

**SECURITY DIMENSIONS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS  
ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKISH POLITICAL LIFE SINCE 1980**

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ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKISH POLITICAL LIFE SINCE 1980**

**BY**

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## PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and references all material and results that are not original to this work.

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**ABSTRACT:**

Religious organizations, whose historical roots go back a long time, have always had a significant impact on the social and political field. This effect sometimes brought them closer to political power, and sometimes caused them to be kept under control by the state. The exclusion from the official field after the proclamation of the Republic led these organizations to be illegal organizations. However, with the transition to multiparty life, it is seen that religious organizations that have developed a relationship of interest with political parties have gained legitimacy as a result of the domestic and foreign conjunction since the 1980s. Especially after 1980, these organizations, which came to the fore with their relations with political parties, their activities in the field of education and their financial dimension, were perceived as a security problem over time. In addition, the international connections they have developed since this process and their effects on Turkish foreign policy make it necessary to analyze them in terms of external security. The transformation of a religious group from a community identity to a terrorist organization in the recent past has caused all other religious groups that lost their essential functions to be considered in this study. The main purpose of this academic study is to examine the internal and external security dimensions of religious organizations that instrumentalized religion by gaining a different appearance and function in Turkish political life since the 1980s.

**Keywords:** Order, Community, Religious Organizations, Turkish Political Life, Turkish Foreign Policy, Security

## ÖZET:

Tarihi kökleri oldukça uzun zaman öncesine dayanan dini yapılanmaların, toplumsal ve siyasal alanda her daim önemli bir etkisi olmuştur. Bu etki, kimi zaman onları siyasi erkle yakınlaştırırken kimi zaman ise devlet tarafından denetim altında tutulmalarına yol açmıştır. Cumhuriyet'in ilanından sonra resmi alandan dışlanmaya başlaması ise, bu yapıların illegal örgütlenmesine neden olmuştur. Ancak çok partili hayata geçişle birlikte siyasi partilerle menfaat ilişkisi geliştiren dini yapılanmaların, 1980'li yıllardan itibaren iç ve dış konjonktürün bir getirisi olarak meşruiyet elde ettiği görülmektedir. Özellikle 1980 sonrasında siyasi partilerle kurdukları ilişkilerle, eğitim alanındaki faaliyetleriyle ve mali finansal boyutuyla öne çıkan bu yapılar, zamanla güvenlik sorunu olarak algılanmıştır. Ayrıca bu süreçten itibaren geliştirdikleri uluslararası bağlantıları ve Türk dış politikasına etkileri de dış güvenlik boyutu açısından analiz edilmelerini gerekli kılmaktadır. Yakın geçmişte bir dini grubun, cemaat kimliğinden terör örgütüne dönüşümü ise asli fonksiyonlarını kaybeden diğer tüm dini grupların bu çalışma özelinde ele alınmasına neden olmuştur. Bu akademik çalışmanın temel amacı, 1980'lerden itibaren Türk siyasal yaşamında farklı bir görünüm ve işlev kazanarak dini araçsallaştıran dini yapılanmaların iç ve dış güvenlik boyutlarını incelemektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tarikat, Cemaat, Dini Yapılanmalar, Türk Siyasal Yaşamı, Türk Dış Politikası, Güvenlik

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*Figure 1* Regional distribution of religious organizations in Turkey



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|        |                                               |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------|
| BDDK   | Banking State Supervisory Council             |
| CIA    | Central Intelligence Agency                   |
| DP     | Democratic Party                              |
| EU     | European Union                                |
| FP     | Felicity Party                                |
| HSYK   | The Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors |
| IDP    | Islamic Democratic Party                      |
| JDP    | Justice and Development Party                 |
| JP     | Justice Party                                 |
| MP     | Motherland Party                              |
| MIT    | National Intelligence Organization            |
| NATO   | North Atlantic Treaty Organization            |
| NOM    | National Outlook Movement                     |
| NOP    | National Order Party                          |
| NP     | Nation Party                                  |
| NSP    | National Salvation Party                      |
| NSC    | National Security Council                     |
| NUC    | National Unity Committee                      |
| PDP    | People's Democratic Party                     |
| PKK.   | Kurdistan Worker's Party                      |
| RNGOs. | Religious Non-Governmental Organizations      |
| RPP    | Republican People's Party                     |
| TBMM   | Turkish Grand National Assembly               |

|        |                                                         |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| TCL    | Turkish Criminal Law                                    |
| TGRT.  | Turkey Newspaper Radio and Television                   |
| TUSKON | Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists |
| US.    | United States                                           |
| USA    | United States of America                                |
| VP     | Virtue Party                                            |
| WP     | Welfare Party                                           |



## INTRODUCTION

### Overview of the Thesis

The relationship between religion and the state has developed on a level that constitutes the social and political order since different periods of history. Religion has come to the fore as a structure that builds and regulates the life of societies, including the oldest civilizations that can be studied scientifically. For this reason, it is not possible to talk about a clear distinction in these civilizations where the power that holds the political power and the religious field interact with each other. However, with the emergence of the state as an organized social model, leaving the religious field in the process, the relationship between these two powers has changed. Especially in Western societies, there have been serious problems in the relationship between the two powers, causing wars.

By the end of the 18th century and the 19th century, the influence of religion in the social field decreased and the phenomenon of religion began to be questioned. In particular, Emile Durkheim, one of the early representatives of the sociology of religion, argued that religion has a very important place in the social field and enables solidarity, Karl Marx accepted religion as a superstructure and stated that people who own the means of production use this area as an "opium" to control the society (Davie, 2003: 62-63). In this process, in which the nation-state structure came to the fore with the effect of modernization, it is seen that the religion phenomenon was replaced by the nationalism movement. The process of exclusion of religion from the public and social field, which continued until the middle of the 20th century, changed with the end of the Second World War. The phenomenon of religion, which is especially effective in the struggle against the threat of communism in the bipolar world order, has gained a different dimension with the religious revival in the social field. In addition, it is seen that new religious groups and religious movements emerged in this period.

One of the important fields of the sociology of religion is the religious organizations that emerged as the representatives of the religious field. Religious organizations, which are defined as "religious groups" or "religious movements" according to the discipline of sociology, are defined as "orders" or "communities" according to theological terminology. However, these groups, which are developing in Turkey, differ from each other in terms of their characteristics and functions. For this reason, in this study, religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs), which are also defined as orders, communities, religious groups, foundations and associations, which have undergone transformation in the historical process, will be discussed under the title of religious organizations.

When considered in the historical process, some changes have been observed in the relations between religious organizations and the state. Religious organizations mostly tried to develop close relations with the political power and influence it in line with their interests in order to carry out their activities. However, it is seen that the perception of threat increases due to the conflict of interests, sometimes in the relations established in cooperation. When examined in terms of states, while religious organizations contributed to the consolidation of the states' existing sovereignty in periods when sovereignty could not be achieved in certain regions, the excessive strengthening of these organizations and the pressure on political power led to the deterioration of existing relations.

Orders, which are a traditional manifestation of religious organizations and the institutionalized form of sufistic thought, emerged in the Khorasan and Transoxiana regions from the 8th century and became an important element in the development process of Islamic communities (Babinger & Köprülü, 1996: 45). Especially with the existing structural features

of the orders, it is seen that the influence on the Muslim people in the Ottoman period was quite high. These organizations, which are a reflection of the migrant Turkish culture, made an important contribution to the spread of Islam in Anatolia with wandering dervishes, and also enabled the conquered regions to meet Islam. On the other hand, it has been observed that the orders, which are generally at peace with political power and maintain their existence with the support of the state or through foundations, sometimes get stronger and drift into an organization outside the state control. Especially in the collapse of the Ottoman state, these organizations, which lost their essential functions and emerged as a security problem, turned into completely banned institutions with the proclamation of the Republic.

With the liquidation of the religious organizations inherited from the Ottoman state by the founding cadres of the Republic of Turkey, some reforms were made to regulate social relations. With these reforms, efforts to create a new state, society and ideology gained momentum. In addition, the Sheikh Said Rebellion in this period reinforced the threat perception of the founding power against religious organizations. However, the orders, which were officially banned by the Law on Closing Dervish Orders, Lodges, and Tombs on November 30, 1925, continued their existence by continuing their activities illegally. Particularly with the transition to the multiparty system, the religious organizations, which entered the process of partial relaxation with the effect of the political environment, continued their activities as a community, foundation or association as a result of modernization. These organizations, which were excluded by the founding power in the early republican period, have actually survived to the present day in an unofficial and uncontrolled way.

The inclusion of religious organizations in the public and social field in Turkey started with the transition to multiparty life. Especially with the 1946 Republican People's Party (RPP) Congress, many innovations in the religious field and developments in the international arena paved the way for these groups. With the beginning of the religious revival in the social field, religious organizations came to the fore again. However, since the religion of Islam is not only a form of worship, but also a structure that directs political, economic and social behaviors, religious organizations wanted to be present in these fields as well. Especially in this period, with the inclusion of actors with religious sensitivities in the political field, religious organizations also entered a partial relaxation process. In addition to this, a rapid urbanization process has been experienced in Turkey since the 1950s, with the effect of social mobility in the process of accelerating the transition from agricultural society to industrial society. With the transfer of the popular Islam phenomenon from the periphery to the center, the influence of religious groups, orders, communities or religious foundations in the political, social and economic fields has increased. Religious organizations, which emerged as Islamic socio-economic formations, especially in fields left empty by the state, had an important business and trade volume over time. As a result, the external and internal security dimension of religious organizations, which took on a modern political identity in Turkey after 1980, became evident in the socio-economic sense, lost its essential functions and started to be active in the international arena, constitutes the main axis of this study.

## **Methodology and Framework**

The subject of the research is related to the internal and external security dimensions of religious organizations that have traditionally existed in Turkey's social structure. Religious organizations in Turkey gained a different appearance and function after the 1980s. The exclusion of religious organizations from the official field, especially after the proclamation of the Republic, pushed them to unofficial organizations apart from the existing official structure. These organizations, which gained legitimacy as a result of Turkish foreign policy and social change especially after 1980, have led to security problems over time. The main purpose of this study is to analyze the internal and external security dimensions of these organizations, which have been intertwined with politics and society since the 1980s. In addition, in this study, how religious organizations in Turkey shaped Turkish political life will also be examined. This study aims to approach the current agenda from an academic point of view through primary sources and interviews. In this sense, it aims to provide an opportunity to overcome the overly politicized nature of the issue.

Considering the importance of this study, although there are some studies on the structural features of religious organizations in academic studies, there is not enough study about the relations of these organizations with the political institution, their financial resources, their activities in the field of education, their legal dimension and international connections.

Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the literature by examining the religious organizations that have started to operate in these fields since the 1980s, in terms of internal

and external security. In addition, the study subject will be analyzed and evaluated with a critical approach.

The problem that is the basis of the research is related to the conditions under which religious organizations that are active in the social field in Turkey turn into a security problem.

The sub-problems that can be expressed are;

- Are the orders, communities and religious NGOs that we call religious organizations in Turkey structurally similar, and according to what quality are today's religious groups classified?
- How has the relationship between religious organizations and political institutions progressed in the historical process in Turkey?
- What is the main function of religious organizations in Turkey and is it possible for these organizations to fulfill their functions in terms of law?
- How has the effect of religious organizations in Turkey on Turkish foreign policy developed in the historical process?
- Do religious organizations in Turkey have international connections?
- How have religious organizations in Turkey strengthened economically both at home and abroad?
- What internal and external factors made religious organizations visible after 1980?

In this study, a qualitative research method was used methodologically in terms of data collection and interpretation. A comprehensive and effective contextual analysis comes to the fore in case studies. Therefore, in this study, a case study based on the literature was conducted in order to analyze the security dimension of religious organizations in Turkey

after 1980. In addition, the documentation method was applied in the study. Throughout the research, books, articles, journals, party bylaws, parliamentary records and archive documents written about religious organizations were used. In addition, tables were also used in the study. Following this, the security dimension of religious organizations was carefully analyzed within the framework of the methodology.

In the context of the scope of the research, primarily religious group typologies such as order, community, religious NGOs, which we gathered under the title of religious organizations as a conceptual framework, were defined and the development process of these organizations in the historical process was tried to be examined. In addition, a short regional analysis will be made about the religious organizations that were effective after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, and since the security dimension of the study will be discussed, information on the content of the concept of security will be given. In the second chapter, in order to understand the historical background in terms of the security dimension of religious organizations, the perspective on religious organizations in the Early Republican period and the implemented reforms will be evaluated. In this chapter, especially in the transition from the single-party period to the multiparty system, the break in the perspective of religious organizations and its effects will be discussed. In the third chapter, the effects on religious organizations will be analyzed by taking into account the domestic developments in the social and political field and the situation in the international arena since 1980 in Turkey. In the fourth chapter of the study, the internal security dimension of the religious organizations that underwent transformation after 1980 will be discussed in political, economic, educational and legal fields, while the external security dimension will be evaluated in terms of its international connections and its impact on foreign policy. On the other hand, this study, like

every research, is limited to a certain time and place. Examining the religious organizations in Turkey with all their functions goes beyond the limits of the study. Therefore, in this study, religious organizations in Turkey were examined with their political, social and economic activities. Another limitation is related to the current appearance and functions of religious organizations after 1980. In addition, the religious organizations discussed within the scope of the study are grouped under three main headings: Naqshbandis, Nurus and Süleymancis. Small independent religious groups that are outside of these three groups and that are not influential in the political and social field are considered outside the scope of this study.



## **CHAPTER I: RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKEY**

For a better understanding of the academic study, first of all, the lexical meaning of the concepts of religious orders, community, and religious non-governmental organizations, known as religious organizations, will be examined and their historical development, sociological definitions, how the process of social change in Turkey is experienced in terms of these concepts, and regional religious organizations will be analyzed in this section. In addition, since the security dimension of the study will be discussed, information about the content of the concept of security will be given.

### **1.1.The Concept of Religious Order**

In this part of the study, the definition of the concept of religious order will be made and the development of religious order in the historical process will be explained.

#### **1.1.1. Definition of the Concept of Religious Order**

When the religious order is examined in terms of the literal meaning, it means “the way to go, the method to be followed, the state and the departure”, and it is used together with the word "Sufism". According to Islamic Sufism, the concept of the religious order, which means entering the path, is expressed as the organized form of Sufism (Rahman, 1992: 218). In short, this discipline, which adapts Sufism according to the principles of Islamic laws, tries to go down to the essence of religion and aims to develop people spiritually, is defined as the religious-spiritual path.

Although there is no common definition in the academic literature, the religious organizations described as religious orders in Turkey are structures that accept Islamic mysticism as a source of information, were founded under the leadership of a charismatic religious leader, and consider themselves more privileged than other groups (Balancar, 2019: 57). These organizations, which guided the public in cases where the established understanding of Islam was insufficient, established an individual and warm relationship with the public that the *ulema* could not reach. They stated that they were guiding society by making music and dhikr in the lodges.

According to Wach, the religious order is described as organized communities established by people who adopt a common way of piety within a closed community. In addition, these organizations, which were established with the idea of spiritual brotherhood, have a monopolistic nature. For this reason, the individual loyalty of the members of the religious order is an indispensable element of these organizations (Wach, 1990: 187). Semih Ceyhan, on the other hand, applies the concept of the spiritual path while describing the religious orders in the doctrinal sense. According to Ceyhan, in the institutional sense, the religious order is the institutionalized version of a set of rules for, dervishes who adhere to the master in this religious-spiritual path (Ceyhan, 2015: 27-29).

When the religious orders are examined in terms of their structural features, they exhibit a formation based on the sheikh sequence. It is seen that the leaders of religious orders have a spiritual authority chain. In fact, many religious order's leaders reinforce their authority by basing themselves on the lineage of prophets. On the other hand, entry to these organizations built by charismatic leaders is on a voluntary basis. A person who wants to enter the religious

order has to follow some rules. The most important point among these rules is that the person entering the religious order must obey his guide under all conditions. Because charismatic religious leaders are accepted as the only compass for progress in the religious order. Frager briefly summarizes this situation as follows: The religious order is considered to be "the way" in the literal meaning, and there is always a need for a guide who can read the signs on the way. The guide who can find the right path is called sheikh (Frager, 2005: 14).

The religious orders, which are also accepted as a sociological phenomenon, have had various functions in the social field since their establishment. The religious orders, which made an important contribution in the political, social, economic and cultural fields of the society, sometimes rebelled against the political authorities and sometimes supported them. In addition, the religious orders have also played an important role in the formation of a culture that is parallel to the religious culture in the society in terms of their functions. Considering the function of these organizations in the field of education, it is seen that they provide an alternative view other than the world view given by the official ulama. As Mardin said, religious orders became an important element of the empire, acting as a bridge between official Islam and folk culture (Volk Islam) (Mardin, 1993: 70-71). In fact, the religious orders, which are also described as 'Parallel Islam' (Atacan, 1990: 14), have made an important contribution to the formation of the religious culture of the people in the historical process. However, it is thought that these organizations lost their old functions in the process and turned into organizations that abuse society (Efe, 2017: 291).

It is possible to come across religious orders, one of the phenomena that we have classified in religious organizations, in almost all universal religions. These organizations, which initially

emerged as a protest movement, have evolved from an individual seclusion to a communal organization. Especially the Christian colonies constitute an important example of the transition to sectarianism. There is no concept of monkhood in the religion of Islam. However, in both religions, the life of monasteries and lodges continued in mystical organizations. While the monastic life was completely isolated from the worldly life, the life of the lodge showed a different development as time passed by identifying with the worldly life (Efe, 2017: 291). While traditional orders were isolated from worldly life in the past, they stated that their goal was individual development. In particular, the points where the religious teachings in the madrasahs were insufficient were undertaken by the orders. 'Orders and communities', which we describe as religious organizations, are described as traditional religious cultural formations, as the continuation of the old religious orders (DIB, 2019: 18). However, today, orders have lost their functions when they were founded and have turned to the political, economic and public fields. When this situation is examined within the context of religion and politics in Turkey, it emerges as a current problem.

### **1.1.2. The Historical Process of Religious Orders**

Orders, which took their place in society as an organized form of Sufi thought in the historical process, have existed in different forms within Muslim communities. The establishment date of the orders in Islamic states is considered to be between 850-900s (Uludağ, 2016: 224). However, the emergence of these organizations corresponds to the 1000-1250s. Orders assumed a socio-political role in these dates when the Abbasid State began to weaken and the Crusades were held.

In the transition of Central Asian Turks from Shamanism to Islam, Sufism was seen as the closest belief to Turkish culture. In particular, the differences between the nomadic life of the Turks and Islam led non-resident Turkmen tribes to adopt the Sufi form of Islam. The Turks living in the cities, on the other hand, accepted Islam as it was. During the establishment of the Ottoman state, the conflict between these two structures developed towards the understanding of Islam. In the later years of the Ottoman state, a mutual understanding developed between those who adopted Sunni Islam and the institutionalized Sufis. Both groups created an important area of influence on the society and enabled the spread and development of Islam in cooperation (Mardin, 1993: 94).

Orders, which were seen as the institutionalized form of Sufism in the Ottoman Empire, contributed to the establishment of Islam in important layers of society by undertaking the mission of spreading religion within a certain system. Especially in the 17th and 18th centuries, these organizations began to appear in almost every region. It is known that tradesmen guilds, janissaries and even some political elites were members of the order. These orders, which managed to enter even established religious education institutions in these years, especially emphasized the individual and moral aspects of the Islam religion (Lewis, 2014: 549). These organizations, which acted as a bridge between the state and society and contributed to the establishment of religious culture within the state, became one of the most important pillars of the Ottoman state. However, since they emerged as a non-state organization in the first period of their establishment and were perceived as a threat, they were taken under control within the Ottoman state and subject to state control due to the task they undertook.

In the 19th century, it was seen that the orders played an important role in the European invasion. In these events that took place outside the Turkish lands, the Naqshbandis fought in the Russian Caucasus, the Khatamians in Sudan, and the Sanusiyyas in the North African region against Western domination. During this period, different factors have emerged that affect the relationship between the state and the orders. In particular, the concepts of individual and property, which emerged with the effect of modernization, carried the ongoing relationship of the individual with the state in society to a different dimension. While the land was accepted as a means of production in the process of breaking away from the agricultural society, the privileges of those who had tax and land privileges were taken from them in the new property order (Işık, 2015: 557). Depending on this development, some problems arose with the political power regarding the foundations owned by the orders and their tax liabilities, and the orders were liquidated financially. In the last period of the Ottoman Empire, the concerns about the orders continued to increase and it was seen that the orders structurally lost their functions and started to deteriorate. For this reason, the state has undertaken a number of measures and regulations for the orders. With the Meclis-i Meşayih, which was established in 1866, the state developed some regulations for the current functioning of the orders and took these organizations under control. However, the improvement works were interrupted as a result of the wars in the following periods and remained inconclusive.

In the Tanzimat period, the orders began to be effective again by taking advantage of the reign of Abdulhamid II. It is noteworthy that the dervishes who were close to the sultan were Arabs. In this relationship, which was shaped according to Abdulhamid's Pan-Islamic policy, an important role was assigned to the Arab-origin orders. However, the Mevlevi and Bektashis,

who were among the order organizations with a Turkish identity in this period, did not take kindly to the current policy and cooperated with the Young Turks. Especially in this period when the political disputes were at their peak, the fact that the orders have a widespread and masonic organization has made them an important ally (Lewis, 2014: 550). It is known that many of the Young Turks belonged to the Bektashi order. After the 1908 revolution, the interest of the political parties towards the orders increased more. The reason for this is the benefit that the current field of influence of the orders will provide to the parties. Especially for parties, these lodges were seen as a propaganda tool. With this understanding, which continued until the end of the Ottoman state, the orders were dragged into the political field. The attitudes of the orders towards the government, on the other hand, differed. While the Bektashi order stood against Abdulhamid and cooperated with the Young Turks, the Naqshbandi order said that they were in favor of the dominance of the Caliphate.

After the establishment of the Republic, as a result of the conditions of the period and the religious policies of the political elites, the orders turned into a banned institution. However, despite these prohibitions, the orders could not be abolished, and these organizations continued to exist in different forms. Especially with the transition to multiparty life in Turkey, orders became visible in the social field and benefited from the partial freedom environment. In the period from the 1980s to the present day, the orders lost their traditional structures and essential functions and turned to the social, political and economic field.

