PERFORMING MORAL OPPOSITION: MUSINGS ON THE STRATEGY AND IDENTITY IN THE GÜLEN MOVEMENT

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Abstract

This paper investigates the Gülen movement's repertoires of action in order to determine how it differs from traditional Islamic revivalist movements and from the so-called 'New Social Movements' in the Western world.

Two propositions lead the discussion: First, unlike many Islamic revivalist movements, the Gülen movement shaped its identity against the perceived threat of a trio of enemies, as Nursi named them a century ago – ignorance, disunity, and poverty. This perception of the opposition is crucial to understanding the apolitical mind-set of the Gülen movement's followers. Second, unlike the confrontational New Social Movements, the Gülen movement has engaged in 'moral opposition', in which the movement's actors seek to empathise with the adversary by creating (what Bakhtin calls) 'dialogic' relationships. 'Moral opposition' has enabled the movement to be more alert strategically as well as more productive tactically in solving the everyday practical problems of Muslims in Turkey. A striking example of this 'moral opposition' was witnessed in the Merve Kavakci incident in 1999, when the movement tried to build bridges between the secular and Islamist camps, while criticising and educating both parties during the post-February 28 period in Turkey. In this way the Gülen movement's performance of opposition can contribute new theoretical and practical tools for our understanding of social movements.

Recent works on social movements have criticized the longstanding tradition of classifying social movement types as "strategy-oriented" versus "identity-oriented" (Touraine 1981; Cohen 1985; Rucht 1988) and "identity logic of action" versus "instrumentalist logic of action" (Duyvendak and Giugni 1995) by regarding identities as a key element of a movement's strategic and tactical repertoire (see Bernstein 1997, 2002; Gamson 1997; Polletta 1998a; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Taylor and Van Dyke 2004). Bifurcation of identity versus strategy suggests the idea that some movements target the state and the economy, thus, they are "instrumental" and "strategy-oriented"; whereas some other movements so-called "identity movements" challenge the dominant cultural patterns and codes and are considered "expressive" in content and "identity-oriented." New social movement theorists argue that identity movements try to gain recognition and respect by employing expressive strategies wherein the movement itself becomes the message (Touraine 1981; Cohen 1985; Melucci 1989, 1996).

Criticizing these dualisms, some scholars have shown the possibility of different social movement behaviour under different contextual factors (e.g. Bernstein 1997; Katzenstein 1998). In contrast to new social movement theory, this work on the Gülen movement indicates that identity movements are not always expressive in content and do not always follow an identity-oriented approach; instead, identity movements can synchronically be strategic as well as expressive.

In her article on strategies and identities in Black Protest movements during the 1960s, Polletta (1994) criticizes the dominant theories of social movements, which a priori assume challengers' unified common interests. Similarly, Jenkins (1983: 549) refers to the same problem in the literature by stating that "collective interests are assumed to be relatively unproblematic and to exist prior to mobilization." By the same token, Taylor and Whittier (1992: 104) criticize the longstanding lack of explanation "how structural inequality gets translated into subjective discontent." The dominant social movement theory approaches such as resource mobilization and political process regard these problems as trivial because of their assumption that identities and framing processes can be the basis for interests and further collective action but cannot change the final social movement outcome. Therefore, for the proponents of the mainstream theories, identities of actors are formed in evolutionary processes wherein social movements consciously frame their goals and produce relevant discourses; yet, these questions are not essential to explain why collective behaviour occurs (see McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). This reductionist view of movement culture has been criticized by a various number of scholars (e.g. Goodwin and Jasper 1999; Polletta 1997, 1999a, 1999b; Eyerman 2002).

In fact, the debate over the emphases (interests vis-à-vis identities) is a reflection of the dissent between American and European sociological traditions. As Eyerman and Jamison (1991: 27) note, the American sociologists focused on "the instrumentality of movement strategy formation, that is, on how movement organizations went about trying to achieve their goals," whereas the European scholars concerned with the identity formation processes that try to explain "how movements produced new historical identities for society." Although the social movement theorists had recognized the deficiencies within each approach, the attempts to synthesize these two traditions in the literature failed to address the empirical problems and methodological difficulties.

While criticizing the mainstream American collective behaviour approaches that treat the collective identities as given, many leading European scholars fell into a similar trap by a

priori assuming that the collective identities are socio-historical products rather than cognitive processes (see, for instance, Touraine 1981). New Social Movement (NSM) theory, which is an offshoot of European tradition, has lately been involved in the debate over "cognitive praxis" (Eyerman and Jamison 1991), "signs" (Melucci 1996), "identity as strategy" (Bernstein 1997), protest as "art" (Jasper 1997), "moral performance" (Eyerman 2006), and "storytelling" (Polletta 2006). In general, these new formulations attempt to bring mental structures of social actors and symbolic nature of social action back in the study of collective behaviour. The mental structures of the actors should be considered seriously because they have a potential to change the social movement behaviours, tactics, strategies, timing, alliances and outcomes. The most important failure, I think, in the dominant SM approaches lies behind the fact that they hinder the possibility of the construction of divergent collective identities under the same structures (cf. Polletta 1994: 91).

This study investigates on how the Gülen movement differed from other Islamic social movements under the same structural factors that were realized by the organized opposition against Islamic activism after the soft coup in 1997. Two propositions shall lead my discussion here: First, unlike many Islamic revivalist movements, the Gülen movement shaped its identity against perceived threat of the triple enemies, what Nursi defined a century ago: ignorance, disunity, and poverty. This perception of the opposition is crucial to grasp non-political mental structures of the Gülen movement followers. Second, unlike the confrontational nature of the new social movements, the Gülen movement engaged in a "moral opposition," in which the movement actors try to empathize with the enemy by creating "dialogic" relationships.

