The re-entry of the Islamic headscarf in Turkish Parliament
- A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Reactions

Presented by Anna Hagberg to
The Faculty of Culture and Society and the Department of Global Political Studies of
Malmö University
In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Human Rights

Human Rights III, (MR106L), Spring 2013

Supervisor: Anders Melin
Abstract

This thesis investigated the reactions to the ruling Justice and Development Party’s (AKP) recent lift of the ban against the Islamic headscarf in the Turkish Parliament. The reactions by the oppositional party, the Republican People’s Party (CHP), were analysed through Norman Fairclough’s understanding of critical discourse analysis, which aims to illuminate unequal power relations created or recreated by the production of discursive practices, which is believed to ultimately affect social practices. The method of critical discourse analysis was accompanied by the feminist critique of orientalism, intended to assess how headscarved women are stereotyped and homogenised through orientalist ideas. The analysis resulted in an understanding of the complex power relations between the ruling party and the main oppositional party, as well as the effect of using orientalist ideas in discourse, possibility contributing to an increasingly extensive polarisation and, thus, the risk of increased conflicts between the secular groups and the more religiously observant groups in the Turkish society.

Key words: hijab, headscarf, Islamic headscarf, Turkey, orientalism, feminism, critical discourse analysis, CHP, AKP

Word count: 15876
Table of Contents

ABSTRACT II

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS V

LIST OF FIGURES VI

1 INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 THE ISLAMIC HEADSCARF IN THE TURKISH PARLIAMENT 1

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM, AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION 2

1.3 RELEVANCE TO THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS 3

1.4 STRUCTURE 3

2 METHODOLOGY 5

2.1 ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY 5

2.2 QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY 6

2.3 CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS 7

2.4 DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY 8

2.4.1 ISLAMIC HEADSCARF 8

2.4.2 ISLAMISM 8

2.4.3 SECULARISM 9

2.5 DELIMITATIONS 9

3 THEORY 10

3.1 FEMINISM IN HUMAN RIGHTS 10

3.2 ORIENTALISM 10

3.3 FEMINIST UNDERSTANDINGS OF ORIENTALISM 11

3.4 ORIENTALISM IN TURKEY 12

3.4.1 CRITICISM 12

3.5 PREVIOUS RESEARCH 13

3.6 MATERIAL 14

4 BACKGROUND: THE ISLAMIC HEADSCARF IN TURKEY 15

4.1 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY 15

4.2 SEPARATISM IN THE TURKISH CONTEXT: THE KURDS AND OTHER MINORITIES 15

4.3 WOMEN AND THE MODERNISATION PROJECT 16

4.4 THE KAVAKCI-AFFAIR 16
4.4.1 REACTIONS 17
4.5 LEGISLATION 17
4.5.1 INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION 17
4.5.2 EUROPEAN LEGISLATION: ARTICLE 9 OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS 18
4.5.3 TURKISH LEGISLATION 18

5 2013: THE ISLAMIC HEADSCARF’S RE-ENTRY INTO TURKISH PARLIAMENT 20
5.1 DEMOCRATISATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS PACKAGE 20
5.1.1 CRITICISM 21
5.2 SEVDE BEYAZIT KAÇAR, GÜLAY SAMANCI, NURCAN DALBUDAK AND GÖNÜL BEKİN ŞAHKULUBEY 21
5.3 REACTIONS 22
5.3.1 AKP 22
5.3.2 CHP 23

6 AN ANALYSIS OF THE REACTIONS TO THE LIFTING OF THE BAN 26
6.1 DISCORDANCE WITHIN THE CHP 26
6.2 KILIÇDAROĞLU’S AND İNCE’S COMMENTS 26
6.3 ŞAFAK PAVEY’S SPEECH 27
6.4 DILEK AKAGÜN YILMAZ’S PROTESTS 35
6.5 SUMMARY 38

7 RESULTS 40

8 CONCLUSION 43

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY 46
List of Abbreviations

AKP  Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Justice and Development Party
CDA  Critical discourse analysis
CHP  Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Republican People’s Party
DSP  Demokratik Sol Parti, Democratic Left Party
ECHR European Convention on Human Rights
EU   European Union
ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
MENA Middle East and North Africa
MP   Member of Parliament
PKK  Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, Kurdistan Workers’ Party
PM   Prime Minister
UN   United Nations
List of Figures

Figure 1.1........................................................................................................pg. 7
1 Introduction

The Islamic headscarf, the *hijab*, represents the righteous expression of human rights, virtue and freedom for millions of people today. However, others concurrently view the Islamic headscarf as a conflictual symbol generating intense debates on the most efficient methods of balancing the right to religious expression with the concepts of secularism and gender equality. The Islamic headscarf engages and enranges in extremely active discursive practises, particularly on the religiously the ethnically diverse European continent, where several states have enacted or proposed laws restricting the wearing of various Islamic dresses in public. Bearing the tendencies in Europe in mind, this thesis will examine the current situation in Turkey, a country where the trend regarding legislation of the Islamic veiling is going in the opposite direction: the previous ban against wearing the headscarf in Parliament was lifted in September of 2013. This research will analyse the discursive and orientalist elements in the main oppositional party’s reactions to the instance in October 2013, when four female members of Parliament entered the Turkish Parliament wearing the hijab.