## **1.2.The Concept of Community**

In this part of the study, the definition of the concept of community will be made, the structural differences between the order and the community will be mentioned, and also information will be given about the historical development of the communities.

### **1.2.1. Definition of the Concept of Community**

When the concept of community is examined in terms of its literal meaning, it means 'to gather, to bring together'. "Jamaat" (Community), which is an Arabic name, also means a community of people who come together around the same feeling, thought, belief and ideology. A common sense of belonging, shared set of values, or systems interconnected in solidarity can also be associated with the concept of community. In addition, when considered as a religious term, it is also used to express the majority of Muslims.

According to the sociology dictionary, community is expressed as the practice of social relations formed with a certain sense of common identity based on the common shares of existing members (Marshall,1999: 90). According to the understanding of modern sociology, the concept of 'community' has been reanalyzed by some sociologists. Charles H. Page and Robert Morrison MacIver define the concept of community in the book titled "Society" as "a group where the members of any group, small or large, live together in such a way that they share not this or that individual interest, but the main conditions of common life" (MACLVER & PAGE, 1971: 14-15). According to MacIver and Page, in order for the

community to be formed, the people in the community must have some social relations. In addition, the sense of commonality and the spatial dimension constitute another condition of the community. The reason for this is that the people in the community need a sense of commonality in order to establish a common living space. In addition, these members need a common place to stay in touch.

Communities continue their existence as formations that adapt to the technological developments of the period on the one hand, and operate by preserving their order structures on the other. In other respects, religious communities are more like the society in the context of F. Tönnies' thoughts on the subject (Torun, 2015: 142-143; Göle, 2003: 89; Doğan, 2000: 30; Çaha, 1997: 32).

When communities are considered historically, they refer to neighborhoods, villages, tribes and ethnic groups. In particular, the identity of traditional communities is built on similarity. People in the community are treated as groups that are similar to each other socially, politically, economically and religiously. The activities within these organizations are limited to the area of the community. As relations with different communities are not established, concepts such as nation state cannot be associated with the community. The reason for this is that the area that communities describe as a common culture and common identity is limited to their own world. In short, communities form different and isolated communities within traditional cities.

When the communities are examined structurally, they are communities with very strong group bonds and are difficult to disperse. Community members meet with people who believe

in their own ideologies and views and devote themselves to their community. For them, every word of the leader of the community is considered as an order. For this reason, it is not possible for every group to build and maintain community life. Communities that come together within the framework of religious beliefs, namely 'religious communities', are the organizations that complete this construction process and come to mind when the concept of community is mentioned. Religious communities are defined as religious groups that were formed based on the needs of modern society, influenced by traditional order structures but differentiated (Sarıkaya, 2001: 46). There is an important solidarity among the members of the religious community. In addition, another typical feature of these organizations is, apart from bringing people to the community, the connection with the non-community is disconnected. A number of media organizations are also used as a propaganda tool within the activities carried out to bring people to the community. These media organs, which are closely followed by the members of the community, also contain some formal features. In these organs, which are seen as a tool for the consolidation of the religiousness of the community, the display of the dressing style and rituals unique to the community is accepted as an important indicator.

While the sheikh tradition and dhikr ritual are dominant in the orders, there are modern organizations that emerged in the presence of religious leaders and conversations in the communities. When compared to orders, participation in communities works more freely. In addition, communities generally have an order tradition in their origin and have evolved into communities over time. The concept of forming a community, on the other hand, is defined as a result of social development required by social conditions and needs. According to Türkdoğan, forming a community is the process of evolution of the existing traditional order structure into today's conditions (Türkdoğan, 1999: 65-90).

When the community structures in our country are examined, it is possible to talk about five different community typologies: Political communities, economic communities, leader-oriented communities, limited area communities, and idea and leader-oriented communities (Şahin, 2008: 59-60). In addition, these communities do not identify with the traditional order structure. They are organizations that participate in modern life and are suitable for modern urban life. When the legitimate dimension of the communities is examined, the religious service mission draws attention. The motivation sources of these organizations are based on adaptation and participation in modern urban life, being able to exist in the central area and being able to influence the central area (Bulaç, 2008: 19-20).

As an ideal typing, communities are considered as a traditional structure of society. Modern community, on the other hand, is identified with the concept of society. However, sometimes traditional and modern structures can intertwine to create hybrid structures. Communities in Turkey are also an appropriate example of hybrid modernity. In fact, religious groups sometimes turn into civil society rather than traditional community organizations. However, there are degenerated communities that claim both traditional and modernity in our country (Torun, 2020: 85).

### **1.2.2. The Historical Process of The Communities**

When the communities are considered in the historical process, it is seen that the traditional community life has changed with industrialization and urbanization. The development of the market and the migration of the rural population to the cities led to the formation of rich and poor classes. In addition, while education became widespread in this process, different hierarchical groups began to form in the social base. Opposite poles have emerged in society not only in terms of income and education, but also in intellectual and political dimensions. With the effect of modernization, the concept of sympathy has changed and it has become difficult to gather individuals in the community. In particular, traditional communities such as tribes and orders gradually lost their functions. For this reason, traditional communities have transformed into different forms by being included in modern groups in urban life. In particular, they had the chance to live in modern society by transforming into civil, economic and political groups (Torun, 2020: 85).

Communities first emerged in the post-colonial period in the Indian region and Egypt. In Turkey, on the other hand, communities began to emerge from 1945 and became prominent after the 1960s and started to rise from the 1980s onwards. Especially after the 1980s, the developments spreading from the periphery to the center have also activated the communities. The breakthroughs in liberalization and democratization made in Turkey during these years had an impact not only in the political field, but also in the public and religious fields. The group that benefited most from these breakthroughs and changes was undoubtedly the communities. They began to operate in many fields, from the economic to the political. In

short, communities have been the religious groups that have changed and transformed the most in the 1980s (Efe, 2017: 297).

The communities, which could not find the opportunity to express themselves both in the social and political field until the 1980s, wanted to protect their existing identities with the liberalization process. For this reason, religious groups began to form corporations by taking advantage of the political atmosphere of the 1980s. They started to operate in many fields such as education, construction, media, hospital, tourism and so on. Thus, the congregations went out of sufistic activities and entered different sectors. The main reason for this is to survive by adapting to changing socio-cultural and economic conditions. However, in order to expand on the social base, they had to increase the number of members and obtain different resources. For this reason, many religious groups in Turkey have turned to trade and capital investments. The way religious groups call themselves 'community' has also developed with this process (Emiroğlu & Aydın, 2003: 179-180). In fact, religious organizations in Turkey have undergone structural and functional transformation with the influence of modernization. Today, many religious organizations in Turkey have corporate websites. Those who want to get information about the order and the community or those who want to become a member can access it from the virtual platform. For this reason, the communities have shifted to a very different line from the traditional community and order organizations.

### **1.3. Religious Non-Governmental Organizations**

The concept of civil society emerged in the historical development process of Western civilization and has been widely discussed in the political science literature. When examined in terms of literal meaning, civil society is described as the area where individual freedoms are experienced and the relations of individuals living under the authority of a state are regulated. According to Hegel, the concept of civil society is defined as a community that includes all the activities of individuals living in an economic and legal system and is dependent on an authority above them. However, after the 1920s, the concept of civil society was separated from the state and accepted as a preliminary stage (Keane, 1988: 63-64).

In modern society, by adding the autonomy dimension to the concept of civil society; It has turned into an area that creates a control mechanism over the state and produces alternative discourses and values. In fact, the state's authority on civil society was emphasized and the existence dimension of democracy was mentioned. On the other hand, the concept of civil society does not only mean the democratization of the political system. Civil society has also become an important actor in establishing the relationship between the state and society on the basis of participatory democracy (Keyman, 2004: 1-14).

Non-governmental organizations, on the other hand, are public communities formed by individuals with their own desires. In addition, non-governmental organizations are autonomous organizations that can organize themselves. These organizations emerge in the public field as legitimate institutions and operate in many areas such as guaranteeing human

rights. Another feature of non-governmental organizations is that they are founded on civil relations (Kneer, 1997: 235-236).

When we look at the connection between civil society and religion, the situation in western countries differs when compared to our country. According to them, religion is accepted as a public issue that encourages civil society. Religious non-governmental organizations are defined as non-profit, independent institutions that are produced from the teachings of religious or spiritual tradition and operate in line with these purposes, producing ideas for the public interest at national and international level (Berger, 2003: 16). According to Western society, religious non-governmental organizations have become an important actor by adapting to the modern system in many sectors such as health and social aid.

In Islamic societies, on the other hand, a western understanding of civil society could not develop. According to Ernest Gelner, the main reason for this is the inability to apply the concept of secularism, which is the prerequisite of civil society, in Islamic societies. *Ulemas*, *gentries*, *madrassahs* and religious orders in the Ottoman Empire are not considered as non-governmental organizations. The reason for this is that the cultural structure and behavior patterns in these institutions are not identified with civil society. There is a tradition of civil solidarity and institutions rather than civil society in Islam. 'Foundations' can be accepted as the most organized form of civil solidarity in Islamic societies (Abay, 2004: 278). According to Bulaç, there is no non-governmental organization in the western sense in Islam, but rather a strong understanding of civil tradition (Bulaç, 2008: 73-75).

Non-governmental organizations have undergone transformation after the 1980s. According to Chamber and Kopstein, as a result of the events, a phenomenon of civil society opposing

the state has emerged. Especially in non-democratic states, non-governmental organizations were tried to be suppressed (Chambers, 2008:36). In our country, non-governmental organizations were first established under state control. In the following years, a number of ideological organizations began to emerge against the state. With the 1980 military coup, non-governmental organizations were stopped or closed. With the 1982 Constitution and the 1961 Constitution, the rights and freedoms provided to the citizens were restricted, and associations and trade unions were subjected to strict control. With the Associations Law, which entered into force in 1983, the state was given the opportunity to put pressure on associations. In the 2000s, in order to meet the Copenhagen political criteria in Turkey, civil society activities were paved the way. These developments have also affected the associations and foundations, which are legally qualified as civil society in the religious field, but continue their traditional activities. Especially in these organizations, an active membership process and a more diverse service area have started to emerge (Çekin, 2013: 34). The law on associations, which was later reorganized in Turkey, also contributed significantly to the increase in the number of associations. According to the aforementioned law, the association is defined as "communities with legal personality formed by at least seven natural or legal persons by constantly combining their knowledge and work, in order to realize a specific and common purpose other than profit and sharing, which is not prohibited by law." (The Official Newspaper, 2004)

The number of associations in Turkey has increased tremendously in the last two decades. The number of associations, which was 61 thousand in 2000, increased to 88 thousand in 2010, and today it has reached 320 thousand (İçişleri Bakanlığı, 2021). On the other hand, the number of associations operating for the realization of religious services has reached 18,322 today (İçişleri Bakanlığı, 2021). Mosque associations constitute the largest number among associations established in Turkey. When the statutes of the mosque associations are

examined, it is seen that the activities for the maintenance and repair of the mosque are generally aimed.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, research on non-governmental organizations increased in non-Western societies. In Muslim societies, foundations and orders have set a similar example to civil society structuring (Aybudak, 2019: 62). However, although religious organizations in Turkey are considered as religious non-governmental organizations after the 1980s, they are incompatible with non-governmental organizations in terms of some criteria. Non-governmental organizations are recognized as power and non-profit pressure groups. These organizations, which are accepted as privileged by the society and the state, have certain rules. Religious organizations are similar to non-governmental organizations in terms of volunteering and autonomy. However, positions such as sheikh, Mahdi and greatness seen in such organizations are not related to civility. Due to these criteria, religious organizations resemble tribes and traditional orders rather than non-governmental organizations. In addition, since the structure of the administration in religious organizations is similar to the patrimonial political culture, it does not match the culture of democracy in non-governmental organizations (Torun, 2020: 86). Religious organizations that want to continue their existence sometimes tend to be civil, political and interest groups. Since the concepts of power and interest and the concept of religion are not compatible with each other, religious organizations directed towards interest groups often cause significant problems. In addition, it should not be forgotten that a religious organization that claims to be a religious non-governmental organization should not take place in the political field as a principle. In fact, politicized religious organizations become interest groups rather than religious NGOs and become the backyard of political parties.

#### **1.4.Social Transformation of Religious Organizations in Turkey**

Experts working on postmodern society argue that religious groups that emerged in modern society have replaced concepts such as family and tribe in traditional society. According to Bauman, these religious groups that emerged in modern society are similar to the tribes of the past. According to this perspective, Islamic religious organizations that emerged with the influence of modernity are similar to the ancient tribes when looking at the networks they created (Bauman, 2001). According to Fromm, the modern individual, while breaking away from his traditional ties such as family, religious leader, and sheikh, panics and chooses the way of escaping from freedom. Thus, he chose the path of maintaining his old ties with religious groups. According to Baumann, who developed Fromm's theory, individuals chose the way of escaping from freedom and created new religious-secular organizations, which they called postmodern tribes. According to Bauman, these organizations, like ancient tribes, restrict the individual, but at the same time offer socio-economic and political opportunities.

As an ideal type, the transition process from the traditional society model to the modern society can also be described as the transition to community and society models or the transition from a closed society phenomenon to an open society phenomenon. This situation can also be defined as the transition from an agricultural society to an industrial society or an urban society (Günay & Ecer, 1999: 9). Religion emerges as an important phenomenon in Turkey, which has undergone a rapid social transformation in the transition period from traditional society to modern society. Although Turkey has not yet completed this transition period, it is stuck between two social and cultural structures, and as a transitional society, it can enable different formations according to internal and external factors. While interest in

religion generally decreases in modern societies, a two-way development can be observed in transitional societies such as Turkey. The main reason for this is that there has been a rapid social change process in Turkey. As Meeker said, while the society culture is secular and western in Turkey, the community culture draws an eastern and Islamic image (Meeker, 1993: 270).

According to S.P. Huntington, Turkey is an important example of a country caught between the traditional understanding of Islam and Western modernity. Categorizing countries around three separate blocks in his book "The Clash of Civilizations", Huntington emphasized that it is unclear whether Turkey displays a secular or an Islamic state image. The Turkish leaders of the period argued that Turkey acted as a bridge between east and west regarding this issue. However, according to Huntington, although it is important for Turkey to act as a bridge, this situation also causes it to display a fragile structure (Huntington, 2001: 170-171). The fragile structure of Turkish society, stuck between the west and the east, has also enabled different social formations. Religious organizations in Turkey, on this fragile ground, have found an important area on the social base as a reaction of the discord brought by modernization and secularization. These structures have become a door of solidarity for individuals who broke away from the traditional community structure in the transition to the modern urban environment. For this reason, religious organizations have turned to various fields of activity under the identities of dormitories, hostels, associations and foundations.

The religious revival process that emerged as a reaction to the social transformation has spread to many regions in Turkey, especially the cities. In the aforementioned years, industrialization in Turkey started with the effect of modernization and urbanization process. Just as in the 19th century Europe, A trend from community structuring to society structuring started in Turkey. The traditional understanding of religion in Turkish society has been the phenomenon most affected by the process of social change. While the form of religiosity was

changing, as a result of the search on the social base it caused the phenomenon of religion to revive and take a different form. Especially in the years after the Second World War, there was a process in which the concept of religiosity revived in Turkish society. Since the 1970s, this trend has followed a parallel dimension to the social changes in our country. Contrary to industrial and modern societies, the form of religiosity has gained importance in Turkey. It is possible to see the current increase in associations and foundations opened for religious purposes and mosques and schools established through these foundations (Günay & Ecer, 1999: 20-22). Religion has begun to exist not only in the social field, but also in the political and economic field. Religious organizations, which are the most important representatives of these, have been included in their fields of activity at an increasing speed. In short, the most important actors of the religious revival process that emerged as a reaction to the social transformation in Turkey are orders, communities, religious movements and foundations and associations containing similar tendencies. It has been determined that these structures, which have been increasing in recent years, have changed shape and transformed into different forms. For example, many of the communities are actually continuation of the old Sufi orders. These structures, which change their shape structurally and functionally over time, also show differences within themselves. For this reason, when we separate religious organizations according to their functions, ideologically based religious organizations and religious organizations that are social security tools emerge (Atacan, 1990: 17).

### 1.5.Regional Religious Organizations in Turkey

No scientific literature has been developed in terms of classifying religious configurations in Turkey. However, orders and communities, which increased after the 1980s in Turkey and lost their essential functions and turned into a security problem, necessitated the analysis of regional religious organizations. According to the report prepared by Prof. Dr. Esergöl Balcı in 2018, the number of people affiliated with orders and communities in Turkey is 2.6 million. It is known that the number of orders and communities is approximately 30, and 400 branches affiliated to these orders are identified. The number of order centers operating only in the Istanbul province is 445. The provinces with the highest number of order centers in Turkey are listed as Siirt, Diyarbakır, Adıyaman, Batman, Van, Hakkari, Şırnak, Ağrı, Muş, Bitlis, Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa. In these cities, there are nearly 800 order centers that are currently active (Balcı, 2020).



In this study, we will talk about three large groups that have been on the social base since the first years of the Republic of Turkey, whose members are expressed in millions, and which have very serious social and economic opportunities; Naqshbandis, Nurcu and Süleymancı communities. Among these three main groups, different order and community forms were formed. In this part of the study, information will be given about the religious organizations that have become visible and transformed in many parts of Turkey regionally.

### 1.5.1. Naqshbandis

The Naqshbandis are a sufi order that is about 800 years old, and it was a rapidly spreading and developing organization during the Ottoman Empire. The main reason for the spread of Naqshbandi in the geography of the Anatolia was the Shia-Safavid threat. Emphasizing adherence to Islamic laws, this order was accepted as the "*ulema's order*" over time, and its socio-political role was important. In the historical process, it has been seen that the political power has adopted a positive attitude towards the Naqsh orders. The relationship that the rulers establish with more than one order sheikh is actually considered as an effort to strengthen their own influence through the orders (Ocak, 2011: 75). However, there were troubled periods in this relationship and the relationship between the state and the orders did not always continue smoothly. Especially Naqshbandis have been involved in social and political events in the historical process. The Naqshbandis, who exhibited a functional structure within the Islamist movement, tried to influence the state authority by being involved in organizing activities since the 18th century. According to Hakan Yavuz, the main purpose of the Naqshbandi sufi order is to influence the political center by bringing rebellion and conflict to the fore (Yavuz, 2003: 136).

In the last period of the Ottoman Empire, Naqshbandi groups established close relations with the state. Especially, the period of Abdulhamid II provided an important area of influence to the Naqshbandis, who were widespread in the geography of Anatolia. In the early Republican period, the Naqshbandi sufi orders continued their existence by becoming an illegal organization. In the process from the transition to the multiparty period to the present day, the Naqshbandi sufi orders have started to establish warm relations with the state step by step. As a result, five major Naqshbandi sufi orders have been influential in Turkish political life since

the 1950s; İskenderpaşa Community, İsmailağa Community, Erenköy Community, Menzil Community and Işıkcı Community. The most prominent among these groups was the İskenderpaşa Community. With the encouragement of Mehmet Zahit Kotku, the religious leader of the community, a political movement emerged from within a religious organization.

### 1.5.2. Nurcu Community

Another group that is influential in Turkey's religious structuring is the Nurcus. '*Risale-i Nur*' The Epistles of Light is important in the Nurcu community, which is a book-centered formation. In addition, Said Nursi is considered to be a charismatic leader. The reason why the Nurcu community is defined as an order is related to the meaning attributed to the book written by Said Nursi. It is believed that this book was divinely dictated to Said Nursi and also that it is a contemporary interpretation of the holy book (Balancar, 2019: 75-78). In this book he wrote, Said Nursi said that the people who will come to the state administration in the following years will be faithful and the state will turn into an Islamic administration style. This issue is frequently mentioned in the process of the Gülen Movement's operation to seize the state, which is taking place today.

Said Nursi, who criticized the oppressive administration of Abdulhamid II during the Ottoman period, defended the 2nd Legitimacy. However, the Party of Union and Progress' emphasis on Turkish nationalism and its distant approach to religion caused Said Nursi's reaction. He was exiled as a result of the Sheikh Said Rebellion in the Early Republican Period. Said Nursi, who was accused of being reactionary until 1950, established close relations with Prime Minister Adnan Menderes during the Democratic Party (DP) period. Although he was not involved in active politics, it is known that the Nurcu groups gathered

around him supported the Democratic Party. Since 1970, different religious organizations have emerged among the Nurcu groups. Among these emerging groups, the most active ones are; Yeni Asya Community, Yazıcılar Group, Okuyucular Group, Med Zehra Group, Meşveret Group, and Gülen Community (FETÖ). The Gülen community is the largest community among the Nurcu community. This organization, which emerged as the Gülen Community, turned into a terrorist organization as a result of the coup attempt on 15th July 2016 and started to be described as FETÖ. Although FETÖ emerged as a religious organization, it sets an important example in terms of turning into a security problem over time.

### **1.5.3. Süleymancı Community**

This religious organization, which emerged under the leadership of Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan, has often been the subject of the agenda in the history of the republic. This structure, which became a community especially after the 1940s, was perceived as a threat within the system on the grounds that it carried out reactionary activities. Süleymancıs, which was operating illegally until 1949, has taken its activities to the legal field with the permission of some religious institutions since that date. By 1960, they opened courses in many provinces of Turkey by increasing the number of courses to 1000 (Aydın, 2004: 311-312).

The activation process of the Süleymancı community was experienced in the establishment and continuation of the Preachers and Prayer Leaders Schools, which was established in 1951. With the adoption of the Religious Organization Law No. 633 in 1965, duties in the religious field were given to the graduates of these schools. This situation led to a serious competition and problem between the Süleymancı community and these schools' graduates. As a result of

this competition that continued throughout the process, some problems arose between the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the community. While the Süleymancı community accused the graduates of being inadequate in the religious field and being Wahhabi, the graduates accused the members of the community of being enemies of the state and being superstitious (Uzun, 2011: 70).