Turkey after the Post-Modern Coup: Organized Opposition against Islamic Social Movements

As many scholars pointed out, the neo-liberal policies of the Turgut Özal cabinet paved the way to a rapid growth of Islamic revivalist movements in 1980s (e.g., Onis 1997, Cavdar 2006). The secularist elite favoured the incorporation of Islamists into the larger system because of the threat posed by the radical left movements at the time being. Özal's free market policies enabled small-scale provincial businesses and the large city petit bourgeoisie to develop rapidly in late 1980s and formed MUSIAD, an association of Islamic capitalists, in 1990. This new Anatolian bourgeoisie had envisioned both a socially Islamic public and an economically liberal society (Yavuz 2003). The new bourgeoisie, however, is consistently excluded by the big corporations and isolated from the centre in economical terms. The economic isolation, together with political marginalization, has produced a political Islamic movement, which is mostly supported by the "Black Turks" (Yavuz 2000).[1]

The rise of the new bourgeoisie was powerful enough to alarm the secularist elite. A recent report of the European Stability Initiative, a research organization in Berlin, argues that,

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1 The term, Black Turks, itself suggests center-periphery approach to Turkish politics. According to Serif Mardin (1973), one of the prominent Turkish sociologists, the Turkish politics can only be conceptualised by identifying two forces date back to late Ottoman modernization period: (1) the centre, which is composed of the civil-bureaucratic elite, and (2) the periphery, who represents the ordinary modern citizen. For Mardin, the Turkish modernization process provided the conditions for the estrangement of the periphery from the centre and therefore, the peripheral forces at an increasing rate began to define themselves with religious rituals and identities. Technological developments and neo-liberal policies led to better penetration of the centre into the periphery; however, the peripheral forces have been excluded from the control mechanisms of the centre. In his late writings, Mardin argues that the centre-periphery duality remained the basic duality into the Republican period and still very influential in shaping current Turkish politics. See, for example, Mardin 2006.

from the 1990s onwards, Anatolia has experienced a silent revolution due to the economic success of the emerging "Islamist Calvinists," who frequently attribute their achievements to their "Protestant ethic."[2] As a number of analysts pointed out, however, the new bourgeoisie was not largely based in small towns of the Anatolia, rather, a significant component of the political Islam supporters were well-educated professionals or businessmen living in largest urban areas (Onis 1997, Yavuz 2003). In this regard, it is very important to see the appeal of Islamist discourse, which was an ideological unifying force among the all different sorts of "excluded" Black Turks from poor peasants to urban professionals. Since the secularist "centre" of the society was radically "elitist" and exclusionary, social forces of the periphery, those who are alienated, became so diverse.[3] As Onis (1997: 748) convincingly puts,

> The religious symbolism associated with political Islam provides the unifying bond that helps to engineer a cross-class alliance, bringing together individuals with markedly different status in society. What is common to both groups is that they are part of the 'excluded,' but excluded in a very different sense of the term. The poor and the disadvantaged who form the principal electoral base of political Islam are excluded in the sense that they do not share in the benefits of growth in the age of globalisation. The professionals, the businessmen and the intellectuals whom we would classify as the rising 'Islamic bourgeoisie,' are clearly benefiting from globalisation and modernity, yet also feel part of the excluded by not being part of the real elite in society. In this sense, political Islam as a protest movement and the ideology of the excluded constitutes a challenge to both left and right-wing parties of the established secular political order.

> The civil and military establishment of Turkish Republic, which consists of the military leaders and the secularists among the civilian population, has expressed its deep concern about the growing success of the pro-Islamic Welfare Party (WP) during 1990s. The municipal elections of March 1994 were the turning point in the transformation of the WP into a nationwide political force. As many scholars note (Onis 1997; White 2002), WP have capitalised on the weakness of the social-democratic left municipalities of the large metropolitan centres. The WP ranked first in the 1995 general election after receiving 21.4 percent of the popular vote. The party's charismatic leader Professor Necmettin Erbakan managed to be elected prime minister, on July 8, 1996, in a coalition with the centre-right True Path Party. This was unprecedented in the sense that, for the first time in the 73 year history of the modern Turkish Republic, a person who had so openly challenged the secular pro-Western orientation of the country had come to power (Gruen 1999).

The WP's economic and political program was based on a project entitled Just Order (Adil Düzen), understood as a third way between capitalism and socialism. The party's program, which has a particular interest in establishing a common market with Muslim countries, was essentially a collectivist program having a semi-socialist outlook (Caha 2003). The Just Order discourse, which openly aims to transform the whole society upon the basis of traditional values and symbols, increased the scepticism of the secular elites about the "true" intentions of the party and its leadership. Although the leaders of the party did not clearly express their favour for Sharia, an Islamic order, they seemed to criticize the secular order

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2   "Islamic Calvinists: Change and Conservatism in Central Anatolia," *European Stability Initiative Report*, September 19, 2005. Accessed from www.esiweb.org, January 30, 2006. Although the report's title offers that there are "Islamist Calvinists" in Anatolia, the theory/practice gap evidenced in the work was plain to see in the following pages: "It is hard to say whether the rise of 'Islamic Calvinism'…is a cause of their commercial success…, or whether increasing prosperity has led them to embrace interpretations of Islam that emphasize its compatibility with the modern world" (p. 25). For criticism, see Author (forthcoming).

