

# RELIGIOUS MARKETS IN TRANSITION PROCESS: THE CASE OF TURKEY\*

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## Abstract

As we know, Turkey was founded in the form of nation-state in 1923 and most of its people are orthodox Muslims. Turkey, with its secularization and modernization processes and changing religious landscape, is a modern and secular state in the way of European Union. In this context, religious groups in Turkey have been in transformation process by ideology, structure, function. Therefore firstly, I want to summarize the development of secularization and modernization processes in the context of modern Turkish society to reach the appropriate methodological and epistemological assumptions to study on the Turkish religious landscape. Following this, I highlight the status of religious groups in Turkey and their transformation process that they have been in. In fact, religious groups in whole world have been globally in a transformation process. In this process, religion is advertised and marketed, produced and consumed, demanded and supplied. Finally, I will emphasize the functions of religious groups in Turkey, as firms.

**Keywords:** Turkey, religious markets, globalization, secular services, rational choice theory, transformation process, patronage

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## **1. Introduction**

It is very well known that a change wind is blown in social, economical and technological domain especially from the second half of twentieth century. The term “globalization” is used when mentioning this process that shrinks our world in increased acceleration in recent two decades of twentieth century. It is possible to express globalization with a paramount feature of “internationalization of capital” as transnational personal entrepreneurship and its free activity in almost all over the world. It is observed in this process that economical factors and concepts are dominant, and every phenomenon is tried to be explained with these concepts. It is understood that people think and behave as per definition of “homo economicus” economically and conduct rational choices accordingly in their every word and step in this process. The changes and developments realized in the processes of globalization representing an economical as well as pluralist feature is mentioned to have affect on social actions of people as well as on their religious behavior. Although it is very well known that the interest of people in religion and economics has never declined in ages of history, this interest can be said to be at its peak by the stimulus of the globalization process now experienced. In fact it can be concluded that religion is influenced from proceedings in global perspective by looking at the establishment of religious markets and hard struggle among religious groups for provision of customer and resource (Bruce 2000:32) all depends on the pluralist structure appeared in religious domain, and by the affect of “new religious movements” (for more details see Barker 1992) tending to spread all over as a global phenomenon in all over the world especially from 1970s on.

The sociologists of religion entered into new efforts for new theoretical approaches in their researches considering the above mentioned proceedings. One of the efforts among all is to construct out an economical model of religion. It is quite possible to mention about a religious market as per rational choice theory which occupies an important place in economical model of religion. Every

community in religious market tries to market of its own commodities by forming a boot, provides new and more customers, advertises and propagates for this purpose, so work to increase its market share (see Iannaccone 1991, 1992, 1997). Individuals, those education levels and socio-economical status are raised, will make rational choices by carrying out cost-benefit analysis on the commodities presented for them by accessing this market. It is observed that in their approaching to a religious group, people behave according to looking at what are proposed to them and what possibilities are presented for them. As the result of the present approaches, religious groups entered into a search for various possibilities and services in social, cultural and economical domains in order to maximize their provision of members and wrapped their selves up with multidimensional and multifunctional but more secular structure. Under this circumstance, it became inevitable to mention about a market a new one is established everyday and became a distinguished sector in the orientation of satisfying of religious needs of people in the globalization process. In other words, religion became advertisable, marketable, producible, consumable, demandable and suppliable (Iannaccone 1992:123).

It is well understood that economy especially in a globalized world expands its effectiveness and covers area ever day including religion in it as well. This situation has some inevitable reflections on Turkish society. In this paper, after a short brief about social and religious history of modern Turkey which depicts a status parallel to aforesaid proceedings observed in globalization process, emphasis will be given on large scale changes and transformation practiced in religious domain especially at religious groups level as well as their process of adaptation to market, and commodities and services they provide to their members to influence their customers will be mentioned.

## 2. Religious Landscape in Republican Period

It is possible that there are three periods in modern Turkey.