The Süleymancı community, which started to organize abroad after the 1971 Memorandum, expanded their social base by saying that they were carrying out activities for the religious needs of the Turks. After the September 12 Coup, the community, which displayed a pragmatic behavior, preferred to adapt to the political conjuncture. However, in a brief statement made to Kenan Evren by Tayyar Altinkulaç, the Head of Religious Affairs at the time, the threat of Süleymancı was emphasized. According to Altinkulaç, the views of the community are as follows; "Mustafa Kemal is the dajjal (antichrist), the religious officials trained by the state are the army of the dajjal, and the path of knowledge is not education, but enlightenment and connection. All kinds of lies and slander can be made against those who are not Süleymancı." (Kara, 2008: 166). No disclaimer has been published about this document written by Mehmet Şevket Eygi and published in the Milli Gazete. Due to these and similar views, the leading staff of the community, especially Kemal Kaçar, was imprisoned after 1980 for 'acting against secularism' based on Article 163 of the Turkish Criminal Law (TCK).

The Süleymancı community, who claim to be loyal to traditional Islamic phenomena, was established in a sharp and hierarchical order of obedience. According to Ruşen Çakır, this religious organization, which exhibits an authoritarian structure based on religious elements, is also fascistic (Çakır, 1990: 135). Although there was a centrally managed order within the structure of the community, there were also important ruptures over time. The main reasons for this are the separation of the community from its original purpose after Kemal Kaçar, who

became the head of the community after Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan, and the economic conflict of interest within the community. As a result of the transformation experienced after 1980, the Süleymancı community turned to the financial and physical areas in parallel with the secularization path (Aydın, 2004: 320). Preferring a pro-government view in its political preferences, the community preferred to be on the side of the strong during the February 28 process and supported the AKP. The political aims of the Süleymancı community are to prevent the community from being harmed and to be represented in the parliament. For this purpose, in certain periods, some community leaders attempted to be candidates for political parties.

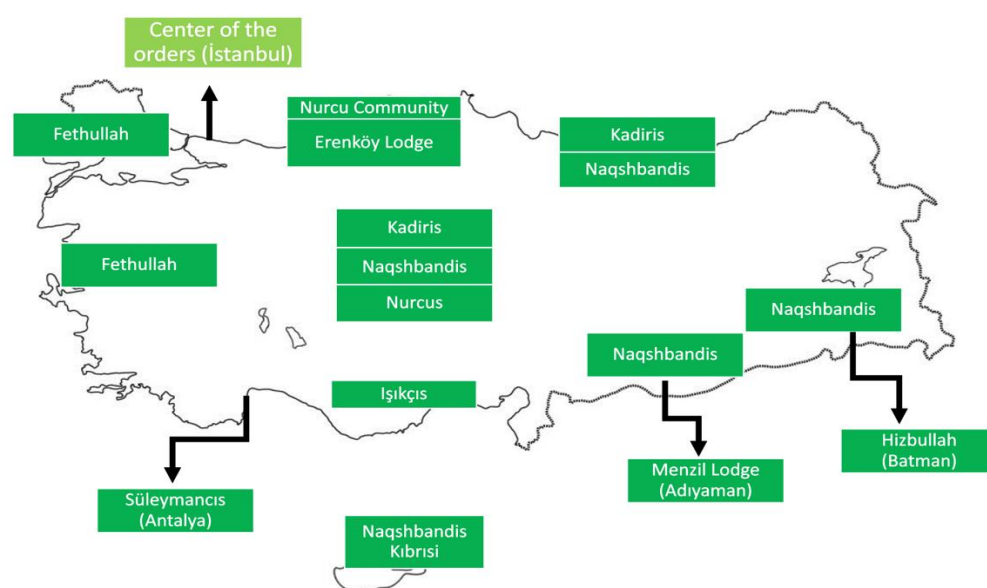


Figure 1 Regional distribution of religious organizations in Turkey

Figure 1 shows the map of religious organizations in Turkey. The city of Istanbul is the center of all orders today. The Gülen Community (FETÖ) first emerged in the Aegean and Thrace regions, but over time, it spread to every city in Turkey and even on a global scale. There are

Süleymançı and Işıklı community members in Antalya and its surroundings. In the Western Black Sea region, there are Nurcu communities and the Erenköy community, which is a Naqshbandi order, while in the Eastern Black Sea region there are predominantly Kadiris and Naqshis. Naqshbandis are dominant in the East and Southeast regions of Turkey. One of the most active communities in this region, the Adıyaman-based Menzil Lodge, is the Naqshbandi order. There are Hizbullah community in Batman. The Hizbullah Movement (Mustaz'aflar Movement), which emerged in 1969, was not involved in violence between 1979-1991, but took an illegal structure between 1991-2001 and resorted to violence against religious groups, especially the Menzil Community (DİB, 2019: 153). In addition, this movement has shifted to a radical line by carrying out attacks against the Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan (PKK). In the Central Anatolia Region, there are mainly Naqshbandis, Nurcu and Kadiri members. In the Turkish Republic of Cyprus, there is Sheikh Nazım Kıbrıs, who is a Naqshbandi Sheik.

### **1.6.The Concept of Security**

While defining the concept of security, which has a fundamental place in the field of international relations, many variables should be taken into account. The concept of security, which we can express as the state of non-hazardousness or protection from dangers, has economic, military, political, environmental and social dimensions expressed in traditional discussions. For this reason, when examining the relationship between religious organizations and security, it is necessary to consider them together with their individual, regional and international dimensions. Today, it has been seen that security (which remains on the agenda with new dimensions such as human security, new security problems created by immigrants, ethnic-based security problems, energy security problem, international organized crime, cyber

security) has urgent priorities such as internal political and economic stability, and therefore primarily shelter and nutrition, and social structures, including religious are directly related to these issues (Baldwin, 1997: 5-26; Rotschild, 1995: 53-98; Yergin, 2006: 69-82; Sorensen, 1996: 371-386; Williams, 2008; Posen, 1993: 27-47; Streeten, 1978: 29-46; Shue, 1980: 13-34)

As the social state weakens, substitution institutions often get involved to meet the needs of the poor (Solt, Habel & Grant, 2011: 447-465). Among these, religious organizations have come to the fore, especially in developing peripheral countries. As a result, the effectiveness of these structures, whose social activities increased, inevitably increased in the country's politics (Karakoç & Başkan, 2012: 1510-1541). These new social power centers also paved the way for developments that could create internal and external security problems for the state.

After the Second World War and during the Cold War period, Turkey preferred to be a part of the Washington-based security structure, and with this preference, in the United States (US)-centered system, which was restructured, it organized its own internal and external security structure, especially according to the security understanding of the United State of America (USA). It is noteworthy that in these regulations, especially in geographies where the USA has interests, it has made great efforts to prevent anti-US structures with local and regional forces. In this process, the path to the intervention of September 12, 1980 was opened in order to get rid of the problems created by the radicalization of the workers' movements as well as the different ideological structures of the Right and the Left in the 1970s in Turkey; after 1980, it was seen that religious organizations were tried to be substituted for the groupings

before 1980, and over time, among these groupings, structures that caused problems in terms of internal security came to the fore.

## **CHAPTER II: RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE EARLY REPUBLICAN PERIOD**

In this part of the academic study, the perspective on religious organizations and religious reforms in the early republican period will be examined. The perspective on religious organizations and the reforms implemented in the single-party period will be discussed together with the Sheikh Said Rebellion and the Law on Closure of Dervish Orders and Lodges. After the 1947 Congress, there were changes in the perspective towards religious organizations. With the transition to the multiparty system, some arrangements were made in the reforms implemented by the single-party regime. Especially in this period, the relationship of the National Outlook Movement (NOM), which is the representative of Political Islam, with religious organizations, reveals the process and the problems it brings.

### **2.1. Religious Organizations During the Single-Party Period**

During the War of Independence, the ideology of Islamism was used as one of the most important pillars of the struggle process. While Mustafa Kemal included religious arguments in his discourses during the period of national struggle, he also acted jointly with religious leaders and sheikhs. Apart from the sense of nationalism, religious feelings also come to the fore, especially in Defense of Law organizations. The alliance process with Islamist organizations continued throughout the period of national struggle. With the victory of the National Struggle, the Grand National Assembly abolished the sultanate on November 1, 1922. At first, the caliphate was not abolished. The reason for this is seen as the reaction of religious organizations and the Islamic section. Some leaders of Indian Muslims who

supported the War of Independence argued that the abolition of the sultanate made the current status of the caliphate institution uncertain. After this development, the caliphate authority started to be discussed throughout the country. Like those who defended the caliphate, those who wanted the abolition of the caliphate included religious jargon in their discourse (Yıldırım, 2005: 72).

After these developments, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, in his speech at the Grand National Assembly on March 1, 1924, said that religion should be purified from politics with these words: "We are witnessing the truth of eliminating and proclaiming the religion of Islam from an intermediary political position, as it has been in existence for centuries," (Atatürk, 2016: 716) and paved the way for the abolition of both the caliphate and the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations. In this speech, which especially mentioned secularism, it was emphasized that Islam is superior to politics and it was said that politics should not be a tool. Immediately afterwards, on March 3, 1924, the Grand National Assembly accepted the abolition of the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations and the draft law of Unification of Education. With the same law, the exile of the members of the Ottoman dynasty from the territory of the Republic of Turkey was also accepted. The decision of exile put an end to the caliphate and sultanate (Uzun, 2011: 55-56).

In fact, with the proclamation of the Republic, it was tried to prevent abuse by taking religion out of the political field. The ruling elites, who see the caliphate as a link with the past and with Islam, think that this link puts the national state in crisis within its borders (Lewis, 2014: 263). In addition, according to them, the institution of the caliphate does not coincide with the identity of the nation state and can be used as a weapon by those who defend the old regime in other religious organizations such as the caliph. Especially with the abolition of the

caliphate and sultanate, there was a deep separation between the founding cadre and the Islamist section. Some leaders of Indian Muslims who supported the War of Independence and conservatives in the Republican People's Party began to take an open opposition stance. On the other hand, the complete change in the understanding of the state that was dominant in the Ottoman state was perceived as a deviation from religion in the eyes of the Islamists, and this situation caused some reactions. In this process, the Islamist section, which contradicted the ideology of the new regime, united around the Progressive Republican Party.

With the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic, the Turkish state ideologically moved away from the Islamic perspective and turned towards the West in a clear and systematic way. This situation also led to reactions within religious organizations and led to riots in some regions. The Sheikh Said Rebellion is considered as one of the most important examples among these rebellions (Ay, 2004: 2). The government, together with the Law on the Maintenance of Order, which was enacted to suppress the rebellion, eliminated those who caused problems in a short time (Bila, 1999: 53).

### **2.1.1. Perspective on Religious Organizations and Reforms**

With the proclamation of the Republic, there have been some changes in the viewpoint of the ruling elites towards religion. Based on this change, the state drew the framework of the religion of Islam. According to them, religion should be limited to the relationship between God and the individual. For this reason, religion has been brought under the control and supervision of the state administration. In addition, with the implemented policies, a management mechanism has been established that can have the monopoly of directly intervening in Islamic institutions. Religious officials were brought under control under the

Directorate of Religious Affairs. In addition, the founding ideology emphasizes the nationalist ideology instead of religion and tries to make the citizens forget the ummah identity.

Especially when the new approach of the state on religious organizations came together with the existing deterioration in these organizations, a number of new regulations were prepared by the ruling elites.

Secularism is the basis of the religion policy of the single-party period. The main aim was not to destroy Islam, but to separate the state phenomenon from religion by limiting the current power of religion and the religious organizations that represent it in political, social and cultural fields. Defined as the dominant ideology of the single-party period, Kemalist ideology wanted to reduce the role of Islam to that of religion in a Western nation-state and to give religion a national identity. For this reason, while the ruling power that founded the Republic tried to integrate the religion of Islam into a modern national state, the orders were seen as a threat to the existing system. The main reason for this is the support these organizations receive on the social base, their deep-rooted traditions and their masonic structures. Orders were not seen as organizations that could come under state control. However, it was thought that the *ulema* class would integrate into the existing system more easily with its existing hierarchy, administrative disciplines and schools (Lewis, 2014: 556).

After the Republic was proclaimed, in 1924, the first debate in the Assembly regarding the separation of religion and state was on the agenda. In this proposal, there are articles such as the abolition of the Caliphate, the abolition of the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations, and the liquidation of the madrasahs. This proposal, which caused discussions in the parliament for a long time, was accepted after a certain period of time. The ruling elites, who abolished the caliphate and sultanate, also eliminated the politicized aspect of Islam in this way. In

addition, the abolition of the caliphate led to very different reactions from the Islamist section. The main argument of the people advocating the caliphate is based on the fate and security of the entire Muslim geography, in line with the ideology of Islamism. However, according to the ruling elites who founded the Republic, being the caliph for Muslim nations living under the rule of foreign states and maintaining the institution of the caliphate poses a problem for the Republic of Turkey. The Islamist section, which had problems with the current regime, emerged as a democratic movement on the social base. According to Yıldırım, with the abolition of the caliphate, the relationship between the state and religion, which has been going on for more than a thousand years, deteriorated, and the abolition of the caliphate led to the formation of an important movement on the social base by reviving Islam. In fact, Islam was taken out of the monopoly of a certain institution in the Ottoman Empire and included in the individual area of Muslims (Yıldırım, 2005: 73). On the other hand, there was no significant reaction in the Islamic geography towards the abolition of the caliphate. The caliphate aspirations of radical Islamist movements that emerged since the 1940s should not be evaluated specific to Turkey. The main argument of organizations such as Hizbu't Tahrir is to create a more universal and nationalist Islamic center. However, some religious organizations in our country think that what is meant by the caliphate center is Turkey. For this reason, the religious organizations and the Islamic section in Turkey displayed a negative point of view towards the abolition of the caliphate from the very beginning (Uzun, 2011: 56).

With the law that prepared the abolition of the caliphate, the law to abolish the Ministries of Sharia and the Foundations was also prepared. As a result, the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations was abolished in 1924, and the duties of the Sharia courts were terminated. In addition, it is also possible to combine the education in this draft law completely under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. In fact, the issue of unifying national education was first discussed in 1923. The legalization process was completed with the adoption of the Law

of Unification of Education in 1924. With the aforementioned law, madrasahs, which were accepted as educational institutions, were also closed. Instead of madrasahs, the Preachers and Prayer Leaders Schools and Faculty of Divinity were opened under the ministry. Along with these religious reforms, the article in the Constitution, which revealed the bond between the state and religion, was abolished on November 3, 1928, and the compulsory religious education course was abolished from school programs. With these reforms, which continued until 1938, deep-rooted legislation and institutions were established (Berkes, 2012: 521).

When the early Republican period is considered in terms of religion-state relations, the most important institution that emerged is the Directorate of Religious Affairs. This institution, which emerged with the law article enacted in 1924, was accepted as the area where activities related to belief and worship were separated. What draws attention in the law is the limits and nature of the religious powers of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. According to the article of the law, this institution is not accepted as a spiritual presidency as in Christianity. No spiritual qualifications can be attributed to a person in the office of the Directorate of Religious Affairs. In addition, the head of this institution cannot make any order or religious doctrine obligatory to the society. In short, the Directorate of Religious Affairs is considered as a public office in charge of Muslim citizens to practice their faith and worship freely. In addition, the Directorate of Religious Affairs is programmed according to scientific data. With the disappearance of the Islamic laws, this institution has no legal function. In short, according to this law, religious affairs were separated from the legal and political fields and were switched to protection in the field of freedom of religious belief (Berkes, 2012: 534-535). In this way, the state was excluded from religious matters and avoided being a party to any religion. From this point of view, it is important that the officials affiliated to the

Directorate of Religious Affairs should not be an intermediary for any religious movement.

The conclusion reached in this institution, which coincides with Atatürk's perspective on religion, is that the main purpose of the legal rules is to prevent the abuse of religion and Islam for politics or profit, contrary to the morality of the society. In addition, only Islam, Christianity and Judaism, which are defined as historical religions, are protected by law. Any attack on their holy places or institutions is punishable (Berkes, 2012: 535-536).

On November 30, 1925, orders were prohibited by the Law on the Prohibition of the Dervish Orders and the Closing of Their Numerous Lodges. With this prohibition, orders turned into different forms and tried to maintain their social functions. In fact, the policies implemented by the ruling elites towards religion during the single-party period carried religious organizations to an illegal dimension. However, these reform steps taken towards religion did not abolish the orders, they only dragged them into a forbidden position. Throughout the history of the Republic, religious organizations continued to exist in various ways. Despite the current prohibitions, the flexible structure of the orders allowed them to maintain their institutions. The fact that some orders have less dependence on the lodge and reinterpret tools such as dhikr and connection '*rabita*' in their own way facilitated their survival in this process. For example, the order of Sheikh Khalid, who is the one of the leaders of the Naqshbandi, does not require any rituals and can sometimes perform these rituals in the mosque (Yavuz, 2005: 190; Kara, 2015: 100). However, religious organizations that define themselves through a certain center and place have been greatly affected by religious policies because they cannot perform their social functions.

The Civil Code was accepted in 1926 and the provisions of the Islamic laws disappeared for the family and the individual. Thus, religious leaders lost all their existing powers. With the

transition to the civil code system, the monopoly of the religious leader to implement justice was taken away and the courts of the Islamic laws disappeared. In addition, article 42 of the Treaty of Lausanne, which allows non-Muslim religious communities to seek rights according to the laws of their own religion, has completely disappeared. Non-Muslim religious communities will also be subject to the Civil Code (Berkes, 2012: 532). The founding party started a strict follow-up on religious education during the single-party regime and ended official religious education. This policy allowed the centre-right and Islamist parties to come to power with the transition to the multi-party period (Ay, 2004: 2).

As a result, after the establishment of the Republic, Atatürk made some reforms in order to bring the Turkish Republic and Turkish society to the level of contemporary civilization. The most important among them is the reforms made towards religion and religious organizations. In this period, the phenomenon of secularism came to the fore in order to adapt the Islam to the role of religion in a modern and Western nation-state. It was thought that the orders would be the ones who would stand against the reforms and secularism because of the way they were organized and their inability to come under state control. As a matter of fact, as a result of the Sheikh Said Rebellion, which emerged in 1925 and was accepted as both an order uprising and an ethnic rebellion, dervish orders and lodges were closed.

### **2.1.2. Sheikh Said Rebellion**

Sheikh Said Rebellion is accepted as an Islamic-based Kurdish uprising. Sheikh Said, a Naqshbandi Sheikh, was the leader of the rebellion. With the policies implemented after the proclamation of the Republic, some reactions arose in the Eastern Anatolia Region as well. These reactions increased especially as a result of the abolition of the caliphate in 1924 and

the British provocation of the Kurds in the region. Landlords and sheikhs, who were afraid of losing their influence on the policies implemented in the social field, took part as important actors in the rebellion.

According to Sheikh Said, one of the main actors of the uprising, Islam is the only bond between Kurds and Turks, and when this bond is broken, the Kurds need to think about their own future (Şimşir, 1991: 21). Although Sheikh Said refers to Islam with this view, it is thought that the main purpose of the rebellion is to ensure the independence of the Kurds. To base the Sheikh Said Rebellion only on an ethnic basis would undoubtedly be an incomplete analysis. The main issue here is that the rebellion is not just an ethnic-based or religious-based formation. Although this incident, which includes political aims, seems like a small incident at the beginning, it has grown over time. Although the Sheikh Said rebellion was justified on religious grounds, it deviated from its purpose and turned into a security problem as a result of the efforts made by foreign states against our country. All groups in the region united by opposing the legitimate government and carried out activities against the state. After all these developments, the Rebellion had important effects on Turkish political and social life. Especially after the uprising reached a dangerous level, Fethi Okyar resigned from the office of prime minister, and the parliament enacted the Law on the Maintenance of Order in order to suppress the rebellion. The Law on the Maintenance of Order remained in force until 1929, and the current authority was preserved. On the other hand, Independence Courts were established both in Ankara and in the Eastern region, and Sheikh Said and 47 people who were the perpetrators of the rebellion were sentenced to death. In addition, the Progressive Republican Party was abolished based on the Law on the Maintenance of Order (Toker, 1998: 155).

As a result of this development, on 30 November 1925, dervish orders and lodges were banned and closed throughout the country within the scope of Law No. 677. As a result, the Sheikh Said Rebellion led to the closure of the Progressive Republican Party, the only opposition party of the Republic of Turkey, and the orders that had an effective social power in the country, which had existed since the Ottoman Empire (Apaydın, 2017: 153).

Another effect of the rebellion was towards Turkish foreign policy. Mosul, Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah were given to the British by the League of Nations when Turkey could not sufficiently deal with the Mosul issue due to internal turmoil. As a result, this rebellion took its place in history, leaving negative traces in Turkish political life. The Sheikh Said rebellion is still a matter of debate, whether it is religious or ethnically based. However, what is clear is that the rebellion was carried against a democratic and legitimate state order. The fact that a religious order sheikh, who is influential in the social field, cooperates with foreign states for political, ethnic or religious reasons and carries out activities against the legitimate state order, has revealed that religious organizations can turn into a security problem.

### **2.1.3. The Prohibition of the Dervish Orders and the Closing of Their Numerous Lodges**

Dervish orders and lodges are institutions that are characterized as the main center of the orders. The order life developed in the lodges. In addition, these structures were shaped as places where Muslim masses lived and received religious education in the process. As in the Ottoman period, many people from the ruling class were in these structures and took them under their protection. On the other hand, it is an undeniable fact that the dervishes of the

order played a catalytic role in the spread and development of Islam in Anatolia. However, over time, these structures lost their essential functions and became problematic organizations within the state. With the establishment of the republican state, the problems related to dervish orders and lodges, which were frequently mentioned before, came to light and some policies began to be followed for the improvement of these organizations (Apaydın, 2017: 161-162).

The founders of the republican regime always remained distant to the eastern traditions inherited from the Ottoman Empire because they were not suitable for the principles of the regime. Orders, one of these traditions, were also perceived as dangerous and objectionable by the republican regime. In addition, these structures are considered outside the civilizational perception of the republican regime. The reason for this is that the religious order structures draw an image that is far from the secular way of thinking, represents the old order and is the main source of superstitions. It was thought that these organizations, which were already perceived as a threat to the regime with their current structure and organizational form, would also display an oppositional attitude towards the republican regime. As a matter of fact, on 30 November 1925, dervish orders, lodges and tombs were closed against the orders that reached a dangerous level with the Sheikh Said Rebellion (Apaydın, 2017: 162).

