

Daily Life and Laicism Practices¹

The relationship between religion and laicism always reflects itself in daily life as an element of conflict. Current circumstances reveal at the first instance that daily life is divided into various niches and each one of these niches are circumspect at the expense of promoting the others. The modernist imagination about how the religion could be given a form in modern circumstances, today in every part of the world, lend itself to large scale regulations which take into account religion's place and authority with regard to how daily life could be given form. One of the most typical of these regulations is in place in Turkey.

The imagination of daily life of modern republic was subjected to the limits of the desire of getting modernized. Modernity implies a new imagination of life which represents a break-up with tradition in the 19th century. The unique way to realize this imagination was seen as Westernization. Westernization was seen and applied as an indispensable means in realization of modernity. While at times the terms "modernization" and "Westernization" are used as synonyms, in fact, what was designed under these terms was internalization of Western social thought and practices as a whole.

Traditional Turkish society's mentality by and large was shaped by religion (Ülgener, 1981). Similarly Islam's presence which penetrates deeply into daily life, was seen as a dominant legitimating source in the political field, as well as in other units of social life. In this context even in the earlier modernization attempts, it is quite important that a need to find references through Islamic origins was felt (Kara, 2008). Indeed religious interests and discourses dominated the practical interests of rulers without being limited with their search for legitimating.

The main themes of Turkish modernity are crystallized in the arrangement of niches through making them secular, as is clearly seen in the establishment of the republic (Davison, 2002). With these arrangements, reducing the traditional weight of religion in our world was sought. This preference allowed a new atmosphere which gave the impression that religion was almost entirely dismissed. Likewise vulnerable tension points which might be deemed as quite tentative were formed not only in religion, but also in the world of values which was fed from the religion. The elites of the new regime agreed on the fact that the religious thinking,

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mentality and activity which characterized the practical life, after all had many serious limitations concerning the goals that the Turkish society should achieve (Subaşı, 2004).

With this arrangement which might be seen as pretty dim, the aim was to appeal to religion as an appropriate tool. Because that half-realized project was not welcomed by a serious attentiveness in the reference world of the Muslim society and that reformers were relatively far from the religious world must have made it necessary to give up expecting support from these circles (Jäschke, 1972). At last from now on, the primary indicators of the new conception and Westernization, which were recalled with the whole republic, would form a new framework in which values that came to the forefront by an Islamic past was pictured as a problem.

In this process the question of which values would form a basis for the construction of daily life was seen as problematic areas in themselves. In fact values could be defined as criteria which were referred when evaluating people, people's qualities, wishes and intentions or behaviors. Values as criteria which were used to measure the importance of people, models and intentions and other social and cultural things, could in reality be seen as places of orientation and significance (Güngör, 1998). In fact the concept of "value", together with "being" and "knowledge" form the three basic subjects of classical philosophical world. When the question of for which higher goals individual and social demands would be channelized, was raised, problem of values comes directly into the forefront.

Through the Turkish modernization a shift to a new understanding of life was realized. Thus, it was imagined that a modern society could be built through a new world of values. But the arrangement of society in a modern and Western framework would make it necessary to cease the relationship with every value which has associations with tradition and even continuously updates it. As a result of this Islamic values are coded as basic reference points which the traditions rely upon, and replaced by the values of Enlightenment which were shaped by French style. In fact the transference of values is a problematic attempt. The production of values in many centuries forms the basic constituents of the identity with the social elements of belonging and reference. In every stage, the import of values brings the society face to face with an anomy which was doomed to be realized. The negligence of root paradigms ate off the feelings of "I" and "we", and weaken the criteria of self-defining and and projections of future (Davutoğlu, 1997).

In the process of Turkish modernization, the transference of values in expense of excluding their own cultural and religious inventory, gave an end to the routineness of daily

life. The fragmented mentality structures, a loose order which made morals and ethics pretty subjective created serious problems in the arrangement of political field (Paker, 2003). But this intention bears continuity and the values of modernity are always recognized and accepted as values of Republic as well. This transformation as a result would necessitate the negligence or rejection of Islamic values which were among the determinant factors of daily life. The desire of modernization which was indispensable for the republic, in time, turned into a sacred intention. With this intention the way to revision of primary values of Turkish society, in line with the criteria of modernity; and a need for essential dismissal and restoration in the field of values was emerged. And at times this sensitivity went hand in hand with warnings which might be deemed as radical (Toprak, Çarkoğlu, 2006).