3   The diverse nature of the periphery against the secularist center is usually omitted in the scholarship on Turkish Islamic movements. The Gülen movement's impact has proved that a very significant amount of individuals from the new Muslim bourgeoisie have rejected to support political Islam and joined non-political Islamic groups.

and many values connected to it.

Due to the growing scepticism among the secularist circles, the WP's exercise of power as the government did not even survive for a year. On February 28, 1997, the National Security Council (NSC) issued a long list of measures to be urgently implemented by the Erbakan government. This kind of military intervention was unprecedented in Turkey in the sense that the action was not a direct intervention of politics by brute force. Therefore, some commentators called the intervention as a "soft" coup or a "postmodern" coup (Yavuz 2003, Bulac 2007). In fact, the February 28 coup was not the effect or outcome of a single memo, but was rather a transformation into a "process" (Cizre and Cinar 2003; Author 2007). The Erbakan government was forced to resign in June 1997 as a result of behind-the-scenes pressure from the military; however, it was not the end of the story, instead, it was the first step of the February 28th process, a process "of monitoring, controlling, and criminalizing all Islamic activism as a security threat and institutionalizing a permanent legal framework for ostracizing devout and active Turkish Muslims from the market, educational, and political spheres" (Yavuz 2003: 277).

After the fall of the Erbakan cabinet, following governments began to implement the list of measures. Mandated by the Turkish military and the NSC, the governments' consequent legislative and administrative steps towards elimination of irtica , religious reactionism, include the proposals that all activities of Islamic movements should be under strict scrutiny and surveillance of the state; eight-year uninterrupted and compulsory elementary education should be enforced in order to unite the all educational activities across the country under the supervision of the state; Imam-Hatip (preacher) schools should be limited in number; and, Kemalist modern dress code should be strictly implemented in public sphere (Gruen 1999).

The February 28th process was a typical example of what political scientists call "securitization", the process of defining an issue "as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure" (Buzan et. al., 1998: 23-24). During the February 28th process, the securitization agenda was primarily held as well. Censorship, the police and an extreme network of spies and informers were activated by the "deep state"[4]; so that free exchange of political ideas was suppressed. In the process,

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4 The concept "deep state" refers to illegal enterprises within the state, which is an important aspect of Turkish politics. The Susurluk accident in 1996 revealed illegal organizations operating in the name of the state, taking considerable help and support from the civil and military bureaucrats. These organizations have justified their presence by claiming that they are protecting "state interest" or "national interest" (Turkone 2007). The emerging threat of Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), a Kurdish terrorist organization, in 1980s, further legitimized the presence of some forces that carries out illegal operations for the sake of the state. In November 2005, a renegade member of the PKK currently employed as an 'informant' by the security forces, two officers of the local gendarmerie and possibly higher level officers were allegedly involved in bombing a local bookstore and forming illegal networks that targeted suspected 'sympathizing' citizens of the PKK (TESEV 2006). This event, known as Semdinli affair, was followed by some other events and, in a couple of months, five different illegal organizations were found and some army officers were arrested. See "Nice çetelere," Radikal, June 2, 2006. The events hinted the existence of shadowy formations within the security forces and raised questions about the 'legality' of the measures in fighting terrorism in respect to citizens' rights. For Hanioglu (2007), the deep state is not a new phenomenon; rather, it is a legacy of late Ottoman period. As William Hale (1994: 8) points out, Machiavelli's observations about the Ottoman Empire still relevant in terms of the strong state culture in Turkish politics: "It would be very difficult to acquire the state of the Turk; but, having conquered it, it would be very easy to hold it." Lately, Christopher de Bellaigue of The New York Review of Books noted that "some members of the armed forces, afraid of losing the prestige, political autonomy, and big budgets that they have enjoyed since the PKK rebellion gained momentum in the late 1980s, do not want peace at all… The relative freedom with which Ocalan's (the captured leader of the PKK) lawyers have been able to pass on

two parties (Welfare Party and its successor Virtue Party) have been abolished because of their allegedly Islamic roots[5], about 900 military officers were removed from their posts; certain corporations were defined as "green capital" and discriminated against in governmental contracts and bids; hundreds of Qur'an courses and Imam-Hatip (religious preacher) schools were closed; thousands of university students were expelled from the public and private universities due to their adoption of headscarf (Kuru 2006). The military unilaterally organized briefings and speeches delivered to businessmen, owners of the mass media companies, and most importantly to members of the judiciary, demanding a total elimination of the religious threat.[6] The briefings were organized by Batı Çalışma Grubu (BÇG), an illegal organization within the military.[7] The BCG was working as secret information service that had recorded thousands of individuals as a threat to the regime of the Republic.[8] The secularist elite were so confident in durability of their policies. In 1999, the Chief of the Turkish General Staff General Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu declared that "the February 28th process will persist for a thousand year."[9] Yet, the February 28th process has ended by the 2001 economic crisis, when the financial supporters of the process experienced a vicious bankruptcy.