### a) Early Period (1923-1945): The Establishment of the Turkish Republic

As we know, after the defeat of Ottoman Empire in the first Great War, it was collapsed. From the ruins of that Empire, the new state of Turkey emerged with through the efforts of nationalist Turkish leaders headed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938).

After the proclamation of Republic in 1923, Turkey has been in transformation process into a modernized, industrialized, and secularized nation-state. With the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923 Atatürk, who is founder and first president of modern Turkey, immediately embarked on the series of reforms with the ultimate goal being the creation of a modern democratic, secular nation-states with advanced economy and a secular minded progressive people in the image of the western countries (Bodur 2001; Kirman 2005:30-1). The aim of these reform programs is to rebuild Turkey's power as an entirely secular nation, excluding Islamic law and tradition from the nation's political and social structures. To this end, in November 1922, the sultanate was abolished. Two years later, in 1924, the caliphate was abolished as well. According to Betty Scharf, this is the first and powerful step of secularization in Turkish society (Scharf 1970:35). All members of the Ottoman dynasty were banished. Turkey then became a republic and Mustafa Kemal became its first president. The new state was established on a strictly secular basis. The Grand National Assembly accepted the new constitution on 20 April 1924. This constitution declared that the "Turkish Republic is a republic" and "Sovereignty belongs unconditionally to the nation." An amendment made during 1937 inserted the principle of secularism was inserted in the Turkish constitution. The religious courts were abolished, Islamic law abandoned, religious schools were closed down and the entire education system was placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Western legislation was introduced in all fields, drawing on the Swiss civil code (1926), and commercial law was developed based on Swiss, Italian, and German codes. The wearing of the fez was forbidden (1925). The Religious-Dervish orders were outlawed and the rural shrines of the saints closed. The Gregorian calendar replaced the lunar calendar of Islam. The weekend holiday was moved from the Islamic holy day of Friday to Sunday. In 1928, a new Latin alphabet was introduced instead of its counterpart Arabic alphabet. Atatürk personally visited different parts of the country to demonstrate the intricacies of the new alphabet. The aim of language reform was to get rid of Arabic and Persian structures in the language and to replace Arabic and Persian words with Turkish ones. Turkish names were adopted for cities (1930). In 1932 all prayers, including the call to prayer from the Mosques, were ordered to be made in Turkish and not in Arabic, the language of the Koran. In 1934, a law was passed which required everyone to adopt a surname, and surnames were made compulsory. The interpretation of religious law to control women was also eradicated, and as part of this process

women were given rights to inheritance and divorce. Polygamy was banned. In 1934, women obtained the right to stand for election. (for Atatürk's Reforms see Vertigans 2003:41-5).

The important thing that should be underlined here is that this set of reforms had already been started in the last years of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, the westernization of Turkey mainly started with the Tanzimat (reorganisation) and Turkey has been following this path since then (Kirman 2005:31).

Two centuries of westernization and decades of radical policies in favor of secularism make Turkey the first—and up to now probably the only—Muslim country where a total separation of the political and the sacred has been implemented with success. It could be underlined the usual implications of the Turkish Model (for this model see Kirman 2003; Mango 1993) as a 'model of a secular, democratic, Muslim country, aiming to achieve Western standards, in partnership with the West, by applying liberal free-market policies. Especially after the attack of September 11, Turkey, as a global model, has been popularized in global agenda. In fact, today Turkey is an ideal secular Muslim democracy contrast to authoritarian and theocratic dictatorships in Muslim world, but has been some weakness (Kirman 2003:53). In another statement, Turkey, with its secularization and modernization processes and changing religious landscape, is a modern and secular state in the way of European Union. So it is clear that Turkey, although her some deficiencies, obtained some acquisitions in the processes of secularization and modernization for a long time, approximately two centuries.