1.1 The Islamic Headscarf in the Turkish Parliament

The existence of the Islamic headscarf in the context of Turkey is actively questioned, criticised and defended in debates between and within different segments of the society. The dispute over the hijab’s presence in the public sphere has its roots in the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, when Turkey’s first president Mustafa Kemal Atatürk cut the ties with the Muslim world and religion, in favour of Westernisation and secularism. A number of reforms were introduced, some of which were aimed at promoting westernised clothing instead of traditional religious dresses and attires. The consequences for the Muslim women of the adaptation of Atatürk’s principles of strict secularism became clear when the Islamic headscarf was banned in universities in 1982. The ban motivated political parties to engage in arguments for and against the prohibition, elucidating the significant split between the opinions and ideologies of political parties. In 2011, the ban on wearing the hijab in universities was lifted, enacting the argument of discrimination against women’s opportunities of education.

However, the ban against wearing the headscarf in public offices remained in place until very recently. On 30th September 2013, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) presented a package of reforms, which included the lifting of the ban on the Islamic headscarf in public
offices, including the Turkish Parliament. However, the ban is currently still in force for judges, prosecutors, police and military personnel.

A month after the ban was lifted, four female members of Parliament decided to wear the hijab while entering Parliament. The last time a woman donned the hijab in Turkish Parliament was in 1999 when Merve Kavakçı wore an Islamic headscarf during a parliamentary session. The reactions were dramatic: she was dismissed from the session and subsequently had her Turkish citizenship revoked. This thesis will, through the use of critical discourse analysis (CDA), examine the reactions of the main opposition party in Turkey to the women wearing the hijab in Parliament in October 2013. The method of CDA will be accompanied with a feminist critique of understandings of orientalism in order to investigate the discourse and the implications on the discursive and social practises.

1.2 Research Problem, Aim and Research Question

The purpose of the thesis is to investigate the discursive dimension of the reactions to the re-entry of the Islamic headscarf into Turkish Parliament. Thereby, it aims to elucidate the current status of a long-standing conflict between the principles of religious freedoms and the concept of secularism in the Turkish context. Historically, the conflict has been significantly polarised in the political field: members of the current main oppositional party, the secular Republican People’s Party (CHP) have been opposing the hijab in the public offices on the basis that its presence would constitute a threat to the Turkish interpretation of secularism. The ruling AKP-party have opposed the ban, claiming it breaches the rights of religious beliefs and creates inequalities between men and women.

The current state of the conflict will be analysed through the examination of the reactions of the political parties to the case of the female members of the Turkish Parliament, who in October 2013 decided to wear the hijab in Parliament. Focused on explaining and analysing the current debate, the thesis will examine the following question: How are orientalist ideas visible in the discursive practises regarding the re-entry of the Islamic headscarf into the Turkish Parliament? Orientalism refers to the European creation of the dichotomy between the inferior Eastern “Orient” and the Western superior “Occident”. The research question derives from the hypothesis that the attitudes and perceptions that stems from orientalism creates unequal power relations through discursive practises, ultimately affecting social practises.
In order to adequately answer the research question, the thesis will begin with presenting the empirical material, providing the historical and legal background relevant for the case. The empirical material will furthermore be comprised of the various discursive practises reacting to the legal acceptance of headscarved women into Turkish Parliament, including comments, a speech and two protest actions produced by CHP-members. The analysis will thereafter examine the material through the method of CDA and the theoretical approach of feminist critique of orientalism, with the aim of distinguishing orientalist tendencies in the material and analyse their potential effect on the discursive and societal practises regarding the hijab.

1.3 Relevance to the Field of Human Rights

The rights of religious expression and their appropriate position within secular societies constitute one of the most active debates within the contemporary human rights discourse. From countries basing their entire legal system on religious texts, to secular countries without an official state religion and with a largely atheistic or agnostic population, most countries fall somewhere in between the two opposing poles. Turkey serves as an interesting example of an officially secular country without a state religion, but with a population that is predominantly Muslim. Hence, both Turkey’s geographical position as a part of both “West” and “East”, and its complex internal battles between the interpretations of human rights in general, and women’s rights in particular, can contribute to an in-depth understanding of religious symbols in secular societies. An understanding of these issues is important as several states currently struggle with the balance between strict interpretations of secularism and freedom of public display of symbols representing religious observance, in educational institutions, parliaments, and the judiciary, police and military-fields.