The main reason for closing dervish orders and lodges is not the religious characteristics of these structures, but the existence of their revolutionary potential for the regime (Subaşı, 2004: 84). The main purpose of the applied religious policies and reforms is to bring Turkish society to Western civilization. The process of closing dervish orders and lodges was also carried out in line with these reforms. Just like the abolition of the caliphate and the closure of the madrasahs, the closure of dervish orders and lodges was also programmed as a

requirement of the religious policies of the early republican period. On the other hand, the role and influence of the Sheikh Said Rebellion in closing the dervish orders and lodges is also important (Apaydın, 2017: 152). In his speech in Kastamonu on August 30, 1925, Atatürk said, *“Today, I do not accept the existence of people who are so primitive as to seek happiness in material and spiritual terms with the guidance of sheikhs, in the service of science and civilization in all its dimensions, in the civilized society of Turkey. Gentlemen and people, know well that the Republic of Turkey cannot be a land of sheikhs, dervishes, disciples and members. The most correct and true order is the order of civilization. It is enough to be a human being to do what civilization commands and demands.”* (Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, 1997: 225) this is an important example to understand the situation regarding the dervish orders and lodges. As it is understood from here, the orders were closed due to the deterioration in their existing structures and because they turned into primitive structures in the process.

The first improvement studies for the deterioration of lodges emerged in the 19th century. As a matter of fact, in 1844 Halveti Sheikh Kuşadalı İbrahim Efendi, while describing the situation in the lodges, mentioned the deterioration in these structures. In fact, in the last period of the Ottoman state, the orders lost their original functions and became the focus of criticism. For this reason, when the dervish lodges were closed in 1925, there were those who evaluated it as a deserved punishment among the Islamic section. According to Abdülhakim Arvasi, who is an order sheikh who accepts the deterioration in religious organizations, the government did not close the lodges, these structures have already closed themselves before (Kısakürek, 1978: 132). On the other hand, the presence of some sheikhs in the assembly that closed the lodges also reveals the state's perspective on religion (Apaydın, 2017: 159).

Article 5 (about dervish orders and lodges) of Law No. 429, which provided for the abolition of the Ministry of Sharia and Foundations in 1924, before the closing process of dervish orders and lodges, is as follows: "The Directorate of Religious Affairs is responsible for the administration of all mosques and masjids, dervish orders and lodges within the Republic of Turkey, *“and for the appointment and dismissal of imams, preachers, predicants, sheikhs, muezzins, trustees and other servants”* (TBMM, 1924). With this law, the state officially accepted the existence of dervish orders and lodges, and on the other hand, these structures were brought under state control. While Law No. 429 was adopted, there was no discussion on the current activities of the orders. However, with the Sheikh Said Rebellion in 1925, the closure of dervish orders and lodges became the most important discussion topic of the assembly (Apaydın, 2017: 152).

On November 30, 1925, Law No. 677 (Ceride, 1341) on the prohibition and abolition of dervish orders, lodges, tombs, certain titles about tomb keepers was accepted and entered into force after being published in the Official Gazette dated 13 December 1925. According to this article, all dervish orders and lodges operating in the Republic of Turkey were closed, and titles such as sheikh, dervish, disciple, *‘dede’*, emeer, sayyid, caliphate, fortune-teller, magian and talismanist were abolished. In addition, it is prohibited to carry out activities by wearing clothes suitable for these identities. It has been stated that those who do not comply with the article of the law have penal obligations, and it has been determined that those who establish tombs, including dervish orders and lodges, will also be sentenced to imprisonment and fines. In addition, by adding the article of the law in 1949, prison sentences and fines were increased and exile penalty was added (The Official Newspaper, 1949).

According to the parliamentary records (Official Report Journal of TBMM, 1925) in the justification of the law adopted on dervish orders, lodges and tombs, it is primarily stated that dervish orders and lodges institutions are not compulsory institutions of the religion of Islam, and the dervish orders and lodges closed in the eastern regions by the Eastern Independence Courts established with the Sheikh Said Rebellion are given as examples. In another justification, considering the past political experiences, it is stated that these order organizations are effective on the social base from time to time, and that they take initiatives beyond their purpose, which is seen as a source of concern for the state and society.

As a result of the enactment of the law on dervish orders and lodges, some issues have emerged. First of all, the current situation of officials such as tomb keepers and sheikhs serving in these organizations and the necessity of taking some measures to prevent the people working in these institutions from being victimized came to the fore. In addition, what will happen to the historical and valuable items in these institutions arises as another problem (Apaydın, 2017: 162-163). On the other hand, according to the article of the law, it is stated that the salaries of the tomb keepers will continue to be paid and that the appointment of these officials to the positions within the Directorate of Religious Affairs will be given priority. In addition, it was decreed that among the sheikhs whose salaries were cut as a result of the closure of dervish orders and lodges, those who were scientifically competent should be paid salaries (Republic Archive of Prime Ministry, 1926). Thus, while the organizations of the order were liquidated by the Republic of Turkey, historical and valuable goods and lodge buildings were taken under protection under the roof of cultural heritage. According to Mahmut Baler, Hamdullah Suphi offered to reopen the tombs during his meetings with Atatürk. However, Atatürk stated that the tombs could only be opened after fifteen years, and

that the reforms should be accepted on a social basis as a priority (Baydar, 1968: 171-174). The Republic of Turkey had to take some measures in order to establish the understanding of the nation-state in these years when preparations were made for the world war. The predominant policy of the state in these years was positioned on statism and emphasis was placed on state structuring. For this reason, no steps were taken to reopen the tombs during this process (Apaydın, 2017: 157). In the nation-state building process of the republican elites, achieving national unity comes to the fore as an important issue. It is thought that order organizations will damage the national unity and give rise to different formations in the society. Atatürk, who gave a speech at Faculty of Law of Ankara University in 1925, said that the Turkish nation formed a unity under the sense of nation, not religion (Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, 1997: 249).

As a result of the closure of dervish orders and lodges in 1925, some order dervishes and sheikhs continued to show their reactions and take part in the Islamic opposition. Another important rebellion that took place after the Sheikh Said Rebellion took place on December 22, 1930 in the Menemen district of Izmir. A group of dervishes gathered in the square and expressed their demands to bring the Islamic laws, and a reserve officer who intervened in the incident was killed. As a matter of fact, this development disturbed the Republican cadre and arrests, and executions were carried out in certain cities. According to Tunaya, approximately 2200 people were arrested as a result of this incident in Menemen, Balıkesir, Manisa and Antalya (Tunaya, 1998: 164). Another important result of the Menemen Rebellion was the closure of the Free Republican Party. Just as the Progressive Republican Party was closed after the Sheikh Said Rebellion, the only opposition party of the period was closed as a result of the Menemen Rebellion. All these developments reveal that there has been a reaction

against the religious reforms made within religious organizations. The state authority, on the other hand, tried to suppress these structures, which could cause security problems due to their structural features, by trying to control them in the early republican period.

## **2.2. Religious Organizations in the Multiparty Period**

The threat of socialism that emerged in the bipolar order that emerged after the Second World War led the USA to some moves. One of these moves is the aid given to border countries such as Turkey and Greece under the name of the Truman doctrine. However, according to the Truman doctrine, it was imperative for these countries to transition to democracy. For this reason, the RPP first approved the transition to the multiparty period, and then went into a stretching process in its religious policies. According to Zürcher, who has been working on this issue, even if the Democratic Party did not exist, more priority would have been given to religious organizations and the religious field in accordance with the anti-communism strategy in Turkey (Zürcher, 2016: 323-350).

As a result, the secularism policies implemented and the regulations on religious organizations in the single-party period have changed with the transition to multiparty life. In fact, orders have not disappeared as a result of the fact that the Republican cadre has banned religious organizations. They have continued to exist in certain forms. After the transition to multiparty life, a partial freedom environment was created for these structures. Thus, religious organizations began to be visible in the social, political and economic fields and increased their influence. Particularly, with the stretching of the secularism policy of the RPP, some arrangements have been made in the field of religion and the pressures on these organizations have decreased. In addition, after the transition to multiparty life, religious organizations began to be a source of political and social movements (İnce, 2017: 143).

### 2.2.1. Perspective on Religious Organizations and Regulations

It is possible to say that religious organizations have become visible again with the transition to multiparty life. With the proclamation of the Republic, some regulations made in the religious field forced these organizations to exist in a secret form. On the other hand, although for the policies applied towards religion a moderate process was stepped in after the 1950s, the acceptance of informal popular and mystical religious organizations was not fully developed during this period. The distrust and threat perception of the central authority towards the orders continued. During World War II, some order sheikhs were arrested in the country. The most important of these is the arrest of Kemal Pilavoğlu, the sheikh of the Ticani order, in 1950. The followers of Pilevnelioğlu, who was tried in a court in Ankara, tried to intervene in the case while the court was going on (Lewis, 2014: 566-567). In the following times, similar judgments were made about different orders. While the Naqshbandis and Mevlevis were tried in a court in 1950, the Qadiris were tried in 1951 (Rustow, 1957: 97).

A significant change process has also started in the social field in Turkey since the 1950s. A rapid urbanization process, change in social culture and democratization have had an impact in many areas of the country. This process has shown its effect mostly in the religious field. This process, which is also defined as the process of religiosity, has become more evident with the rise of political Islam since the 1980s. The process of becoming religious in the 1950s actually emerged as a social reaction as a result of the religious policies followed during the founding years of the republic. The founding power's policy of modernization and secularization for the transition to a nation model in the Western sense has led the society to gain a citizen identity by removing it from the ummah identity. In addition, in this period, the principle of populism was brought to the fore and the intellectual and modern people were

given the task of enlightening the public. This section has led to the formation of reactions on the social base by rejecting the existing folk culture, namely the phenomenon of Islam (Efe, 2017: 296). The reason for their rejection of the phenomenon of Islam is the potential of religious organizations to apply to different tools (Mardin, 1993: 110). In this period, "Turkish Hearths" and "People's Houses" were established instead of degenerated orders that lost their original functions. However, the influence of religious organizations on the social base could not be prevented (Arslan, 2004: 151-152). With another regulation made for religious organizations, Article 163 was adopted on June 10, 1949. According to this law, the establishment of orders and religious propaganda were prohibited. In the same period, the article of law allowing the opening of 20 tombs was accepted (Jascke, 1972: 103-104).

With the effect of the liberalization movement in Turkey, the multiparty system has been started. With the transition to multiparty life in 1945, a moderate process was stepped in the secularism policy of the state. The 7th RPP congress, in which the secularism policy was the agenda item, was an important meeting where views on the current policy were discussed and some arrangements were made for social solidarity. With this congress that took place on November 17, 1947, there was a significant break in the statist and secular identity of the RPP and the party tried to integrate into the multiparty life. Not only the party but also the country's politics were greatly affected by the decisions taken in this congress. However, the effect of the congress on the party is also undeniably important. With the current changes, the principles accepted as the basic principles of Kemalism have been rearranged. However, there are also those who think that these regulations are an ideological deviation. With these changes, the RPP tried to make the party base more effective within the party (Uzun, 2012: 101).

In the 1947 Congress, it was discussed mostly on the principle of secularism. The reason for this is that religion has started to play a decisive role in the field of politics. In the discussions, it has been argued that the existence of the Directorate of Religious Affairs as a state institution is against the principle of secularism and therefore this institution should be transformed into an autonomous structure (Congress of RPP, 1947: 454). In addition, in these discussions, the problems experienced in the social base at the point of religious education and teaching were also mentioned. The importance of preachers and prayer leaders' schools and faculties of divinity in order to train religious officials was the agenda item in the congress. Because, according to some deputies in the Congress, the opening of preachers and prayer leaders' schools is against the principle of secularism. In addition, the instrumentalization of religion against the rising threat of communism was another issue to be opposed (Congress of RPP, 1947: 440-470; Uzun, 2012: 127).

There were also those who suggested giving up the principle of secularism completely at the 1947 Congress. Vehbi Kaydaş, the Sinop Delegate, stated that some problems were prevented by the implementation of the principle of secularism and that it was adopted on the social base, but that it was insufficient in terms of religious education and training.

Subsequently, he made a proposal to the Ministry of National Education about religion lessons in primary schools entering into the force (Congress of RPP, 1947: 448-449).

Abdülkadir Güney, the delegate of Çorum, also emphasized the necessity of religion for the development of conscience and morality on a social basis, emphasizing the necessity of faculties of divinity to train religious knowledge teachers (Congress of RPP, 1947: 449).

Sinan Tekelioğlu, the delegate of the Seyhan region, stated that non-Muslims living in our country have more opportunities to meet their religious needs than Muslims, and argued that

the Directorate of Religious Affairs should have an autonomous structure and that funds should be allocated to this institution by the foundations administration. According to Tekelioğlu, immoral behaviors in society have increased, and this is due to the lack of religious education necessary for the formation of social morality. Şükrü Nayman also agreed with the views of other delegates and argued that the Ministry of Sharia and the Foundations, which was separated in 1924, should be reunited. Thus, the Foundations administration will provide some opportunities and resources to religious institutions. In addition, Nayman argued that if the Directorate of Religious Affairs fulfills its essential functions, religious services will develop and become widespread. On the other hand, many of the delegates who took the floor in the Congress argued that the threat of communism should be feared rather than religion (Congress of RPP, 1947: 451-452). Another issue that was emphasized in the 7th Congress was on the principle of nationalism. According to Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver, Istanbul Deputy, the importance of the Ottoman sultans for Turkish society and Turkish history is undeniable. For this reason, he argued that the tombs should be repaired and reopened. While giving his speech in the parliament, Tanrıöver reminded Atatürk of his promise that we can open the tombs in fifteen years (Congress of RPP, 1947: 402-403).

The views on the principle of secularism, which became the agenda item at the Congress, were also reflected in the media. According to Tanrıöver, who gave a statement to the press on the subject, meeting the religious needs of the society, like the principle of secularism, is obligatory. On the other hand, according to him, the principle of secularism is not a new concept for Turkish society but emerged with the modernization movement that started in the Ottoman Empire. However, in the process, some deficiencies have emerged in meeting the religious needs of the society. Tanrıöver argued that there are no more trained religious officials in the villages to meet these needs and that an urgent solution should be found regarding this issue. Tanrıöver also referred to religious organizations in this regard and stated

that religious needs should not be met by orders and communities. According to him, religious services should be provided in the institutional area, depending on the central authority. The central authority should appropriate funds for religious services and religious education should be developed in the scientific field. Based on this, institutions such as the Faculty of Divinity and Preachers and Prayer Leaders schools should be activated in order to train religious officials (Akşam Newspaper, 1947). Reşat Şemsettin Sirer, who was the Minister of National Education at the time, also emphasized the issue of religious education. As a result, according to the decision taken at the Congress, the article about the principle of secularism; “...*The Party considers it necessary for the state and future of the Turkish nation that the national language and national culture be free from the influence of foreign languages and cultures through religious ways.*” (Programme and Regulation of RPP, 1947: 7-11) which was adopted in 1943, was removed from the current definition of the principle of secularism (Güngör, 2004: 35-36).

Another person who expressed his views on the policy of secularism is Falih Rıfkı Atay, who served as a deputy during this process. According to Atay, the main reason for the adoption of secularism in the republican regime is to eliminate the sectarian differences and problems that arose in Anatolia. Another reason is to ensure national unity by separating the state and religious affairs. In fact, Atay draws a status quo frame. According to him, these issues have been brought to the agenda with the transition to multiparty life, and it is obvious that any deviation from existing ideologies will harm the sense of national unity (Akşam Newspaper, 1947). Another politician who defends the principle of secularism is Nihat Erim. According to Erim, the principle of secularism should not be changed, but in order to meet the religious needs of the society, religious and state affairs should be separated and religious officials who will provide religious services in state universities and institutions should be trained (Uzun, 2012: 129). The Republican People's Party shifted to a softer line in its secularism policy

under the presidency of Şemsettin Günaltay after the congress. The most important example of this is the re-enactment of religious education under state control. Elective religion courses were added to primary schools by the Ministry of National Education, tombs were reopened, and foreign currency was allowed for citizens who wanted to go on pilgrimage to Mecca (Bila, 1999: 135). In addition, preachers and prayer leaders' courses were opened in 1948. With the decision numbered 5438 adopted by the parliament on June 10, 1949, the following addition was made to the law regarding the closure of dervish orders and lodges: *"Those who occupy the leading positions among the members of the Sheikh, Baba and Caliphate are punished with exile, not less than one year, in addition to fines."* (The Official Newspaper, 1949). After this addition, in 1950, the Ministry of National Education decided to make the tombs open to the public again in order to protect the historical heritage (Mazıcı, 2001: 253-255). The reason for these concessions made by the government is that after the transition to multiparty life, the phenomenon of religion has become a means of collecting votes for the parties. RPP stated that in this process, the opposition channel, especially the Democratic Party, frequently brought these issues to the agenda of politics. In addition, religious organizations started to negotiate with the parties by channeling into politics in this process. For example, in the 1950 elections, the Republican People's Party and the Democratic Party negotiated with the sheikhs for votes in the eastern region. In fact, in the following processes, the RPP allowed the revival of Islam on a social basis in a conscious way and under state control. With the current government's changing perspective on religion, a number of Islamist parties have also emerged. These parties, which try to protect Islamic values, are listed as: Turkish Conservative Party, Epuration Protection Party, Land, Property and Free Enterprise Party, Islamic Protection Party, Farmer and Peasant Party (Jenkins, 2008: 116).

The parties to which Islamic movements and religious organizations are oriented have been Right-wing parties. The Nation Party (NP), which formed a serious opposition representation for the continuation of the Islamic tradition, undertook the advocacy of these organizations between 1945-1950. Religious organizations have also turned to parties such as the National Order Party (NOP), the Justice Party (JP), and the Islamic Democratic Party (IDP) over time. However, among them, the Islamic Democratic Party has never been active in political life. The Islamists thought that the Justice Party was advancing along the lines of the Democratic Party for a while, but when it was understood that it was not, they left the Justice Party and started to be in a different political movement (Ay, 2004: 5).

The perspective of the Democratic Party, which came to power after the transition to multiparty life, on the principle of secularism is different from the RPP. According to the current understanding of the Democratic Party, secularism should not be interpreted as hostility to religion, and a distinction should be made not only between religion and the state, but also between religion and politics. In addition, according to the DP program, religious education should be turned to meet the social religious needs and the faculties that can provide this education should be autonomous structures. With its current policy, the DP wanted to end the leading role of the RPP in religious matters and criticized the RPP's view on religion (Uzun, 2012: 130). However, both the Democratic Party and the RPP made religious political propaganda during this period. The Democratic Party, which entered into an electoral alliance with the Nurettin Toprak, allowed the activities of religious organizations in order to calm the social base due to the economic crisis that broke out in 1958. The Democratic Party, which is identified with the resurrection of Islam, was not accepted by the Islamic section when it was not in power. Among the main reasons for this is the fact that Celal Bayar is in the founding team of the party. However, the Democratic Party, while emphasizing its

commitment to the principle of secularism on the one hand, tried to win the Islamic section and religious organizations on the other hand (Duman, 1999: 35). As a result, the Democratic Party won the 1950 elections. Although the Islamic section initially supported the Nation Party, the Democratic Party began to be supported as a result of the speeches Menderes made towards this section. In particular, to restart reciting the Azan in Arabic on June 16, 1950 pleased the Islamic section and religious organizations. Other arrangements made are the removal of religious bans in broadcasting programs, permission to broadcast the Azan on the radios, and making religion classes compulsory.

During the Democratic Party period, the perspective on religious organizations also changed. During this period, some Islamic tendencies became visible. Speeches by politicians and Prime Minister Adnan Menderes kissing Said Nursi's hand, the leader of the order, are some of them. In addition, some deputies even argued that the caliphate could be brought back in the parliament. With these developments, a certain freedom environment has emerged for religious organizations. However, this process has led to the emergence of situations that will threaten the social order after a certain period of time. The attitude of the Democratic Party, on the other hand, has changed in the direction of defending the principle of secularism. The most important event that led to this change in the Democratic Party was the armed attack of Vatan Newspaper writer Ahmet Emin Yaman by some Islamic movements. After this development, the Democratic Party made some arrangements by revealing its reaction to religious organizations and Islamic development. First of all, in 1951, in order to prevent reactionary events, the Law on the Protection of Atatürk was accepted, and the Islamic Democratic Party was closed. In 1953, the "Law on the Protection of Freedom of Conscience"

was enacted in order to prevent the phenomenon of religion from interfering with politics (Ay, 2004: 3-4).

It was thought that the National Unity Committee (NUC), which carried out the coup against the Democratic Party that came to power in 1950, would initially stand against Islamic structures. However, the May 27 regime allowed an Islamic understanding under state control, instead of returning to the policies of the single-party regime. In fact, the current administration adopted a tolerant attitude towards non-political Islam in this process. In addition, no other changes were made, except for some regulations regarding preachers and prayer leaders' schools and Quran courses. Retired General Cemal Gürsel stated that some provisions should be included in the constitution to prevent religious abuse. According to Article 2 of the 1961 Constitution, secularism was accepted as one of the basic characteristics of the state. According to Article 19, it is stated that individuals have freedom of religion and conscience, and it is prohibited to regulate the existing structure of the state in accordance with religious rules. In fact, the 1961 Constitution, which had a libertarian structure, did not try to suppress the Islamic movement that was on the rise with the transition to multiparty life. On the contrary, the years after the 1961 Constitution were the years when Political Islam started to rise. After this period, religious organizations were added to politics and started to exist first with the National Order Party (NOP) and then with the National Salvation Party (NSP) (Ay, 2004: 4). As a result, with the influence of the 1961 Constitution, the National Outlook Movement (NOM), which was born from a religious organization and was a political movement, emerged.

### 2.2.2. National Outlook Movement

With the transition to multiparty life in Turkey, a political movement emerged from the body of a religious organization with the effect of the developments in the social and political field. The National Outlook Movement which emerged with the encouragement and advice of the charismatic religious leader Mehmet Zahit Kotku, who was a Naqshbandi sheikh, initially developed within a religious group. This is important in order to understand the relationship of the National Outlook Movement with religious organizations and the social base. On the other hand, identifying the National Outlook Movement, which is also defined as a political movement, with only religious organizations will not be an adequate analysis. Especially when considering the legal framework, it is also necessary to evaluate the social developments in the historical process while evaluating the National Outlook Movement.