The Gülen Movement against the Organized Opposition

Especially after 1994, the Gülen movement has tried to form a vast network including some secularist members of the academia, business elite, popular artists, journalists and the Alevi opinion leaders under the umbrella of some fashionable causes such as "dialogue," "tolerance," "democracy," "liberty," and an inclusive "Anatolian platform." This Anatolian Platform was named as "Abant Platform," in which prominent writers, journalists, and professors gather on a yearly basis to discuss Turkey's problems and prospects for the future. This intellectual endeavour has been organized by Journalist and Writers Foundation, of which honorary president is Fethullah Gülen himself, since 1998 and it has provided both a great sympathy

his messages has led some to suspect that he is cooperating with his captors—that he has defected, in effect, to the 'deep state'". See C. Bellaigue "The Uncontainable Kurds," The New York Review of Books 54: 3, 2007.

5   Welfare Party of Necmettin Erbakan was closed in January 1998 and Erbakan was banned from politics for ten years. The successor party of Erbakan followers was Virtue Party, which was closed in 2001. Another important event during the process was the imprisonment of Tayyip Erdoğan, renowned Istanbul Mayor from Welfare Party. Erdoğan was a popular opinion leader within the party, who was likely to succeed Erbakan. He was arrested because of reciting the following verses in a public speech: "The mosques are our barracks, the minarets are our bayonets, their domes are our helmets and the believers are our soldiers." Ironically, the poem was written by a famous Turkish nationalist, Ziya Gokalp, whom the secularists elite admire. Erdoğan was spent four months in prison. Yet, this experience made him more popular in the public image. Erdoğan took the advantage of the imprisonment and broadcasted his new album, "This Song is Not Yet Over," in which his recites some famous poems. It was a clear message to the audience that he would return back to politics. Later, he established a new party, Justice and Development Party, and succeeded to become Prime Minister.

6   M. Yetkin, "10. Yilinda 28 Subat," Radikal, February 26, 2007. Sevket Kazan, the Minister of Justice at the time being, pointed out that the briefings to the members of the judiciary were organized without any official request for permit from the Ministry of Justice. See "28 Subat- Derin Darbe Belgeseli" www.stv.com.tr (Accessed May 10, 2007).

7   The generals of the time later confessed the presence of the BCG but still defended its rationale. According to them, they needed such kind of organization to save the Kemalist regime from the Islamist threat. See, for example, interview with General Ozkasnak: "BCG Cevik Bir'in Fikriydi," Sabah, February 26, 2006.

8   According to Bayramoglu, six million people, in one way or another, had been recorded on the lists. Some of the lists were revealed to the public after the February 28th process. See Nese Duzel, "Bayramoglu: Izleniyoruz," *Radikal*, April 12, 2004.

9   "İlk Kez Konuştu," *Sabah*, September 4, 1999.

and prestige to the movement from various circles. Since 2004, the Abant Conventions has started to be held internationally as well as domestically. In its seventh annual meeting in 2004, the Platform was held in Washington D.C. on "Islam, Secularism, and Democracy: The Turkish Experience"; in December 2004, it was in Brussels, titled "Culture, Identity, and Religion in Turkey's EU Accession Process." The Platform brought together the French and Turkish academia in the name of Turkey-France conversations in March 2006 and in April 2007 to discuss religion, secularism, and pluralism in democracies. In February 2007, the Platform organized its annual conference with Arab intellectuals in Egypt on "Islam, the West, and Modernization." The most recent subject in domestic gathering was on Alevi identity in Turkey, held in March 2007. The movement had never mentioned the sensitive and symbolic issues such as the headscarf issue as an urgent problem at any instance; instead, the compromising attitude was the dominant characteristic of the events they organized.

Ironically, however, as the Gülen Movement took compromising behaviour; it led to a further schism between the Kemalist elite and the movement. For the Kemalists, the Gülen movement has tried to break the monopoly over the civilisational project, which has been employed as a symbolic capital in their hands. The greatest challenge to the secular establishment was the movement's outstanding success of absorbing "the global language of human rights and democracy in its efforts to counter Kemalist exclusiveness" (Yavuz 1999). As Özdalga (2005: 438) asserts, "it is true that this religious community particularly promotes modern developments, but this has not prevented it from being degraded by the leading elites in Turkish society into the position of an Outsider."

As the Gülen movement became apparently different from political Islam, the secularists denounced it as a "secret Islamist" organization. The routine Kemalist opposition became an organized opposition in June 1999 when the military decided to eliminate the threat of "Gülen-led Islamism." Özdalga (2005: 439-40) sums up the main accusations against Fethullah Gülen in the mainstream media as the following:

i.   Fethullah Gülen is trying to infiltrate important state institutions like the judiciary, the police and the military.
ii.   The purpose behind that is to prepare the ground for a seizure of state power.
iii.   The struggle for the final takeover of the state has been going on for a long time and takes place in great secrecy.
iv.   Fethullah Gülen's strategy is to pretend that he and his adherents fully favour Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the existing regime, while in reality he is preparing himself and his followers for an Islamist revolution.
v.   What is so disturbing about Gülen is that he has been so skilful in hiding his real purposes from the public.
vi.   Fethullah Gülen controls "gigantic" (korkunç) sums of money. How and where these resources are appropriated is unknown. Since he lives in the US, it is hinted that he is supported by this superpower (allegedly to undermine the interests of his native Turkey).
vii.   In the schools, dormitories and home-like student houses (ışık evleri) set up in the name of Gülen, students are pressured to accept his teachings (brainwashed).
viii.   Gülen and his adherents constitute a greater threat to the regime than either the Kurdish "terror organization" PKK and Abdullah Öcalan or the Welfare Party and its most militant demagogue Sevket Yilmaz. The fact that the Welfare Party functions openly must count in its favour compared to Gülen's secretiveness.