The values of the republic could find a new realization to themselves only in the axis of modernization and laicism. The orientations in the political field also reflects the efforts to institutionalize this reality. In fact it cannot be told that the political field proceeds independent from these values. The real motive upon which the construction and spread of the new values rely, was shaped by interventions in the fields of politics and education. While the cognitive maps of the society were transformed by the renovated curriculum, new recognitions in the field of values would become unobstructed by the possibilities of the political field. Here, what was expected from the given politics was to use a secular rhetoric which aims to strengthen the power and hegemony by continuously updating the features of Republic in the context of Turkey. Thus the basic arguments of the politics would be shaped on the frontiers of the Turkish modernity with a complete loyalty. This rejection which was not limited by a critical account of the Islamic past, would create serious obstacles before the application of basic tenets of the traditional legacy as a serious reference network. Thus in the universe of politics which might be deemed as occasionally pragmatic, the essential thing was to make the society accept a framework which would help the continuity of the new regime. The favorite thing in the new register of the politics was to make it unhindered that “secularization by laicism”, which the state included in the priorities, become accepted by masses with a continuous sensitivity and expanded as much as possible.

However the transformation of the field of values was not as easy as assumed even by radical interventions. In fact the field of values could be considered as indications, even maps which could meet with root paradigms. It cannot be said that the interventions to the field of values, would create responses which would satisfy the expectations. Similarly the images of Turkish modernity which made it possible to often talk about a whirlpool of values,

in fact were the result of a lack of satisfactory value production (Mardin, 1992). The question of which values would replace the old values, more interestingly to what extent these values would find a response in the society's secret and deep world, creates some gaps which could be assumed as highly uncertain. Even though a construction process, which found Western life styles as indispensable for the restoration of daily life, as a result it is seen that these values surprisingly emerge again (Birtek, 1998).

The pragmatism which is seen as one of the most important weaknesses of the Turkish modernity, characterized the field of values as well as the political field. The aims which were shaped in the political world, increasingly in a way which could be assumed as a complete fragmentation, shook also the world of values. The presence of modernization in the hegemonic level, never lost its quality of being the main mold of the society. Different political representations which came till today, always hesitated with regard to overcoming the dilemma between the society's moral values and the complicated goals of the society. Together with this, it must not be overlooked that the political rhetoric of the discourses of the political right, left, and Islam, appropriate manners which could be deemed as highly attemptive concerning the breaking of the sieging pressure of the formal life styles (Subaşı, 2005).

The only value whose legitimacy could not be discussed is laicism and secularism which is aimed through laicism. Laicism, which was determined by the state as a basic tool for consensus is undoubtedly specific to itself. The main axis which applies to Turkish laicism is to sweep away the potential effects of religion from the frontiers of the state and public space. This attentive manner, not only ceases religion's being a representation in the political field, but also brought forth an effective revision for accents on values based on the religious axis. In the mainstream politics, which wants a total secularization of daily life, the current is to intervene to the epistemology of the society and make the citizens be subjected to new paradigms (Krş. Shayegan, 1997; Oskay, 1989). The concern that the values most of which fed on religious arguments would limit the expectations of a laicist and secular life style, increases the strength of vulnerability on this subject.

This determination in Turkish politics does not make it possible for politics to have stances independent from the necessities of the state. This limitation makes it harder for searches of other values to exist and present themselves. However alternative discourses also have to emphasize the dangers which could be created by new value perceptions on the construction of a Western, laicist and secular society. The gap in the field of values neglects

the main intersection points on which the society should unite. The moral and religious demands want to legitimize their emphasis on values by criticism aimed at Western values which diminishes the desire of unity and solidarity.

