected from Turkey's Islam but still interacts with it to some extent. It aims to form a distinctively Islam-oriented Kurdish nationalism while interacting with all other categories.

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The List of Interviewees

Formal Networks: Those who have formal representation in Kurdish Islamic circles

Representatives Of Political Parties

- Justice and Development Party (AKP) – Süleyman Serdar BUDAK – Diyarbakır Provincial Chairman – Diyarbakır
- The People's Democratic Party (HDP) – Nimetullah ERDOĞMUŞ – Deputy Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly – Ankara
- Felicity Party (Saadet Party) – Abdurrahman ERGİN – Diyarbakır Provincial Chairman – Diyarbakır
- Democracy and Progress Party (DEVA Party) – Fazıl Hüsnü ERDEM – Founding Board Member – Diyarbakır
- Future Party – Vahdettin İNCE – Founding Board Member – İstanbul
- The Freedom Party (Partiya Azadî) – Ayetullah AŞITİ – Party Chairman – Mardin
- Kurdistan Islamic Movement (Herekate Azadî) – Fevzi BULGAN – Secretary General – Mardin
- Human and Freedom Party (PİA) – Mehmet KAMAÇ – Party Chairman – Van
- The Free Cause Party (HÜDAPAR) – Zekeriya YAPICIOĞLU – Party Chairman – Diyarbakır

Unions

- Memursen (Employee Trade Union) – Serdar Bülent YILMAZ – Advisor to the Union Leader – Ankara
- Religious and Foundation Workers Union (A Branch of KESK) – Zeynel Abidine ARİKELE – Member – Van
- Diyanet-Sen – Ömer EVSEN – Head of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

Islamic Non-Governmental Organizations

- Alliance of International Doctors (AID) – Eşref ARAÇ – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

- The Association for Rights Initiative – Reha RUHAVİOĞLU – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

- The Association for Strengthening Democracy (DEMGÜÇDER) – İlyas BUZGAN – The President of the Association – İstanbul

- The Association for Human Rights and Solidarity for the Oppressed (MAZLUM-DER) – Mahmut AYTEKİN – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

- Humanitarian Relief Foundation (İHH) – Vahdettin KAYGAN – Board Member – İstanbul

- The Association for Free Thought and Educational Rights (ÖZGÜR-DER) – Murat KOÇ– Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

- The Association for Life (HAYAT-DER) – Mehmet TURAN – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

- The Association for Wisdom, Morality and Brotherhood (İHVAN-DER) – Nurettin ZEYBEK – Diyarbakır

- The Association Rights and Freedoms, Education, Culture and Solidarity for a Bright Future (AYDER) – Abdulbaki ERMİŞ – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

- The Association for Religious Scholars' Aid and Solidarity (DİAYDER) – Ekrem BARAN – The President of the Association – İstanbul

- The Association for Radical Change (Köklü Değişim Derneği) – Aydın USALP – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır

- Dicle Fırat Dialogue Group– Muhittin BATMANLI – Chairman – Diyarbakır

Islamic Foundations

- The Union of Islamic Scholars and Madrasas – Suat YAŞASIN – Deputy Leader – İstanbul
- Madrasah Scholars' Foundation (MEDAV) – Tayyip ELÇİ – The Head of the Foundation – Diyarbakır
- The Ensar Foundation – Mehmet GÖZÜ – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır
- The Zehra Foundation – Abdullah ŞAHİN – Representative of Diyarbakır Branch – Diyarbakır
- The Invitation and Brotherhood Foundation – Maruf ÇELİK – The President of the Foundation – İstanbul
- Siyer Foundation – Muhammed Emin YILDIRIM – The Founder of the Foundation – İstanbul

European Based Organizations

- Kurdistan Islamic Movement (Civaka Islamiya Kurdistan) – Hafız Ahmet TURHALLI – The President of the Movement – Germany
- Kurdistan Islamic Party (Partiya Islamiya Kurdistan) – Hikmet SERBİLİND – The Chairman – Germany

Political Figures and Activists

- Abdülbaki ERDOĞMUŞ, Writer and Former Member of Parliament, Ankara
- Abdülilah FIRAT, Kurdish Politician and the Grandson of Sheikh Said, Ankara
- Ahmet KAYA, Vice Chairman Human and Freedom Party (PİA) and Former Mayor of Ergani, Diyarbakır
- Adem GEVERİ, Former Member of Parliament, Diyarbakır
- Altan TAN, Kurdish Politician and Writer, Diyarbakır
- Emine Uçak ERDOĞAN, Columnist at Perspektif, İstanbul
- Fatma Bostan ÜNSAL, Human Rights Activist, Ankara

- Ferda DEMİREL, Kurdish Activist, İstanbul
- Hüseyin SARIGÜL, the Former Representative of Malatya Branch of Mazlum-Der, Malatya
- Menice Rümeysa GÜLMEZ, Vice Chairman of PİA, Van
- Ömer Vehbi HATİPOĞLU, Writer and Former Member of Parliament, Ankara
- Nurettin TURGAY, Former Member of the Democratic Islamic Congress, Diyarbakır
- Nurten ERTUĞRUL, Political Activist, İstanbul
- Rauf ÇİÇEK, Lawyer, Diyarbakır
- Sabiha ÜNLÜ, Political Activist, Diyarbakır
- Seher AKÇINAR, Former Member of Parliament, Diyarbakır
- Sevgi Çelik MORAY, Former Kurdish Politician, Diyarbakır
- Sıdkı ZİLAN, One of the Founder of Azadi Initiative, Diyarbakır
- Şeyhmus ÜLEK, the Former Representative of Şanlıurfa Branch of Mazlum-Der, Şanlıurfa
- Yakup ASLAN, one of the Founder of the Azadi Initiative and former Representative of the Van Branch of Mazlum-der, Van

Informal Networks: Those who have no formal representation in Kurdish Islamic circles but conduct studies and participate in debates on the relevant topic in the public sphere, such as opinion leaders, researchers, academics, intellectuals, religious scholars, and members of some Islamic organizations.

Affiliated and Non-affiliated Researchers

- Abdulhakim BEYAZYÜZ, Columnist at Haksöz Magazine, Diyarbakır
- Abdulkadir TURAN, Columnist at Doğruhaber Newspaper, İstanbul
- Abdurrahman ARSLAN, A Muslim Intelectual, Diyarbakır
- Ahmet YILDIZ, Professor, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, İstanbul
- Mücahit BİLİCİ, Associate Professor, John Jay Criminal Justice, USA

- Mehmet ALKIŞ, Former Member of Azadi Initiative and Columnist at Milat Newspaper, Gaziantep
- Muhammed SALAR, Kurdish Writer and Researcher, Mersin
- Müfid YÜKSEL, Kurdish Writer and Researcher, İstanbul
- Huseyn SİYABEND, Kurdish Writer and Researcher, İstanbul
- Necat ZİVİNGÎ, Kurdish Writer and Researcher, İstanbul
- Fikri AMEDİ, Translator of Quran into Kurdish, Diyarbakır

Non-affiliated Kurdish Religious Elites

- Mele Süleyman KURŞUN, one of the Representatives of Traditional Kurdish Madrasa, Diyarbakır
- Mele Sadullah ERGÜN, one of the Representatives of Traditional Kurdish Madrasa, Diyarbakır
- Anonymous, Diyarbakır

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Çağlayan, Muttalip
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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
Ph.D.	METU International Relations	2023
MS	METU International Relations	2013
BS	Bahçeşehir University Political Science and International Relations	2008

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Year	Place
2012- 2016 Research Assistant	METU Department of International Relations
2016- Present Research Assistant	Mardin Artuklu University Department of Political Science and International Relations

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies, Middle Eastern Politics, Religion, Political Islam, Nationalism.

PUBLICATIONS

"Kürt Sorununun Barışçıl Çözümü Mümkün mü?" in *Türkiye'nin Demokratikleşmesi Etnik- Dini Kesimler Üzerinden Değişimin Analizi*, Çizgi Kitabevi, co-authored by Hakan Samur and Zelal Kizilkan, 2014.

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"Between Islam and Democracy: Is Turkey on the Right Path?"), *EU – Middle East Forum: Transforming to Where? The Cases of Egypt and Tunisia,* DGAP, German Council on Foreign Relations, 2012, Berlin, GERMANY.

"Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding on Turkey's Kurdish Issue", *Uniting for Peace: Building Sustainable Peace Through Universal Values,* International Peace and Research Association (IPRA), 2014, İstanbul, TURKEY.

"Çatışma Yönetimi ve İnsan Hakları", Selçuk Üniversitesi İnsan Hakları Kongresi", 2-4 May 2014, Konya, TURKEY.

"Can mediation be a functional tool in Turkey's Kurdish Conflict?", *Exploring Peace,* International Studies Association's 57th Annual Convention, 2016, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Kürt milliyetçilik düşüncesinin ya da uluslaşma sürecinin İslam ile ilişkisini anlamaya ve açıklamaya çalışmaktadır. Sözkonusu araştırma konusu ile ilgilenmeye başladıktan sonra Batı-dışı toplumlarda dinin, bilhassa da İslam'ın, ulusal kimliklerin oluşumunda ya da teçhiz edilmesindeki rolünün akademik açıdan yeterli ilgiyi görmediğini fark ettim. Kaldı ki, din ve milliyetçilik çalışmaları arasındaki bağı inceleyen literatürde kavramsallaştırmalar ve teorik çerçeveler henüz bir berraklığa kavuşmuş değildir. Günümüzde milliyetçilik teorilerine ve tipolojilerine dair çok sayıda araştırma mevcut olmasına rağmen, aynı şeyi din ve milliyetçilik arasındaki ilişkiyi inceleyen literatüre dair söylememiz mümkün değildir. Tabiatiyle, bu durumun alana girmeye çalışan yeni araştırmacılar için hem avantajları hem de dezavantajları bulunmaktadır. Literatürün olgunlaşmamış olması yeni ve özgün şeyler söylemeyi daha kolay kılarken, teorik altyapının zayıflığı ise mevzubahis vakaya yaklaşımı problemli hale getirmektedir. Her vakanın kendine münhasır biricikliği, dinamik özellikleri, bağlam-bağımlı yapısı, tarihsel özgünlüğü gözönünde bulundurulduğunda kapsamlı ampirik araştırmalar yapmak ilgili literatürün oluşması için gerekli hale gelmektedir. Vaka analizi yönteminin esas alındığı bu çalışma, din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki ilişkiyi bağlamsal, süreçlere dayalı, dinamik ele alarak teorik yetersizliğin üstesinden gelmeye çalışmaktadır.