1.4 Structure

After this short introduction to the topic, including the thesis’s problematisation and the relevance to the field of human rights, the second chapter will follow. The methodological tool of this thesis, namely, critical discourse analysis, will be further explained and discussed in chapter 2. Chapter 3 will present the theory, which will be applied to the critical discourse analysis in order to produce knowledge about, and understanding of, the present case. An understanding of the historical and legal developments regarding the hijab in Turkey is crucial in order to thoroughly comprehend the current debate. Therefore, chapter 4 will provide an overview of the historical and legal background of the case of the headscarf in Turkish Parliament. The fifth chapter will present the case and the subsequent reactions to the event.
The reactions will then be analysed, using the theory and methods previously presented, in the sixth chapter. The seventh chapter will summarise the results of the research findings, and the final chapter will conclude with connecting the results to the broader debate on the Islamic headscarf.
2 Methodology

The following chapter will present the methods and discuss the methodology used in this thesis: qualitative case study and critical discourse analysis. The chapter will, furthermore, define central concepts and discuss delimitations.

2.1 Ontology and Epistemology

Ontology refers to the philosophical study of the nature of reality and the “study of being in general”. Social science research is thus affected by the approach adopted by the researcher regarding his or her view of the nature of reality. In this research, the outlook on the nature of reality is critical, believing that the reality is socially constructed through the creation and recreation of power-relationships and that reality is shaped through historical events.

Orientalism and critical discourse analysis are not neutral, but are rather inherently critical towards unequal power relationships, ultimately aiming to identify and highlight them in order to catalyse social change. The reality, according to the critique of orientalism, is constructed by Orientalists scholars who produced knowledge about the Orient, thereby constructing an artificial idea of a clear-cut division between “East” and “West”. When the concepts of “East” and “West”, “Orient” and “Occident” are used in this thesis, they refer to this construction of a dichotomy, and are thereby not acknowledging the split as an unchangeable, constant fact. Edward Said’s argues for the possible changes of power-relations, believing that, “history is made by men and women, just as it can also be unmade and re-written, always with various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurements tolerated, so that "our" East, "our" Orient becomes "ours" to possess and direct.”

Epistemology concerns the nature of knowledge, what knowledge constitutes and how it can be acquired. The critical research holds that knowledge is mediated in discursive practises, that the knowledge-production can be distorted; thereby hiding or highlighting certain facts. Knowledge is thought to ultimately be produced through unequal power-relations. In the case

---

1 P. Simmons, Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Academic Edition, 2014
2 S. Tracy, Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact, 2012 pg. 48
3 E W. Said, Orientalism, 2003, pg. xiv
4 Tracy, pg. 48
of Turkey, the knowledge production of the Republic indicates that there is an inherently conflictual relationship between the secular values of the Republic and the need for expression of religious affiliations in the public sphere, presuming that the very existence of the hijab poses a problem. Concurrently, the previous knowledge-production of the Republic is actively being questioned in the form of opposition and resistance from the headscarved women and recently, through the uplifting of the law against Islamic headscarves in public offices.

2.2 Qualitative Case Study

In order to investigate the debate on the headscarf in the Turkish Parliament, the thesis will use the method of qualitative case study. The case in this research is the instance of four women who, in October 2013, decided to don the headscarf in the Turkish Parliament. A case study is here understood as “an approach that uses in-depth investigation of one or more examples of a current social phenomenon, utilizing a variety of sources of data”5. The unit, in this research, is the phenomenon of the group four women entering Parliament wearing headscarves, and the subsequent reactions by the main oppositional party. The unit will be observed at a limited period of time: an historical background will be presented, but the analysis will concern the discursive practises produced after the women’s entry into Parliament. Thus, the case studied in this research project consists of the performance of an action made by an identified group which produced reactions in the forms of various discursive practises.

The case study method provides a wide methodological diversity. This diversity, however, creates uncertainties and a possibility of over-inclusion that needs consciousness and selection. Choosing one theoretical perspective inevitably leaves out alternative understandings of the research problem. Thus, validity has been established through the awareness of the selectivity of the methods, theory and material. By using data that captures and measures information that is highly relevant to this research’s aims, a high level of internal validity has been established. In order to strengthen the reliability of the research, the sources are transparent and a significant amount of quotations from the reactions are used. Since qualitative research inherently builds on the interpretations of the researcher, and

5 (V. Jupp, The Sage dictionary of social research methods, 2006) pg. 20
interpretations may differ between researchers, it is vital that the data is capturing the research focus.

The investigation of the specific case may produce additional knowledge, relevant in regards to similar cases of secular states where the debate on religious attire in the public sphere is active, for example in Britain, France, Tunisia and Belgium. However, the events occurring in Turkey are unique vis-à-vis the aforementioned countries, that are introducing laws against different forms of veiling. Turkey is instead relaxing its ban against the headscarf in public institutions, making the re-entry of the hijab in the Parliament a revealing and unusual event, suitable for the case study method.

2.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

The case study method will be accompanied by critical discourse analysis, understood as “a set of theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains”⁶ In CDA, discursive practices, or the production and consumption of texts, are seen as important social practices, ultimately affecting the construction of the social world, including identities and relationships. Through discursive practices, social and cultural reproduction and societal changes occur.⁷ CDA’s aim is to illuminate the linguistic-discursive dimension of social and cultural phenomena and processes of change. In this thesis, CDA will be used as a method for analysis of the production of texts reacting to the occurrence of four headscarved deputies entering Parliament, underlining the phenomena’s linguistic-discursive dimension.