While religion united the Sunni Muslim population during the Ottoman Empire, and secular policies or the absence of a cultural and a religious policy eased the differences between people most of the time, in the new republic, religion and state were separated, and religion, the importance of which was reduced in the state and society, could no longer be a unifying power, Atatürk's solution to the problem was to define an entity called 'Turkishness' in the frame of secular one and urge the citizens to unite around it. Although Mustafa Kemal was a nationalist, his nationalism was not based on race, but limited by the boundaries of Turkey and open to all citizens. Anyone who carried a Turkish I.D. card and called Turkey his or her homeland, was a Turk. Hence, being a Turk was a question of citizenship rather than race, and in theory, Atatürk's nationalism disregarded differences in race and religion (see Bal 1998).

During Atatürk's time, a basis for democracy and the multi-party system were established. The role of religion was undermined in society and the state. As these developments showed, the new republic turned her face toward the West completely and modernization became the main aim of Turkey.

In the historical setting once almost all aspects of social life fell under religious influence. For this reason Islam and the Ottoman State had never been separate. So the reform programs that are taken of the early years of the Republic aimed at removing the pervasive hold of religion on society and polity. Of course, modern Turkey despite the difficulties attendant on the process in striving to achieve a modernity that is harmony with its history, geography and traditions has succeeded to be secular and modern nation-state from the establishment of Turkish Republic and with the support of secular nationalism. At the same time the role of religion changed drastically from what it is before. And religion has become a specialized institution. That is the impersonality of the secular society penetrates the religion. So it was easy to make distinctions between religion and government, education, etc.

In this process, with some troubles, many religious leaders who act as an anti-regime stance are seen to challenge to the modern integrative mechanisms and to a variety of western way. Some developments and encountered problems in this new economic structure led to increase in ideological commitment to religion or past culture which is in the guise of religion. But Atatürk was not seeking to overcome religion, but the inclusion of a modernized Islam into Turkish nationalism. The religious personnel was placed under state supervision and paid by the state. Ideologically, Ziya Gökalp, one of Kemal's most important theoreticians, formulated this symbiosis of religion and nation. Amongst other things, he sought the translation of the Quran into Turkish, cleansed of its Arabic and Persian influences.

There are Islamist organization and communities, unofficial Islam, in the forms of "Sufi" brotherhoods in Turkey. These provide a tenuous network from one country to another, sometimes active, often dormant, but always present.

#### b) Second Period (1945-1980): The Democratization and Urbanization Process

After 1945, a major change occurred in Turkey. The political system has transformed to a multi-party system. With the democratization of political system

and the success of Democratic Party in 1950 elections the political success dramatically changed (Mardin 1981:54-5; Vertigans 2003:49). In this period, Turkey joined NATO, and Turkish membership of Western institutions such as the Council of Europe, the OECD and her associate membership of the EEC (then the EU), reinforced Turkey's closeness to the West. It is also important to note that economic development achieved and thus the infrastructure modernized in the decade of the 1950's (Vertigans 2003:50).

But with this development, tendency of immigration from rural areas to urban areas increased. "While Turkey is a country with low rate of urbanization, there has been speeding up of this rate since the Second World War." (Akcura 1974:296). "The rate of urbanization was already low initially, increased sharply between 1945-50 and 1955-55, and increased dramatically again 15 years later, between 1960-65 and 1965-70." (Shorter and Tekce 1974:285). The term of urbanization refers to the process of rapidly increasing population in city areas and to the process of concentration of people and activities in urban communities. As we know urbanization process is one of the most important sub-processes of modernization and even is thought as a first step of it. In situations of rapid urbanization the cities pulled the rural population with the promise of higher income availability of jobs and the better living conditions.

After 1945, the flow of large groups into some cities in Turkey has brought about a serious matter: the housing problem. People coming from the rural areas into the city have settled in the old and peripheral sections of big cities, as named "gecekondu"s. The term gecekondu, literally "built in the night", is widely used to refer to the type of squatter settlements (Saran 1974:327). The urbanization process/fact in Turkey has been more rapid than functional urbanization, as can be seen in the socio-economic structure and in the physical appearance of the cities (Akcura 1974:297).

So it is important to note that the local communities organized around religion have greatly increased in gecekondu settlements as a result of globalization process.