Ne din ne de milliyetçilik tek tip ve yeknesak değildir. Dolayısıyla, bu iki olgunun arasındaki ilişkinin karmaşıklığını ve çok boyutluluğunu açıklığa kavuşturmanın kolay bir iş olmayacağı en başından beri bilinmektedir. Hele ki, İslam'ın Kürt toplumunda kişilerin günlük yaşamlarında rehberlik etme potansiyeli ve grup kimliklerinin asli unsurlarından biri olduğu dikkate alınacak olursa, İslam ile Kürt milliyetçiliği arasındaki bağı deşifre etmek olağanüstü derecede daha girifttir. Bu yüzdendir ki, İslam ve Kürt milliyetçiliği arasındaki ilişki, tutkulu bir birlikteliğin ve büyük kavgaların eşzamanlı varolduğu bir aşk ve nefret ilişkisine benzetilebilir. Bazen bu iki realiteyi birbirinden ayrı

değerlendirmek zorlaşırken, bazen ise birbirini dışlayan çelişkili olgular ve idealler haline gelebilmektedirler. Yani, aralarında hem rekabet ve hem de işbirliği potansiyeli bulunmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, modernitenin temel iddialarından biri olan laik yaşam tarzının zorunlu olarak dinin siyasal, sosyal ve kültürel alanda gerilemesine yol açacağı veya günün sonunda dinin yerini seküler milliyetçiliğin alacağı şeklindeki varsayımını savunmak güçleşmektedir. Bugün dünyanın farklı noktalarında din ve milliyetçiliğin içiçe geçtiği ve birbirlerini konsolide ettikleri sayısız örnek gözlemlemek mümkündür. Bu bakımdan, milliyetçilik düşüncesinin yükselişini nihai olarak dinin ricatıyla ilişkilendirmek sorunludur. Bu noktadan hareket eden çalışma, sekülerliğin ve dindarlığın birarara varoluşu üzerine kuruludur. Destekleyici bir güç olarak dini kimlik, ortak milli dava etrafında birlik ve dayanışma arzusunu pekiştirerek grup içi aidiyet duygusunu artıran bir motivasyon kaynağı haline gelmektedir. Çalışmanın vurgu yaptığı bir başka nokta ise dinin etnopolitik mefkurenin olgunlaşmasının ve milli kimliğin grubun organizasyonunda belirleyici bir motivasyon kaynağı olmasının önünde engelleyici bir rol üstlenmesidir. Din ve milliyetçilik ilişkisinin kapsamı, etkileşimde bulunduğu siyasal, sosyal ve tarihsel bağlama göre çeşitlilik arz etmekteyken, aynı vaka içinde dahi birbirinden farklı düzeyde bağlantı noktaları mevcut olabilmektedir.

Kürt milliyetçiliği ile İslam ilişkisinin araştırma konusu olarak seçilmesinin temel nedeni, din ve milliyetçilik arasındaki etkileşimlerdeki muğlaklıklara ve karmaşıklıklara ışık tutmaktır. Bu ilişkiye dair karmaşık duygu ve düşünceler içereren kişisel deneyimim de ister istemez böyle bir çalışma alanına yönelmemi etkilemiştir. Zira, bir çalışmanın araştırma sorularının araştırmacının biyografisinden ve sosyal bağlamından bağımsız olması mümkün değildir. Bilhassa Ortadoğu'da İslam'ın ve birbiriyle rekabet eden milliyetçiliklerin de dahil olduğu değişim süreçlerini anlamak isteyen biri olarak araştırmamın vardığı sonuç, kişisel merakımın giderilmesinde de kaydadeğer bir role sahiptir. Yaşadığım çevredeki dindar insanların değişen tutumlarını uzun süredir gözlemlemem bu alana yönelmemi illa ki hızlandırmıştır. Seyyid Kutub'un Yoldaki İşaretler, Said Nursi'nin Risale-i Nur Külliyatı ve Said Havva'nın El

Esas Fis-Sünne'si gibi eserler ile dünya görüşü şekillenen ve İslami kardeşlik ya da ümmet idealinin herşeyden önce geldiği bir ailede büyümem daha çocukluk yaşlarımda İslami fikriyat ile tanışmamı sağlamıştı. Bu kitapların bazılarını okuyarak başlayan kişisel entelektüel yolculuğum, sonrasında bazı sorularıma tutarlı yanıtlar alamadığım için İslami çevreleri eleştirel bir gözden incelememe de olanak vermiştir. Zihnimi uzun bir süredir meşgul eden bazı zorular şu şekildedir. İslam geleneğinde var olan ve birçok samimi dindarın da can-ı gönülden inandığı "İslam kardeşliği" neden uygulama sathında zayıf kalmaktadır? Ümmet inanca mı yoksa siyasi doktrine dayanan bir topluluk mudur? Ya da her ikisi midir? Ümmet siyasi anlamlar içeriyorsa hangi ilkeler, normlar ve kurumlar üzerine inşa edilmektedir? Ümmet dünyevi bir nizam kurmayı hedeflemekte midir? Amaçlanan nizam, dünyevi ile uhrevi arasında optimum dengeyi nasıl sağlayabilecektir? Ümmeti oluşturan insan toplulukları kimlerdir? Böylesi bir toplumu oluşturacak farklı etnik gruplar arasında temsilde adalet nasıl sağlanacak? Kürtler, bu konfigürasyonda nasıl temsil edilmektedir? Eğer pratikte böyle bir örgütlenme tarzı mümkün ve muteber görünmüyorsa dindar Kürtler neden bu düşünceye inanmaya devam etmektedirler? Kürtler bu fikrin hayata geçirilmesi mücadelesinde yalnız mı bırakılmaktadırlar?

Bu ve buna benzer sorular ışığında, dinsel olarak homojen olsa da rekabet eden milliyetçilikler arasında dinin ulusal kimliğin gelişiminde ve inkıtaya uğramasındaki rolünün açıklığa kavuşturulmasına yönelik hem kişisel merakımın giderilmesi ve ilgili literatüre katkıda bulunmak hedeflenmektedir. Zira, din ve milliyetçilik arasındaki ilişkiye odaklanan literatürde din ile milliyetçilik düşüncesinin birarada varoluşu genişçe bir yer işgal ederken, iki olgu arasındaki rekabetçi etkileşim ise hakettiği ilgiyi pek görememektedir. Mevcut çalışmaların çoğu dinin ulusal kimlik üzerindeki teşvik edici rolüne yoğunlaşırken, inancın millet ve milliyetçilik düşüncesinin gelişimi üzerinde engelleyici etkileri hakkında ise az şey söylemektedir. Çalışmanın odağındaki araştırma sorusu dinin milli duygu ve düşüncelerin neşet etmesini teşvik edip etmediği, eğer ediyorsa ne tür bir rol oynadığı üzerine şekillenmektedir. Bu sorunun cevabını ararken, iki olgu arasındaki eşzamanlı farklı etkileşimleri

çatallanma yaklaşımını kullanarak deşifre etmektedir. Buna göre din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki irtibat noktalarının oluşturduğu konfigürasyonlar ana hatlarıyla rekabetçi ve simbiyotik ilişki tarzı altında toplanmaktadır. Bir başka deyişle, din ulusal kimliğin ortaya çıkmasında ve tahkim edilmesinde hem teşvik edici hem de engelleyici rol oynama potansiyeline sahiptir. Etkileşimin farklı reaksiyonlar doğurmasında dinin dogmatik unsurlarını içeren ontolojik yapısı ve onun belirli bir sosyal-kültürel havza içerisinde yeniden işlenerek şekillenmesi de etkili olabilmektedir. Bu noktada, belirli genellemelere başvurmaktan ziyade vaka-bazlı değerlendirmeyi gerektiren bağlamsallık devreye girmektedir. Örneğin, İslamın Kürtlük bilincinin zuhur etmesinde ve pekişmesinde ikili bir rolü bulunmaktadır. İslam bir yandan Kürtlük düşüncesinin gelişmesi ve aksiyona dönüşmesini ulus-üstü iddialara sahip olması nedeniyle yavaşlatırken, öte yandan Kürtlük bilincinin katılaşmasını ve bu bilincin üzerine inşa edilen ulusal birlik söylemini kavimler arası eşitliğe dayalı adalet vurgusuyla meşrulaştırmaktadır.

Bu çalışma özü itibariyle İslamın dindar kitleler arasında Kürtlük bilincine dair siyasi mefkürenin ortaya çıkmasında ne derece etkili olduğunu incelemektedir. Başka bir deyişle, Türkiye'de İslam'dan etkilenen bir Kürt milliyetçiliğinin olup olmadığını mütedeyyin Kürtlerin yapısökümü üzerinden anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu kesimin siyasal ve sosyal alanda değişim taleplerini dine mi yoksa milletleşme realitesine mi dayandırdıklarını açıklığa kavuşturmayı planlamaktadır. Dolayısıyla, dini kimliğin mi yoksa milletleşmenin mi daha fazla itibar vaat ettiği ve önemsendiği çalışmanın odak noktalarından biri olmuştur. Kürt bağlamında İslam ve milliyetçilik, ideal bir toplum yaratma yolunda çelişkili ve iç içe geçmiş örüntülere sahiptir. Çalışma, İslam ve Kürt milliyetçiliği arasındaki ilişkiyi tarihsel sosyolojik bir analiz seviyesinden ziyade kavramsal ve kuramsal bir çerçeveden incelemeyi tercih etmiştir. Bu yüzdendir ki, araştırma konusunu retrospektif bir bakış açısıyla değil, mevcut etkileşim modelleri üzerinden tartışmayı yeğlemektedir. Bu bakış açısı, Kürt milliyetçiliğinin tarihsel çerçevesini ihmal ediyor gibi görünse de dindar

Kürtlerin siyasi yönelimlerinin değişmesinin içinde bulunulan tarihi koşullardan bağımsız olmadığını net bir şekilde kabul etmektedir.