By donning the hijab in Turkish Parliament, the four women are actively questioning the language used to describe them as “headscarved women” and, in extension, the normative idea of the appropriateness of religious clothing in the Turkish Parliament. Therefore, in this case, the knowledge regarding the headscarf in public, created by the Turkish Republic through the use of discourse, has affected the actions of resistance by the headscarved women, but also the response from the opposition. CDA believes that discursive practices create ideological effects: they contribute to the production and recreation of unequal power relationships between social groups.⁸ CDA aims to reveal the role of discursive practice in the

---

⁶ M. Jorgensen & L J Philips, Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method, 2002, pg. 60
⁷ Ibid pg. 61
⁸ Ibid pg. 63
maintenance of the social world, including those social relations that involve unequal relations of power.\textsuperscript{9}

The thesis will use Norman Fairclough’s three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis as the analytical framework. The model recognises three elements of every communicative event: 1. the text and the linguistic features of the text, 2. the discursive practise highlighting the production and consumption of the text and 3. the social practise, which investigates the broader social practice to which the communicative event belongs.\textsuperscript{10}

---

2.4 Definitions and Terminology

As some concepts have disputed meanings, or vary enormously, the following section will define certain central concepts used in the research.

2.4.1 Islamic Headscarf

The “Islamic headscarf”, “headscarf”, “veil” or “hijab”, defined as the headgear and outer garment used by Muslim women are used interchangeably in this thesis.\textsuperscript{11} The hijab encompasses a range of canons in addition to the headscarf, such as modest clothing and behaviour. Moreover, there is a wide range of additional Islamic dresses used in Turkey, including the çarşaf, which covers the entire body except the eyes. However, the focus of this research will be on the scarf covering the hair of the Muslim woman. It should also be noted that there is a traditional form of headscarf in Turkey, most common among older women in the rural areas, which stems from cultural traditions rather than religious observances. The focus here will, however, lie on the type of headscarf used due to religious convictions.

2.4.2 Islamism

Islamism is in this research defined as the ideological attempt to establish an “Islamic order”, often through the application the sharia, Islam’s divinely ordained moral and legal code.

---

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid pg. 63
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid pg. 68
regulating human activity. In the Turkish context, there are several historical examples of Islamist parties, including the Virtue Party and the Welfare Party. These parties were eventually banned for violating the principles of secularism. The currently ruling AKP-party is in this thesis defined as a conservative party with Islamist roots.

2.4.3 Secularism

Secularism, traditionally defined as the idea of the separation between state and religion, was extended during the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Through the adaptation of the French strict interpretation of secularism, “laïcité” (“laiklik” in Turkish), the religion’s place in society was rearranged, taking a vast step back from the public sphere. Supported by the secularists but criticised by many members of the religious community, the struggle regarding the views of the correct place of religion in the public constitutes one of the major conflicts of the Turkish society. Secular states share certain general characteristics derived from the concept of secularism, but there is, however, a great variety regarding the interpretations of the appropriate level of tolerance towards religious symbols in the public sphere.

2.5 Delimitations

In order to adhere to the principles of case study-method, the case is limited in time and space: it encompasses the current debate of the headscarf’s place in the Turkish Parliament by analysing the orientalist components to the CHP-reactions to the lift of the headscarf-ban.

The material is comprised of statements from the oppositional party, the Republican’s People Party, CHP. A more extensive research project could conduct a comparative case study, comparing the reactions of two or more political parties or groups, nationally, regionally or internationally. Further research could moreover focus on qualitative interviews of the four women entering the parliament wearing the hijab, analysing how their personal convictions can relate to the larger debate. This research, however, is focused on the analysis of the discursive practises produced by the CHP in reaction to the event in October 2013.

---

12 G. Krämer, Political Islam Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World, 2004
3 Theory

This chapter will present the thesis’s theoretical framework and connect the theories to the case.

3.1 Feminism in Human Rights

Feminist theory holds that men, as a group, systematically oppress women, as a group, in a global patriarchal system. Thereby the feminist theory recognises the unique difficulties and complexities in the implementation of gender equality and women’s rights. The existence of the patriarchal system has delayed the emancipation of women and has hindered women’s presence in public sphere, including their presence in the political decision-making organs. In order to promote gender equality and women’s rights, states have enacted anti-discrimination laws, recognising gender as a possible ground for discrimination, laws criminalising violence against women, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, and rights related to reproduction and maternity. Despite these legal measures, discrimination based on gender and violence against women is still globally widespread. By recognising the underlying structures that are creating unequal power relations between men and women, feminist theory serves as an important explanatory force in the discourse of human rights implementation.