On the other hand the map of values which never changes by the operative interventions of the social reality, always enlivens a surprising area of exploitation in the pragmatic nature of the political world. In this context, the usage of national and spiritual values of the society as a part of the dominant systematic would be subjected to a wide range of accusations from “exploitation of religion as a political tool” and “abusal of religion”, to “religious exploitation” and “trade of religion” (Kırş. Siar, 1985; Ergüder, Esmer, Kalaycıoğlu, 1991). In fact the scale of values which are assumed as legitimate, emphasize a world view that is realized on the axis of formal curriculum of Turkish modernity. The realization of modern values without relating them with the tradition, thus corresponding to a severe aching, makes an atmosphere of total disorder the unique reality of daily life. Thus the forms –which could be deemed as Turkish– of relationship between values and politics, continue their presence with an assurance to remain totally loyal to the modern demands of the state, taking a place among the main characteristics of the Republic.

Here it is necessary to focus on the field of religion which continues its presence in the world of modern Republican values, always with an uncertainty. Though it is deemed as essential that religion should be harmonized with the nature of the new regime, it is also known by the founder actors that the nature of religion always have a remarkable distinctiveness. When we focus on whether there was a religious policy among the main political orientations of Republican elites, it occurs at the first instance that the main itinerary which existed originally was designed relying on pragmatism.

While religion had been ceased to be a central element among the founding principles and ideals of modern Republic, frequently reoccurring presence of some fears which could remind a returning back to a world of imagination based on religion, created a profound consensus basis that religion should be controlled. Thus, this intention and orientation enabled shaping the religious education in the statement of Republic’s presence through a interminant continuity. (cf. Ayhan, 1999). How should this actual situation be understood?

A political form, with which we are familiar today through a main vein of analysis of power by Althusser and Foucault, Bourdieu and Arendt, continuously reveals itself, concerning the molding of daily life at the time of the foundation of the Republic. Thus the

urgent need to reorganize the state had convinced the leaders of Republic that the structures of daily life should be upset. The reflections (which could be deemed as increasingly Turkish style) of this restructuring that was realized on the axis of modernization, had produced a new language and grammar that finds its main sensitivities in a laicism of its own version.

Accordingly the essential goal in this redesigned society should be modernization. Modernization was the unique way to be contemporary. In order this goal to be realized, Westernization would be needed continuously. Westernization was to become European. In effect, Westernization was part and parcel of the tide of becoming civilized, and it was necessary that the republic should be involved with this adventure without losing time. On the other hand, the one and only way to achieve that goal was to erect a strong barrier between the traditional partnership of religion and state. The foundational imagination, which was embodied in the founders' tendencies concerning religion and today when considered retrospectively exactly took the shape of a tide, cannot be understood without taking into account the circumstances of the time (Jäschke, 1972).

The effect and attraction which 19th century Europe caused over the countries on the verge of Westernization, led to a considerable radicalism over the place of religion in the modern world. In the West, the dominant theme in the theories concerning the new place of religion produced a sociological mechanism, which could be deemed as quite explanatory in itself. For example, the positivist imagination as a dominant paradigm was expanded surpassing the subjective view of Comte, and religion was being removed from its place as one of the primary sources of legitimating in daily life. Thus religion would not be seen as a producer of values. The religious perception of positivist discourse today confronts quite harsh criticisms, but with the support of intellectual discourse the initial radicalism took a considerably long way and became one of the determinant features of daily life as much as it could.

The real theme inherent in the religious policies of the Republic could be explained by the transference of this radicalism to Turkey. But it is impossible to see the radicalism of religious policies with the same harshness and even with the same clarity in every period of the Republican history. Thus this difference brought a variety as a result, which could be deemed as a distinctive feature of Turkish laicism. When these observations are taken into account, it cannot be said that Turkish laicism has a route yet in reality. The image presented by Turkish laicism is available to be defined as a tide. Whether by radical or liberal policies in fact the real goal, which was intended to be attained by every policy, is doomed to bear the

uncertainty about religion. For example the question of what as a religion Islam represents for laicist Turkey, was exposed to various solutions in the main stages of Turkish democracy. Essentially this fluidity applies mostly still today.

An analysis of laicism scattered, even disordered in itself allows less a strong discourse than analysis which bring forth security; and this also gives explanatory clues about the routes taken by Turkish religious policy. For instance, it is not clear what kind of a world of significance that religion was associated in the trials of one-party, or multi-party politics; or what religion does signify even it was handled on its own. As a result this ambiguity not only problematize the religious policies, but also the education policies which could be taken into account in this context.