Çalışmada veri oluşturmak için ise ağırlıklı olarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelere dayalı nitel yöntem kullanılmıştır. Güncel konulara dair yeni perspektifler içeren gazete haberleri ve başta Twitter olmak üzere bazı sosyal medya paylaşımlarının içerik analizinden de veri üretiminde yardımcı yöntemler olarak faydalanılmıştır. Yüzyüze görüşme ve ikincil kaynakların analizine ek olarak, dindar kesimlerin eğilimlerine odaklanan kişisel gözlemim de araştırma tasarımın bir başka bileşenini oluşturmuştur. Çalışma, içinde bulunduğum ve yaşamaya devam ettiğim toplumda cereyan eden süreçler hakkında bilgi üretmeye dair olduğu için gözlemden yararlanmak adeta kaçınılmaz hale gelmiştir. İlgili kişiler ile mülakat yapabilmek için camilere, medreselere ve çeşitli İslami Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarına gidilmiştir. Bu mekanlar kendine özgü davranış kuralları gerektirdiği için yalnızca bilimsel araştırma konusuna odaklı bir araştırmacı gibi biri değil de oradaki insanlardan biri gibi davranılmıştır. İçeriden nüfuz etmeye dayalı bu tutum, görüşmeci ile güvene dayalı bir bağ kurulmasını mümkün kılarken, görüşmecilerin atıfta bulundukları semboller, imgeler ve anlamların idrak edilmesini kolaylaştırmıştır. Nitel görüşmenin araştırma yöntemi olarak benimsenmesinin nedeni konuya dair verilere başka düzeyde ulaşılmasının kabil olmamasıdır. Mülakat, sosyal dünyayı ve gerçekliği anlamanın bir yoludur. Dahası, vaka çalışmam ile alakalı olmasını istediğim verileri üretmenin belki de tek yoluydu. Nitel yöntem, araştırmacılara hakikate giden bir yol sunmasa da, insanların karmaşık davranışları, fikirleri, duyguları ve çeşitli deneyimleri hakkında ne yaptıklarına ve düşündüklerine dair kısmi içgörüler sağlamaktadır (Longhurst, 2003:153-154). Mason'un belirttiği gibi, insanların bilgileri, görüşleri, anlayışları, yorumları, deneyimleri ve etkileşimleri, araştırma sorularının keşfetmeye çalıştığı sosyal gerçekliğin anlamlı özellikleridir (Mason, 2017:111).

Bu çalışma, Kürt sahasındaki mütedeyyin Kürtlerin tutumları ve söylemleri üzerinden belirli bir sosyal gerçekliği kavramaya çalışmaktadır. Çalışmaya dahil

edilen katılımcıların seçiminde rastgele olmayan örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Farklı kesimleri temsil eden entelektüeller, akademisyenler, siyasi figürler, STK temsilcileri ve aktivistler gibi kamusal alanda görünürlüğü olan ve araştırma konusuyla ilgili tatışmalara doğrudan iştirak eden aktörler ile görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Elitlerin tercih edilmesinin nedeni ise ister seküler ister dini alanda olsun, bu kişilerin genellikle ideolojik hareketlerin merkezinde yer almasıdır. Bazı milliyetçilik araştırmacıları, bir bütün olarak toplumdan ziyade ulusal bilincin oluşmasında toplumun siyasi ve kültürel seçkinlerinin, yani etnik girişimcilerin rolüne özellikle odaklanmışlardır (Hroch, 1985: Brass, 1991: Greenfeld, 1993; Brubaker, 2006). Etnisite, ulus inşası sürecinin gerçek bir kaynağı olmaya devam etse de, milliyetçilik gerçek anlamını seçkinlerin ellerinde bulmaktadır.

Milliyetçiliğin elit bir fenomen olduğunu iddia etmek ilk bakışta abartı gibi görünebilir. Ancak onun toplumsal tabanda gerçekleşen bir hareketlilik sonucu ya da kendiliğinden ortaya çıkmadığı veya çıkamayacağı gözönünde bulundurulduğunda bir girişimcilik inşasına ihtiyaç olduğu kolaylıkla kabul edilebilir. Milliyetçilik nihayetinde bir toplumsal mühendislik projesidir ve bu nedenledir ki kitleler arasında tanıtımının yapılması ve benimsetilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu misyonu yüklenecek kişiler de ekseriyetle elitlerdir. Bu çalışma, elitlerin ulusal kimliği şekillendirmede oynadığı belirleyici rolü büyük ölçüde geçerli varsaymaktadır. Dolayısıyla, İslam ve Kürt milliyetçiliği arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklamak için de seçkinlerin görüşlerine başvurarak değişim dinamiğini anlamaya çalışmaktadır. Bunu yaparken, milliyetçiliğin toplumsal alana yayılmasının görece eğitimli ve okur-yazar bir nüfus gerektirdiğini, bu popülasyonu temsil eden seçkinlerin toplumdaki felsefi ve siyasi meseleleri ilk ortaya çıkaranlar olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Bununla birlikte, milliyetçilik inşacı seçkinler ve onun dışında kalan nüfus arasındaki seferberlik-etkileşim sürecinin nihai ürünüdür. Seçkinlerin din odaklı siyasi seferberlikteki rolü de milliyetçiliğin inşasına benzer şekildedir. Zira, geleneksel inanç anlayışının ötesine geçerek dini siyasi amaçlara matuf bir motivasyon kaynağı haline getirmektedir.

Çalışma, bu verilere dayanarak İslam ile Kürt milliyetçilik düşüncesi arasındaki güncel ilişkiyi incelemeye gayret etmektedir. Din ve milliyetçilik arasındaki muhtelif etkileşimlerin belirli teorik genellemeler altında çalışılamayacak derecede çeşitli örneklerle ortaya çıktığının gayet iyi farkındadır. Demek oluyor ki, tek başına hiçbir model dini ve ulusal bağlılıklar arasındaki ilişkiyi tek başına izah edememektedir. İlişkinin karmaşıklığına sürekli yapılan vurgunun nedeni de budur. Yarı-yapılandırılmış elitler ile yapılan görüşmeler aracılığıyla saha çalışmasından elde edilen ampirik bulgulara dayanan araştırma, İslam ile Kürt milliyetçiliğinin farklı düzeydeki etkileşimlerini yukarıda da bahsedildiği üzere çatallanma yaklaşımı etrafında aydınlatmaya çalışmaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, İslami hassasiyete sahip Kürtlerin zihinlerindeki İslam ve milliyetçilik ilişkisi hem ayrışmayı hem de sentezi yansıtan iki karşıt eğilimi aynı anda var etmektedir. İslam, bir yandan Kürtlüğe dayalı ulusal duygu ve düşüncelerin kurucu unsuru olmasa da destekleyici bir bileşeni olarak ulusal birliğin bir güç kaynağı haline dönüşmektedir. Öte yandan, ulusal birliğe ulaşma yönünde toplumsal fay hatlarını derinleştirerek Kürt toplumunun seküler milliyetçiler ve dindar ümmetçiler ekseni etrafında bölünmesinin başat sebebi olarak öne çıkmaktadır.

İlk eğilim, İslam ve milliyetçiliği birbirini dışlayan ve çelişkili idealler olarak ele almaktayken, ikinci eğilimde ise iki olgu arasında herhangi bir gerilim veya uyumsuzluk gözlemlenmemektedir. Din ve milliyetçilik arasındaki ilk ilişki türü doğası gereği rekabetçi niteliktedir. Bu ilişki biçiminde, çelişen amaçlara sahip olan din ve milliyetçilik birbiriyle mücadele eden düzen-yaratıcı sistemlere ya da ideallere tekabül etmektedir. Bu tablo aynı zamanda etno-milliyetçi iddiaları aşan ve müslümanlığa dayalı bir ulus imajının merkezinde olduğu "Müslüman milliyetçiliği" veya "Müslüman ulusötesiliği" fikriyatı ile oldukça uyumludur. Zira, müslümanların önemli bir kısmının nazarında İslam dini fani olsa da bu dünyada düzen yaratıcı bir gayeye sahiptir ve mensuplarının kolektif aksiyonlarını belirleyen bir motivasyon kaynağı olarak işlevselliğe sahiptir. Bu çerçevede gelişen yeni bir toplum oluşturma ülküsü, zımnen ulus imajından ziyade düzen-yaratıcı bir sistem olarak dinin temel ilkelerine daha sıklıkla atıf

yapmaktadır. Mevcut literatürde, İslam'ın günlük ve sosyo-politik alan üzerindeki dramatik etkilerinin cari olduğu müslüman toplumlarda, ulusalcılık karşıtı ideolojinin ve bu amaca matuf eylem biçimlerinin milliyetçilik fikrinin altını nasıl oyduğu ise büyük ölçüde ihmal edilmektedir. Konu ile ilintili bazı İslami naslar, dini metinlerin ulus ötesi birlikteliklere vurgu yapan yorumları, İslami bilginler tarafından yeniden üretilen fıkıh ve ictihat geleneği gibi unsurlar, İslamı bir yaşam tarzı olarak gören samimi müminler üzerinde münhasıran ulusalcılık karşıtı eğilimleri beslemektedir. Oysa ki, literatürün önemli bir kısmı daha çok dinin modern milliyetçiliğin ortaya çıkışı ve gelişimi üzerindeki etkisine odaklanmaktadır. Buna göre dini kimlik ve ulusal iddialar arasında siyasi hedefler açısından bir yakınlaşma ve çekim kuvveti oluşmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada İslami akidelerin takipçileri arasında güçlü ulusötesi yönelimler ve milliyetçilik karşıtı akımlar oluşturduğu varsayılmaktadır. Weberyen anlamda söylemek gerekirse, bu durumun dinin teolojik özüyle ilişkisi olmakla birlikte onun içinde yeşerdiği sosyal ve kültürel havzadan bağımsız olduğu da iddia edilemez. Bu bağlamda, İslam kendi müntesiplerine yalnızca içinde bulunulan koşulları ve karşılaşılan zorlukları açıklayıcı örüntüler sunmamakta, aynı zamanda siyasi tutumlarında dahil olduğu belirli doktrinsel düsturlar ve ahlaki yönelimler içeren motivasyonel bir çerçeve sağlamaktadır. Dolayısıyla İslam, günümüzde bireysel ve kolektif davranışlar üzerinde geniş kapsamlı etkilere sahiptir. Bireysel düzeyde dünyanın anlamlandırılmasının yanısıra mevcut dünyanın insan eliyle tasarımına yönelik kolektif eylemler tavsiye etmektedir. Çalışma tam da bu noktada Weber'in din tanımına başvurmaktadır. Buna göre, dinin bireylerin iç dünyalarının keşfine aracılık etmesi ya da psikolojik ihtiyaçlarının giderilmesinde bir başvuru kaynağı olmasına ilaveten, toplum halinde yaşayan insanların içinde yaşadıkları çevrenin de inanca dayalı referanslarla şekillendirilmesi gibi iki düzeyli bir işlevi bulunmaktadır. Aslında Weber, din de dahil olmak üzere toplumsal realitelerin çok-nedenli olduğunun ve temel niteliklerinin deterministik olmadığının altını defaatle çizmektedir. Ancak, bir dinin nevi şahsına münhasır içeriği bireysel ve kolektif davranışları münferiden etkileme potansiyeline sahip ise, o dinin toplumsal kesimlerin