3.2 Orientalism

The Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798 represents a keynote event in the history of Western interest in the East. The forces invading Egypt identified themselves as stronger than the inferior Arabs, who were stereotyped according to the western orientalist literature and art, thereby creating a dichotomy between the artificially constructed characteristics of the Westerners and the Orientals. Through the fall of the Ottoman Empire, England and France began an extensive investment in the Middle East and North Africa-region, which subsequently lead to the more formal colonisation of vast parts of the MENA-region. The processes that began with Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt, continued with the western colonisation of the Orient and ended in decolonisation of the region affect the contemporary political and cultural perspectives through the creation and re-creation of orientalist and post-colonial ideas and attitudes.\(^{13}\)

Edward Said is one of the most important contributors to the field of post-colonial studies. In

\(^{13}\) Said, pg. 43
his renowned work “Orientalism”, he argues that the European states have artificially created the “Orient” and, concurrently, created a dichotomy between the civilised and strong “West”, the “Occident”, and the uncivilised and weak “Orient”, the “East”. Throughout history, the West has defined itself through the use of the opposite adjectives prescribed to the “Orient”. Europeans became, through self-definition, rational, civilised and sophisticated while “Orient” and its people became “the other”, irrational, uncivilised and brutish. Although affected by historical developments, the western stereotypical descriptions of the “Orient” remain, and thus contribute to the upholding of uneven power-relationships between the two. The people of the “Orient” are recurrently described as traditional and conventional regarding religion and politics, requiring western help and assistance in the pursuance of a society with increasingly “western”, and thereby superior, values such as liberalism, secularism and democracy.

Critique of orientalism focuses on the problematic idea of directly applying western solutions, regardless of the historical, ethnical, cultural, geographical or religious context of the society. Through the creation of the Turkish Republic, European laws were copied and applied to the new Turkish legal system, thereby disregarding the unique factors of the Turkish context, including the existence of several national minorities and the important role of religion in the majority of the citizen’s lives. An awareness of, and critique against orientalism, has been chosen as a theory for its possibilities to identify underlying power structures between “West” and “East”, which is believed to impact on the reactions to the re-introduction of the Islamic headscarf in Turkish parliament.

3.3 Feminist Understandings of Orientalism

The view of the women of the “Orient” is of particular interest and importance in this research project. The orientalist view of the women of the “East” has gone through several, often contradictory, stages. The first western “explorers” published literature and exhibited art that was based on fantasies and desires, portraying the oriental woman as erotic and exotic yet sacred.14 The currently dominating orientalist view of the Muslim woman focuses on her automatic oppressed role due to her veil. The feminist oriented reading of orientalism criticises this western emphasis of the veiled woman of the “Orient” and her embedded “otherness”.15 In Turkey, the prejudices towards veiled women became evident in the process

15 Ibid, pg i
of establishing the Turkish Republic. Headscarved women were seen as an obstacle in the modernisation project: they needed to be liberated from their headscarves in the name of modernity, secularism and progress. Merve Kavakç,

A political researcher focused on the headscarf-debate in Turkey, explains that the contemporary discourse regarding “Oriental” women is focused on the need to liberate them from the veil, understood as a symbol of inevitable oppression and constraint. Orientalist ideas form categories of people that are ahistorical and undifferentiated and thus create an idea of an unchanging, homogeneous, group of headscarf women, (“başörtülü kadınlar” in Turkish) that are seen as, in the words of Kavakç, “waiting to be rescued by the Turkish Republic from the trappings of their religion”

3.4 Orientalism in Turkey

Although Said’s original use of the concept of orientalism was in the context of the historical relations between Europe and the MENA-region, this research will redirect the previous geographical focus of orientalism, applying it to the national context of Turkey. In the case of Turkey there is, historically, a distinct separation between two segments of society, the so-called “white Turks”, the urban proponents of modernisation and westernisation and the so-called “black Turks” with a strong religious and traditional identity. Although some have suggested the arise of a new class of hybrid, “grey Turks”, who are observing secular principles while simultaneously identifying themselves as pious Muslims, the political climate in Turkey is still heavily polarised between the urban secular elite and the more Islamic, Anatolian Turks. The headscarf debate comprises one of the more vocal disagreements between the two groups. Despite not necessarily geographical, the constructed dichotomy between the “Occident” and the “Orient” is applicable to the Turkish context where the liberal political parties such as the CHP would represent the westernised and secular “Occident”, and the traditional or religiously rooted parties, including AKP, would symbolise the “Orient”.

3.4.1 Criticism

Critics against Orientalism, often European scholars of the MENA-region, have claimed that their work on the region is not necessarily automatically coloured by orientalist ideas and is

---

17 S. Akarçeşme, “A new class of Hybrid Turks emerging between White and Black Turks”, *Today’s Zaman*, 5 August, 2012)
thus not given the respect it deserves. Critique has also been highlighting that the “West” is presented as monolithic and unchanging, leading to a stereotyping of the “West” in the same manner as the Orientalist is guilty of stereotyping the “Orient”. Critical voices from the field of post-colonial studies have emphasised that, since the “Orient” is considered artificially constructed, there has to be a building process, a process that Said fails to explore in his work. Post-colonial scholars understands orientalism as an historical process rather than a finished state, thereby breaking with Said’s notion of the “Orient” as an “unbreachable discourse”.