The most important factor that ensures the permanence of a political movement is related to the social base on which it is based. With the influence of the religious organizations that form its social base, the National Outlook Movement expressed the demands of the conservative-religious section in the field of politics and reflected it in its policy (İnce, 2017: 143-144). When we look at the political discourses of the National Outlook Movement in this respect, it is seen that the religious-conservative sections and religious organizations that are marginalized by the single-party regime bring the demands to the fore. These demands were even reflected in the election declarations of the National Outlook parties. In the founding declaration of the National Order Party, which is one of the National Outlook parties, a number of statements about the problems of the religious section stand out; “We have an understanding of freedom of conscience that will meet the citizens' needs of religious belief, worship, teaching, suggestion and education... We are against the use of secularism for the

purpose of oppressing religion and disrespecting religious people... We are striving to follow and implement an education and training policy that will not allow the abuse of religious feelings, instead of policies that will partially or completely deprive our nation of religious knowledge..." (Funding Declaration of NOP). In this respect, the National Outlook Movement is an important example for understanding the process in which the conservative-religious section and religious organizations are included in the political field.

The partial freedom environment that emerged in Turkey since the 1950s also reinforced the desire of religious organizations to take part in the public field. Political parties that tried to take advantage of this situation, on the other hand, had implicit and open relations with these religious organizations. From this point of view, the National Outlook Movement has been accepted as the representative of religious organizations and the conservative section (Çakır, 2005: 545). Religious groups, who could not find the opportunity to express their religious demands politically and organizationally before, pioneered the rise of Political Islam with the National Outlook Movement. On the other hand, the period when National Outlook emerged should be associated not only with developments in the social field, but also with external developments (İnce, 2017: 152). As the conservatives in Turkey began to see the danger of atheism in communism, Islam began to be seen as a shield against the spread of communism. Until the 1980s, the National Outlook Movement shaped its current political life according to the Cold War conjuncture and the green belt theory of the USA. In Turkey, which is in the western alliance in the bipolar world order, the emphasis on the religion element against the communist threat has strengthened the basis of the National Outlook Movement.

When the relations of the National Outlook Movement with religious organizations are examined, the influence and support of many Naqshbandi orders, Nurcu orders and many different orders, especially the İskenderpaşa order, can be seen in its political structure (Çakır, 2005: 545; Şentürk, 2011: 336). Especially in the relationship between the National Outlook Movement and the Naqshbandis, the relationship between the party's leadership and the order leaders is important. Existing relations are not limited to dialogue but are shaped by the perception of religion of the current cadre, especially Erbakan. The religious perceptions of National Outlook's leadership are mainly based on Naqshbandi, Hanafi and Maturidi. For this reason, the discourses of Islamic unity and Islamic brotherhood draw attention in the relationship of the National Outlook Movement with existing religious organizations. In particular, Naqshbandism is predominantly felt in the social base of the National Outlook Movement. When the Naqshbandis were examined geographically, the fact that they were distributed in three Sunni regions and the relations they had historically established with the political leaders in the Ottoman state led to its progress in the same line with the National Outlook. İskenderpaşa, one of the Naqshbandi orders, has been identified with the National Outlook Movement in terms of its current structure and characteristics (Çakır, 1990). Mehmet Zahit Kotku, the leader of İskenderpaşa, and Erbakan, the leader of National Outlook Movement, had common discourses and views on the social field. Erbakan stated the impact of Kotku on the National Outlook Movement with the words "our morality is the moral of the lodge" and "of course, it is impossible for us to forget the advice and recommendations of our late teacher Mehmet Zahit Kotku in our struggle for industrialization". When the relationship between the two leaders is examined, it is possible to evaluate this as the Naqshbandi's effort to be included in the political field and to give direction, just like in the Ottoman Empire (Çalmuk, 2005: 559).

Considering the characteristics and discourses of the National Outlook Movement, it is seen that it interacts with religious organizations, especially the Naqshbandis. In order to develop and implement its current policies, the National Outlook Movement has benefited from religious organizations and included them into the field of bureaucracy. In particular, Naqshbandis were able to have a say in the political center by being included in the bureaucracy. The alliance between the National Outlook Movement and the Naqshbandi is actually an expected result in the current ruling order, when evaluated in the historical background. Because both sections have similar characteristics on the social base and their goals in the field of politics started on the same line. On the other hand, Muslim farmers and artisans, also called petit bourgeois, who form the social base of the National Outlook Movement, represent the class area on which this movement is based. This class area constitutes the section that is not socially, culturally and economically integrated into the system in Turkey. The same class structure is present in the area that constitutes the social base of religious organizations in Turkey. Particularly, the policies followed during the single-party period had an impact on the aforementioned popular base to turn to the National Outlook Movement (Yavuz, 2011: 68). It is understood that this orientation is mutual, with the following words of Erbakan: "...We have come to this day with the work of many Islamic greats such as Said-i Nursi, Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan, Mehmet Zahit Kotku, Mahmut Sami Ramazanoğlu, Muhammed Raşit Erol" (Çalmuk, 2005: 563). This speech that Erbakan gave when he accepted the leaders of the communities and orders reveals that the National Outlook Movement bases its legitimacy on these religious organizations.

Although the National Outlook Movement is defined as a political movement that emerged from a religious organization, its relationship with these organizations has not always

progressed smoothly. Depending on the political and social conditions of the period, the differences and problems between the National Outlook Movement and religious organizations emerged from time to time. In some periods, orders and communities did not support National Outlook parties in order to protect their own existence. Religious organizations, which especially stated that some of Erbakan's breakthroughs pose a danger to the continuation of the civil government, withdrew their support to the Welfare Party (WP) in the 1990s. Due to the current policies of the Welfare Party, it was thought that it put the future and security of these organizations at risk (Özdalga, 2007: 124). As seen in this example, the support of religious groups to the National Outlook Movement is not unconditional. Especially since the 1980s, with the emergence of Islamic Capital, how this field will be shared has been a matter of dispute between religious organizations and National Outlook. Another factor is that religious organizations do not want to share their power in the social field with the National Outlook Movement. In summary, religious organizations have started to act interest-oriented in this process by creating an element of pressure on the National Outlook Movement. As a result of this process, it is seen that the leader of the National Outlook Movement, Erbakan, changed his attitude in his relations with religious organizations (Çalmuk, 2005: 562).

Another issue that should be evaluated in terms of the relationship between the National Outlook Movement and religious organizations is the differences between communities and orders in the perspective of the movement. In general, while the National Outlook Movement was widely accepted by the orders, it was met with a certain prejudgment by the communities (Çelik, 2013: 290-294). The main reason for the emergence of this difference is that the religious communities have a desire to be included in the political arena more than the religious orders in Turkey. Communities saw the National Outlook Movement as a potential threat and competitor to their own existence (Şentürk, 2011: 504). For example, while Nurcus

and Süleymancı withdrew their support to the National Outlook parties much earlier, the deterioration of the relations of İskenderpaşa, which is the Nakşibendi order, with the National Outlook Movement occurred at a later time and due to social-political conditions (Büyükkara, 2006: 134). The National Outlook Movement was established with the support of Kotku, who was the leader of İskenderpaşa during the establishment phase. However, by the end of the 1970s, it is thought that a more radical structuring within the movement was made as a result of its global developments. Kotku, who started to criticize the National Outlook Movement in this respect, made some demands in this regard. Kotku's demands proceeded in the form of closing the youth organizations of National Outlook parties, resigning Necmettin Erbakan, and in the following processes, liquidating the party completely (Yaşar, 2004: 331). With the death of Kotku, the leader of the İskenderpaşa order, the relationship between İskenderpaşa and National Outlook Movement deteriorated further.

Necmettin Erbakan, the founder of the National Outlook Movement, defined this movement as the view in which the nation finds itself and represents the spirit of the nation (Erbakan, 1975: 27). The development process of the National Outlook Movement started with the National Order Party. The National Order Party, which is dominated by an Islamist discourse, was founded in 1970. Islamic religious organizations paved the way for the creation of the National Order Party, arguing that its current interests were not taken into account by the Justice Party (JP). Especially Kotku, the leader of the Iskender Pasha community, contributed to the establishment of the National Order Party. With the appointment of Erbakan as the party chairman, the National Order Party became the representative of the small business owners who were oppressed by the big bourgeoisie and the Islamic segment that opposed the secularization policies. The Islamic discourse of National Order Party which is the organized

political representative of political Islam, has always been timid. The National Order Party, which was dissolved by the Constitutional Court in a short time, was the first important step towards the creation of an independent Islamic movement. The reasons for the closure of the party are listed as advocating for the restoration of the caliphate, demanding to amend Article 163 of the Turkish Criminal Law, and criticizing the secularism policies of the past (Ay, 2004: 5-6).

After the closure of the National Order Party, the National Salvation Party was established as a continuation of the National Outlook Movement. According to the policy followed by the National Salvation Party, opening to the Islamic world is important and according to this policy, the National Salvation Party opposes the common market and emphasizes the importance of material and moral development. In addition, according to this party, the salvation of Turkey will be possible by transforming into Islamic civilization. As a result of the 14 October 1973 elections, National Salvation Party became a government partner in the coalition government. It was an important event for a party representing political Islam to come to power for the first time. Within the RPP - National Salvation Party coalition, there were debates over religion between both parties. In the following processes, as a result of Nurcu community's support of the Justice Party, the National Salvation Party's vote rate decreased (Ay, 2004: 6). During the National Salvation Party's ruling period, some regulations were made. The authority of the religious institution has been increased, some of the arrangements made are the abolition of the pilgrimage quotas and the construction of a mosque for each village (Duman, 1999: 91). However, the National Salvation Party, which was increasingly connected to radicalization after the Iranian revolution, was closed with the 1980 military coup due to its pro-Islamic-laws views and religious propaganda rallies.

After the closure of the National Salvation Party, the Welfare Party was established in 1983, which adopted the same views. During the Welfare Party period, a policy based mainly on religious-based views was followed, and relations with Islamic countries were tried to be developed. The Welfare Party was closed by the Constitutional Court due to its actions against the principle of secularism during the February 28 Process. The moral development discourse in the current programs of the National Order Party, the National Salvation Party and the Welfare Party reflects their desire to raise the society morally (Özdalga, 2007: 120). This situation also reveals the common goals of the Naqshbandi groups and the National Outlook Movement.

The Virtue Party (VP), which was the continuation of the National Outlook Movement after the Welfare Party was closed, was founded in 1998. Later, Recai Kutan was appointed as the chairman of the party founded by İsmail Alptekin. The Virtue Party was closed in 2001, after the incident of Istanbul deputy Merve Kavakçı, due to its secularist anti-republic actions. After this period, the National Outlook Movement disintegrated into the Justice and Development Party and the Felicity Party (FP). Today, there is no party that continues and represents the National Outlook Movement in the same line.

Another phenomenon that emerged when the National Outlook Movements relationship with religious organizations was examined was related to the Kurdish Question. Expressing the demands of the religious and conservative sections and shaped around an Islamic discourse, National Outlook Movement has also directed towards the Kurdish voters living in eastern Anatolia with this feature. National Outlook parties led by Erbakan have tried to use religious organizations as a way of reconciliation with the Kurdish voters in these regions, where religious sensitivity and adherence to traditional structures are high, since the 1970s (Özdalga, 2007: 112).

Especially the current political discourse of the National Outlook parties provides a significant benefit to the National Outlook parties in the eastern regions with Kurdish voters. According to Erbakan, the steps to be taken for the solution of the Kurdish Question must be compatible with social realities, and it is important to emphasize the phenomenon of Islamic Brotherhood for the solution of the problem (İnce, 2017: 159).

In regions where Kurdish voters are concentrated, Naqshbandism comes to the fore. Considering the relationship between the Naqshbandi orders and the National Outlook Movement, it was easy for the National Outlook parties to develop relations with the order leaders in these regions. It is seen that many religious leaders in the eastern and southeastern regions have close relations with National Outlook parties. In fact, the election of the family members of some Naqshbandi sheikhs to the National Outlook parties is one of the most important indicators of this (İnce, 2017: 159).

In order to understand the power of religious organizations in the region, it is necessary to analyze the tribal and order structures in this region thoroughly. In the East and Southeast regions, tribes and orders still maintain their power and represent a position equivalent to the state on the social base (Çakır, 1994: 155). In general, in these regions, order and tribal structures were intertwined, and in some periods, order sheikhs assumed the role of mediator in the problems between the tribes by assuming an important role of religious reputation. It should not be forgotten that these organizations were one of the most important representatives of religious dignity and were identified with the religious-cultural history of the region, especially when looking at the Ottoman period (Bruinessen, 2003: 112; Subaşı, 2004: 121-126).

Considering that the PKK terrorist organization, which is discussed in the context of the Kurdish Question, tries to establish relations with the religious organizations in the region, the functions and purposes of the National Outlook parties in this region can be understood more clearly. The recent initiative process towards the Kurdish Question clearly reveals the importance of the relations established with the religious organizations in the region. People's Democratic Party (PDP), the current representative of the PKK in the political field, tried to develop relations with religious organizations in this region during the opening process. As a result, National Outlook Movement, which expresses the demands of the religious-conservative segment in Turkey and is identified with Political Islam, has lost its influence in the regions where Kurds live mainly. Another reason why the National Outlook parties lost their influence in the region is that the mass forming the National Outlook base turned to the Justice and Development Party.

As a result, with the transition to the multiparty system in Turkey, significant changes have been experienced in the social and political field. Ethnic and religious organizations that could not exist in the region before have started to become an actor in the social and political field. Especially in regions where Kurds live mainly, tribal and order leaders have become one of the main actors by getting involved in the political arena (Yavuz, 2011: 137). It is also known that during the Democratic Party period, some order sheikhs were elected as deputies by being included in the political field (Bruinessen, 2003, p. 376). The National Outlook Movement, which was born within a religious organization and is a political movement, also played a leading role in the inclusion of these organizations in the political field. However, there were also problems between the National Outlook Movement and religious organizations during the process. The reason for this is that religious organizations began to

exist in the public and political field by taking advantage of the freedom environment created by the 1961 Constitution and they moved away from their main functions and turned into a pressure group.



### **CHAPTER III: RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN TURKISH POLITICAL LIFE AFTER 1980**

In this part of the study, the effects of developments in domestic politics and international conjuncture in Turkey after 1980 on Islamic religious organizations will be discussed. While internal developments that led to radical changes in the social and political field in Turkey were handled as January 24 Decisions, September 12 Military Coup, 1982 Constitution, Özal period and February 28 Process, it was also accepted as a turning point for religious organizations. The developments in the international conjuncture will be analyzed in terms of the security framework, the direction of the USA from the Green Belt Theory to the Moderate Islam Project in its policies towards Islamic countries, and how the 1979 Iranian Revolution had an impact on religious organizations in Turkey.

After Turkey became a member of the US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a western military alliance, in 1952, it has also reshaped its internal security structure in accordance with the structures in the Washington-based security system. Here, especially the Soviet Union was seen as a threat, therefore communist expansionism was shown as the main threat and accordingly, internal security arrangements have been made in NATO countries, including Turkey, against these threats. In this process, in the 1970s, when the Cold War continued, it was seen that US-based activities intensified in order to prevent anti-US developments in different parts of the world. The developments in Afghanistan and Iran (Halliday, 1980; Halliday, 1987) in 1978-1979 made Washington uneasy, US President J. Carter explained in his doctrine published on these developments that there were no irreconcilable differences between them and the governments of Islamic countries, that they were ready to cooperate with all Muslim countries, and that they were ready to work with other

countries in the region (Carter, 1980: 3). Carter's national security adviser, Z. Brzezinski, came up with the Green Belt Theory, which he called "Arc of Crisis", which means the arc-line-geography of the crisis, in this period and he convinced Carter to open a new front against the Soviet Union through Muslim countries (Lenczowski, 1979: 796). Brzezinski also suggested starting a propaganda campaign in cooperation with some important Islamic countries (Guerrero, 2017: 14). The aim was to prevent the spread of communism to the Middle East geography, where energy sources are located, by creating a Green Belt (Bandeira, 2017: 4-5; Brzezinski, 1983: 226). In this direction, the way to the intervention of September 12, 1980 was opened in order to get rid of the problems caused by the radicalization in the workers' movements (Nichols & Suğur, 2010: 44), as well as the different ideological structures in the Right and Left, which increased in Turkey, and it was seen that religious organizations were tried to be substituted for the radical groupings before 1980 (Tugal, 2009: 40). Just at this time, Brzezinski was emphasizing the importance of the control of the region extending over from the southern part of the Soviet Union to Turkey for the national security of the USA (Time Magazine, 1979).

In December 1978, Brzezinski, in his weekly report to the US President Carter (Brzezinski to Carter, 02/12/1978: 3), stated that an "Arc of Crisis" had occurred in a significant part of the third world and that it was against the national interests of the USA. He talks about the risk that the developments in the geography stretching from Bangladesh to Saudi Arabia and Turkey may cause instability, that is, a political vacuum in Turkey, and that groups close to the Soviet Union may fill this void (Vinha, 2017: 220).

In this period, the discourse of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis and the 'moderate Islam' project was highlighted (Taşkın, 2006: 381-401; Emin & Göral, 2006; Çağlar & Uluçakar, 2017: 119-139; Üzgel, 2002: 34-81), religious discourses and nationalist discourses were used together,

and these efforts were supported in order to keep possible different social radicalizations under control (Yavuz, 2005: 171; Buğra, 2004: 128). Some of these groups, which got stronger over time, started to create security problems. It has also been observed that among these groups, different religious organizations criticize each other with names such as anti-sectarian, anti-religious, and anti-state (Çakır, 2002: 138; Özçelik, 2011: 86).

With the 1980 intervention, the military administration paved the way for some religious organizations, but these groups started to come to the fore with their commercial activities in the 1990s (Onis, 1997: 750-758). In the 1970s and 1980s, when there was intense migration from the countryside to the big cities, new urbanization areas were formed (Whitte, 2007: 103), where immigration intensified, and gatherings around those who emerged with religious identity in these places emerged as a mechanism such as protection, cooperation/solidarity, protection of identity (Sezen, 2017; Mardin, 1995: 102-4; Kıray, 1998: 186; Mardin, 2011: 106; Göçmen, 2011: 115-147).

The financial resources of these religious organizations, which became numerically stronger over time, began to increase, and a mutual interest relationship with political parties emerged. While these religious groupings, which contain large numbers of people, are seen as a vote depot for political parties (Norton, 1990: 7), on the other hand, the leaders of religious groupings have started to look for a way to turn this political relationship into financial gain (Tekeli, 2008: 62; Temel, 2015: 32). In this process, they had the opportunity to be represented by their own people from different political parties in local governments and in the parliament. In this process, they increased their political power and started to use their capacity to direct political

life (Yavuz, 2005: 41; Yılmaz, 2005: 615; Özdemir, 2014: 439). Some religious organizations started to be paved with the support of organizations such as the National Youth Foundation, MUSIAD, Hak-İş, and the Anatolian capital, which was getting stronger financially, and the new Islamic intellectuals (Yavuz, 2005: 130; Yankaya, 2014; Kurtuluş, 2013). In the 1980s, it was observed that religious organizations began to prosper, their influence began to increase in the political field, and their activities in the bureaucracy began to increase (Erkilet, 2005: 690). It was also seen that in this period, political Islam started to come to the fore with different religious organizations and became radicalized, therefore it was started to be discussed whether it would create a problem in terms of security (Kandiyoti, 2012: 513).

### **3.1. September 12 and the Özal Period**

In the post-1980 period in Turkey, there have been many changes in the economic, social and political fields. The economic policies implemented in this period, the abolition of the freedoms granted to political activities with the constitutional amendment started a rapid social and political change process; this social change has permeated every aspect of society and paved the way for religious organizations. In the Özal period, not only the revival of traditional orders was witnessed, but also religious communities, religious groups and religious NGOs, which had similar characteristics to traditional orders, gained momentum in this process.

The economic crisis that appeared in the Turkish economy since 1974 started to create serious problems in the dependent Turkish economy. Especially in 1979, the crisis reached its peak and inflation reached 70%, and the political events in the country increased the current chaos (Şahin, 2016: 180). As a result of these developments, the current government resigned and

Süleyman Demirel came to power. Turgut Özal, who was brought to the position of undersecretary during the period of Süleyman Demirel, prepared the January 24 decisions that foresee a radical transformation in the economy. The January 24 Decisions, which include a series of structural reforms, are based on the transition from the statist policy applied in the past to the liberal economy (Uluç, 2014: 114). However, a non-democratic process is needed as it is not possible to implement these decisions during Demirel's term as a minority government. Because the January 24 decisions meant a reduction in the share of the working class from the social income. In addition, the increase in strikes and unions during this period made it difficult to implement the decisions. As a result, these economically targeted decisions found the opportunity to be implemented as a result of the military coup in 1980 (Küçük, 2019: 25). Özal, who came to power as a result of the Turkish Armed Forces' seizure of power on September 12, requested support from the society for the implementation of the January 24 Decisions. In addition, the Özal government has made many breakthroughs in order to solve the economic problems in the country.

The 1982 Constitution, which was accepted with a referendum in November 1982, is important for understanding the conditions of the period. Compared to the 1961 Constitution, the 1982 Constitution exhibits a structure in which freedoms are restricted and state authority is emphasized. In particular, the philosophy of this constitution was formed on the basis of traditionalism, spiritualism, nationalism and liberalism (Tarhan, 2012: 17-18). Fundamental rights and freedoms were limited by preventing unionization with the current constitution (Zürcher, 2016: 406). With the September 12 Military Coup and the adoption of the 1982 Constitution, while trying to establish a strong government system, authority in the social field was tried to be established. In addition, elements such as hierarchy, obedience to the

existing order and nationalism came to the fore in this period. The most extraordinary thing in this process is the freedom of religious organizations and religious elements outside the control center despite the existing authority. From this point of view, the post-September 12 period has been a period of political and social restructuring in Turkey dominated by the 'neo-conservative' thought (Köse, 2010: 66). While the 1982 Constitution limited fundamental rights and freedoms, it tried to prevent the social movements that had increased before the coup and aimed to create a disciplined social structure. In the years after the coup, the state of martial law was continued, and the state authority was tried to be adopted on the social base. In line with this goal, the Özal government, which came to power by establishing the Motherland Party (MP), tried to break the social movements of the past with religious organizations and Islamic discourse by making a neo-conservative discourse dominant in the political field (Küçük, 2019: 28). In this period, the phenomenon of religion was seen as a tool that could be used especially against the 'Left' and was used as an antidote to liquidate the Left. Since this period, political Islam has been on the rise (Küçük, 2019: 34). Özal, who took in charge between 1983-1993, used religious organizations while officially legitimizing the religion of Islam. In addition, in this period, religious organizations were tried to be adapted to the modern urban structure.