The migration wave transcended the capacity of big cities and generated poor neighborhoods around them with their own sub-culture in 1950s. Of course as these migrant communities act as a means of preserving their traditional ways of life, at the same time they have a strong control over the lives of individual migrants. In a situation of the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the city, some of the

migrants advocate an attitude toward religious communalistic patterns; because it is very hard to reach to urban institutions for people living in squatter settlements. For this reason the newcomers who are lack of education, skills or capital tend to contact with the villagers who sharing similar origin and socio-economic status. But the length of residence in the city, the present age of the migrants and gender are considered to be significant factors shaping the attitudes of migrants toward religious communalistic tendency.

Shortly, with transition to a multi-party system and subsequently encountered changes, there are two important developments in religious sphere in modern Turkey. First, in the second part of the 1940's, CHP administration relaxed the state control over religious activities, and their perception of laicite. Second, from the early 1950's to the present day, centre-right governments, especially DP administration, allowed the use of religious symbols, idioms and practices. In 1950's Islam within Turkey became more visible. For example, the prohibition of singing the ezan in Arabic was lifted, Islamic radio programs were allowed, thousands of new mosques were built, partly with private funds, and Islamic organizations increased dramatically. There was an increase in visibility of Islamic documents, buildings, and symbols. The numbers of pilgrimages, newspapers and magazines, and education courses all increased. Religious education in schools was extended (Vertigans 2003:50). In this period, a number of the religious groups and communities have been emerged in Turkey. However they have some characteristics of sufi tradition, they emphasis on their social and cultural functions other than their religious-mystic ones to maintain of their existence, as the ban of activities of tariqats and the close down of their special spaces, tekke and zaviye (1925). Therefore they are named "*yeni dinî cemaatler*" (new religious communities) in Turkish context (Kirman 2004).

#### c) Third Period (Post 1980): The Liberalization and Globalization Process

After the army coup of September 12, 1980, the ANAP (Motherland Party) which headed by Turgut Özal (1983-1989) and represented a laissez-faire right-wing perspective came to power in 1983 (Vertigans 2003:63; Kaya 2004:102). In 1980s, Turgut Özal, economics minister and later 'civilian' prime minister and eighth president, immediately embarked on the series of reforms and the free market mechanism was adopted as a principle in the economy. In his economic model, privatization was not merely a possible solution, but a scientific rule for escaping Turkey's economic problems (Kaya 2004:103-4). Turkey has been in



transformation process into a liberal, modern and industrial nation-state. After the 24 January decisions, liberal economic policies, privatization before proceeding further/primarily privatization, were applied to the economy. Trade and exchange regulations have been liberalized, quotas and import deposits have been abolished, quantitative restrictions on imports and agricultural subsidies have been removed.

Briefly it can be said that after 1980, state intervention in the economy has been reduced and the economy was opened to the outside. Therefore it is possible to say that the transformation is still continuing in Turkey.

Turkey has adapted new economic model based on market-oriented economy in 1980s. In this period, as a result of new economic and political liberalization and globalization processes, support for the tarikats and other newer religious movements have also grown. The growing political and social commitments are met by increasingly diverse financial sources from within Turkey and international organizations. This growth is part of the wider expansion of the Islamist economic sector and includes banks, insurance companies, large commercial operations, and holding companies. Influence has also been extended to incorporate the institutional framework, and there are now Islamist employers' organizations, consulting agencies, and trade unions (Vertigans 2003:73).

Of course these developments and encountered problems in this new economic structure led to increase in social polarization and ideological commitment to religion or past culture which is in the guise of religion. The ANAP party with its liberal outlook has loosened state control on religion and attempted to merge within its ranks the different ideological positions that shaped in the pre-1980 political scene. As a result of this and other developments some tariqats and religious groups started to gain public visibility, social recognition, legitimacy and prestige. At the same time, new religiosities called "new public visibilities of Islam" have emerged (Göle 2000). In other terms, in 1980's we are witnessing pervasive influence of Islam in all spheres of the social and political arena in Turkey.