3.5 Previous Research

From the first western “explorers” of the “Orient” to the currently active criticism of their orientalist ideas, the question of the hijab have, for long, engaged and enraged. Academic research has focused on the hijab and human rights in the discussion of freedom of religion, the Islamic headdress’s role and legitimacy within Islam and the hijab as a tool of strengthening patriarchy. The research has stemmed from various disciplines including history, political science, sociology and theology.

Merve Kavakçi Islam is a professor of international relations at George Washington University and Howard University, and the woman who got dismissed from Parliament for wearing the hijab in 1999. Kavakçi Islam has conducted extensive research regarding the headdress debate using the theories of orientalism and post-colonialism in order to adopt an “insiders-perspective”, departing from the Muslim women’s own experiences. She acknowledges that women did formally gain rights through the founding of the Turkish republic, but that they lost many of their religious rights in the process. The Republic favoured one type of woman: The secular, republican, “modern” women with Western clothes. Thereby the Republic constructed a dichotomy between the uncovered secular woman and the headdressed Muslim woman.

Kim Shively has conducted extensive research on conflict around the headscarf by using the “Merve Kavakçi-affair” and the reactions that followed as a critical case. This thesis will, to

---

18 R. Owen, “Edward Said and the Two Critiques of Orientalism”, Middle East Institute, September, 2009
20 The case in 1999 when Merve Kavakçi entered the Turkish Parliament wearing an Islamic headscarf. The case is further discussed in the background-chapter of this thesis.
a large extent, regard Shively’s research as a point of departure, directing the analysis towards the current status of the public discourse regarding the headscarf in the Turkish Parliament.

3.6 Material

The thesis will use materials selected for their possibilities to provide adequate background information and theoretical explanations in order to analyse the case. Academic literature and journal articles scrutinising the topic will provide necessary background information as well as contribute to an understanding of previous research. Despite possessing a high reliability, academic literature need to be critically scrutinised in order to discover any biases or lack of objectivity in the researchers work. Kavakçı Islam’s “Headscarf Politics in Turkey: A Postcolonial Reading” is an interesting example, as she happens to be both a researcher and the woman who entered Parliament wearing a headscarf in 1999. Thus, her personal experiences and believes has to be taken into consideration.

In regards to the reactions to the October 2013-case, the AKP have posted their views of the women entering the Parliament in headscarves in several press releases on their English-version of their official website. Since these sources are first-hand, they will contribute to a heightened reliability. The CHP, however, have not released any official statements in English on their website, therefore, second-hand sources such as newspapers quoting statements from the CHP will be used. One CHP MP has posted a speech addressing the event in English on her official website, and this speech therefore possess a high reliability and will be extensively used in the analysis. Newspaper articles will additionally be used for the background information of the October 2013-case, since no journal articles or academic literature in English covering the event have been found. Since newspaper articles constitute second-hand sources, and are often politically affiliated, a high level of source criticism will be applied.

The theoretical backbone will be formed using academic literature on Norman Fairclough’s model of CDA, as well as works on orientalism and feminist critique of orientalism, such as Edward W Said’s “Orientalism” and Meyda Yeğenoğlu’s “Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism”
4 Background: The Islamic Headscarf in Turkey

The debate regarding the appropriate place of the hijab in the Turkish public sphere has come under deep scrutinise from the general public, political parties and from academic and religious scholars. In order to comprehend the Islamic headscarf as a religious symbol operating in the public sphere of a strictly secular society, this chapter will explore important historical events in Turkey, relevant for the understanding of the headscarf-debate.

4.1 The Establishment of the Republic of Turkey

The Lausanne treaty of 1923 effectively ended a period in Turkish history distinguished by several devastating wars and conflicts. The treaty enabled the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, with a single-party regime under its first president: the charismatic Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Atatürk effectively broke the ties with the previous Islamic Ottoman rule and introduced reforms of modernisation, secularism and westernisation, later developed through the ideology known as Kemalism. As symbols of the Ottoman era, certain religious or traditional dresses or attires were restricted or forbidden and a “civilised dress” was promoted. The introduction of the Hat Law required Turkish men to wear western hats instead of the Islamic fez and the wearing of traditional Ottoman headgear was restricted.

4.2 Separatism in the Turkish Context: The Kurds and Other Minorities

Through the establishment of the Republic, nationalism and territorial integrity was emphasised, offering no concessions for minority groups’ claims for independent territories. An understanding of the problem with minority rights in the context of the Turkish Republic is thus vital in order to thoroughly comprehend the national debate on human rights. The reactions to the Kavakçı-case as well as the reactions to the event in October 2013 have included the accusation of “separatism” (“bölücü” in Turkish) and requires an explanation. The Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK) have violently fought for the Kurdish minority rights for some thirty years, and have commonly been charged for the crime of separatism.