Following the media accounts, the State Security Court Prosecutor opened a court case against Fethullah Gülen by demanding a death penalty. This massive attack on the Gülen movement was astonishing for many individuals given the fact that the movement's constant representation of Islam's moderate face, opening educational centres and worldwide schools, its emphasis upon diversity, dialogue, and tolerance as well as its strong loyalty to the state policies have constituted a bulwark against radical Islamic revivalism and all sorts of political Islamic parties. The uneasiness of the secularists, however, has emerged exactly at this point: the Gülen movement has projected a re-construction of the society in every aspect without any confrontational means. Therefore, the Gülen's movement identity for education, which gives strong legitimacy to the movement to challenge the monopoly of the state elite, became the source of the problem itself. As Özdalga (2005: 440) adequately puts,

> Regarding class, the urge for social mobility is strong among Gülen adherents, who are largely average urban middle class in character. This means that the socioeconomic composition of the Gülen movement is not markedly different from that of the official elite. The same is true of ethnic belonging, since Gülen adherents are of mainly Turkish, not Kurdish, origin, and of religious belonging, since they, like the establishment, are mainly Sunni Muslims, not Alevis. It is a characteristic of an Established-Outsider relationship that hostility tends to be stronger the more similar the groups are with respect to their socioeconomic, ethnic or racial backgrounds.

Although the movement had first faced with such a fierce organized opposition, its reaction was not radical. Parallel to earlier strategy of deploying educational identities, the movement aimed to defend itself by public speeches, media accounts, and lobbying. Since the movement was not a political movement, it has been "inclusive" in its organizational infrastructure; in other words, the movement's access to the polity has been very broad due to its practical aims such as being the centre of an "Anatolian Platform" (see fig.1. path 1b). In the following section, I will specifically discuss on the Gülen movement's moral opposition against the organized opposition of the secularist elite.

Performing Moral Opposition

The most distinguishing feature of the Gülen movement is its ability to define the Kemalist opposition as non-unified entity. Therefore, the Gülen movement has been eager to ally with the passive secularists (Kemalist doves); whereas opposing assertive secularists (Kemalist hawks).[10] Ron Eyerman (2006) provides the basic principle for moral performance in social movement activism as the following:

> If the first step in dehumanization is to reduce an other to a simple phrase, an enemy, a parasite, or a terrorist, the first step in moral performance or empathy is attentiveness to the complexity of another's status and situation, something which can be viewed as an attribution of subjectivity. This may involve seeing the other as an agent or victim of historical or natural forces and "forced" to act in certain ways.

Eyerman gives the example of diversification of the opposition movements in France against the French government policies during the war with Algeria between 1954 and 1962. There were two groups that opposed to French invasion: reformists and Marxists. According to the reformists, associated with L'Express, Algerian rebels were potential partners in a dialogue to renegotiate the relationship between France and a somewhat independent Algeria. On the other hand, Marxists associated with Les temps modernes viewed the rebels as historical agents of "world historical dimension ushering a new stage of development," in which

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10 For the distinction between assertive secularism and passive secularism, see Kuru (2006).

violence is accepted as a necessary means. Therefore, Marxists had a morally more tolerant view of the other, the Algerians (Eyerman 2006: 201).

The Gülen movement, from its very beginning, has expressed a moral tolerance toward the secularist power centre. Inspired from the Jasper's (1997) concept of "moral protest" and Eyerman's concept of "moral performance," I shall call this non-confrontational engagement as "moral opposition." As a challenging movement, on the one hand, the Gülen movement has launched an opposition to the centre; however, on the other hand, the movement's use of non-confrontational means and its deployment of educational identity distinguished it from other social movements.

The moral opposition of the Gülen movement stems from twofold reasons: mental structures of the movement and its organizational features (see figure 1). Unlike political Islamic movements in Turkey, the Gülen followers believe that their actual enemy is the triple monster that was defined by Said Nursi: (1) ignorance of the Muslims in religious as well as scientific terms (2) poverty of the ummah, Muslim nation, in general (3) disunity among the believers. Therefore, their perception of the oppositional cultural domination led them to employ cultural and educational means to overcome the problems in Turkey (see figure 2).

Mental Structures of the Movement

Pointing out the vicious circle that Islamic community has found itself for centuries, Gülen (2005: 22) believes that the problems can only be solved by "the inheritors of the earth," a cadre of "physicians of the soul and reality whose hearts are open to all fields of all knowledge: perspicacity, culture, spiritual knowledge, inspirations and divine blessings, abundance and prosperity, enlightenment; from physics to metaphysics, from mathematics to ethics, from chemistry to spirituality, from astronomy to subjectivism, from fine arts to Sufism, from law to jurisprudence, from politics to special training of religious Sufi orders." Gülen calls this ideal type of man as the "new human model"[11] and employs "the inheritors of the earth" concept interchangeably with some other concepts such as "golden generation," "hero of thought and action," and "devout" to refer this new model throughout his writings.[12] In this regard, the Gülen schools have played an important mission and envisioned a "new society" that is full of "new humans."

A typical reader of Gülen can understand that there is a Divine mission in the course of history and this mission will be accomplished by "the inheritors".[13] Becoming an inheritor, however, is not that being "chosen by God." Gülen specifically mentions the difference between "becoming" and "being", where he explains meaning of one verse in the Qur'an.[14] Since becoming depends on the conditions that should be fulfilled rather than being chosenness beforehand, the state of "becoming" can be lost in future if the necessary duties ignored. This belief implies that there are no God-favoured people; instead, there are God-favoured attributes. Therefore, "inheritors of the earth" as personalities are intentionally remained ambiguous in Gülen's thought; but, the characteristics and attributes of the inheritors are clearly

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11 See Gülen 1991; Ergene 2005: 270.