In the early 1990s, Turkey came to mean a secular state where the majority of the population is Muslim, with a multi-party system, which is close to and co-operates with the West, and has a market economy. However, tension between religion and secularism is central problem in modern Turkey. But this problem is starting to overcome by the transformation of religious groups to firms.

Until the late 1980s, there was only state television, but now there are several private channels that reflect the transformation and the plurality (Kaya 2004:148). Special attention was paid to the different religious groups which are proscribed under Turkish law and have to operate in secrecy by Islamist mass media, included periodical, newspaper, radio and tv. With the help of diverse magazines and newspapers these groups began to express themselves and disseminate their ideas. For example, traditional gender roles stressed by religion are presented in these Islamist periodicals. In this period, the formation and expansion of Islamist groups were accelerated.

In this context, the modern educated recently urbanized second-generation young people whose parents came from countryside have developed a tendency toward the fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. With their critical approach to the traditional Islam the activities of Islamist authors such as Ali Bulaç, Dilipak and İsmet Özel who turned Islam into an ideology have found resonance among this new category. They take on anti-modernist stand without being apologetic to western modernity in the name of an Islamic alternative model (Göle 1995:53-54).

All these developments can be thought as a factor of emergence of Islamist political movement in 1980s. As we know, political Islamism is systematized around the concepts and ideas of those ideologists who try to define Islam as a political system.

Another development in this period is to rise of economic Islam. Because the new economic restructuring and other various factors attracted many small businessmen, merchants and artisans to the big cities from the traditional-conservative provincial towns which have been created through expansion of the rural. This group who established their workplace with the help of jointly managed family concern has become small employers in working class of squatter neighbourhoods in metropolitan centers. This sector as a part of petty bourgeoisie which is conservative and anti-socialistic in nature has grown very rapidly in the 1980s and partly contributed to the formation of MUSIAD, it defines itself as an "Anatolian Tigers", in 1990 (Bodur 2001). There is no doubt that MUSIAD is the most important business organization claiming to carry an Islamic identity. With MUSIAD, Turkey has seen the emergence of economic Islam with its actors, strategies, and discourses. (Özbudun and Keyman 2002:307).

MUSIAD also attributes a positive quality to globalization because it is as a result of the globalization of market relations that a suitable ground was created

for the rise and the success of economic Islam. However, MUSIAD is founded on Islamic principles, which include feelings of trust and solidarity, the primacy of community over the individual, the discourse of the just self over the self-interested actor, and the privileged status of ethical codes over individual morality. (Özbudun and Keyman 2002:307-8).

Of course these developments and encountered problems in this new economic structure led to increase in ideological commitment to religion or past culture which is in the guise of religion. The rise of religiosity which is seen as a product of various reasons in the process of urbanization is effective especially among the lower income strata. Because of this group is under the influence of popular Islam, they are open to the effects of sermons and religious speeches. And these people are very sensitive to the effects of religion in their relations with religion and economy (Bodur 2001).

### 3. Commodity and Services that Religious Firms Provide

It is known that religious groups are multidimensional and multifunctional social realities formed by coming together around “religion affection”. In spite of their much emphasis on metaphysical thoughts and comments, they express a physical and social reality by their appearance in social context and their provision of various commodities and services like a commercial company. In other words, every religious group performs “religious-mystical” functions those can not be reduced to any other dimension (Fallding 1974:52; Hamilton 2001:3-11). It is also very well known that they undertake various social, economical, political, etc. functions with secular characteristics. That is, religious groups provide not only religious but also worldly commodities and services to their customers. Experts point out the difficulty in distinguishing these two functions which come to conglomerate (embracing one another) existence (Günay, Ecer 1999:286). This difficulty is met more particularly in understanding and analyzing religious groups today when their secular functions are highlighted. It is observed so that religious groups turned themselves towards service industries like education, healthcare, media and trade. In this sense, religious groups had to make product differentiation in order to increase their market shares in competition with their competitors in today’s globalized conditions.

Religious companies, working on presenting various commodities and services mostly in the field of economy, are in subject rather than classical

organizations emphasizing religious-mystical dimension when it is talked about a religious group or a sect. As far as they are understood, new religious formations appear today exhibits quite a functional structure by providing various possibilities and choices to their members in social, political, economical and cultural fields.