---

21 Kemalism has been described as the “religion” and state ideology of Turkey. It consists of the following six arrows: republicanism, secularism, nationalism, populism, statism and revolutionism. (Eric J. Zücker, *Turkey: A Modern History*, pg. 181–182)

22 Kavakçı İslam pg. 18

23 Understood in this research as “The idea that racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, political, and linguistic differences, when accompanied by a legacy of oppression, exclusion, persecution, and discrimination, are justifications for groups to terminate their political and legal ties to other groups.” (Dennis, Rutledge M. “Separatism.” *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, Blackwell Publishing, 2007, Blackwell Reference Online, 19 December 2013)
ultimately seen as a threat to the territorial integrity of the Turkish Republic. Against this background, the seriousness of the perceived crime of separatism becomes evident, whether the alleged separatism is ethnic in the form of independence of a minority group, or religious in the form of observing religious obligations in the public sphere of the Turkish Republic.

4.3 Women and the Modernisation Project

Although there were no formal rules regarding female dress, the modernisation project initiated by Atatürk clearly favoured one type of Turkish woman: the nationalist, secular and uncovered woman. Previously homogeneously praised for introducing reforms increasing the status of women’s rights in Turkey, critiques against the origins of the reforms have recently surfaced in the public discourse. The improvement of women’s status was inherently linked to the modernisation project. In the words of Atatürk: “Republic means democracy, and recognition of women’s rights is a dictate of democracy, hence women’s rights will be recognized.”24 Thus, the expansion of women’s rights was made in an instrumental manner, ignoring the existence of the patriarchy: the underlying social system that produces unequal power relations between men and women.

4.4 The Kavakçı-Affair

Merve Kavakçı created a public outcry when she, in 1999, attended the Turkish Parliament wearing an Islamic headscarf. Kavakçı had previously that year been elected to Parliament representing the Islamist-rooted Virtue party and was obliged to take an oath of alliance to the Turkish State.25 The swearing-in ceremony was conducted on the 3d of May 1999 and Kavakçı’s entry was received with applause from her colleagues in the Virtue Party, but secular parties stood up, gathered together and vociferously demanded her to leave the Parliament. The leader of the secularist Democratic Left Party (DSP) entered the podium and proclaimed that Kavakçı should know her limits and that there was no place for the headscarf in a secularist republic.26 Kavakçı subsequently left the Parliament, lost her seat and had her citizenship revoked.27

24 Y. Arat, Rethinking Islam and Liberal Democracy: Islamist Women in Turkish Politics, 2005 pg. 17
25 Shively, pg. 46
26 Ibid, pg. 52
27 Ibid, pg. 61
4.4.1 Reactions

Kavakçi was subjected to condemnation by various parties and organisations, who claimed that Kavakçi had violated the secular principles of the Republic. She was furthermore criticised within the own party ranks for “exposing the party to condemnation and suspicion” and was accused of intending to introduce Muslim fundamentalism into Turkish Parliament. Süleyman Demirel, the Turkish President at the time of the event, published a statement claiming that Kavakçi was an agent provocateur who symbolised a "deep fundamentalist threat" to the Turkish state. The statement moreover declared, “If you say, 'I am a Muslim because I covered my head, and those who do not cover are not Muslim,' you are committing the world's greatest sin, and what you do is against Islam, it is separatism. Agent-provocateurs are seen a lot, and she is one of them.”

4.5 Legislation

The following section will outline the international, regional and national laws that are relevant for the case of public manifestation of religion.

4.5.1 International Legislation

The right to manifest one’s religion is outlined in article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was ratified by Turkey in 2003. It states, “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.” Article 18 explains that any limitations to the aforementioned rights have to be prescribed by law and have to be deemed “necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.”

Additionally, the ICCPR protects against discrimination through article 3, which prohibits gender-based discrimination, and through article 26, which states that all people are equal before the law.
Turkey have thus adopted a broad interpretation of the possibilities to limit the rights to manifestation of religion, in accordance to the strict interpretation of secularism. Through the enactment of limitations in the national law regarding the right to manifestation of religion, the ban against the hijab in public institutions became a reality.

Critics against any form of restrictions of the use of headscarf in public spaces emphasise that Turkey actively discriminate headscarved women since they have previously been unable to attend university and public offices and are still, due to their religious manifestations, excluded from the judicial, military and police spheres.

4.5.2 European Legislation: Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights

Turkey has been a member of the Council of Europe since its founding in 1949 and is, thus, one of 47 member parties of the ECHR. Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights is comparable to article 18 of the ICCPR, providing protection of the rights of freedom of religion and freedom of manifestation of religion, and stating the reasons for limitations. Article 9 overlaps with article 14 regarding the prohibition of discrimination on religious and gender grounds.

4.5.3 Turkish Legislation

The ban against the hijab in universities and public offices has previously been prescribed in national laws and has been upheld by the judgements of the Constitutional Court.

4.5.3.1 The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey

The constitution from 1982 functions as the current fundamental law of Turkey. Freedom of religion is protected in article 24, although accompanied by several limitations and references to other articles, such as article 14 which states that none of the articles in the constitution “shall be exercised in the form of activities aiming to violate the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation, and to endanger the existence of the democratic and secular order of the Republic based on human rights.” Article 24 furthermore states a prohibition on exploitation or abuse of religion for the “purpose of personal or political

---

34 European Court of Human Rights, *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*
35 Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Constitution of the Republic of Turkey*
interest or influence, or for even partially basing the fundamental, social, economic, political, and legal order of the State on religious tenets." Article 10 ensures equality before the law and equal rights between men and women.