12 For the concepts of "hero of thought and action" and "devout," see Gülen 2005: 67-83, 91-97. On the concept of "golden generation," Gülen's tape-recorded conferences have been in circle from as far as 1980es, which are available from the official web-site of Gülen: www.fGülen.org.

13 For Gülen's philosophy of history, see Gülen 2005: 129-34.

14 The verse was translated by Gülen as the following: "You *became* the best of people, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah." (3: 110) See, Gülen 1998: 36.

described.[15] True inheritors are those who live "at the expense of their own selves in order to make others live"; who never claim that they are inheritors; who "do not ever desire that the masses follow them" (Gülen 2005: 95). Nobody knows the genuine "inheritors of the earth" because it resembles an ideal form of a true believer who is very open to worldly affairs and science, while seeking the hereafter and spiritual nobility:

> To reach such a degree of spirituality and saintliness is dependent on being open to perception, logic, and reasoning, and thence to thoughts and inspiration from the Divine. In other words, it is very difficult for a person to reach this peak, to acquire such a state, unless experience has been sieved by the filter of the reason, reason has surrendered to the greatest intellect and foresight of the prophets, logic has turned completely into love, and love has evolved into love of God (Gülen 2005: 62).

Thus, the Gülen movement has defined the enemy as "attributes" rather than the "objects." In other words, bad attributes such as selfishness, ego-centrism, and fraudulence that sustain the triple enemies of ignorance, poverty, and disunity in Muslim world specifically, and the world in general, can only be solved by the "new human" attributes such as love, saintliness, and perceptive reasoning. In this sense, the Gülen thought is not a utopian vision[16]; instead, it refers to a dualistic situation of an ideal human, "whose world of thought stretches from the material to the immaterial, from physics to metaphysics, from philosophy to Sufism" (Gülen 2005: 64). Gülen perfectly describes this paradox as the following:

> Using Rumi's expression, such a person is like a compass with one foot *well-established in the centre of belief and Islam* and the other foot with people of many nations. If this apparently dualistic state can be caught by a person who believes in God, it's most desirable. *So deep in his or her own inner world, so full of love…so much in touch with God; but at the same time an active member of society.*[17]

The Gülen movement's inclusive nature in its mental structures and its well-expressed identity for education (cf. Bernstein 1997) has provided a strong base for moral opposition toward the Kemalist organized attacks during the February 28th process. Unlike the Milli Gorus (National View) Movement, the Gülen movement did not openly criticize the regime; rather, it interpreted the Kemalist opposition as fuzzy, which includes those who have been ignorant about Islam and Muslims due to the bad representations in the media. For Gülen followers, they were "victims of the historical forces" (cf. Eyerman 2006), who should see the real lovely face of Muslims. Therefore, the Gülen movement took a mission to find a middle way to gather non-ideological Kemalists (passive secularists) and non-ideological Islamists in order to represent the all-encompassing nature of the Anatolian Islam. One of the most striking examples of the Gülen movement's inclusive strategy was witnessed in the Kavakci affair in 1999.

The April 18 general country-wide elections in 1999 introduced the election of two Muslim women with headscarves for the first time in Turkish modern history: Nesrin Unal, a representative of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP), and Merve Kavakci, an Istanbul deputy from the pro-Islamic Virtue Party (FP). What produced a tense public debate was not the

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15   For an extensive description of the attributes of the inheritors, see Gülen 2005: 31-42. Gülen exhaustively stresses on altruism as the main characteristic: "What we are always stressing is that it is those who live their lives in sincerity, loyalty, and altruism at the expense of their own selves in order to make others live who are the true inheritors of the historical dynamics to whom we can entrust our souls" (p. 95).

16   For a comparison of Gülen, Confucius, and Plato on ideal human, see Carroll 2007: 35-58.

17   Cited in Ünal and Williams 2000: 207. Emphases added.

election of "covered" deputies but, instead, the possibility of having covered women in the parliament. The mainstream mass media, which has predominantly secularist writers and commentators, started a campaign against the presence of headscarf in the parliament. The media also interviewed the each deputy, asking if they would remove the headscarf in the parliament, as they were demanded to do. The MHP member, Unal, replied that if she absolutely had to she would uncover her head, though she did not want to.[18] Yet, the FP member Merve Kavakci declared that she would not take off her headscarf nor would she resign (Shively 2005). All Islamic groups and their media outlets defended Kavakci's right to appear in parliament with the headscarf given the fact that there is no explicit statement in the Parliamentary legal rules of conduct.[19] The secularist opposition, in turn, replied that no woman had ever worn the headscarf in the parliament and it would be an explicit offense to the secular Kemalist ideology of the Republic.[20]

Thus, the Merve Kavakci incident in the Turkish Parliament inflamed a furious historical debate between the secular elites and the Islamic groups, and thus, threatened the implicit social contract in the Turkish society. Yet, the Gülen movement's emphasis on the non-confrontational means (cf. Turam 2007) and educational identity prevented a further contention in a society of turbulent crisis (see figure 2).