The route which the Republic determines for itself is shaped by emphasize on Westernization. The motives which imply the new directions this route would take converge with the effect of a violent wave of laicism and are legitimized rapidly. The main implications and clues which could be taken from this story, lead us to different backgrounds and some searches of conceptions, which could be associated with pragmatism. Thus, while Atatürk and modern founding elites of Republic felt the need to deal with religion quite openly and their emphasize on religion as a main tool of daily life, their main problem was to eliminate all the potential obstructions that might occur before a demand of modernization that would be realized through Westernization (Subaşı, 2005: 32). And religion was seen as one of those obstructions.

Still, the question whether the Republic has a religious policy from its beginning, is not without an answer. The answers searched, should be fed from different expectations. Essentially, the networks of reference, which were stimulated both by circles who wish to move religion with a considerable weight into the public space and by circles who wish the reverse order, converge with various Kemalist emphasizes and discourses. At the end, the differences in Kemalist reading and consideration turns Atatürk's biography, and including Nutuk all his speeches, his political preferences, his personal preferences and attitudes into a technical property. The religious analysis which was developed through images of Atatürk that portrays him as of right wing, of left wing, and as a Muslim were compelled to overcome this problem of property. (For instance see Gürtaş, 1982).

The continuity of religion as the same with its existent value and form was encoded as an impossible demand with regard to the expectations of the new regime. However religion's role in daily life had a reality which should not be ignored. The searches about how

to balance the links between intention and reality necessitated that state should deal with religious space which it appropriated from now and then. But this return was obviously different from Ottoman attitudes about religion. The religion which Ottomans referred to as a tool of legitimization redefined in the modern Republic. According to Republican elites religion was not a necessary tool to make state be approved. However, the importance of social unity and of taking religion under registration as the mold of new nation-state was emphasized constantly. This sensitivity had led to such issues like religious reform, religious courses, Imam Hatip schools have a vital place among the main problems Turkish laicism (Akşit, 1993).

In this framework the question of changing the traditional framework which was formed by Islam and reorganizing of that framework by a reform, was among the important problems of both Republican elites and the intelligentsia. It is frequently observed that the mold into which the concept of Muslim could be placed, was continuously changed by the intelligentsia especially after Tanzimat, and indeed reorganized through interventions based more onto external reasons than an internal description. It was thought that with these molds, a basis for a profound and reasonable religiousness could be refunded after a break in the relationship between the religion and attitudes that are defined as “heresy and superstitions” (Subaşı, 2005: 30; Ayrıca bkz. Bayramoğlu, 2006).

In fact the analysis of pioneering elites, with a chaos of intentions frequently intertwined with exercises of reformation or radical politics, led to a suspicion that an apparent religious policy was continuously followed. For this reason, the subject of religion would be compelled to be handled as a problem many times, and efforts would be spent to give an order to spiritual life by considering the given circumstances. However, the values which these efforts relied upon were also quite ambiguous. In the face of unexpected reflexes of social dissidence, which declared religion as untouchable, the state was compelled to refer frequently to the functional weight of “prosperity”, “reaffirmation”, and “restoration”. On the other hand, the traditional assumptions over the adequacy of religion in the face of new circumstances, left their places to searches, which raised the harmonization of religion with new questions as a problem. And these searches as a result exposed religion to the intervention of a series of operations, allowing it to become an object of the new circumstances. In this context, “Turkish religious reform” is a completed project, and the state still has a right to intervene, which was derived from the mentioned intention; and whenever religion comes to be an important problem, the state could also gain a new dynamism. On the

other hand, both the nature of Protestant reform, and the structure of reformist tendencies in Turkish modernization, continue to have significant effects on everybody who speak about Islam. The distorted meaning of “prosperity”, “reaffirmation” and “restoration” integrated with the reformist modernist interest (Subaşı, 2005: 38).