yönelimleri üzerinde ne derece belirleyici olduğunun ayrıca değerlendirilmesinde yarar bulunmaktadır. Dinin özüne ve içeriğine odaklanan Weberyen anlayış, dini muhtevanın bireysel ve toplumsal yansımaları üzerindeki rolüne ışık tutarak dinin kendi içinden de gözlemlenebileceğini ve deneyimlenebileceğini iddia etmektedir. Bir başka deyişle, din sosyal gerçeklik alanının dışında bir yerde değildir. Weber'de muayyen bir dini ve etik sistem, kendi örneğinde Protestan Etiğinin öngördüğü çalışma disiplini ve ahlakı gibi bazı davranış normlarının kapitalizmin yükselişinde ve ekonomik kalkınmayı sağlaması gibi, dünyevi alanı kurabilme kapasitesine sahip olabilmektedir. Bu tanıma uygun olarak belki de şu genelleme yapılabilir. Elbette, bir din inanç boyutundan yoksun olamaz, fakat din yalnızca inançtan ibaret de değildir. Bundan daha fazlasıdır. Din ile dünya arasında manevi alandan dünyevi işlere, hatta dünyaya ait gerçeklikten uhrevi alana olacak şekilde sürekli bir devinim oluşmaktadır. Örneğin, İslami metinler bünyesinde tam teşekküllü bir siyasi düzen formülasyonunu kapsamıyor gibi görünse de, içerdiği evrenselleştirici ve ulus karşıtı vurgular dindar kitleleri derinden etkileyerek daha geniş çerçevede farklı etnik çevreler arasında üst kimlik oluşturmada bir köprü vazifesi görmektedir. Bununla bağlantılı olarak, Kur'an ve sünnet merkezli İslami çevrelerde, hem birincil hem de esasında usül ile ilgilenmesi beklenen Fıkıh ve ictihad faaliyetleri gibi ikincil kaynaklar aracılığıyla bir yeryüzü tasarımı düşüncesi gelişmektedir.

Weberyen dizaynı takip eden bu çalışma, İslamın değişmez esaslarının (sabitelerinin) substantif bir bakış açısıyla ele alınmayı hak ettiğini ileri sürmektedir. İslamın sadece uhreviyat alemi ile ilgili vaadlerine odaklanmak, onun toplumsal etkilerinin daha kapsayıcı bir açıdan anlaşılması için yeterli olmamaktadır. İslamın bu dünyaya dair söyledikleri ve söyleyecekleri vardır. Ancak ne kadarını gerçekten İslamın dediği, ne kadarının da ona aitmiş gibi gıyaben söyletildiği hususu ise tartışmalıdır. Bu çalışma, sosyal tasarımına rağmen İslamı merkezinde etnik farklılıkları aşan ümmet imajının yattığı, siyasi amaçlara matuf bir din olarak tasvir etmektedir. Kuran'da geçen ümmet kavramı, genellikle müminlerin kendilerini inananlar topluluğunun bir parçası olarak gördükleri aidiyet bilincine tekabül etmektedir. Kuran'ın bazı ayetleri, İslamın

müminlerin kardeşliğine ve birlikteliğine dayalı ulus-ötesi karakterine zımnen vurgu yapmaktadır. Örneğin Ali İmran Suresi 103. ayette, "Hep birlikte Allah'ın ipine sımsıkı sarılın ve ayrılığa düşmeyin. Allah'ın size olan nimetini hatırlayın. Siz birbirinize düşman iken, O kalplerinizi birleştirdi, böylece kardeş oldunuz", buyrulmaktadır. Bir başka ayette ise "kardeşlik kurumu" inananlar arasında bir buyruk olarak tarif edilmiştir. "Mü'minler ancak kardeştirler, öyleyse kardeşlerinizin arasını düzeltin" (Kur'an; 49:10). Güncel konular bağlamında "İslam Kardeşliği" söylemi ayrı bir ilgiyi hak etse de, İslamın bu temaya verdiği önem metafiziksel olarak tanımlanmış sübliminal bir bilinç oluşturmaya tekabül etmekle kalmayıp, aynı zamanda bu olgu üzerinden ideal bir toplum ve siyasi düzen yaratmaya yönelik bir bilincin oluşması gerekliliğine de işaret etmektedir. Tabiatiyle, modern ulus kimliğine sadakat ve milliyetçilik düşüncesi ile İslam'ın ulusötesi iddiaları arasında ideolojik bir çekişme kaçınılmaz olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Zira, milliyetçilik özü itibariyle bu dünyayı kurgulamaya yönelik seküler bir bilinç gerektirmektedir. Bu fikriyatın, düzen kurmaya müteveccih bir İslam ile barışık olamayacağı ise aşikardır. Ümmet bilinci burada sadece diğer dinlerin üyelerini değil, ait olunan etnik grubun laik kesimlerini de dışarıda bırakan ve müslüman topluluğa bağlılığın birincil hale geldiği siyasi şuurlanmanın ifadesi haline gelmektedir. Ümmet ideali, tıpkı Peygamber'in Araplarla sınırlı olmayan yekpare bir topluluk içinde muhtelif Arap kabilelerini ve Arap olmayan unsurları aynı çatı altında birleştirmesi gibi, etnik kökene veya ait olunan ulusa bakılmaksızın özgün bir inananlar topluluğunu sembolize etmektedir. Ancak, elbette ki peygamber sonrası dönemde Araplar ile Arap olmayan etnik gruplar arasında iktidarın paylaşımında eşitlik hususuna ne kadar riayet edildiği konusu ise tartışmaya açıktır.

Uygulamadaki etkinliği bir tarafa bırakılacak olursa, ümmet ideali kavramsal düzeyde dinine bağlı bazı birey ya da grupların kolektif eylem içeren siyasi iddialar ile mücehhez bir İslami doktrine tutunmalarının dışa vurumudur. Bu bilinçlenme hali, "Müslüman milliyetçiliği" adı altında münferit bir milliyetçilik türüne karşılık gelmektedir. Bu grup aidiyeti dindar Kürt nüfusu nezdinde popülaritesini hala korumaktadır. Sözkonusu Kürtlerin azımsanmayacak bir

oranı Müslüman milliyetçiliği kavramından bihaber olsalar dahi siyasi, sosyal ve kültürel alanda onu tutkulu bir şekilde savunmaktadırlar. Bu kişiler bilhassa içinde yaşadıkları çevreyi anlamlandırırken ve sosyal gerçeklikleri tanımlarken Kur'an, sünnet ve hadis gibi teolojik kaynaklara başvurmaktadırlar. Kaldı ki, siyasi aksiyonlarının yönünün belirlenmesinde de spiritüel isteklerinin ağır bastığı aşikardır. Müslüman milliyetçiliğinde İslam, kolektif inisiyatifi meşrulaştırmaya yarayan ideolojik bir aygıt olmaktan ziyade bizatihi bu dünyanın tasarımının belirleyici menbaı haline dönüşmektedir. Müslüman milliyetçiliğinin en önemli ayağı İslami akidelere dayalı, yani Allahın hükümleri ile donatılmış, bir nizamın kurulmasının amaçlanmasıdır. Allah'ın hükümlerinden kasıt aslında şeriattır. Ancak şeriat burada tam teşekküllü ve iyi tanımlanmış bir sisteme ya da pejoratif uygulamalara tekabül etmemektedir. Oysa ki şeriat denilince sıklıkla akıllara İslam hukuku gelmektedir. Burada şeriat zımnen İslami prensiplere müstenit ancak beşerin günlük gereksinimlerini de gözönünde bulunduracak şekilde inşa edilecek bir hedefler manzumesi anlamında kullanılmaktadır. Şeriatin müphemliğinin esas nedeni, kervanın yolda kurulacak şekilde dizayn edilmesidir. Bu yaklaşıma göre, önemli olan hedefin gerçekleşmesi değil, niyettir. Mefkürenin gerçeğe dönüşüp dönüşmemesi Allah'ın takdirindedir. Öte yandan, Müslüman milliyetçiliği nosyonu tıpkı modern etno-milliyetçilikler gibi homojen ya da yeknesak değildir. Ilımlı tonlardan en radikal veya cihatçı siyasal İslam tahayyülüne kadar uzanan bir düşünce ve eylem yelpazesini içinde barındırmaktadır. Bu bileşenleri asgari düzeyde biraraya getirecek en somut hedef ise "İslami düzen projeksiyonu" ya da tahayyülüdür. Bu nizam arzusu, dinin dünyanın siyasi, toplumsal, kültürel, ekonomik vs. hemen hemen her alanında etkilere sahip olacağını varsaydığı için de bireysel bağlılıkların ötesine geçerek yeryüzünü yeniden kurmaktadır.