In order to understand the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, which is the official ideology of the September 12 regime, it is necessary to examine the Aydınlar Ocağı, which was established in the 1970s (Alper & Göral, 2006). The aim of the Aydınlar Ocağı is to reduce the influence of the Left, which is active in the social and political field in Turkey. The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, which defines the ideology of this Ocak, has been supported by the Right-wing parties since the 1970s and was accepted by Kenan Evren, who carried out the September 12

military coup. Evren found the support he needed in the political atmosphere after the coup in the religion element and many arrangements were made in the religious field. Religious education has been made a constitutional obligation, and graduates of the Preachers and Prayer Leaders Schools have been offered education at different universities and opportunities have been created within the existing system (Kongar, 2001: 187). The military administration that carried out the September 12 coup did not allow the Welfare Party to enter the elections and thus MP came to power easily. Being the leader of MP, Özal followed an open policy in religious practices throughout the history of the Republic (Nokta, 1985: 20-22). Until the 1980s, the suspicion of religious policies ended with the strengthening of religious organizations that were accepted in the social field. In this way, the Özal government received the support of religious organizations when it came to power. Turgut Özal, who was already affiliated with the İskenderpaşa dervish lodge, was also accepted at the base of the National Outlook Movement. In this period, while the policy of Islamization was followed in the field of education, the Minister of National Education Vehbi Dinçerler, who was affiliated with the Naqshbandi order, created a new curriculum by identifying the concept of national culture with the concept of religion (Toprak, 1988: 131-132). In addition, approximately 90 the preachers and prayer leaders' high schools were opened during the Özal period and there was a significant increase in Qur'an courses. While the number of Qur'an courses, which was 2,610 before 1980, reached 4,715 in 1989, the number of mosques increased from 54,667 to 62,947 (Ahmad, 2016: 257). In the 1980s, as a result of the September 12 military coup and the policies carried out by the Özal government, religious organizations began to operate more openly, effectively and widely. In addition, these structures, which started to grow in the political, public and economic fields by taking advantage of the atmosphere of the 1980s, became the agenda of the country by being discussed in terms of security over time.

### **3.2.From the Green Belt Theory to Moderate Islam**

Another factor affecting the religious organizations in Turkey after 1980 is the developments in the international field and its reflection on Turkish political life. While Turkey, a NATO member and strategic partner of the USA in the region, has come to the fore as a model country in the projects developed by the USA for Islamic countries, and religious organizations have also become the target point of these projects.

The USA, which wanted to prevent the expansionist policy of the Soviet Union in the bipolar world order, prepared the green belt theory in the 1970s and started to use Islam against communism and developed relations with religious organizations and Islamic movements. The Green Belt Theory, also known as the Carter doctrine, which came into force in this period and was prepared during the US Prime Minister Jimmy Carter's term, was carried out under the leadership of Zbigniew Brzezinski, the national security adviser of the Carter administration (Carter, 1980: 3; Guerrero, 2017: 5). With the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979, the USA started to cooperate with radical religious organizations. The Taliban, which was established as a radical religious organization, emerged in this period. On the other hand, the Iranian Revolution that took place in the same year and the anti-American rhetoric of Khomeini, the leader of the revolution, led to significant support by the USA to Sunni religious organizations, especially Turkey. A project was needed to alleviate the increasing anti-US sentiment in Islamic countries as a result of the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, America's perspective on radical Islam changed and the "moderate Islam" project began to come to the fore. According to the then US Secretary of State C. Rice,

in order to deal with terrorism, first of all, radical religious thought had to be replaced by a moderate understanding of Islam (Kaplan, 2009: 5). In addition, the USA needed the Moderate Islam project in order to ensure its economic and political interests in the region with the Greater Middle East Project. With this project, he defended a moderate, modern and democratic understanding of Islam against the rising radical Islam in Islamic countries. In addition, in order to prevent the activities of organizations aiming an Islamic state, it is aimed to integrate religious organizations into the social and public field by providing financial support in educational and cultural activities (Rabasa et al., 2004: 64). Religious organizations, which started to take an increasingly independent position in Turkey in the post-1980 period with the moderate Islam project of the USA, gained an important position in the political, social and public fields. However, while these religious organizations were involved in the civil field through associations and foundations, they turned into a security problem as a result of losing their essential functions. Because while the 'Moderate Islam' project was exported to Turkey by the USA, religious organizations were used. In particular, the Gülen Community (FETÖ) is regarded as a product of the US' moderate Islam project (Macit, 2011: 541). Under the influence of Islam, which was produced in accordance with capitalist and liberal themes, religious organizations in Turkey became the groups that benefited most from the current conditions and started to be perceived as a threat in the following processes.

### **3.3.The Iranian Revolution**

Historically in competition with each other in the region, Iran and Turkey have always been in interaction in both political and cultural dimensions. In the 20th century, while Iran was inspired by the modernization movement in Turkey, the Iranian Revolution that took place in 1979 also had significant effects in Turkey. Thus, in Turkey, apart from the religious organizations dominated by the Sunni understanding, the "Iranian" Islamism movement

emerged under the influence of the Iranian Revolution (Elhan, 2016, p. 31). The 'Iranian' Islamism movement, with an increasing momentum from the 1980s to the 1990s, effectively broke some sectarian reflexes in the social field. On the other hand, the developments in Iran's domestic politics after the death of Khomeini in 1989, and the end of the bipolar world order as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, reduced the influence of the Iranian Islamism movement in Turkish political life (Elhan, 2016: 45).

The reflection of the Iranian Revolution on Turkey has been two-dimensional. At the state level, a number of security concerns arise. The first of these is the potential of religious movements affected by the Iranian revolution to threaten the regime in Turkey. Another security problem is the concern that an independent Kurdish state may emerge in this region during the uncertainty created by the revolution in Iran (Olson, 2004: 1). In addition, the Iranian revolution, which caused the US to worry that it might come under the influence of the Soviet Union, has become one of the important problems considering the Right-Left conflicts in Turkey. When evaluated in terms of foreign policy, the regional impact of the Iranian Revolution for the Republic of Turkey leads to an important security problem. According to some authors, the 1980 military coup was carried out in order to eliminate the atmosphere of insecurity that emerged in Turkey as a result of the Iranian Revolution and to reduce the effectiveness of Iran under the Soviet influence (Yavuz, 2009: 50). According to these claims, the Soviet threat, the Kurdish problem and religious organization, which increased their influence as a result of the Iranian revolution, are accepted as the biggest threats to the territorial integrity and security of the country in the post-1980 period (Elhan, 2016: 34).

Another dimension of the Iranian Revolution that was reflected in Turkey was in the social field. The ideological and religious framework that changed in the social base after the revolution also affected the religious organizations in Turkey. On the other hand, while the religious organizations in Turkey supported the Iranian revolution because it is a social and religious movement, they opposed the export of the revolution to Turkey. The main problem that the Iranian revolution would create for religious organizations was that the understanding of Shiism was brought to the fore in the revolution (Çakır, 1990: 31-32). For this reason, Nurcu communities completely opposed the Iranian Islamism movement and accused the leader of the revolution, Khomeini, of instrumentalizing religion for political purposes and presenting the Shia order as a separate religion from Islam (Özçetin, 2011: 69).

As a result, with the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, a new era has started in Turkey-Iran relations and some security problems have emerged in Turkey's social and political field. The problem of exporting the Iranian Revolution in Turkey and the threat to secularism, which is one of the basic principles of the republic, became clear around the question "Will Turkey be like Iran?" This perception of threat maintained its place on the agenda in the political environment experienced during the February 28 process. The Iranian Islamism movement, which emerged with the effect of the revolution in Turkey after 1980, was marginalized after a while due to the secular-religious tension. On the other hand, the death of Khomeini in 1989, the end of the Cold War process and the changes in Iran's current policies led to some ruptures in the rising Iranian Islamism trend in Turkey. With the Welfare Party coming to power since the 1990s, religious organizations have become power partners in Turkish political life, leading Iranian Islamists to turn to these Sunni orders and communities (Elhan, 2016: 45). Considered one of the Iranian Islamists in this period, Ali

Bulaç turned to the Sunni religious organizations in Turkey and established close relations with the Gülen Community (Elhan, 2016: 47-48). As a result, the Iranian Islamism movement, which is perceived as a threat because it is not a domestic and national ideology, has lost its influence today due to the civil war in Syria and the sectarian tension in Iran-Turkey relations.

### **3.4. February 28 Period**

In order to understand the February 28 Process, which is defined as the post-modern coup, first of all, the changes in the social and political field after 1980 should be examined. Because the rapid transformation process experienced in this period with the effect of increasing modernization in Turkey caused the social field to take on a fragile structure. According to Ali Bayramoğlu, the distance between the center and the periphery in the social field has narrowed since the 1980s in Turkey, and therefore social and political tensions have increased (Bayramoğlu, 2007: 11-15). In this period, some problems began to arise between the Islamic & religious organizations and secularists, which became visible in the public and social fields. With the deepening of religious and secular lines since the 1990s, cultural demands have become more important than economic demands. Another reason for these identities to come to the fore is the strengthening of the previously excluded Islamic section in the socio-economic field since the 1980s. In short, with the effect of modernity, these years have been a period of representation crisis in Turkey.

The Welfare Party's coming to power in the 1994 local elections was accepted as the victory of political Islam and the religious section. Political Islam has become the main determinant of Turkish political life as a result of the WP's making religion the main argument in its

political discourse and the religious propaganda it has made in the slums. Shortly after the Welfare Party came to power under the presidency of Erbakan, the memorandum redesigning the government and politics was published and the February 28 process took place (Ay, 2004: 7).

In the process leading up to February 28, there were some developments that the secular system was under threat. It was criticized that Erbakan's first trip abroad was to Iran, and it was argued that Turkey's image of secularism was damaged. On the other hand, some non-governmental organizations active in this period emphasized secularism by being involved in the process and demanded early elections. Another pillar of the threat perception in question is religious organizations. As a result of the incident of Müslüm Gündüz and Fadime Şahin, the leaders of Aczimendi sect, 113 people were arrested and the functions of religious organizations against the threat of reaction in the country were discussed (Akın, 2016: 40).

With the coup over the National Security Council (NSC) on February 28, 1997, the army took some decisions and informed the government. Immediately afterwards, the implementation committee of the NSC's decisions was activated and decisions were taken to fight reactionism. In the 18-point decision text prepared by the army, some issues such as the necessity of some legal regulations in order to prevent reactionary activities, increasing the education to 8 years, converting the preachers and prayer leaders schools to vocational schools, preventing religious caderisation in the political field, following religious organizations and examining the media organizations belonging to these structures came to the fore (Erdoğan, 2007: 15-16). In addition, in this process, lawsuits were filed against some of their rights with the allegation that they were 'reactionary' about religious organizations under the identity of a foundation (Kurban & Hatemi, 2009: 10). In short, the February 28

Process was a period when the perception of threat against religious organizations came to the fore and was considered as a domestic security problem.



## **CHAPTER IV: EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN TERMS OF SECURITY**

Religious organizations in Turkey have sometimes developed good relations with the state in the historical process, and sometimes they have been perceived as a threat, and they have been tried to be kept under control with certain policies, and even turned into completely prohibited organizations. Considering the developments experienced, it is important to analyze the orders and communities in Turkey in terms of internal and external security. In this part of the study, religious organizations in Turkey will be evaluated in terms of internal security, and their relations with politics, education problems, financial and legal dimensions will be discussed. In terms of external security, the international connections of religious organizations will be investigated and their effects on Turkish foreign policy will be discussed. The FETÖ organization, which has recently caused a crisis in Turkish political life, is an example in this study for investigating the security problem of religious organizations.

### **4.1.The Internal Security Dimension**

The historical roots of religious organizations that are effective in the social field in Turkey go back to very old times. The situation of these organizations with political institutions, in the commercial field, in the field of education and in the legal dimension has changed over time. It is observed that these organizations, which are accepted as a phenomenon in the social structure, are sometimes active in these areas and sometimes cause internal security issues. In this part of the study, religious organizations in Turkey, which has undergone transformation since 1980, will be evaluated in terms of internal security.

Historically speaking, orders were often supported but still kept under control during the Ottoman period. After the proclamation of the Republic, while many reforms were made in the social field, there was a break with these organizations inherited from the Ottoman Empire and it was argued that the religion phenomenon should remain between Allah and the individual. In addition, in this period, the phenomenon of religion was limited so as not to interfere with politics, education and law, and religious organizations were controlled by the state with certain means (Arslan, 2016: 248). The main goal here is to abolish the political, public and cultural powers of religious leaders, which may cause security problems with their current potential, and to transform the current role of religion into a modern Western nation-state by limiting the religion of Islam to public prayer (Lewis, 2014: 408). The incorporation of religious organizations into the field of politics first started with the transition to multiparty life and has gradually increased since the 1980s. These organizations, which have accelerated their activities in the field of education since the 1980s, have become one of the leading actors of Turkish political life by getting stronger financially. When it is examined from a legal point of view, since the 1980s, there has been a partial loosening in the articles of law regarding religious organizations. Today, orders and communities in Turkey are accepted as legitimate organizations that are not legal but socially accepted.

There are many factors that make it necessary to evaluate religious organizations in terms of security. First, the fact that these organizations were isolated from their religious identities in the process and immersed themselves in worldly affairs and turned to the political and economic field are the main indicators of the current deterioration. According to Güngör, although a religious group has different social functions apart from religious life, some problems arise when social functions become more important than their main duties (Güngör,

1987: 107). According to Konur, religious organizations have always had relations with politics, but if this relationship is not outside the borders of politics, it will lead to some security problems in the state after a certain period of time (Konur, 2003: 557-558).

According to Oral Çalışlar, who stated that Turkey is made up of religious communities, he stated that every community that is channeled into politics and that struggles to find a place on the legitimate ground, primarily considers the interests of its own community, and for this purpose, it tries to push the other side out of its social field by being involved in a competitive position. (Radikal Newspaper, 2008). As it can be understood from here, there was no solidarity between religious groups and communities in Turkish political life, and after a certain period of time, a parallel social organization emerged within each group, and institutions were considered suspicious in the eyes of the state. There have been many religious leaders among these organizations, which have come into conflict with the government in certain periods, in terms of internal security. Leaders such as Said Nursi, the founder of Nurcu Community, Muhammet Raşit Erol, the founder of the Menzil Community, and Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan, the founder of Süleymancı Community, are among those who went through judicial and legal processes. In addition, Ali Kalkancı, Fadime Şahin and Müslüm Gündüz, who were the main actors of the February 28 Process, are among the people on trial in terms of internal security due to a religious formation (Arslan, 2016: 251).

Factors such as the rapid migration experienced in Turkey after 1980 and the change in the income balance in the economic and social fields created an important opportunity environment for religious organizations. In particular, it was not difficult for religious groups to reach the poor section in the slums, and individuals who developed a culture of solidarity tended to these organizations. Thus, religious organizations in Turkey, which aim to recruit

people and strengthen their groups, have started a conservative social transformation process by reaching the social base thanks to the networks they have established (Uzun, 2011: 32). Religious leaders, who assumed religious, political and economic roles in this process, are no longer spiritual people. According to Bruinse, these religious leaders have become people who "feel as comfortable in the saddle as they are on the prayer mat, holding their gun as confidently as their rosary"(Bruinse, 2003: 37). Religious leaders, accepted as a mystical instrument of holiness, changed in the social process by becoming the representatives of a worldly leadership, and as their mass effects increased, they began to emerge as a security problem for the state as on 15th July.

The transformation of religious organizations from private schools to holdings by channeling them to the commercial field has been experienced since the second half of the 1990s. Religious groups, which also show diversity with their media activities, started to rise in this period by integrating into the global system. This rise among Islamic religious groups caused them to lose their anti-system and opposition positions after a certain period of time, and to move their problems in the early republican period to a different field (Uzun, 2011: 32). As these groups, which are considered to be outside the system and claim to be marginalized from the central area, approached the center, there were some breaks in their current discourses. These groups, which have experienced a significant change in their perspective towards Western countries, have been in alliance with the USA and Western countries. The moderate Islam policy carried out by the USA in this period created a new opportunity field for religious groups. The Justice and Development Party (JDP), which came to power in 2001, turned this field into an opportunity and achieved significant success in line with the gains of Islamist groups. According to Tuğal, JDP ensured the inclusion of Islamic religious groups within the system based on capitalism, which started to show its effects in Turkey after

1980 (Tuğal, 2010: 40). In other respects, religious organizations, which are afraid of losing their current hegemony, on the one hand, take advantage of the blessings of modernity and mix with the political and economic field, on the other hand, they hold tight to the creeds they describe as Islamic. In fact, while postmodern religious organizations are growing rapidly in these areas, being closed to cultural development causes them to turn into tribes in modern society (Yanmış, 2021). On the other hand, the changing conditions after 1980 lead religious groups in Turkey to become civil, political and interest groups. However, since the concepts of power and interest are not identified with the phenomenon of religion, the formation of these groups as pressure or interest groups has created some problems. The fact that religious organizations, which claim to be Non-Governmental Organizations by instrumentalizing religion, are actually engaged in politics, turns them into an extension or backyard of a political party (Torun, 2020: 86). As a result, the main reason why religious organizations are considered as a internal security problem is that, with the freedom of being in a legally prohibited position, they are included in the political, public and economic fields, and they tend to become a state and a company with the ties they have established on the social base (Torun, 2020: 88-89).

#### **4.1.1. The Relationship of Religious Organizations with Turkish Politics**

It has been observed that religious organizations in Turkey have had a strong influence on political power since the Ottoman Empire. For this reason, we need to consider the role of these organizations in order to understand today's politics. Although the orders in Turkey became banned organizations with the Republican regime revolutions, they have survived to the present day as actors that shape Turkish political life due to their voting potential. Because religious leaders of orders and communities have the potential to direct their followers to vote

for the party of their choice. The capacity of these organizations to influence the results in local elections due to their regional power has led some parties to enter into negotiations with religious groups from time to time (Akyeşilmen & Özcan, 2014: 33).

On the other hand, the politicization of religion causes religion to move away from its essential functions and shift to the social, that is, worldly field. As a result, organizations that use the religious field for their own interests emerge. Especially in Turkey, orders and communities, which are illegal organizations, shape the environments in which they cannot be controlled for their own interests (Kara, 2015: 16-20). On the other hand, in the process of transformation of orders into modern communities, the relations between religious groups and political parties have increased significantly. These organizations, in particular, have been more influential in the political arena during election periods, depending on their quantity. Especially centre-right parties, which see religious organizations as vote depots, have made negotiations with these organizations almost every period, and thus representatives of different religious groups have started to take place in the parliament. In fact, this situation enabled religious organizations to consolidate their current authority by turning to the political formations that they profited the most (Çakır, 1994: 69). However, the inclusion of religious groups in the political field also eliminates the principle of "staying out of politics", which is one of its essential characteristics (Uzun, 2011: 113).

This relationship between religious organizations and political power was first encountered in the relationship with the Naqshbandi sheikhs during the reign of Yavuz Sultan Selim (Ocak, 2010: 75). In addition, during the War of Independence, similar relations were encountered between the National Forces and religious order leaders, while the relations between the

National Outlook Movement and İskenderpaşa Community, and the Yeni Asya Group with Süleyman Demirel are also encountered in Turkish political life (Sözer, 2015: 586). The relationship between the Naqshbandi orders and political parties in Turkey is discussed in certain dimensions. First of all, Naqshbandi groups are concerned about preserving their existence within the current regime. On the other hand, Naqshbandi groups are getting rid of their traditional structure with the effect of modernization, and they want to benefit from the opportunities that their close relations with political parties will bring them (İnce, 2017: 151).

When the relationship between religious organizations and politics in Turkey is examined in the historical process, it is seen that religious organizations, which were suppressed under state control between 1923-1950, turned to the politics field since the 1950s and turned to parties suitable for their own activities. While the aforementioned parties are generally centre-right parties, the National Outlook Movement led by Erbakan, which took part in the political scene between 1960 and 1990, also interacted with religious organizations. In particular, the fact that the National Outlook Movement was founded with the reference of a religious organization brought out its prominence in the political field. On the other hand, relations between religious organizations and political parties have not always developed decisively in Turkish political life. The National Outlook Movement, which was founded with the encouragement of Kotku, the leader of the İskenderpaşa Community, clashed with the community over time. The main reason for this is the leadership competition between Erbakan and Esad Coşan, the religious leader of the community after Kotku. However, due to the basic principles of the Republic, the aims and values of the political field and the aims and values of religious organizations are different from each other (Sözer, 2015: 603-605). In the case of the National Outlook Movement and İskenderpaşa, this difference was ignored and it

was seen that they interfered with each other. As it can be understood from here, religious groups that have lost their essential functions and become secular are also defined as 'religious-based pressure groups' (Çakır, 1994: 68) when we evaluate them in terms of their relations with politics and are discussed in the dimension of internal security in certain periods.

It has been much easier for religious organizations, which have adopted a pragmatic understanding since the 1980s, to develop the ability to articulate with the political field. Especially with the September 12 military coup, an important transformation has been experienced in the religious field. This situation, which was initially seen as a process of adaptation to modernity, eventually resulted in the Islamization of the social and political field by religious groups (Günay & Ecer, 1999: 276-278).