In this context, every time a policy of religious education would be told of, it is necessary to consider the reservoirs that the state tried to protect. The foremost important one of these reservoirs is the protection of new order of perception concerning the religion’s modality. It is possible to understand the problem of religion which appears in some of the turbulent orientations of Turkey, only by following this new order of perception. In this framework it is difficult to explain the institutions of religious education which actually occur by a discourse which could be matched easily with a theme of radical anti-religious attitudes, on the axis of Kemalist sensitivities. The discourses which built the religious policy of the state onto an opposition, in reality, desired to declare religious demands as illegitimate (Krş. Özdalga, 2006). But among the policies of the Republic, the practices and implementations which showed religion as an unregistered part of the state could not be overlooked. Indeed the earthquake caused by some practices which occur with the excitement of the foundation of the new Republic, could be assumed to be pretty capable in destroying the indicators of religion in daily life. It must be difficult to understand how the same determined attitude led to the implementations which could be seen as openly in conflict with main features of laicism. If the state had a religious policy, that policy should be based on living with the mentioned conflict. Thus, issues like mandatory religious courses, and far more importantly the presence of a Religious Affairs Directorate, offer explanatory clues about how the modern Republic balanced the contradictions between laicism and religion (see Mardin, 1990).

The common conception is that the assurances or consolations about religion occurred as a result of demands of masses, in the process of multi-partied political life. Even in these circumstances, it is worth to discuss the issue of what kind of positions the areas opened to religion could be transformed into. Concerning the demands of masses, it is a widely known phenomenon that the world of politics could transfer the necessities of religious field into its own language. However, when we take into account that religion as a social phenomenon was assumed as an open assurance of the existent political regime and used as an effective shield or a filter against the Marxist wave coming from Eastern block and internal religious uprisings, it cannot be overlooked that the instrumentality of religion was the issue

in every experience. When it comes to the imagination of religion as religion, and being content with it, the considerable fears of both the state and opposite discourse were seen.

These fears and routine anxieties account for the persistence on such subjects as institutional unification of Religious Affairs Directorate, foundation of Imam Hatip Schools and Faculties of Theology and a certain mandatory nature of religious courses, even they are given on a gradual basis. The state's search for conduct, which could be defined by efforts to put religion into the service of technology of government power in a controlled way, instead of establishing parallel relationships with religion, allow expectations related with accepting the religious field as a secure ground. In this framework, policies concerning religion within the one-party political life, and within the multi-partied political life as well, helped religion have a cliché presentation as a part of the ideological tools of the state (see Aktay, 2000: 29-36). The periods when the main patterns of this presentation get clarity are periods when Turkish democracy came to a halt. In these periods a new discourse which fortifies the mainstream approaches to religion was needed. For instance the atmosphere dominant in the aftermath of 1980 (Tanör: 1997; Subaşı: 2005) relied on the fear that religion could become a dangerous tool of opposition without the control and intervention of the state.

In Turkey the pragmatism which determines the direction of the policies concerning the religion does not allow that religion becomes a basic mold as a world design in the last analysis. But the implicit support provided from the religious field does not allow the arguments which limit the credibility of the official discourse on a massive basis. This situation give some clues that the religion was transformed into a kind of tool for legitimization even it is loose. But it is impossible to derive results which have certainty. Because the matter is a religiousness and religious devotion which are defined (Subaşı: 2006; Cizre:1999; Çarkoğlu, Toprak: 2006).

At last whenever a problematic concerning whether there is a policy of religion in Turkey is focused on, first and foremost it is necessary to concentrate on the aspects of religion which converge with various expectations in the society and the state. This attention requires that we see religion might be put into service as a pillar supporting the shaky and no established official rhetoric. And this in the last analysis might be defined as a real-political preference.

Today designing of daily life with new values and taking under control the current fluidity with operational interventions without obeying any restrictions led to a perception of religion which is hard to describe. In the daily life which is shaped by the interventions of

politics and the siege of laicism, naturally religion was also got significantly away from its traditional style, for instance even the religious universe of an ordinary religious person became convinced of the practicality of rough and sectarian ways.

Nowadays it is no longer discussed what religion means for each of us individually, for instance on which levels the difference between “having no religion” and “having a religion” occurs or is felt is not talked upon. What religion corresponds in the world of reality is also considered a little; similarly a little significance is attributed to its absence or the consequences of its denial or negligence.

“In a country where 90 percent of the population is considered as Muslim”, Islam as a religion, despite its huge organizational structure and variety could be handled only as a problem of security every time. But it is necessary to understand on which criteria of values a religiousness frequently underlined meet with our world of mentality, daily life styles and moral preferences.