Müslüman milliyetçiliğinin ikinci ayağı ise mevcut devletler arası sistemde değişikliğe yönelik siyasi emelleri bünyesinde bulundurmasıdır. Bu özelliğine istinaden, etnik olarak bilinçli topluluklara dayanan ve mevcut küresel düzeni oluşturan sınırların ötesine geçerek ulus-ötesi ve etnik-üstü niteliğe atıf yapmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Müslüman milliyetçiliği içeride İslam nizamının

oluşturulması, dışarıda ise küresel sistemin yeniden tanımlanması talepleriyle esaslı bir değişimi amaçlamaktadır. İslami ideallerin takipçileri, ümmet ya da İslam kardeşliği etrafında seferber olarak bu dünyayı yeniden inşa etme iddiasındadırlar. Etno-milliyetçilikler çağında inanca dayalı hedefler ve ülküler peşinde koşanların böylesi bir toplum yaratma arzuları, haliyle siyasi eylemlerinin içeriğini ve sınırlarını da çerçevelemektedir. Bu çalışmanın Müslüman milliyetçiliğini etno-milliyetçilik ile rekabet eden bir olgu olarak sunmasının nedeni de dinin münferiden kitlesel hareketlerin mobilize olmasında ve kolektif aksiyonlarının belirlenmesinde başat bir rol oynamasıdır. Böylesi bir misyonu üstlenen İslam ile etno-milliyetçilikler arasında çelişkili bir ilişki ortaya çıkmaktadır. İronik bir şekilde Müslüman milliyetçiliği olarak adlandırılan İslamın dini milliyetçilik formu, yeryüzünde siyasal bir entite dahilinde inananlar topluluğu oluşturmak için teolojik bir ulusötesilik vurgusu yapmaktadır. Literatürdeki dini milliyetçilik örneklerinin çoğunun aksine, Müslüman milliyetçiliği, değişim ihtiyacını ve yeni bir düzen kurma talebini dini gerekçeler ile temellendirmeye çalışmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmada müslüman milliyetçiliği kavramı seküler milliyetçiliklerin dini ve dindarlığı absorbe ederek (dışlamayarak) oluşturdukları melez bir terkip olan yeni milliyetçilikleri ima etmek için kullanılmamaktadır. Aksine, etno-milliyetçilikler ile yöntemsel düzeyde benzerlik içerse de ideolojik olarak İslami kimliğin diğer tüm hüviyetlerden daha fazla itibar vaat ettiğinin düşünüldüğü ve eylemselliğin sınırlarının dini onaylamaya tabi tutulduğu siyasi bir yönelime karşılık gelmektedir. Modernitenin egemenliğine meydan okuyarak İslamın haysiyetinin yeniden tesis edileceğinin altını çizen ve mevcut siyasi-toplumsal düzenin değişimine matuf bu ideolojik bilinçlenme hali ironik bir biçimde modern zamanlara özgüdür.

Öte yandan, İslam etnik gruplara kristalleşmiş bir kültürel homojenliği empoze etmese de bazı açılardan yerel kültürleri etkilemeye devam etkilemektedir. İslam inancının yazılı metinleri, Kur'an ayetleri ve hadisler, orijinal hali korunarak Arapça tekrarlanagelmiş ve bu şekilde de dini ritüellerde icra edilmektedir. Bu aşamada başka bir noktaya vurgu yapmak gerekmektedir. Kürt medreselerinin

eğitim dili tarihsel olarak tamamen Arapça olmasa da Kürtçe ile karma nitelik arzetmekteydi. Günümüzde ise bu tablo değişerek bazı Kürt medreselerinde lingua francanın (ortak dil) Türkçeye dönüştüğüne dair emareler mevcuttur. Konumuza dönecek olursak, İslamın ilk muhataplarının Araplar olması ve dinin Arapça üzerinden şekillenmesinin elbette ki diğer yerel unsurlar üzerinde din-milliyetçilik füzyonunun oluşmaması üzerinde muazzam etkileri bulunmaktadır. Zira, yerel dil (kültür) ile din aynı potada buluşmamaktadır. Anaakım İslami ekollerin, Kuran'ın anlamının olası tahrifatının önlenmesi için yerel dillere tercüme edilmesi konusunda benimsediği asırlık çekince de buna eklendiğinde, Arap olmayan müslüman topluluklar ile İslam arasında ayırt edici kültürel bir kohezyonun neden gelişmediğinin ayrıca sorgulanması gerekmektedir. Etnik farkındalığa dayalı ulusal bilinç ile münferit dil grubu duygusu arasında organik bir ilişki olduğu açıktır. Hristiyanlığın milliyetçiliğin oluşumu üzerindeki etkisiyle mukayese edilecek olursa, İslamın Arap-dışı unsurların yerel kültürleri ya da edebiyatlarının gelişimi üzerindeki rolü en iyimser yorumla sınırlıdır. Araplar ve Arap milliyetçiliği elbette ki bunun istisnasıdır. Arap-dışı etnik grupların İslam'ın yerel kültüre nüfuz etmesi sonucunda Araplaşmış olduklarını iddia etmek zor olsa da, etnik kültürleri onların siyasi amaçlara matuf münferit bir grup olduklarına yönelik farkındalıklarına da kaydedeğer bir katkıda bulunmamıştır. Halbuki, Batı'da ulus realitesi büyük ölçüde yerel topluluklar arasında hususi bir ulusal bilinç oluşturmaya yardımcı olan kutsal metinlerin yerel dile çevrilmesinden doğmuştur. Dahası, İslamın yeryüzünü inananlar ve kafirler olarak iki alana ayıran ontolojik imaları belirli topluluğun dilsel ve kültürel özellikleri üzerinden siyasal formasyon edinmesini dizginleyerek ulus inşasına somut destek sunmamıştır. İslamın ulus-ötesi evrenselci görüşü, başta Kürtler, Berberiler ve Beluciler dahil olmak üzere ikincil etnik grupların üyeleri arasında daha dar dairede belirlenmesi gereken ulusal bilinci gereksiz hale getirmektedir. Milliyetçiliği seküler modernitenin bir ürünü olarak algılayan dindarların nezdinde o bir düzen yaratıcı sistem ya da sosyal bütünleşmenin birincil kültürel mekanizması olarak İslamın yerini almamıştır. Ulus-üstü söylem ve toplumun yeniden yapılanmasına yönelik bu siyasi projeksiyon, klasik ulusal egemenlik iddialarının önüne geçmektedir. Din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki böyle

bir ilişki, Weberyan anlamda dinin dünyanın düzenini sağlama konusundaki ontolojik kaygısına pekala uymaktadır. Zira Weber'de değişim, dinin tözsel içeriğine dayalı kolektif eylem sonucunda ortaya çıkmaktadır. İslam da bu tanıma uygun olarak bu dünyayı düzenlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ulus realitesini aşan ümmet idealine dayalı kolektif aksiyonu sosyal reçete içinde sunmaktadır. Durkheim'da ise toplumun dini inanç ve uygulamalara bizatihi toplumun kendisinin münferiden bir anlam atfetmesi, dinin sosyal alanda kurgusal yönünün ontolojik boyutunu aşmasının zeminini hazırlamaktadır.

Bu aşamada, din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki rekabetçi ilişki biçiminin yanısıra eşzamanlı olarak cereyan eden İslam ile Kürt davası arasındaki simbiyotik temastan bahsetmek elzemdir. Dini fikirlerin ve söylemlerin, modern Kürt kimliğinin inşasına hizmet ederek milliyetçiliğin seküler boyutu ile uyumlu hale getirildiği gözlemlenmektedir. Böylece dini ve laik değerlerin birarada rahatlıkla varolduğu görülmektedir. Din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki koekzistans tek başına dindar Kürtlerin milliyetçi duygulara garkolmasından hasıl olmamaktadır. Müslüman milliyetçiliğinin gücünü kaybetmesi ve seküler Kürt siyasetinin milli duygulara hitap ederek halk desteğini artırma çabası sonucunda dindar kişi ve grupları barındırmaya daha istekli davranmasının da bu dinamizmin ortaya çıkmasında etkisi bulunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, çalışmanın bulgularından biri de "Kürt Davası" etrafında buluşan dindar kişilerin seküler karakterli milliyetçiliğin dışında ayrı bir milliyetçilik türünü temsil etmedikleridir. Kendi içlerinde muhtelif uyuşmazlıklara rağmen güçlü bir grup duygusuna ve milletleşme bilincine sahip olan bu kitle, Kürtlerin etnopolitik iddiaları üzerinden İslami hassasiyeti olmayan seküler Kürt siyaseti ile yakınlaşmanın yollarını aramaktadır. Bu temas arayışı doğal olarak seküler Kürt siyasetinin İslam ile ilişkisinde bir dönüşüm gerçekleştirmesini ihtiva etmektedir. Bu yüzdendir ki, çalışma boyunca Kürtlere özgü bir "dini milliyetçilik" olduğu iddiasından özellikle kaçınılmıştır. Bununla birlikte, bu çalışma laik karakterli milliyetçiliği dini duygu ve imalardan yoksun ya da din-karşıtı bir olgu olarak da tanımlamamaktadır. Seküler ve dini alanın içiçeliği, literatürde yaygın olarak yapılan dini milliyetçilik ve laik milliyetçilik ayrımını yapmayı gereksiz

kılmaktadır. Bu dünyaya ve ampirik gerçekliğe odaklanan milliyetçilik, özü itibariyle seküler bir bilinç gerektirmektedir. Milliyetçilik günün sonunda dünyevi alanı nihai anlamın kaynağı haline getirirken, dinde ise dünyeviyat ile uhreviyat arasında bir denge gözetilmektedir. Milliyetçiliğin dünyevi odaklı olması kendi kutsalını yaratamayacağı ya da dini kutsallar ile özdeşleşemeyeceği anlamına gelmemektedir.