In Turkey after 1980, religious organizations that moved away from their main missions became integrated into the economic and political field (Subaşı, 1995: 86). Especially religious groups that developed good relations with the ruling party sometimes acted in their own interests by removing deputies from these parties (Arslan, 2016: 247). It is possible to observe a typical example of this for the Gülen Community. In this process, politicians who tried to control the base with religious motives and Islamic rhetoric and instrumentalized religion came to the fore. Kenan Evren stated that some of the soldiers who carried out the September 12 military coup belonged to the Bektashi order (Kıvanç, 2001). During the Turgut Özal period, bureaucracy cadres were appointed to these organizations, which were seen as vote depots. While the leader of the Democratic Left Party, Bülent Ecevit, defended the need

to liberalize the orders based on the principle of secularism (Milliyet Newspaper, 1997), former RPP leader Deniz Baykal said in his speech in 1997 that there is no place for orders in Islam and it is right to close these orders (Cumhuriyet Newspaper, 1997). PDP Deputy Altan Tan, who expressed his opinion on religious groups, made a proposal to the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) on March 2, 2013 for the reopening of dervish orders, lodges and tombs. The Justice and Development Party government, which came to power in 2001, received the support of the majority of religious organizations. The JDP's permission and support for the activities of religious organizations has been an important factor in the orientation of these groups to the party. On the other hand, during the JDP period, an operation against a religious organization was carried out for the first time by the state. After the process, there has been a concern that orders and communities that claim to make politics in the name of Islam may cause internal security problems, as seen on July 15, 2016.

Today, when the relationship between religious organizations and politics is considered, one of the most important agenda items is 'caderisation in the bureaucracy'. The Gülen Community's caderisation in the fields of security, judiciary, military and bureaucracy since the 1980s eventually resulted in a religious group trying to get stronger with its existing cadre, attempting a military coup and trying to seize the state. For this reason, it has been started to be opposed to the strengthening of religious organizations in a certain field on the social base and the perception of threat against these organizations has increased. The elimination of the Gülen Community from the fields of security, judiciary, military and politics since 2010 has created a serious shortage. The fact that different religious organizations were able to get into the vacant public space as a result of the good relations they established with the JDP government, just like FETÖ, revealed the concern that it would strengthen over time and

cause a security problem (Terkoğlu, 2019: 79-80). At this point, the most mentioned religious group was the Menzil Community. The fact that the Menzil Community's caderisation in the judiciary and the ministry of health often comes to the fore in the public (Balancar, 2019: 72-73). In addition, another caderisation problem reflected in the press is related to the Military Academy. There were debates among the orders and communities that were staffed in the Military Academy on the question of "which community's religious leader would lead the Friday prayer" (DİB, 2019: 12-13). On the other hand, the permeability between these religious organizations that exist today allows people who are involved in FETÖ to wander around with different orders' masks.

As a result, the only way to eliminate these conditions in Turkey is possible with institutional reforms. Unless a control mechanism is provided, especially in the field of bureaucracy, it is obvious that religious groups may turn to these fields in line with their own interests and cause internal security problems. Undoubtedly, as understood from the coup attempt on 15 July 2016, one of the most important features of religious organizations is the fact that they are capable of forming a parallel state within the state and that the followers of religious groups will choose their sheikh when they have to make a choice (DİB, 2019: 12). For this reason, those who use religion in politics for political benefit and profit, on the other hand, harm religion and cause religious organizations to turn into an internal security problem.

#### **4.1.2. The Educational Problems of Religious Organizations**

Along with the revolutionary laws numbered 430 and 677 implemented in the early Republican period, madrasahs, dervish orders and lodges providing religious education were banned in Turkey, and the Ministry of Sharia and Foundations was abolished. The Ministry of National Education and the Directorate of Religious Affairs were assigned to these institutions operating in the field of religious education during the Ottoman period. However, in the process, religious organizations that claimed that the state had an oppressive attitude towards religious education continued to gather in some areas and provide religious education in secret. As a result of the need in the social base, with the transition to multiparty life, the issue of religious education started to be discussed in the political field. Discussions focused on whether the religious education in question would be given by the Ministry of National Education or the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Lewis, 1952: 47). As a result, in this period, some arrangements were made in the field of religious education, and Preachers and Prayer Leaders Schools and Faculties of Divinity were activated (Öcal, 1998: 244).

Religious organizations, which got rid of their banned positions since the 1950s, have brought their activities in the field of religious education to the legal field. Süleymancı Community, which is a Naqshbandi community organization, has opened Qur'an courses in many parts of the country since these dates. The number of courses in the community, which was 70 until 1956, approached 3000 by 1966 (Aydın, 2004: 311-312). Another reason for this rapid increase in Qur'an courses is the fact that Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan, the leader of the Süleymancı Community, accepted opening a Qur'an course as a divine duty and encouraged his community (Uzun, 2011: 69). On the other hand, religious organizations in Turkey did not

only serve in the field of religious education, but also tended to different education fields such as secondary education. While examples of this can be seen in almost every religious group in Turkey, it is most common in Naqshbandi orders. It is thought that the main purpose of religious organizations that turned to the field of education in the 1980s is to train a mass that will be staffed in the political field affiliated to them (Sarıkaya, 1998: 99). It is known that the Naqshbandi orders, which aim to transform the society morally, turned to educational activities with the support they received from the National Outlook Movement in the political field (İnce, 2017: 152-153). With the arrangements they made in the institutional field, they tended to open Qur'an courses. On the other hand, the Süleymanî community, known as the Naqshbandi order, have never had a good relationship with institutions providing official religious education in Turkey. The reason for this is thought to be due to the Süleymanîs' desire to monopolize the employment of religious officials and the competition between the community and Preachers and Prayer Leaders schools' graduates (Uzun, 2011: 70). Another Naqshbandi order that started to operate in the field of education since the 1980s is the Erenköy Community. Erenköy Community continues its educational activities with 135 organizations in approximately 30 countries with institutions known as Aziz Mahmud Hüdayî Foundation, Muradiye Foundation and Scientific Research Center (Balancar, 2019: 69-71).

Despite the oppressive and authoritarian nature of the post-1980 regime of September 12, the regulations made in the field of religious education led the communities and orders to operate in these fields. In particular, the Gülen Community established 'Preparatory Schools' in this period when it became stronger socio-economically. Emphasizing the 'service' dimension of these institutions, the Gülen Community has started to operate with approximately 250 preparatory schools since 1995 (Sarıkaya, 1998: 98-99). Another development of the Gülen

Community in the field of education was in the field of private schools. The current number of schools abroad of the community, which has educational institutions in three continents from the Balkans to the Central Asian Turkish states, is as follows; 11 in the Netherlands, 14 in Germany, 18 in Nigeria, 10 in Tanzania, 7 in Kenya, 3 in Somalia, 37 in Iraq, 12 in Azerbaijan, 21 in Kyrgyzstan, 6 in Tajikistan, 20 in Afghanistan, 28 in Pakistan, 3 in Cambodia, 4 in Thailand, 9 in Indonesia, 7 in Russia and 1047 in Turkey (BBC, 2016). However, the schools of this organization, which turned into a security problem after the coup attempt of July 15, were closed completely in some countries, especially in Turkey.

With the withdrawal of the state from the field of education in Turkey since the 1980s, it has left its place to religious organizations, and this has led to the emergence of some problems. Families affected by the internal conflicts in the country in the 1970s directed their children to religious orders and communities (Sarikaya, 1998: 98). In this period, these organizations, which provided shelter and dormitory services to students apart from schools, were thus able to include students studying in their institution more easily into the community. It is known that the Süleymanî Community has been active in this field through the *"Associations for Helping School and Course Students"* after 1980.

The purpose for which these students, who turn to religious organizations in line with their economic and social needs, will be used reveals the problematic area in this regard. According to Esergöl Balcı, individuals raised in orders that describe the Turkish state as *"Darülharb"*, that is, "land of war, land of disbelief, and battlefield", have the potential to be easily dragged into activities that may threaten national security in the future. As a result of this situation, which Balcı called 'Erasmus of Order', 1 million children growing up in orders especially in the eastern and southeastern regions are under threat (Balcı, 2020).

On the other hand, the opening of schools that defend the ideology, political view or slogans of an order or community causes the generations who grow up here to have a narrow mentality (Sarıkaya, 2001: 56). In addition, one of the structural features of religious organizations in Turkey is the sense of affiliation they try to instill in their members. Members of religious groups become attached to their religious leaders through education and acknowledge their competence. However, while these people are isolated from the social field, they form a parallel society and break away from the family phenomenon and their social environment (Yanmış, 2021). As a result, the fact that FETÖ, which had thousands of educational institutions in our country in the recent past, started an operation to seize the state, shows that with the education system, separating children from family and country belonging and transforming them into community belonging causes security problems.

#### **4.1.3. The Financial Dimension of Religious Organizations**

It is necessary for religious organizations to have significant financial resources in order to continue their activities in the social field. In recent years, it is seen that the fields of activity of religious groups have diversified and they are active in many fields, especially in written and visual media, education, tourism, health, culture and arts. One of the main fields that religious groups are interested in and receive great financial support from is civil society activities. There are various organizations operating under a religious group in the field of civil society, such as business associations, benevolent associations, and associations for social activities.

The economy, on the other hand, is the social field that includes the distribution of natural resources among demands and requests. In Islamic economics, there is an eternal ideal that

causes moral and economic development of people both in this world and in the hereafter, and aims to achieve the welfare of all people, and tries to establish a balance in every field between the world and the hereafter. The prohibitions of luxury and waste in Islam limited the fields in front of disposable incomes and enabled them to turn to social welfare through foundations. Foundations fulfilled the most important needs of the public by fulfilling many functions in the process of their establishment. There are those who deal with the foundation institution from its political side, as well as the relations between the foundation and the state. These people focused on the role of foundations established by private individuals in the formation of civil society in Islamic societies, and evaluated the foundations established by the ruling class as a tool of public policy. State taxes, which constitute the largest part of public revenues, are an obligation that is paid by the individual without consideration. Since the share of taxes in public revenues is 90%, most of the time taxes are also considered as public revenues. Article 73 of the Constitution states that “Everyone is obliged to pay taxes according to their financial strength in order to meet public expenditures” (TBMM, Article 73). Of course, state taxes are levied only by law, and their collection is valid for the person appointed by law. State taxes are not a value that the state has to take, but an obligation that every citizen must pay for the benefit of the state and the public.

As a natural result of the development moves that started in the 1950s and 1960s in Turkey, the transition to social mobility was made as a result of the transition from agricultural society to industrial society. In this context, there has been rapid urbanization, the slumming of urban existence and the migration of workers towards Europe. Again, in this period, we observe that the popular Islam, which took shape in the countryside and the surrounding area, was reflected in the center and the cities with all its institutions. “At the root of the phenomenon of Islam are

well-known economic and demographic problems and the policy dilemmas they pose to the government” (Zubaida, 1994: 85). The modern nation-state structures established in Muslim countries in the 20th century were insufficient to solve the socio-economic problems they faced and had to withdraw from these fields. In these fields, where the state was insufficient or completely abandoned, Islamic economic and social sectors stepped in under various forms, and over time, they established financial sectors and created a large business and trade volume (Zubaida, 1994: 15-16).

After 1980, religious organizations in Turkey concentrated on collecting donations by exploiting the goodwill and religious feelings of the society. They were financed by collecting money from tradesmen and businessmen under the name of "student scholarship", "zakah", "**benevolence**", "donation" (General Staff, 1997). It has been mentioned in the reports of the prosecution in the legal field that nearly 80 holdings abroad collected money from Turks living in Europe, especially in Germany, and some of them committed fraud. The biggest of these holdings are Kombassan, Yimpaş, Jet-Pa, İttifak Holding, Endüstri Holding, Kamer Holding, Silm Holding, Noya Holding and Umpaş Holding, and the biggest money transfer in these holdings took place between 1998 and 2001 (Milliyet Newspaper, 2006). The fact that this process coincided with the most fragile period of Turkish political life caused Turkey to experience major problems in terms of both internal and external security. Holdings, which changed their methods of collecting money by hiding behind the decisions taken especially after the February 28 process, collected close to 20 billion dollars in this period. These donation funds collected on behalf of different companies in the country and abroad were then transferred to the holding centers in Turkey. These companies were made not only on behalf of the holdings they established in Turkey, but also by Yimpaş Group AG in Switzerland, Yimpaş Verwaltung

GmbH in Germany, Kombassan S.A. in Luxembourg, which are the 'mailbox companies' they created in Europe (Milliyet Newspaper, 2006). Although Islamic holdings have been declared as fraudulent in hundreds of lawsuits filed in Germany, the inability to implement these decisions in Turkey has increased the distrust between countries in foreign policy. While the place where financial income was obtained under the name of donation was mostly Europe, the place where this income was used was generally Turkey. These holdings, established under the name of Islamic values, do not comply with the requirements of the Capital Markets Board. The fact that European countries such as Germany and Switzerland applied to Interpol for the arrest of those responsible for Islamic holdings, and the fact that these activities could not be followed adequately in terms of Turkey's foreign policy created a security gap.

It is an important debate on how the religious organizations that became visible in the 1980s and took the idea of establishing an Islamic society as their duty, got the financial income to open Qur'an courses, hostels and dormitories. It is noteworthy that orders and communities have a lot of financial expenses at the country and abroad when the big parties that have provided mass support socially are in financial difficulties. One of the visible financial supporters of religious organizations is the religious-purpose foundations we call "Brother Foundations". Established under the leadership of Prime Minister Özal's brother Korkut Özal and MP Istanbul Provincial Chairman Eymen Topbaş, Brother Foundations earned money by making joint trade with Saudi capital, and used some of the money they earned for religious purposes (Mumcu, 2020: 140). The prime minister of the time, Özal's leading the Saudi capital as much as he could, was the primary financial source of religious organizations established for political purposes. The most important point here is that the main reason for the increase in foundations established

for religious purposes since the 1980s is related to the financial support behind these organizations.

Islamic Capital in Turkey started in the MP period when the orders were staffed in politics. This process, which started with the January 24 Decisions, gained momentum as of 1986 and led to the emergence of Islamic Capital (Dalan: 67). Another source of money of religious organizations for political purposes is Turkish-Iranian companies. While Saudi capital was investing money in religious education in Turkey through brother foundations, it was trying to support the same field in Iran through Iranian businessmen led by mollahs. Saudi-owned financial institutions such as Faisal Finans and Al Baraka were operating domestically. With the support of Saudi capital, 'Islamic Insurance Companies' were established abroad, the company at the address of Luxembourg, 40 Bl Joseph 11 L. 1840, opened branches in the Netherlands at Geestbrugweg 73 2281, Ch Rijswijk and 10 in London, St James's Street London Sw 1a 1ef. These organizations, which are presented as companies with a fatwa, collected the Money of Turkish citizens living abroad (Mumcu, 2020: 140).

Another religious organization that gained strength in the economic field after 1980 is the İsmailağa Community. The financial resources of the İsmailağa Community are various institutions such as private schools, Qur'an courses, and media organs. Since the 1970s, when the name of the community was heard, it was organized mainly into the lower and middle classes, especially small and medium-sized business owners. İsmailağa Mosque Science and Service Foundation (İsmailağa, 2022), which is the central institution of the community, has been recognized as an organization working for public benefit with the decision taken by the

Council of Ministers in 2015 and tax exemption has been brought to the institution (Balancar, 2019: 68-69). Aziz Mahmud Hüdai Foundation stood out among the foundations and organizations of another important religious organization, the Erenköy Community, and through the foundation, activities have been carried out in the fields of education, media and social culture for about 25 years in more than 30 countries, mainly in the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia and Africa. Within the structure of the foundation, 135 institutions, consisting of divinity and equivalent faculties, teachers' colleges, schools equivalent to preachers and prayer leaders' high schools, Qur'an courses, student dormitories, kindergartens and orphanages, operate in more than 30 countries. Approximately 50 thousand students benefit from these institutions. On the other hand, it is also known that BİM, one of the largest and most widespread retail store chains in Turkey, belongs to the Topbaş family, thus the Erenköy Community. The fact that BİM, which has hundreds of stores throughout Turkey, has a net profit of 1.25 billion TL in 2018, shows that the Erenköy Community has a great economic power (Balancar, 2019: 69-71).

In the financial resources of the Menzil Community, the press, publishing and distribution organs draw attention, and this community also has a television channel called Semerkand TV. In addition, this community earns very high turnovers from the tourism companies it has established for pilgrimage organizations to Saudi Arabia.

The Işıkcı Community, which founded the İhlas Foundation in 1975, was incorporated in 1993 under the name İhlas Holding, which operates in the construction, media, automotive, beverage, food, household appliances and tourism sectors. In the same year, media organizations called

İhlas News Agency and TGRT (Turkey Newspaper Radio and Television) started operating within the structure of İhlas Holding. İhlas Finans, which was established within the structure of İhlas Holding in 1995, was seized by the BDDK (Banking State Supervisory Council) during the banking crisis in 2001 (Balancar, 2019: 72-73).

The financial resources of the Yeni Asya Group are the book sales of Yeni Asya Newspaper and Yeni Asya Publications, which have a circulation of around 50 thousand. Especially after the printing and distribution of Risale-i Nur became a state monopoly in 2015, the Yeni Asya Community has become an important source of income. From July 2014 to January 2016, the Ministry of Culture imposed a banderol ban on Nur Booklets. However, this ban was lifted after reactions from other Nurcu religious organizations. Apart from publishing activities, another important source of income for the community was donations to the Yeni Asya Foundation.

The financial source of the Süleymancı community was the people living in the rural areas. It is very common in Anatolia to visit village mosques, especially during Ramadan, and to collect donations for a few course students, accompanied by an adult teacher, at harvest time in summer. From this point of view, although Süleymancı community was born in Istanbul, was founded by a well-educated person and exhibits an urban structure in organizational terms, it generally created a demand in the rural areas at the subcultural level (Aydın, 2004: 321). With their unique Islamic inferences, they were able to use the area prohibited by Islam, such as interest, and even by giving the fatwa that even gambling can be played on the condition of winning, they enabled their supporters at home and abroad to benefit from the benediction of capitalism (Kara, 2008: 337). In this way, the community had a great economic power. The

financial resources of the Süleymancı are mostly the donations made and collected from inside and outside the community, the incomes obtained from commercial enterprises and sacrificial animals' skins. In addition, the activities of the community in foreign countries and the support these countries give to the organization are quite high. The Süleymancı community, especially since 1979, has been institutionalized and started to work in the USA. Today, the Fatih Mosque and Social Complex in New York is used as the main center of the community, all decisions are taken here and followed meticulously, and efforts to create sub-service units are continued. According to the General Staff's report titled "Threat Evaluation of Reactionary Organizations", Fatih Mosque and Social Complex, headed by Burhan Satar, is the center of the American Muslim Union, and continues (Birgün Newspaper, 2016) 2 representation activities with 5 mosques, 11 foundations and companies, 6 branches. According to the same report, Süleyman cıs, which operates as a public institution in Germany, applied to the official authorities and received support from some Christian democratic politicians and the German Grand Masonic Lodge.

Said Nursi, the founder of the Nurcu Community, did not attach importance to the economic organization of the state. The reason for this is the free market economy in Turkey. The community's biggest source of income is donations made by its members. The members of this community, which did not establish any companies or economic institutions affiliated with them, consisted of large company owners. High-income donations were collected from people who owned these companies. The Fethullah Community, which is the most influential among the Nurcu religious groups, tried to gather supporters in the public by establishing Non-Governmental Organizations, and through NGOs, the "Kimse Yok Mu Solidarity and Aid Association," associations and foundations affiliated with Turkish Confederation of Business

men and Industrialists (TUSKON), and 7 federations and associations with 211 members were established (TBMM Report, 2017: 188). In addition, this community has financial/economic institutions, schools, universities and dormitories in Turkey and abroad. Especially the preparatory schools and broadcasting institutions established in Turkey constitute the most important financial resources of the community. In the post-1980 period, while generating income with financial resources within the education index of the community, employment was created for the members of the organization.

In summary, religious organizations in Turkey have been institutionalized in Turkey and abroad by obtaining important sources of income financially after 1980. The fact that these groups operate through associations and foundations under the name of NGOs has taken these organizations from an illegal dimension to a legal dimension. However, these organizations, which we cannot qualify as NGOs due to their structural features and functions, have started to operate as an interest group, leaving aside their religious functions. The conglomeration of these religious organizations after 1980 by leaving their form of order and community and the transformation of religious leaders in these organizations into CEOs reveals that they have lost their essential functions. It can be said that religious organizations that cannot be controlled and that benefit from the economic field as well as the political field, have turned into a national security problem financially, when their international connections are taken into account.

#### **4.1.4. The Legal Dimension of Religious Organizations**

When the religious organizations in Turkey are examined from a legal point of view, it is not possible for neither orders nor communities to continue their activities today. Because, with the law article 677 adopted on November 30, 1925, these organizations became completely prohibited. According to the article of the law, dervish orders, lodges and tombs were closed, wearing clothes suitable for religious orders and using titles suitable for this organizations were prohibited, and it was stated that those who opened these closed places or those who were active in these places would be punished (Konur, 2003: 552). Another point that should be emphasized when it is examined from a legal point of view is the justification of this article of law. In the early Republican period, with the Sheikh Said case, these organizations were completely closed considering the possibility that religious organizations could pose a threat to the regime with their current potential. However, despite the Law on Closure of Dervish Orders and Lodges in 1925, orders and communities continued to operate illegally until today.

In Turkish political life, it is seen that some restrictions are made on the phenomenon of religion within the legal framework. First of these, according to the Law on Societies, which was put into effect on July 14, 1938, societies that were based on order or sectarian, caused discrimination among the Turkish nation, favored one family, community or group over the other, and had hidden purposes were dissolved by the Council of Ministers (Law of Associations Article 9, 1938). In addition, according to Article 10 of the same law, the establishment of the aforementioned societies abroad is completely prohibited (Law of Associations Article 10, 1938). As it can be understood from the article of this law, religious organizations that are classified as orders and religious NGOs in Turkey are prohibited organizations due to their current functions. Another restriction in the religious field is that a political party cannot be established to provide support from a certain religious group. For this

reason, religious propaganda should not be made in the statutes of political parties and should not carry religious purposes, otherwise they will be closed (Berkes, 2012: 536). Another legal restriction in the field of religion emerged with the amendments Made to Article 163 of the Penal Code on June 16, 1949. According to Article 163, it is considered a crime to change the social, economic, political or legal systems of the state by establishing a society, even partially, in accordance with religious principles, contrary to secularism (Penal code Article 163, 1949).