It is known that religious communities in Turkey became quite active in their relation with money-business and capital as a result of liberal policies applied in 1980s. This process which was initiated in name of “disseminating religion” produced a result like the one is conquered who went for conquer. For instance, Islamic channels, which started to work on guiding people into the true faith, are dissolved in “show business” (Atay 2004:82).

Some paramount subtitles of services provided by religious companies to their members are activities in education and culture. It is observed that religious groups support formal education through provision in educational infrastructure like private school, college, schoolroom, dormitory, guesthouse, scholarship, and loan. It is also possible to take various activities like personal development seminars, courses in information, deportment and skill, yoga and meditation sessions, summer camps in this regard. There is a very big demand of people for asking more although their educational levels are quite high in the present age known as information age in global information society. Efforts of religious groups active in Turkey as of bringing the service to customer can especially be assessed as modern marketing techniques like hunting novices by staff they make in charged at established information boots besides putting presentations in big posters and placards in passenger transportation terminals during enrollment periods of universities to provide customers to private dormitories and student houses those are under control and supervision of their partisans. On the other hand, it is known that religious groups recognized employment problems those arise because resources of developing companies are scarce, of students just graduated from their high education are in patronage relations with these students through getting organized under the form and name of society, foundation. On the other hand religious groups started to give much importance to health care services provision by opening private hospitals and polyclinics. Although it is known that many communities have some works and investment in this field, it can be said that their predecessor is Işıkçılar a religious group. In regard of all, religious groups behaved enthusiastically in opening private hospitals, polyclinics and health houses upon the privatization policies of Turkey covering health sector as well. However there can be met some other communities interested in alternative medical works in

social platform while most of the new religious communities provide modern medical services. The most powerful tendency among the alternative treatment ways searches on contrary to modern medical ways is search for cure by visiting hotels of thermal springs in this cadre. Besides this, some people tend to favor to attend applications like meditation and yoga.

It is known that some of the religious groups invest and become active in mass communication sector which turned to be more important in the process of globalization. For instance, while members of transcendental meditation and Evangelist movements carry television broadcasting, members of Moon movement publish daily newspaper. It is also known the presence of communities in radio and television broadcasting, and publishing newspaper and periodical. For instance, while Fethullah Gülen community with Samanyolu TV, Burç FM and Zaman newspaper; Işıkçılar with TGRT TV and Türkiye newspaper; Haydar Baş community with Meltem TV and Yeni Mesaj newspapers are active in mass communication, on the other hand Kanal 7 and Kanal 5 TVs known with their closeness to Milli Görüş perspective with small fractional differences carry their broadcasting. As a matter of fact, entrance of terms like electronic religion, media preacher and prime-time piety into Turkish religion in which sociology literature puts the present situation quite clearly.

Veiling dress fashion shows (mannequin parades) for pious women are arranged and Islamic swimming dresses namely “haşema” for men and women are produced. In addition to all these, the vogue for beauty saloons individualistically but not at level of religious groups is in increase and this make possible that one can mention about “beauty and cosmetic industry” addressing to Islamic circles (Atay 2004:83).

Religious groups in modern Turkey exhibit a specter as they are very active in fields of activities committed in “*social and economic aid and solidarity*” like private hospital, polyclinic, health center, help and shelter provision for unemployed people; “*education and formation institution*” like scientific research, private schools, colleges, dormitories, guesthouses, schoolroom courses; being “*culture and research center*” for activities like publishing newspapers, periodic and books, and arranging scientific meetings (Özdalga 1999:111; see also Günay, Ecer 1999:275), as well as in “*mass communication*” like broadcasting in private radios and televisions and publishing daily newspapers and periodic magazines.