Mamafih, milliyetçilik ideolojik olarak önceden belirlenmiş ve iyi tanımlanmış bir yol haritasına sahip değildir. Kürtlük davasının bütün müritleri de milliyetçi duygular ile önceden saptanmış yollardan geçerek tanışmazlar ya da onu aynı semptomlarla ve aynı yoğunlukta deneyimlemezler. Zira, bireyler sıklıkla algılama biçimlerine bağlı olarak dünyayı farklı yorumlamak ve o doğrultuda davranmak üzere hareket etmektedirler. Uyanan ulusal bilinç de çeşitli süreçler tarafından şekillendirildiği için yekpare bir kategori oluşturmamaktadır. Aksine, birbirine benzemeyen insanları da biraraya getirerek içinde güç mücadeleri, çıkar çatışmaları, ideolojik rekabetin olduğu birçok parçadan oluşan ama aynı amaca hizmet eden kümelenmeleri içermektedir. Bu çalışmanın benimsediği ikili yaklaşıma göre, simbiyotik ilişki tarzı açısından İslami duyarlılığa sahip Kürtlerin bir kısmının Kürtlüğün tüzel kişiliğinin kabulüne dair iddiaları ve arzuları İslami gerekçeler ile meşrulaştırmaya çalışmaktadır. Rekabetçi model içinde yer alan kesimler de iradi olarak ulusal kimliğin inşasından ve buna yönelik tutumlardan uzak durmaktadırlar. Karşıt nitelikte olan bu iki bilinçlenme hali, Kürt toplumunun homojen ve durağan olmadığını kanıtlamaktadır. Toplumsal gerçekliğin öznel bir bileşeni olan bilinç, aynı toplumda farklı şekillerde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Simbiyotik modelde İslam, eşitlikçi adalete dayalı sözler, imgeler ve semboller aracılığıyla Kürt ulusal davasının meşrulaştırılmasını ve güçlendirilmesini destekleyen bir mekanizma görevi görmektedir. Bu yaklaşıma göre, etnik olarak bilinçli Kürtlerin dini kimlikleri ulusal özbilinçlerini oluşturmalarının önünde bir engel teşkil etmemektedir. Kürt kimliğinin bekası ve ulusal birlik oluşturma ihtiyacı, dinin münferiden bir dünya görüşüne eşdeğer olduğu Kürt toplumunda milliyetçiliğe karşı daha ılımlı ve hoşgörülü bir İslam üretmiştir.

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Müslüman milliyetçiliği çevrelerinde cari olan "önce müslümanlık, sonra ise siyasal imalardan yalıtılmış kültürel Kürtlük" iması bazı İslami Kürt halkaları arasında artık anlamsız hale gelmiştir. Müslüman milliyetçiliğinin aksine, İslami sabiteler veya yorumlar dindarların modern milliyetçilik fikri etrafında siyasi seferberliğini yavaşlatan faktörler olmaktan çıkmaktadır. İslam'ın milliyetçilik karşıtı teolojik kökenlerine rağmen, ulusal davaya daha sempatik ve dolayısıyla daha uyumlu bir İslami perspektif geliştirilmektedir. Milliyetçiliğin nihai olarak seküler bilince gereksinim duyması, din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki koordinasyona ilişkin akıllara Durkheim'in kutsal alan ile dünyevi alan arasında yaptığı ayrımı akıllara getirmektedir. Buna göre, din uhrevi boyutlara sahip olsa da aslen bu dünyayı inşa etmeye matuf toplum marifetiyle icra edilen beşeri bir girişimdir. Sekülerleşmeye dirençli olan dindar Kürtler tam da bu noktada Weber ve Durkheim'ın din tanımına benzer özellikler taşıyan biçimde siyasal yaklaşım geliştirmektedirler. Sekülerleşmeye daha meyilli olan kitle ise bireylerin ve sosyal grupların daha proaktif olduğu ve dine ilave anlamlar yüklendiği Durkheimci yoruma daha yakındır. Bu bakımdan, İslam'dan etkilenen bir Kürt milliyetçiliği var ise de, özü itibariyle seküler nitelik arzetmektedir ve ayrı bir milliyetçilik türü teşkil etmemektedir. Dinden destek ve meşruiyet almaya çalışan milliyetçi hareketlerin, Durkheimci anlamda dine ek anlamlar yükleyen dinamik aktörler olduğu unutulmamalıdır.

Din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki simbiyotik ilişkide İslam ontolojik önemini korumakla birlikte inandırıcılığını ve gücü cemaat ile uyumundan almaktadır. Bu kompoziyon, Durkheimci bir pespektiften bakıldığında dinin etnopolitik birimlerin ulusal özlemlerini içinde barındırabileceğini göstermektedir. Simbiyotik ilişki, Weber'in anlama yönelik ontolojik kaygısını, yani dünyayı düzenleyici bir sistem olarak tanımlayan din anlayışını, Durkheim'ın inancı kolektif toplumsal eylemin kaynağı olarak tarif eden işlevselciliğiyle mezcetmektedir. Dinin ontolojik iddiaları onun kamusal alanda cereyan eden güncel tartışmalarda bir destek unsuru olarak görülmesine engel değildir. Dolayısıyla, İslami ve ulusal kimliklerin örtüştüğü bu yaklaşıma "anlam sistemlerinin sosyal inşası" da denilebilir. Ancak, İslam ile daha içiçe geçmiş bir

Kürt milliyetçiliğinin İslamı siyasal bilincin belirleyici unsuru olarak tasvir etmeleri pek de kolay değildir. Bu yüzdendir ki, İslam Kürtlük davasına ayırt edici bir karakter kazandırmaktan ziyade, Kürt ulusal mücadelesinin iddialarının güçlendirilmesinde ya da meşrulaştırılmasında ikincil bir rol oynamaktadır. Çalışma, İslamın Kürt örneğinde ulusal bilinci geliştiren ya da pekiştiren münhasır bir faktör olduğuna yönelik bulgulara ulaşamamıştır. Bir başka deyişle, İslam Kürt milliyetçilik düşüncesinin ve aksiyonunun mütemmim cüz'ü olarak öne çıkmamakta, onu destekleyici mahiyette bir görev üstlenmektedir. Bu cihetle, Kürt milliyetçiliği dinin etno-politik seferberliğin kaynağı ya da kurucu unsuru olan dini milliyetçilik tipolojilerine bir örnek teşkil etmemektedir. Zira, Kürt popülasyonu kendi içinde farklı mezhepler ve ekoller barındırsa da, Kürtlerin rekabet ettiği ya da onu çevreleyen milliyetçilikler ile aynı dine mensubiyeti, İslamın etnopolitik Kürtlüğün bileşenlerinden biri olma imkanını sınırlamaktadır. Bu konfigürasyonda, İslam kimlikler arası ayrışmayı derinleştirecek bir unsur olma işlevini görmekten uzaktır. Çalışmada Kürt milliyetçiliğini tanımlarken etnodinsel kavramını kullanmaktan özellikle kaçınma sebebim de esasen budur. Kürt sahası, dinin ulusal bilincin inşasında ve pekişmesinde rol oynadığı Hindistan, Pakistan, İrlanda, Polonya, Filistin, Ermenistan, Azerbaycan, Çeçenistan, Filipinler ve Keşmir gibi klasik örneklere pek benzememektedir. Çünkü, Kürt kimliğinin rekabet ettiği milliyetçilikler karşısında kurucu unsuru İslam değildir. Adı geçen yerlerde dinin oynadığı rolün aksine İslam münferiden Kürt milliyetçiliğini tahkim eden bir güç kaynağı haline henüz dönüşmemiştir.

Öte yandan, çalışmada dünyanın farklı noktalarında deneyimlenen sekülerleşme sürecinin de yekpare ve doğrusal olmadığı, buna bağlı olarak modernleşmenin dinin nihai olarak bertaraf edilmesine ya da gerilemesine yol açmadığı savunulmuştur. Zira, günümüzde sekülerleşme süreci değişik düzeylerde farklı meydan okumalar ile karşılaşsa da, modernleşmenin amaçlanmayan sonuçlarından biri haline geldiği için geri döndürülemez bir realite biçimini almıştır. Bununla birlikte, aklın rasyonelleşmesini esas alarak insan zihnini metafizik bilgiden arındırmaya çalışan, keza doğayı spiritüel çerçevede değil de

akıl ile anlama ve açıklamaya yönelik bir girişim olan sekülerleşme olgusunun kısıtlarının olduğu yadsınamaz bir gerçektir. Bilhassa müslüman coğrafyada, laikliğin adının siyasi istikrarsızlıklarla ve krizlerle anılması, inançlar üstü bir şemsiye görevi görmesi ve toplumsal birliği sağlaması gerekirken bazı vakalarda aksine yeni faylar oluşturması, ona karşı reaksiyoner hareketlerin gelişmesi gibi unsurlar onun dayanıklılığının sınırlarına delalet etmektedir. Bütün bunlara rağmen, sekülerleşmenin elastikiyetini artırarak din ile ilişkisini dönüştürebildiği iddia edilmiştir. Din ile milliyetçiliğin simbiyotik ilişkisi de bu dönüşümün açık bir sonucudur. Sekülerleşmenin yanısıra, çalışma Kürt sahası bağlamında milliyetçilik olgusunun da dar bir tanımını yapma yoluna gitmiştir. Milli kimlik etnik köken, din, dil vb. gibi bazı somut özellikleri içinde barındırsa da, esas bileşeni onu oluşturan cemaatin mensupları arasındaki öz-bilinç ya da öz-farkındalıktır. Çalışma, teorik düzeyde milliyetçiliği mevzubahis objektif kriterler aracılığıyla değil de subjektif bir faktör olan öz-bilinç üzerinde kurgulamıştır. Milliyetçiliğin nesnel bir tanımını yapmak yerine, onu etnik bilinçli grupların siyasi amaçlara matuf kolektif eylemler icra ederek özgürleşme arzularını içeren bir siyasal doktrin olarak tasvir etmiştir. Kuşkusuz, ulusal öz-bilinci ölçme ve değerlendirme işi ilk bakışta problemli görünebilir. Bu sorunun giderilmesi amacıyla çalışmada din ve milliyetçilik arasında oluşan farklı ilişki biçimlerini ayırt etmek için Kürt sahasındaki seçkinlerin birincil motivasyonuna odaklanılmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, ulusal iddiaların mı yoksa dini akidelerin mi ya da her ikisinin birlikte mi kolektif eylem oluşturabilme kapasitesine bakılmaktadır.