Some legal concessions to religious organizations have been made since 1983. Pursuant to Article 24 of the prepared Constitution, some space was opened for religious organizations, and they were allowed to operate in certain fields. According to the article of the law, worship, religious ceremonies and rites are allowed to be held provided that it is not contrary to the provisions of Article 14, that is, fundamental rights and freedoms are not abused (T.C. Anayasası, 1982). However, according to Article 174 of the 1982 Constitution, which is still in force today, it is stated that no reform law article "with the aim of raising the Turkish society above the level of contemporary adaptability and protecting the Republic of Turkey" (See Article 174) cannot be claimed to be unconstitutional. For this reason, it is stated that the unconstitutionality cannot be put forward in the revolution law No. 677 on Dervish Orders and Lodges. Another regulation regarding the legal dimension of religious organizations in this period was that on February 25, 1925, the Treason Act was repealed due to the Anti-Terror Law of April 12, 1991 (Official Newspaper, 1991). According to the first article of the Treason Act, adopted in 1925, those who establish and participate in societies to use religious values for their political purposes are considered traitors (Official Report of Journal TBMM, 1925: 310). With the amendment of the aforementioned article in 1991, it became difficult to make a definite determination about the concept of treason and one of the legal obstacles in front of religious organizations was removed.

Considering the legal status of religious organizations and the attitudes of state officials and politicians towards religious organizations today, it is seen that a contradictory situation has been carried over from the 1980s to the present. The orders, which were considered as a security problem in 1925, have continued to exist until today, even though they are legally prohibited organizations. It was also difficult to control religious organizations that were integrated into the social, economic and political fields, as they were illegal in this process. The foundations belonging to these organizations were gathered under the General Directorate of Foundations with the establishment of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the prevention of the legitimate activities of these groups, which were dealt with around the security phenomenon. However, the attitude towards foundations in the early republican period started to change from the 1950s, and communities and orders in Turkey continued their activities through foundations and associations, especially since the 1980s, in order to eliminate their illegitimacy (Kara, 2008: 96). However, this does not change the fact that these organizations are illegal from a legal point of view and hinders the auditability of their fields of activity. When evaluated from this point of view, it is considered as an unavoidable process that a religious organization that does not have any legal regulation that can provide transparency in terms of its organizational structure and that does not control it causes some problems in terms of internal security.

#### **4.2.The External Security Dimension**

While the religious organizations in Turkey are handled in terms of security, the basic dynamics of official policies in Turkey and external factors have gained importance. For this reason, in this part of the study, the international connections of religious groups outside Turkey, which were evaluated in terms of foreign security after 1980, and their effects on Turkish foreign policy will be analyzed. In addition, the Gülen Community (FETÖ), which

has transformed from a community organization to a terrorist organization, is important for understanding how a community that emerged on the territory of the country caused a national security problem on a global scale.

The concept of security consists of internal and external factors that are constantly interconnected. While the problems that threaten the security of the society organized within the state are evaluated in the field of internal security, the problems that arise in the relations of the states with each other are included in the external security dimension. The political, economic and cultural relations produced by the countries interacting with each other in the field of international relations are analyzed in terms of the concept of security.

Historical facts maintain their priority in the perception of internal security in Turkey. According to the definition of the General Secretariat of the National Security Council, the internal threat is expressed as follows: “Perception of a danger that includes organized crime and violence against the constitutional order of the State, the indivisible integrity of the country and the welfare of the nation, whose root and provocative sources are inside and/or outside, which is carried out openly or secretly at home” (MGK, 2021). Religious organizations in Turkey are especially perceived as an internal security problem because they threaten the principle of secularism. However, when religious organizations, which exist as socio-cultural structures in our country, started to spread in many fields since the 1980s, it has become necessary to deal with different dimensions. Although it is not true to claim that all of the mentioned organizations are on Turkish territory or that they originate from social phenomena, factors such as the Iranian Revolution and Wahhabi in terms of external security were also effective in the formation of some religious groups in Turkey (DİB, 2019: 265).

It is an important fact that religious organizations, which have turned into illegal structures since the establishment of the Republic, gained some liberties in the process, and which were discussed in terms of internal security with the February 28 process, started to be discussed with the external security dimension, especially with the developments on July 15, 2016 (Arslan, 2016: 242). In particular, it is necessary to take into account the reasons why some religious organizations that emerged on the territory of the country began to struggle with the political power and how this process turned into a security problem on an international scale.

#### **4.2.1. International Connections of Religious Organizations**

Considering the security perception of Turkey, it has been considered that there are always external enemies and their extensions within the country that threaten the territorial integrity and security of the country. Especially religious organizations in Turkey have emerged as institutions that are approached with suspicion with the proclamation of the Republic. With the increase in the effectiveness of religious organizations since the 1980s, the international connections they have developed in the process have been an important factor affecting the foreign security policy in Turkey. These groups, which operate in many countries, especially in Germany and the USA, have been institutionalized through foundations, associations and schools. According to the report prepared by the Directorate of Religious Affairs in 2006, it was determined that many of the order sheikhs or religious community leaders, who are around five thousand in Turkey, have connections with some states in the international arena. It has been emphasized that the main purpose of some religious groups in Turkey is to cause civil war through sectarian conflict.

Institutionalized abroad and handled within the framework of security with its international connections, Süleymanî is one of the most popular religious groups in today's Turkey. This community first established the Islamic Cultural Center in Cologne, Germany in 1973 in the

international arena, then spread to different cities and countries and formed around 300 Islamic Cultural Centers, 220 of which were abroad (Yükleyen, 2008: 384). The competition between religious organizations in Turkey has also affected their organizations abroad, especially since the 1980s. The establishment of the National Outlook Movement in European states was realized through the Directorate of Religious Affairs. However, during this period, the payment of the current salaries of religious officials working abroad by the Saudi Arabia-based '*Rabita*' organization has been a matter of debate (Aydın, 2004: 313). Drawing attention to the international connections of religious organizations in Turkey, Sait Çamlıca claimed that the German state supported the Süleymanîs, the Menzil Community and FETÖ, and stated that the main purpose of the German state was to use these religious groups (Odatv, 2018).

The Gülen Community, which has turned into an international threat over time with its international relations since the 1980s, has recently become one of Turkey's most important security problems in the international arena. Although the international connections of the community are known, the organization of the community in the USA, where Fethullah Gülen resides, is very strong. The organization has a widespread educational structure and economic volume in the USA. It is known that FETÖ, which has approximately 140 schools in the USA, generates 500 million dollars of income per year. It is said that George Fidas, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Analysis Unit, which is linked to FETÖ, and Graham Fuller, former chief of the CIA Turkey Desk, and Morton Abramowitz, the former US Ambassador to Ankara, have given significant support to this group. Büyükelçisi Morton Abramowitz bu gruba önemli ölçüde destek verdiği söylenmektedir (Polis Akademisi Başkanlığı, 2018: 45). Especially the fact that some authorities in the USA allow FETÖ to be established in the fields of education, politics and trade within the country reveals the existing

relations. Another region where FETÖ is strongly organized is Europe. The fact that EU countries saw the organization as a useful card against Turkey was the main reason for their support to this organization. It is known that the schools established by FETÖ, which has a strong organization especially in Germany, received significant help from the German state. In addition, it has been determined that approximately 300 NGOs affiliated with FETÖ operate in settlements (İnat et al., 2017: 11; Dexter, 2016: 1-10).

With the end of the Cold War Process, the telegram “Demand for information on orders, Kurds and Islam and minority religions in Turkey” sent from Washington to the Ankara Embassy on July 22, 2009, with the approval of Clinton, is important in order to understand the connection of the USA, which is accepted as an effective power in the global-scale international relations system, with the religious organizations in Turkey. Because, according to this telegram, the USA, while examining the religious organizations in Turkey, analyzed how open they are to external factors and the mechanisms for foreign religious groups to penetrate Turkey (Çongar, 2012: 110). As a result, religious organizations that were institutionalized in the international arena and received support from different states in the economic, political and educational fields in the post-1980 period became a threat to Turkey's security dimension. Revealing the international political connections of religious organizations in Turkey is important in order to be able to fight within the borders of the rule of law

#### **4.2.2. The Effect of Religious Organizations on Turkish Foreign Policy**

The field of international relations is related to the relations between states based on the social structure, historical processes and various actors. On the political platform of these relations, there are alliances, wars, diplomacy and cultural interactions. The foreign policy of states is defined as the strategies created by policy makers in these fields in the international arena (Goldstein, 2017: 37-46). While states create and implement foreign policies, they create a set of organizational mechanisms and relations.

Certain facts have been influential in the foreign policy-making process of the Republic of Turkey. The main target of the foreign policy followed in the early Republican period is accepted as Westernization and democratization, which are accepted as the necessity of the age. In addition, the protection of the territorial integrity of the state in this period constitutes one of the basic elements of foreign policy (Gönlübol & Kürkçüoğlu, 1992: 1051-1083).

After the Second World War, the dominant view in Turkish foreign policy developed towards ensuring the security of the country, depending on the expansionist policy of the Soviet Union. In this period, trying to become a member of NATO, Turkey tried to transform its foreign policy in accordance with this structure. In addition, the developments in the international arena were reflected in Turkey's domestic policies, and the harsh attitude towards religious groups, which was thought to create a barrier against Soviet expansionism, was softened in the process that started with the 1947 RPP Congress. On the other hand, in the bipolar world order, Turkey's relations with the Islamic countries in the Middle East suffered a serious loss of prestige and although Turkey was the only Muslim country in NATO, it could not use this advantage (Davutoğlu, 2004: 259). In the 1970s, the National Salvation Party, which was in power during the period of right-left conflict and instability in

Turkey, increased its emphasis on religion in domestic politics and made religious organizations visible in the political field. In addition, Ankara turned to the Organization of the Islamic Conference by creating a strategy for religion in Turkish foreign policy in this period. The Green Belt Theory, which was created by the US foreign policy for the argument of the threat of communism during the Cold War period, created a significant transformation in Turkish foreign policy in this period, and paved the way for religious organizations operating illegally. Towards the end of the 1980s, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the threat of communism began to cease to be the main argument of the US foreign policy, and for this reason, the "Moderate Islam" project for the radical Islamic movements that were on the rise in this period was put into action.

Graham Fuller, one of the architects of the moderate Islamic policy of the USA, expressed the current policy of the USA with the following words; "All we can hope for is that liberal Islamists persevere in their work to introduce a renewed understanding of Islam and universal Islamic values in the modern age...finding allies throughout the Process." (Fuller, 2004: 345). In Turkey, which is a NATO member, the Moderate Islam Project has formed the basic framework of foreign policy and relations with Western countries. In addition, in the report titled "Islam in Turkey" prepared for the US administration by the Rand Corporation, which is allegedly linked to intelligence units in the US, it is suggested that the US should be in contact with religious organizations and moderate Islamic groups in Turkey (Cumhuriyet Newspaper, 1990). The Gülen Community, which carried the main arguments of the Moderate Islam Project against radical anti-Islamic groups, was on the rise during these periods. In the report titled "The Prospects of Fundamentalism in Turkey" prepared by Graham Fuller, who is also the Turkey director of Rand Corporation, while the recent rise of religious organizations and Islamic movements was praised, the USA's meddling in the internal affairs of other countries

was also justified. Fuller states that the religious groups in Turkey have successfully solved their current problems with regard to Islamic movements and integrated into the democratic system, and that the relations established by the USA with religious groups have contributed to this success (Albasan, 2021).

Considering the general framework of today's Turkish foreign policy, the goals of the Republican regime based on the basic ideology and the developments in religious organizations that have changed in the historical process do not coincide. Especially in these two poles that tend to conflict, the changing foreign policy after 1980 is important. With the transition of the phenomenon of Islam from the social base to the political field, Turkish foreign policy has also undergone a transformation. However, some religious organizations in Turkey continue to exist as an element threatening the regime and unitary structure of the country in the threat perception of Turkish foreign policy since the establishment of the Republic. The most important example of this was FETÖ's July 15 coup attempt. As a result of the coup attempt on July 15, 2016 in Turkey, an important turning point was experienced not only in domestic politics but also in foreign policy. After this process, the priority of Turkish foreign policy was the return of Gülen and the struggle against the activities of this religious organization abroad. The refusal to accept the red notice request requested by the Ministry of Interior regarding FETÖ caused tension in relations between Turkey and the USA (TRTHABER, 2021). In addition, the negative approach of European Union (EU) countries towards the extradition process against FETÖ members has negatively affected EU relations in Turkish foreign policy. Germany refused to extradite FETÖ prosecutors Zekeriya Öz and Celal Kara to Turkey, and damaged existing diplomatic relations by not accepting that FETÖ is a terrorist organization (Hürriyet Newspaper, 2016). On the other hand, the July 15 coup attempt is not only considered as an internal attempt. With this coup attempt, the roles in the

international equation were redrawn, and Turkey was left alone by the countries it considered allies and entered into an important security dilemma. Due to this problem, Turkey's need for a more independent policy and security in the international arena has increased rapidly.

#### **4.2.2.1. From Community Organization to Terrorist Organization: FETÖ**

The Gülen Community was born from the Nurcu movement led by Said Nursi, who was educated in the Naqshbandi madrasahs, within the state of the Republic of Turkey. The Nurcu movement, which started as a resurrection movement and turned into a social movement in time, was divided into subgroups after Said Nursi's death in 1960. The Gülen Community, on the other hand, became a religious organization among these sub-groups, which turned into a terrorist organization in Turkish political life and caused security problems. Although the Gülen Community led by Fethullah Gülen accepted Said Nursi as the 'rationalist of the century', it never accepted other Nurcu religious groups (Açıkgeç, 2008: 572).

The Gülen Community, which operated as a small-scale community until the 1980s, expanded rapidly, especially with the September 12 coup. Since this period, the Gülen Community has focused on education and opened schools in many countries. In addition, this community was active in the commercial and media fields. During this period, it was frequently mentioned in the press that he established close relations with Prime Minister Turgut Özal and was organized in military schools (Balancar, 2019: 82-89). Since the 1990s, the Gülen Community, known for the concept of 'dialogue between religions', has been the group least affected by the military intervention processes, especially with its relations in the political and military fields.

While public spaces were opened to religious organizations with the effect of the harmonization process with the EU between 1999-2005, the group that benefited the most from these

developments was the Gülen Community. In this period when the JDP came to power, the Fethullah Gülen Community tried to direct Turkish political life by settling in many state institutions, especially in the military, education and judicial fields (Balancar, 2019: 82-89). The community, which has strengthened at all levels of the state, has been an important ally for the JDP government until 2010. However, with the constitutional amendment referendum held in 2010, the Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK) was completely taken over by this religious organization, and a crisis broke out between the Justice and Development Party and the Gülen Community. In the ongoing process, with the JDP's closing of the community's preparatory schools, the February 7 National Intelligence Organization (MIT) Crisis in 2012 and the December 17/25 Events in 2013, on the other hand, the current crisis is the reflection of the power struggle between a religious organization and the political power. The main reason why a religious organization has such a high operational power in the Republic of Turkey is that it has infiltrated state institutions with an increasing momentum since the 1980s.

With the coup attempt on July 15, 2016 as an operation to seize the state, the Gülen Community revealed how a religious organization turned into a terrorist organization. The coup attempt, which overshadowed all events in terms of internal security, revealed the transformation of a religious organization that emerged as a service movement into a "Parallel State Structure" or "Fethullahçı Terrorist Organization". The main reasons for this are that a religious organization leaves its original functions and becomes secular and tries to direct politics by adopting an interest-oriented structure. This event has made it necessary to deal with the religious organizations, which are accepted as an internal security issue in Turkey, also with the external security dimension (Arslan, 2016: 252).

It is not correct to equate this organization, which the National Security Council started to define as FETÖ on May 26, 2016, with all other religious organizations in Turkey. Although the FETÖ organization is a totalitarian and secret structure in essence, it has created a parallel structure to the state in terms of trying to gain power and profit by instrumentalizing religion. However, the important point here is that the other religious organizations in Turkey, losing their essential functions and instrumentalizing religion, and also trying to touch on fields such as politics (Amin, 2007: 1-19), economy and education, make them a useful card in the eyes of international actors, while increasing the risk of them turning into a national security problem.

## CONCLUSION

In this research, it has been discussed under which conditions the religious organizations, which have existed as a socio-cultural formation in the historical process, have turned into a domestic and foreign security problem in Turkey since the 1980s. In this context, the social transformation process of the religious organizations inherited from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey has been examined, focusing primarily on the conceptual framework and historical background. In addition, Naqshbandis, Nurettin and Süleymanî, which are regionally influential in Turkey, are discussed with their structural features and functions. In the historical background, the perspective of the founding power on religious organizations and the reforms implemented in the Early Republican period were evaluated together with the transition process from the single-party period to the multiparty system. Orders and communities, which became prohibited organizations with the establishment of the Republic, went underground due to the existing pressures until the 1950s and tried to hold on to the periphery of the public center weakly. However, this status quo has changed with the effect of internal and external conjunction since the 1950s. The fact that Turkey is in the Western bloc against the Soviet Union and that the USA follows a foreign policy that supports Islam has bent the policies of the political power in the field of religion. Especially with the transition to multiparty life, the effects of modernization and industrialization began to be seen in religious organizations with the start of the religious revival process. Religious organizations, which started to show a tendency towards community organization in this period, gained different functions within a structure squeezed between the west and the east. According to Meeker, the fact that the society culture in Turkey is secular and western, while the community culture is eastern and Islamic, has caused the form of religiosity to change shape. It has been observed that the banned religious organizations got rid of their traditional forms in the social field and

started to operate through associations and foundations. In fact, it is seen that while the fundamental organizations of orders and communities are being transformed, their functions are reduced and this leads to an identity crisis for religious organizations. Especially since the 1980s, religious organizations, which moved to the center in the field created by the internal and external conjuncture, turned into civil, political and economic pressure groups. In addition, it has been observed that since the 1980s, some legal concessions were made to the religious organizations that were banned in 1925.

In the process starting from the 1950s to the present day, religious organizations have begun to be seen as a vote depots for political parties, and this has created a mutual interest relationship. Numerically strengthened religious organizations actually saw this political relationship as a way to turn it into financial gain. The problem of staffing in bureaucracy, which is still widely debated, is the result of the influence of religious organizations in the political field and the relations established with political parties. Another field in which religious organizations have started to operate since the 1980s is the economic field. In fact, one of the most important situations in these organizations, which accelerated their commercial activities through foundations and associations after 1980, differed from the order and community phenomenon in the past, is their integration into the economic field by pursuing financial gain. Religious groups, which conglomerates with their financial resources, have replaced the orders of the past, which had the philosophy of choosing substance level living (*'Bir lokma bir hurka'*). These organizations, which try to gain financial gain by instrumentalizing religion through zakah, charity and donation, cannot be audited because they are not legal. Religious organizations that cannot be controlled in the public field, on the other hand, appear as a security problem due to their commercial activities. In addition, since

the 1980s, religious organizations, which have a pragmatic understanding, have increased their activities in the field of education. While orders and communities contribute to the formation of a parallel social organization with their activities in the field of education, it is also seen that, just like in the example of FETÖ, it also provides an opportunity to raise individuals who are detached from the country's affiliation, attached to the community, and raised with the consciousness of affiliation. The fact that this education, which is generally given in order and community dormitories, cannot be controlled by the state, is an important problem in raising future generations. The fact that religious organizations, which have always been considered as an internal security problem in Turkey, started to be addressed in terms of external security, came to light with the coup attempt of the Gülen Community, which became visible as a religious community since the 1980s, on July 15, 2016. In fact, another reason why the cadre who founded the Republic in 1925 banned religious organizations is that these organizations are open and suitable for use by foreign states. In fact, it is seen that many religious groups in our country were also affected by external factors during the process and had international connections. Especially in domestic politics, the process that started with the "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" since the 1980s is actually a reflection of the moderate Islam project of the USA. In this period, the USA provided financial support to many religious organizations in Islamic countries, allowing these groups to become stronger and operate. Thus, religious organizations, which have the opportunity to institutionalize abroad and are supported by state institutions in the countries where they are located, have a significant impact on Turkish foreign policy. In fact, using the religion of Islam as an anti-communist ideology in countries like Turkey has dragged these organizations into an endless adventure. An important transformation process has been experienced in Turkish foreign policy, especially with the transformation of a religious group into a terrorist organization in the process experienced with the coup attempt of July 15. It has been revealed

that the main problem of Turkey, which has entered a security impasse in the international equation, is the religious organizations in question, which are strengthened by the state and made open to control by foreign intelligence agencies.

Although there are banned organizations that have gained legitimacy thanks to the support they receive from the political power and the social base, their situation is completely different from the current problematic and the situation in the past. Religious organizations, which were suppressed in the Early Republican period, come to the fore today due to their instrumentalization of religion and it is thought that these organizations dominate public institutions.

What needs to be done by the state is to create a legal framework that will ensure the transparency of religious organizations in our country by considering the legal dimension. The rapid acceptance of religious organizations on the social base due to their structural features makes it necessary to supervise these organizations by the public authority. In this context, it is important to examine the Meclis-i Meşayih, which was established due to some deterioration in religious organizations in the last period of the Ottoman Empire. In order to keep the religious organizations in Turkey from being a security problem, it is imperative that these organizations return to their original functions. In addition, the establishment of the merit system in the administration will prevent these organizations from being included in the political field on an interest-based basis.

On the other hand, it has been seen that completely banning these organizations, which are accepted by the social base, did not bring any results when the Early Republican experience is taken into account. For this reason, it is important to include these organizations in a legal audit mechanism. Otherwise, the risk of the formation of groups that provide benefits for politics and commercial activities by instrumentalizing religion will continue. In addition, it will be difficult to prevent the use of organizations such as FETÖ, which has turned into a national security problem, by foreign intelligence organizations. On the other hand, considering the religious organizations that are accepted on the social base but have lost their essential functions and turned into a security problem, substitute organizations that reinforce the individual/social solidarity phenomenon can be established under the control of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, instead of the "front companies" established between religion and the individual. In addition, by employing social scientists such as sociologists and psychologists in cooperation with relevant ministries and institutions such as the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of National Education, it is possible to contribute to the existing process.

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