As religion is seen as an area of interest which is neglected with memorized attitudes, prejudices, careless and disgraceful suggestions and exercises, denials and acceptations, its reflections in daily life are also handled on the same level. It might be thought that an ordinary believer may give some clues about the consistency of the religion, in which she/he believes. Similarly it might be guessed that an ordinary irreligious may give the main images on which her/his preference relies upon.

These pairments are used to support the mentality of organization, modern imagination about how the basic features of religion could remain so open to the influence of the daily life. On the other hand, every time the social price of problems which were included in the religious field was discussed, believers think that they get rid of this conspiracy by being accused as “ignorant of religion” and non-believers think they did the same by saying “Religion is this at all.”

The cognitive, emotional, and even the intellectual aspects of possible connections between the religion and the believer is persistently neglected; the short-cut interpretations damage both the human and her/his space of assumptions. Today without paying attention to the mental world of a typical “religious” person, which was upset by countless interventions, her/his actions are continued to be encoded and read as a reflection of an “inventory of faith”. At last the analysis which were done on the axis of these familiar schemes and datas, could not go beyond strengthening our perceptions and interpretations about religion. And with

these one could not have a new “mighty hand” which would break through or force the limitations we are subjected to. Today in the analysis the human and her/his actions are underlined more than religion. In this context religion is also considered as the same with an archaic register of human and social expectations. However this analysis could not go further from revealing the reference systems that we are connected.

But when a person believes in a religion, then she/he is considered to be connected to it and be subjected to a system of knowledge, transcendental explanations a space of values. Believing, even at the initial stage, requires reason, to think, to evaluate, to ask account of and account for, to deal with tormenting questions, to have a serious attitude towards being and life. Thus begins a tight process of experience which requires questioning, going into deep with heavy thinking, to follow the claims of truth, to compare.

At the end, one may take pleasure from one decision, may prefer to believe or not to believe. In fact, in our daily life each of our presumptions goes through the same processes, similar adventures. We may gain the thing we take into account seriously only if we put effort for it, appropriate it, pay a price for it. When our analysis of distance to religion is subject to same processes, then it is not difficult to reach plains which may be assumed as effective. Making philosophy, even it is handled in opposite forms frequently as a recurrence which got habitual, in effect requires that we consider each of these stages; when all these ignored then an accomplished thought cannot be reached.

In the case of Turkey, the situation seems not to be different at all; here again religion is often considered through its function, role and status in the current establishment. The religion’s visibility in daily life, where it corresponds to in public-private spaces, its problems of harmonization in the context of modernity, its organic relationships and demands with the given politics, the tension points which are locked in between the religion and the world etc., all these issues are handled, considered and questioned in a way that their results could only be assumed as a part of laicism/secularism arguments.

On the other hand, the preferences about religion mostly go in between being included in a cultural continuity or not. In the environment where we participate in life, from family to neighborhood, from official curriculum to public partnerships, almost everywhere, a ground for reason is already built, to which our presumptions (that are expected to make us satisfied) about which religion we would remain loyal and obedient could rely on without exceptions. This referential sequence, unless the universe we dwell in does not seem any different from usual, continue to have explanations which would satisfy us.

This conviction not only does not neglect to refer to maps of meaning in a common epistemology, but also conforms to the molds of a given paradigm. Instead of placing religion over the dominant paradigm, taking it as an organic part of this paradigm, even subjecting it to the explanation of this paradigm many times, occurs as a weakness of cultural distinction. Connecting to religion over cultural affiliations stimulate some emotional gaps which could be considered as some sort of nostalgia. And this restricts the emphasis of clarity of religion with a form of ambiguous and naive religiousness, which could vary from an unpleasant radicalism to plain declarations of identity.

Nowadays it is easily understood that popular understanding of religion is not available for a profound questioning and learning about how it could provide a contribution to our world of being, our preferences about life, and above all our demands of understanding and explaining the universe we live in.