Kapsamlı saha araştırmasından elde edilen bulguların analizine dayanan çalışmanın vardığı sonuç, İslam ile milliyetçilik bağlamında mütedeyyin Kürtlerin siyasi yönelimlerinin kabaca iki hatta toplandığı ya da rakip iki eğilim tarafından temsil edildiğidir. Diğer bir ifadeyle, İslam bir yandan milletleşme eğilimini inkıtaya uğratıp gelişmesinin önünü keserken, öte yandan ise eşitlikçi adalet teması üzerinden ulusal duyguların ortaya çıkmasına ve gerekçelendirilmesine zemin hazırlamaktadır. İlk eğilimin temel mottosu, "sırf Kürtleri çevreleyen milliyetçiliklerin tahakkümlerinden dolayı milliyetçi yola

tevessül etmek gayri-İslamidir" iken, ikinci eğilimin altını çizdiği husus ise "Türk, Arap ya da Farısi müslüman kardeşimin neyi varsa benim de onu elde etme hakkım olmalıdır" niteliğindedir. Dolayısıyla, Kürt bağlamında İslam bir yandan Kürt ulus inşası sürecinin dindar çevrelere yayılmasını yavaşlatırken, diğer yandan eşitlikçi siyasal hak talepleri ekseninde Kürt kimliğinin tüzel kişiliğinin tanınması ve varsayılan milletlerarası düzende yerini alması taleplerini meşrulaştırmaktadır. İkinci yönüyle İslam, Kürt ulusal bilincini edinmeyi ve ulusal birliğe ulaşmayı teşvik etmektedir. Bu bağlamda İslamın Kürt milliyetçiliği ile ilişkisinde ikili bir rol oynadığı aşikardır. Muhakkak ki, Kürt sahası çalışmanın toplumsal eğilimlerin çatallanarak bu iki yörüngede toplandığı önermesinden daha karmaşıktır. Birbirinden kesin olarak ayrılamayan ve aralarında çeşitli geçişlerin mevcut olduğu kategorizasyonlar ile sahanın yeni araştırmalar ile derinlemesine analizi gerekmektedir. İslam ile Kürt milliyetçiliği arasında daha sofistike tipolojilerin keşfedilmesi olasıdır. Her çalışma gibi bu tez de elde ettiği bulguları nihai olarak indirgemek zorunda kaldığından bu ikili ayrımı yapmayı uygun bulmuştur. Rekabetçi ve simbiyotik ilişki türlerinin istisnaları illa ki mevcuttur veyahut bu çalışmayı okuyan dindar bir Kürdün kendini bu kategoriler arasında herhangi bir yerde görmemesi de mümkündür. Bu yüzdendir ki, çalışma bu kategorilerin Kürt kamusal alanındaki ana eğilimler olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Kürt sahasında İslam ve milliyetçilik farklı düzeylerde olsa da siyasi düzenin temeli olma iddiasında eşdeğer bir işlev görmektedirler. Dolayısıyla bu iki olgunun birbirlerine alternatif ideolojik hipotezler olarak sunulması sık rastlanan bir durumdur. Rekabetçi model olarak adlandırılan Müslüman milliyetçiliği düşüncesi, Kürtlük yerine İslami motivasyon ile rafine edilmiş siyasi arzuların ve buna yönelik kolektif eylemlerin icrasını hayati görmekte, müslüman toplumların önce kendi içlerinde bir dönüşüm yaşayarak sonrasında ise ulusların ayrımına dayalı siyasi entiteler sisteminin ötesine geçmeyi amaçlayan bir nizam kurmayı amaçlamaktadır. Öte yandan, simbiyotik modelde dini ve ulusal kimliklerin birbiriyle çelişen olgular görülmesi yerine, ikisinin birarada varolabileceği ve birbirlerini dışlamak zorunda olmadıkları belirtilmektedir. İkinci kategoride dini ve seküler alan içiçe

geçerek ve birbirlerinin dönüşümünü hızlandırarak milli bilince dayalı siyasal tahayyülü olan dindar kitlelerde sekülerleşme eğilimini artırmaktadır.

Çalışma bulguları, Kürt sahasında siyasi yönelimleri ana eksen itibariyle "Müslüman Milliyetçiliği" ve "İslami Eğilimli Kürt Milliyetçiliği" kategorilerinde toplarken, aynı zamanda her iki kesim için de ikili alt tipolojilerin mevcut olduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Müslüman milliyetçiliğinin paradigma olduğu çevrelerde etnik kimliğe ya da Kürtlüğe dair iki farklı eğilimin birarada varolduğu görülmektedir. İlk eğilim, grubun üyeleri arasında etnik kayıtsızlığın yaygınlığına atıf yaparak anti-etnik olarak adlandırılmaktayken, ikinci eğilim ise müntesipleri arasında güçlü bir etnik bilincin varolmasına rağmen bunun etnopolitik düzlemde siyasi amaca matuf olmadığı veya etnik aidiyetin bir mobilizasyon kaynağı işlevini görmediği bir kitle hareketine karşılık gelmektedir. İlk kategorinin belirleyici unsuru Türkiye'deki Türkler ve Kürtlerin tek bir millet veya siyasi varlık olarak görülmesidir. Buna göre, Türkler ve Kürtler etnik olarak farklı aidiyetler içerseler de, benzer tarihsel deneyimlerden geçtikleri için ortak geçmişe sahip ve dolayısıyla ortak kaderi paylaşan tek topluluk olarak görülmektedir. Bu yaklaşımda, etnik kimliğin, yani Kürtlüğün bir özü yoktur, yalnızca günlük yaşam içinde araçsal bir değeri vardır. Bu kesimin Kürtlüğe neredeyse hiç atıf yapmaması ve buna bağlı olarak Kürt sorununun Kürt sahasındaki siyasi gündeme egemen olması nedeniyle elit düzeyinde temsil imkanı pek bulmamaktadır. Zira, seçkinler düşüncelerinden ve tutumlarından bağımsız olarak toplumsal meselelere duyarlılık göstermek zorunda kalmaktadırlar. Kürt sorununu temsil etmeyen bu kesim büyük ölçüde Türk muhafazakar-dindar çevrelerin liderliğini yaptığı siyasi partiler-organizasyonlar içinde sosyalleşmekte ve onların belirlediği düşünsel ve entelektüel sınırlar içinde hareket etmektedirler. İronik bir şekilde, Kürt nüfusunun kademeli olarak asimilasyonu ve entegrasyonu nedeniyle bu grubu oluşturan kimselerin toplumdaki görünürlüklerinin özellikle bireysel düzeyde zaman içinde artacağı öngörülmektedir. Devletin güvenlik politikaları, Kürt sorununa kayıtsız kalmayı tercih eden anti-etnik kategoride yer alan kesimler nezdinde büyük çapta destek görmektedir. Kürt meselesinin doğrudan bir parçası olmadıkları için de Türk

milliyetçiliği ile rekabet etmelerine gerek kalmamakta, aksine onunla işbirliği yapmanın yollarını aramaktadırlar. Bu çevrelerde Kürtlüğün yalnızca folklorik seviyede varolduğu, hatta yer yer bunun izlerinin bile silinmeye başladığı gözlemlenmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, Kürtlük en fazla kültürel pratik düzeyinde varolmakta, ayırt edici bir kültürel kimliğe dönüşmemektedir. Siyasi mefkûreler açısından Kürtlük ve Türklük birbiriyle örtüşmekte ve aynı hedeflere yönelmektedir. Etnik kayıtsızlık ve yabancılaşma içeren bu zümrede doğal olarak etnik bilinçlenmedeki zayıflık göze çarpmaktadır. Üst kimlik olarak tanımlanan ve kabul edilen Türklük karşısındaki ikincil konum herhangi bir ideolojik rahatsızlık yaratmamakta, kolektif aksiyonun sınırları bu çerçeve içinde kalınarak oluşturulmaktadır.

Müslüman milliyetçiliğinin altındaki ikinci alt tipolojide ise etnik kimlik siyasal bir atıf yapılmaksızın korunmaya çalışılmaktadır. Bu alt kategori, ulusal birlik tahayyülünün olmadığı ve etnopolitik kimliğin referans alındığı siyasi aspirasyonlardan uzak duran bir dini kimlik formasyonuna tekabül etmektedir. Bu grubun üyeleri kendilerini etnik olarak çerçevelenmiş bir topluluk olarak görme eğiliminde olsa dahi Kürtlük bilincinin kendine özgü siyasi arzulara yönelmesini amaçlamamaktadırlar. Bu konfigürasyonda, Kürt kimliğinden ziyade İslami motivasyonlar sosyo-politik bilincin ve mobilizasyonun iskeletini oluşturmaktadır. Kürtlük aidiyetinden kültürel olarak beslenilse de, ulusal bilince dayalı arzu ve özlemlere sahip olduklarına yönelik alamet-i farika mevcut değildir. Daha da ötesi, İslami paradigmanın ulus gerçekliğini aşan siyasi, sosyal ve kültürel etkileşim önerileri bu çevreler arasında ulusal bilinci gereksiz hatta gayri-meşru kılmaktadır. Bu kategorinin üyeleri arasındaki kuvvetli etnik bilinç, halihazırda birçok kriz ile başetmek zorunda kalan Müslüman ümmetini daha zayıflatacağı ve mikro kimliklere böleceği endişesiyle siyasal amaçlara matuf ulusal bilince dönüşmemektedir. İslami kimlik grubun siyasal bilincinin özünü teşkil ederken, bunun dışında kalan gayri-müslimler hatta aynı etnik gruba mensup olsa da sekülerleşmiş kitleler dışarıda bırakılarak zihinsel ayrışmanın sınırları çizilmektedir. Bu yaklaşıma göre, İslam hakikatin kaynağı olarak tektir. İslam adına yapılan yanlış temsiliyetler ve uygulamalar onun özüne halel

getirmemektedir. İslami idealler, müslümanlar tarafından gerçekleştirilme imkanından yoksun olsa dahi siyasal bir ülkü olarak bu kitlenin zihninde yer etmektedir ve toplumsal ilişkilerin yeniden üretilmesinde etkili olmaktadır.