The Organizational Base of the Moral Opposition

The structural factors have also played a decisive role in the Gülen movement's moral opposition. The Gülen movement has been a civic, cultural social movement (see Figure 3). Unlike political movements, cultural movements have inclusive organizational structures, in which active participation of the movement is open to everyone and the access to the polity is straightforward. This characteristic, besides with the inclusive peaceful message in content, led to a unique stance of the Gülen movement compared to other Islamic movements in Turkey (see Figure 1 and 3).

Implications for Social Movements Literature

The Gülen movement's distinctive feature might extend the new social movement theory in two important respects. First, New Social Movement theory regards all cultural movements as "expressive" and "confrontational" social movements. Instead, as proved in the Gülen movement case, cultural movements are more prone to combine strategic and expressive elements simultaneously when they are compared to political movements (see Figure 4). Political movements, on the other hand, seem liking to play extremes in both (strategic vs. expressive) directions. One possible suggestion of this fact would be that cultural movements have always keep an "expressive" content in their nature; however, when they are targeted by political power holders (cf. Eyerman 2006), the movements are strategically trying to find a way to escape from deadlock, which may put an end to the movement itself. Unlike cultural

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18   It should be noted that the MHP leaders put an explicit pressure on Nesrin Unal to take off her scarf. See, "Bahceli: Meclis Krizle Baslamamali," *Hurriyet*, May 1, 1999.

19   See, for example, Fehmi Koru, "Vahim Hata," *Yeni Safak*, April 25, 1999; Nedim Odabas, "Neler Olacak?," *Milli Gazete*, April 28, 1999; Ahmet Ridvan, "Merve-Nesrin ve MHP," *Yeni Safak*, April 29, 1999; Kazim Gulecyuz, "Meclis Acilirken," *Yeni Asya*, May 2, 1999.

20   "Turban Yasagi Ata'nin Emri," *Milliyet*, May 1, 1999; "64 Yildir Turban Sorunu Olmadi," *Hurriyet*, May 2, 1999; Emin Colasan, "Merve'nin Ortusu," *Hurriyet*, May 1, 1999; Derya Sazak, "Merve Krizi," *Milliyet*, May 1, 1999.

movements, political movements are extremely eager to convince more people around their movements. The conventional wisdom suggests the political movements to become more opportunistic and strategic in order to reach many more people. Yet, it is equally easy to understand that when a political movement becomes more expressive and resisting, there is a high possibility of appealing certain type of people. Therefore, playing the extremes in both directions are feasible options for political mobilization.

Second, regarding the social protest aspect of the new social movements, Katzenstein (1998: 7) persuasively illustrated that feminist activism inside the church and the military has taken unusual forms of protest that are very different from the traditional demonstrations in the street:

> Feminist organizing in institutional contexts may not press for the instant cessation of daily business sought by the earlier sit-ins or the demonstrations that led to the destruction of property or clashes with the police. But feminist organizing (in its most adversarial and even sometimes in its more accommodative forms) does seek to transform the world. Even some of the most narrow versions of feminist politics that decline to embrace antiracist, antiheterosexist, and antipoverty agendas intend through their focus on equal jobs, promotions, harassment, rape, and other forms of sexual violence to fundamentally change the way American institutions function.