Religion gets identified with an elitist attitude with every interest having a concern of getting deeper. Nevertheless it is quite difficult to come across with manifestations of this orientation which could be deemed as quite limited, in countries which like Turkey always had a tense relationship with religion. Because in these countries religion could only be recognized and discussed in the language of socio-political reality. But the implications of religion which stand as an answering proposal could be considered as an opportunity, a richness of imagination, even as a chance for all of us.

As every religion which claims to overcome the basic problems of humanity, Islam also claim to help maturing of the human soul by closing all the gaps in all areas of human life, and by the desire of supporting her/him against the whole universe without limiting itself to structure her/him always. The examples of the image of Muslim, which are deemed to be a part of the past, today could be seen only in places which aren't tainted by the presentations of modernity. The faiths, identities and imaginations which were upset by modernity changed profoundly the perception of religion. This change in the perception of religion meet on a new path with the modernization of main demands.

The differentiation of the tools speeds up the loss of meaning. A religious rhetoric which is not translated into the language of new times bears the danger of staying outside of time, and the relationships of many people with religion remains as mysterious agenda knowledge.

Modernity shakes all the parameters of societies which have traditions. For this reason, though Islam, which continues its presence among public, has a powerful and confident language, it is not always possible to reach the new products of this language and discourse in the context of modernity. Even though the Muslim society establish a new contact with modernity which could be assumed as relatively formal, in these new times this rhetoric can not go beyond being a weak, thin voice. Even in cases where modernity seems to be well penetrated, religion could not be made to meet with a different language and discourse, beyond being a weak partner.

While religion is benefited from in current strategies of modernity, this strengthens the common claims about instrumentality. For example the urban public could no longer attain the enthusiasm, spirituality and emotion that it would like to find in religion; it seems compelling. The urban language of Islam, which it produced in the tradition, seems to leave its place to the narrow universe of provinces, or the lively world of the migrant. Basic fixed points are discussed frequently, and the language of religion also gets secularized fastly.

The vision of religion, which is weakened by daily politics and laicist requirements, gain new forms with modern molds of consumption. Religion, with the effect of the wave of secularization fast gets a daily face. Thus it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish religious demands and religious exploitation; religion seems to be as a phenomenon more than a state.

Many people who come into contact with modern criteria of religiousness are compelled to take any sublime pleasure from religion. But religion, without regard to its relationship to whichever worlds of meaning, somehow reminds itself as the “lost taste”. The aspects of religion, which could not be loaded onto the interests of another person, as opposed to what Marx once pictured as “the language of the poor”, today could be converted in the international power relations. Different religious attitudes, reflexes and stances could be talked upon; for instance in the case of Islam, the way before the politics which are vulgarized as radical, fundamentalist or modest Islam, is cleared. The aspects of religion which could be seen as a place of security on the cognitive plane now could be redefined totally as tools of insecurity.

On the other hand the symmetric partnership in the same methodic framework, of the representations of Islam and opposition to Islam, which are both shaped in public level is not much considered. As it happens in the religious imagination which is fed through provincial religiousness, also in weak political criticisms which continued opposition to religion through

several repetitions, it is preferred to wander around the frontiers of commonplace knowledge, instead of an intellectual ground.

The attitudes of people who cannot bear the presence of difference, do not change much against believers or non-believers; the tension which is created by an establishment which sees the thing different than her/himself as a source of danger, allows the efforts of religion to be included in the politics through sociological images.

The steps taken by the Muslim scholars and philosophers who took on to diminish the damage of the losses which occur through Islam's meeting with the outside world, today became a fantastical interest. Theologians, do remember little of their predecessor Gazali, against the intellectual attacks coming from his contemporaries, and philosophers remember little the alertness and motives of Ibn Rushd against a religiousness without a philosophy and motives, and act on this remembrance.

In this context the question still remains: How could Islam not find a way to a new civilization from its remarkable being which "catches the eye" always. In modern times, whose duty is that to read the aspects of religion which changed and to give it a respectable and lively status without ignoring the requirements of current times? If the real goal is to attain a satisfying peace, then in this framework it is necessary to concentrate considerably on questions such as the harmonization with the modern world, the search of accomplished responses to the discourses opposing Islam and the efforts to diminish the increasing fears and misperceptions about Muslims.

Otherwise the current state of religion could not go beyond a search which oscillates in between the lost taste and the missed peace, and never stays calm.

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