Müslüman milliyetçiliği altında anti-etnik kategoride yer alan bireyler ekseriyetle kendilerini Kürt sorununun bir parçası olarak görmezlerken, etnik olarak bilinçli kategoriye mensup olanlar ise Kürtlerin kolektif hakları konusunda kaydadeğer değişim talep etmektedirler. İki kategorinin farklı eğilimleri, siyasal alanda değişim taleplerinin ivmesini ve yönünü belirlemesi açısından önem arzetmektedir. Zira, nitelikli bir değişim arzusuna sahip olmayan ilk kategoride yer alanların Kürt etno-milliyetçiliğine yönelik siyasal tutumlardan ve aksiyondan kaçınması onları daha konforlu ve güvenli bir alanda tutmaktadır. Kürt jeopolitik sahasındaki yeni gelişmelere kayıtsız kalırlarken, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin benimsediği politikalar ve kullandığı yöntemlere zımnen onay vermektedirler. Bu yönelim, dindar Kürtlerin bu kesimini Türkiye devletine daha bağlı ve sadakatli bir kitleye dönüştürürken, ironik bir biçimde kültürel asimilasyona karşı daha savunmasız hale getirmektedir. Çünkü, bu kategorinin kolektif düzeyde bilişsel idraki, kendini müstakil bir özne olarak tanımlamayan pasif irade çerçevesinde şekillenmektedir. Öte yandan, etnik olarak bilinçli kategoriye ait olanlarda ise güçlü bir İslami kimliğe direngen bir kültürel kimlik eşlik etmektedir. Ancak, bu iki bilişsel özdeşleştirme halleri arasında başat ya da primer olan açık ara İslami kimliktir. Dolayısıyla, bu kesimin aciliyet arz eden siyasal ve sosyal problemlerine, ki buna Kürtlerin kolektif haklarını ilgilendiren hususlar da dahildir, Kürtlerin münferit milli gündemlerine odaklanarak çözüm üretmeleri olası değildir. Milliyetçiliklerin bizatihi kendisi ontolojik olarak kötüdür. Müslüman coğrafyasında, bu düşüncenin ve uygulamaların kökünün kazınması gerekmektedir. Kürtler, onları çevreleyen dindaş ulusların tahakküm altında tutulsalar da onların kullandıkları yöntemleri kullanmamalı ve haklarını seküler vizyona dayalı Kürt milliyetçiliğinde değil de İslami nitelikli toplum tasavvuru bağlamında aramalıdırlar. Bu görüşe göre Kürt milliyetçiliği, Kürtlerin İslam'la bağlarını koparmak için tasarlanmış modernite kaynaklı seküler bir projedir. Bu çevreler

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arasında Kürtlerin milletleşmesi tavsiye edilmeyen hatta kaçınılması gereken bir olgu olarak nitelendirilmektedir. Mevcut milliyetçilikler İslam'ı kendi amaçlarına hizmet eder hale getirmiş olsalar da, sadık Müslümanlardan müteşekkil tek bir millet tahayyülü diğer tüm kimlikleri gölgede bırakmaktadır.

Anti-etnik ya da etnik olarak bilinçli kategoride yer alanların ortak özelliği, Kürtlerin millet olmaktan kaynaklı sorunlarını kamusal alanda gündeme getirme iştahlarınının olmaması ve Kürt toplumunu bu yönde mobilize etmeye yönelik siyasi amaçlara sahip olmamalarıdır. Müslüman milliyetçiliği bakışı genel olarak ulus ya da etno-milliyetçilik olgusunu modernitenin bir ürünü ve hatta başlı başına yeni bir din olarak görmektedir. Buna göre, milliyetçiliklerin karşıt milliyetçilikleri harekete geçirmesi ve tetiklemesi nasyon olgusunun bir insan icadı olduğunu teyit etmektedir. Bir başka deyişle, milliyetçilik özünde insan eliyle tasarlanan reaksiyoner bir girişimdir. Dolayısıyla, milliyetçilik sabit ve değişmez bir öze sahip olmadığı için de primordial nitelikte değildir. Bu bağlamda, etnik aidiyet otomatik olarak milliyetçiliğe dönüşmemektedir. Kürt milliyetçiliğinin doğmasına ya da büyümesine ise onu çevreleyen Türk, Arap ya da Fars milliyetçilikleri zemin hazırlamıştır. Dışlayıcı milliyetçilikten azade olan Türk kimliğine bakış ise ilginç bir şekilde onun İslam ile ayrılmazlığı üzerine kuruludur. Müslüman milliyetçiliğine gönül veren Kürtler nezdinde, Türk kimliğinin bilhassa seküler seçkinler tarafından toplumun geri kalanları üzerinde hakimiyet kurma amacına hizmet eden bir aparat olarak kullanıldığı yönünde güçlü bir algı mevcuttur. Ne yazık ki, dindar Türkler de devletin üzerine inşa edildiği seküler projeden bağımsız bir siyasal tasavvura sahip değildirler. Dolayısıyla, Türk milliyetçiliğinin kendisi değil de onun tanımlanma biçimi ya da onu temsil eden aktörlerin motivasyonları ve algıları problem teşkil etmektedir. Mütedeyyin Kürtlerin zihin dünyasında öteki olan, kolektif Türk kimliğinden ziyade seküler ya da İslam dışı olan Türk kimliğidir. Kürt milliyetçiliğine eleştirel yaklaşımları, bütün milliyetçiliklerin gayri-İslami olduğu yönündeki düşünceleri ile tutarlılık arzetmektedir. Bu yaklaşıma göre, Kürt toplumunu Kurdi ya da milli hassasiyetler değil, İslam özgürleştirecektir.

Bu nedenledir ki, milliyetçilik gibi beşeri bir ideolojiye de ihtiyaç hasıl olmamaktadır.

Ezcümle, din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki rekabetçi ilişki tarzında İslam dindar Kürtlerin "Müslüman Milliyetçiliği" ekseninde kalmalarını sağlayarak, müstakil bir Kürt milletleşme sürecini yavaşlatmaktadır. Zira, bu kitlenin bilişsel düzeydeki benlik idraki ve kamusal alandaki kolektif aksiyon girişimleri İslamın ulusu aşan düşünce ve davranış kodlarıyla çerçevelenmektedir. Dolayısıyla İslam, seküler bilinç gerektiren modern Kürt kimliğinin inşasının geniş dindar kitlelere nüfuz etmesini bir bakıma frenlemektedir. Elbette, bu ilişki tarzının mütedeyyin Kürtlerin bütününe teşmil etmeyeceğini belirtmek lazımdır. Çalışmanın üzerine temellendiği ikinci yaklaşıma göre, İslam ile Kürtlük davasının birbirlerine bağımlılık duyacak ölçüde içiçe geçmesi özelinde din ile milliyetçilik arasında simbiyotik ilişki tarzı meydana gelmektedir. Bu modelde, İslam Kürtlerin ulusal bilinç ile şuurlanmalarını ve aksiyona geçmelerini teşvik ederek etno-politik bir mefkûre etrafında oluşan birlik ve dayanışma duygusunu pekiştirmektedir. Böylesi bir ilişki tarzı, dinin kendisinden ziyade ulus olgusunu grubun ya da cemaatin seferberlik kaynağı haline dönüştürürek, siyasi aspirasyonlara yönelik kolektif eylemlerin motivasyonunun asıl bileşeni haline getirmektedir. Simbiyotik ilişkide esas itibariyle, milliyetçilik fenomeni seküler niteliğini korumaya devam etmekle birlikte, din ve dindar imajına kamusal alanda yer açılmaktadır. Bu açılımda dinin mi yoksa milliyetçiliğin mi daha fazla belirleyici rol oynadığı ya da aktif olduğu elbette tartışmalı bir husustur. Ancak şu kesindir ki, din ile milliyetçilik arasındaki etkileşim iki olguyu da nihai olarak dönüştürmektedir.

Milliyetçilik, seküler bilinç gerektirse de, bireylerin günlük yaşamlarında seküler yaşam kodları ile hareket etmelerini dikte etmeyebilmektedir. Böylece, din ile dünyevi alan arasındaki muğlaklıklar belirginleşmektedir. Her ne kadar kamusal alanda sekülerleşme sürecinden geri dönüş sözkonusu olmasa da, din toplumsal ihtiyaçlar ve beklentiler üzerinden yeniden tanımlanmaktadır. Bu noktada Durkheim'a atıf yapılacak olursa, toplumun dini inanç ve uygulamalara tikel

düzeyde anlam atfedilmesi, dinin sosyal alanda inşai yönünün ontolojik sınırlarını aşmasının yolunu açmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, ortak bir ulus çatısı altında toplanma ihtiyacı ve aciliyeti görünürde sekülerleşmeyi gerektirmemektedir. Ancak, ulus temelli arzulara garkolma uzun vadede kaçınılmaz olarak dünyevileşmeyi zaruri kılmaktadır. Çünkü, milliyetçilik er ya da geç dünyevi alanı nihai anlamın kaynağı haline getirirken, din ise dünyevi ile uhrevi alan arasında ayrım gözetmemekte, ikisi arasında karşılıklı etkileşim öngörmektedir. Simbiyotik modelde, bireyin ulusal cemaate güçlü bir duygusal bağlılık hissetmesi için tam teşekküllü laik biri olmasına gerek olmadığı gibi, sekülerleşmeden de ateşli bir milliyetçi olması mümkün olmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, siyasi bir doktrin olarak milliyetçilik düşüncesi günümüzde birçok dindar Kürt arasında yeşermektedir. Hatta "müslüman aklın" modern dönemde sekülerleşmesinin bir tezahürüne dönüşmektedir. Kürt vakası bağlamında, çalışma bu süreci İslamın Kürt milliyetçiliği ile içiçe geçmesi olarak kavramsallaştırmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, dindar Kürtler baskın veya üst kimlik olarak olarak tanımladıkları Türklük karşısındaki ikincil konumlarına itiraz etmekte, ayrı bir ulusal cemaate ait olduklarını bilişsel düzeyde idrak ederek eşit olmayan ve tahakküme dayalı ilişki tarzının değişimini arzulamaktadırlar. Burada İslam esas itibariyle, eşitlikçi adaletin tesis edilmesine yönelik söylemler, imgeler ve semboller aracılığıyla Kürtlük davasını gerekçelendirmektedir. Dolayısıyla, Kürtlerin millet olma haklarını meşrulaştırmada ve güçlendirmede destekleyici bir role sahiptir. Sonuç olarak, etnik olarak bilinçli bir grubun dini kimliği ulusal öz-bilinçlerinin gelişmesinin önünde bir engel olmaktan çıkmaktadır.

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