#### 4. Factors that Transform Religious Groups to Firms

It is quite clear that there are many motives and reasons for religious groups transformed structurally and functionally under global conditions those tend to behave at domains like education, culture, media, health, sports, movie making and music through getting organized as if they are trade companies. The main factor in entering of religious groups into such a transformation is their will to survive under new conditions. There is no doubt that their such a will can only be materialized by their enrolling new members and enlarging their social bases. It is also quite clear that their earning new customer is not sufficient for this and mobilizing new resources is required. Since, it may be almost impossible to stimulate a demand for change in social domain and to start a social movement without lacking of significant resources according to resource mobilization theory (Macionis 1995:631-2; Schaefer and Lamm 1995:582). The groups those recognized this fact take the pains over to get adapted to global conditions through a structural and functional transformation process for finding new members, customers and resources.

Another reason for religious groups spending efforts to present and provide various commodity and service like a trade company for their struggle for existence could be determined "demand for earning legitimacy in public and social realm". It is quite clear that works of religious communities, in western societies with powerful secular tendencies and in secular countries especially like Turkey those move rapidly in the way of modernization and where sect activities are prohibited, on presenting secular commodity and services by overcoming their religious and mystical functions are distinctly important. Mother-and-child health care, peace and tolerance meetings, combat works against tobacco, alcohol and drugs use, grouped wedding ceremonies and circumcision feasts, green (environmental) meetings, sport tournaments and music feasts can be mentioned in regard of arranged activities of religious groups for their obtaining legitimacy.

#### 5. Problems in the Transition Process and the Ways of Solution

Though it can be said that the religious groups, established in religious markets in globalization process, may obtain some advantages in their behaving like trade companies, it is clear that they face with some new and serious concerns and risks. The most fundamental obstacle the religious groups need to overcome is experienced on ideological platform. The reason for this is the reduction or actually

the transformation of the fundamental of religion economy into a commodity or merchandise that can be subject of choice of people. The term of commodity is a concept causing to displeasure of some people and scare of some others. The main duty of religious groups in this domain is to determine the relationship, if any, between “the religious commodity and services in holly and abstract characteristics”, and “a commercial commodity with tangible and market value”. In other words, the groups coming round the track again at religious market should accord ideologically the dependence on a religious fundamental with carrying a secular activity. This fact forms the most basic concern the religious groups experience in Turkey.

Such a reconciliation and synthesizing effort bears a big importance not only for present members but also for prospective ones and even for ordinary people. The reason for this importance rise from the need of people, living in a world where the holly and non-holly is separated from each other, to obtain knowledge and be informed in order to minimize the risk of being a defaulter, be deceived and be swindled in the market they go to satisfy their religious needs.

## 6. Conclusion

It is seen that economical factors and concepts are continuously kept at foreground and almost every fact is tried to be explained with these concepts in globalization process where being an economical process is a dominating characteristics of it since beginning. This has inevitable reflections on religious domain as well. In this respect the terminology and mentality of economics also surrounded the religious domain. It seems Turkish society also got its share from these global proceedings effective in all over the world. It could be mentioned about the efforts of religious communities in Turkey to satisfy religious needs of people in a sense by bearing production and marketing business by adapting to conditions of globalization process especially from years of 1990s. In a manner of speaking, new religious communities entered into great scale economical activities by bearing into sectors like education, heath, media and sports. It is worth to mention about the transition from “political Islam” to “light Islam” or “soft Islam” started with expressing the slogans made out of verse as rise of political comments of Islam in Turkey in 1980s (Çakır 1990), with expressing the religion is commercialized and light form Islam through a life where verse turned to an advertisement from being a slogan (Atay 2004:79-87). Actually this status recalls the transition perspective experienced during modernization period and yields that

similar evolution is observed in Turkish society, for the evolution of religion being “object” in pre-modern, “subject” in modern and “merchandise” in post-modern societies (Atay 2004:86). As corollary, women veil “in name of religion” in the beginning, then for “political” symbol for advent of Islamic Law in 1980s and then after for a cosmetic accessories “in name of look beautiful”, in a “commercial” nature.

As result of all these proceedings, tendency to appraise religious groups in Turkey as trade companies or firms producing and marketing religious commodity and services.

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