Parallel to feminist activism, Islamic activism in Turkey in its all forms aims to challenge the unwritten assertive secularist codes of the society. In this regard, we can turn the Kavakci case: all Islamic movements in Turkey, for example, ardently support the headscarf liberation. Yet, the Gülen movement strategies such as discursive activism and dialogue activism are not usually considered as protest behaviour. The Gülen movement supporters who do not attending the sit-ins in the universities to favour the headscarf ban protestors were conscious and collective actors. Instead of taking that type of confrontational protest, they call for a discursive action through educating the society. Headscarf ban protest literature, however, omits this dimension of moral protest and therefore disregards the Gülen community's collective action. Thus, by indicating the possibility of new types of protest, we may unfold "the art of moral protest" (cf. Jasper 1997). Viewing the social movements as dynamic agents that using full of artistic imaginaries (Eyerman and Jamison 1998) and the social life as artful (Jasper 1997), in which people play on cultural meanings and strategic expectations in multiple ways, we can understand the Islamic moral protestors better. Moral protestors in moral opposition, as Jasper (1997: 13) asserts, are "at the cutting edge of society's understanding of itself as it changes."
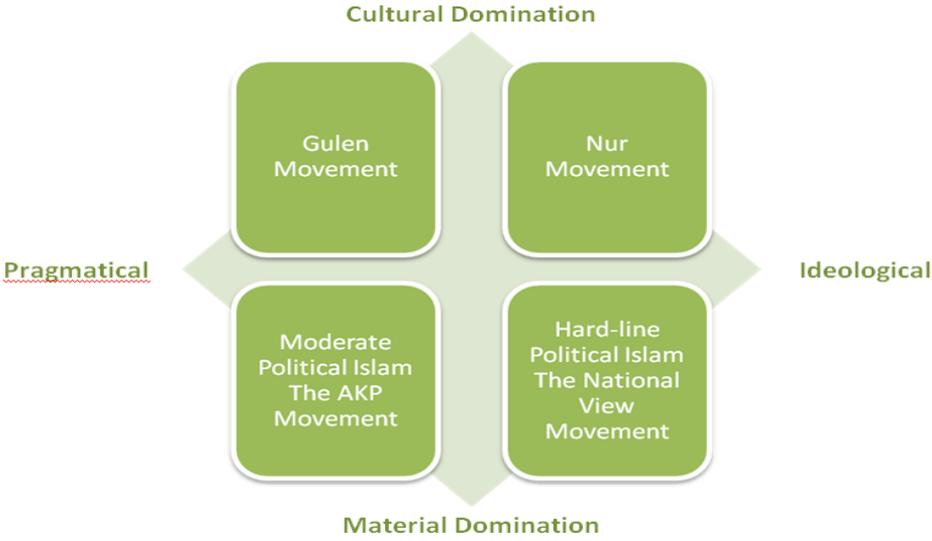
Table 1: Islamic Movements' Perception of the dominant opposition ("other") and operation of power politics in Turkey.
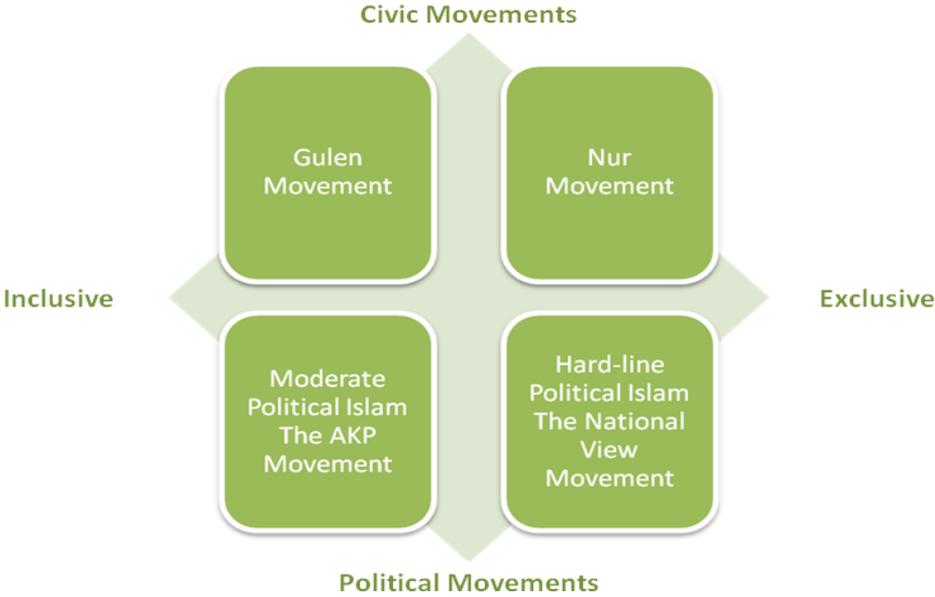
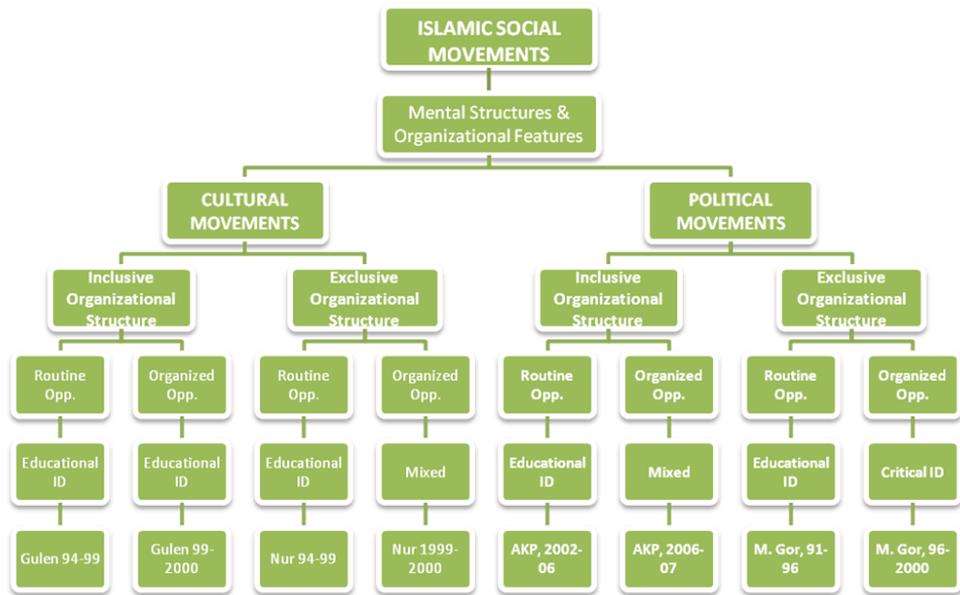**Table 2:** Diversification of Islamic Movements in Turkey.

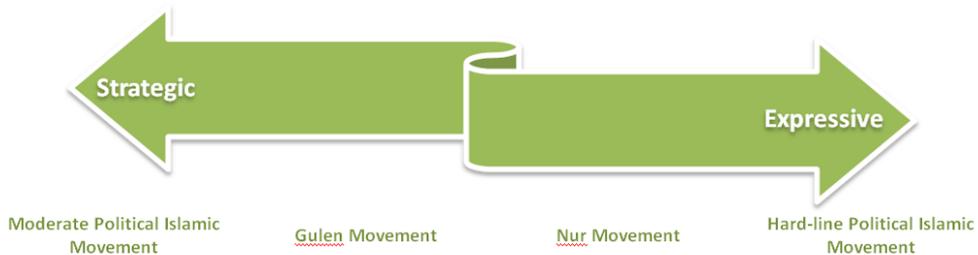**Figure 3:** General model of identity as perceived strategies in the context of Islamic activism

Figure 4: Islamic Movement Behavior in Turkey.