**4.5.3.2 Dress Regulations Act**

Through The Dress Regulations Act of 3 December 1934, Turkey imposed a ban on wearing religious attire, including the hijab, in all places except places for worship or at religious ceremonies. The wearing of the headscarf in universities increased in the 1980’s and the Higher-Education Authority subsequently published rules that banned the wearing of the headscarf in lecture theatres two years later. Most universities in Turkey have, nevertheless, abandoned the official prohibition on wearing the hijab in public institutions for higher education since 2010. Through the “Democratization and Human Rights package” of September 30th 2013, the By-Law on Dress was amended and the ban on headscarves in public institutions was abolished.

---

36 Ibid
38 J. Head, “Quiet end to Turkey's college headscarf ban”, BBC News, 31 December, 2010
39 Justice and Development Party, "Democratization and Human Rights Package” 30 September, 2013)
5 2013: The Islamic headscarf’s Re-entry into Turkish Parliament

Following the 1999-event, the headscarf was conspicuous by its absence from the Parliament for fourteen years. A number of factors, including the changes in the political power-landscape, where the Islamist-rooted AKP are currently ruling, has effectively changed the conditions for the possibilities of wearing certain clothes and attire marking religious affiliations. This chapter will explain the changes in the legal framework that enabled the legal re-entry of the headscarf into Turkish parliament. Furthermore, the chapter will explore the subsequent reactions to the changes of the legislation.

5.1 Democrationisation and Human Rights Package

The “Democratization and Human Rights Package”, introduced by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on September 30th, 2013, includes a significant number of legal amendments and expansions of previous laws, affecting the legal scope of human rights protection. The practice of the student oath, an oath that has emphasised the legacy of Atatürk and Turkish nationalism was, for instance, abolished. In the Turkish context, the student oath has been a complex matter for the students who do not agree with Atatürk’s principles, or identifies themselves as one of the minority groups rather than as ethnically Turk. The package furthermore addresses minority rights as it allows private institutions to conduct education in other mother tongues than Turkish.

Chapter two of the package, dedicated to administrative regulations, states in article 24 that “The By-Law on Dress is amended and the ban on headscarf in public institutions is abolished”, thereby effectively ending the formal ban on wearing the headscarf in public institutions, such as the Parliament. The language used in the package, combined with the realisation that previous laws and practices have caused problems for minority groups and headscarved women, could be seen as an attempt towards a relaxation of certain laws and policies that are deeply rooted in the secular and nationalistic principles of Atatürk, the, according to the Constitution, “immortal leader and the unrivalled hero.” The human rights and democratisation package was praised by the European Union, claiming, through the

40 Ibid
41 Ibid
42 Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Constitution of the Republic of Turkey”
Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle, that “all the reforms in the judicial and democratisation packages aim to strengthen democracy in line with EU standards.”

5.1.1 Criticism
The socialist-kemalist newspaper Aydinlik Daily reports that CHP Chairman Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu’s publically silent reaction to the Democratisation and Human Rights Package encouraged other CHP members of Parliament to publically express their views. MP Dilek Akağün Yılmaz claimed that the package was counter-revolutionary, separatist and reactionary and that the currently ruling government thus was “committing crimes against the constitution”, crimes for which they, according to Yılmaz, should stand trial for in Supreme Court. Furthermore, she argued that the prohibition of discrimination as set forth in the package, was, in reality, the criminalisation of the defence of “secular and modern republican believes” CHP MP İsa Gök focused his criticism on the new minority rights, considering the AKP-package an “initiative to place Abdullah Öcalan and the other PKK members into the framework of Parliament.” The religiously-rooted newspaper “Today’s Zaman” reported that CHP Member of Parliament’s Constitutional Reconciliation Commission, Atilla Kart, criticised the AKP for not taking other parties’ views into consideration when drafting the package, and that such a package should be based on mutual agreement. Criticism was furthermore expressed from those seeking further freedoms for headscarved women, highlighting that headscarved women are still not allowed to enter the police or military force as well as the judicial system.

5.2 Sevde Beyazıt Kaçar, Gülay Samancı, Nurcan Dalbudak and Gönül Bekin Şahkulubey
On October 21st, almost a month after the introduction of the Human Rights and Democratisation package, four AKP members of Parliament, Sevde Beyazıt Kaçar, Gülay Samancı, Nurcan Dalbudak and Gönül Bekin Şahkulubey entered the General Assembly meeting at the Parliament in Ankara donning the hijab after previously announcing their planned veiling in media. The nationalist and secular-oriented Hürriyet Daily News cited

43 European Commission, European Commission Štefan Füle, 8 November, 2013
44 Aydınlık Daily, “CHP MPs: Package is Counter-Revolutionary”, 4 October 2013
46 Ibid
Dalbudak, “The time has become right for female deputies to wear headscarves” and that “We have decided to continue this [wearing headscarves] after being influenced by the spirituality there [at the hajj]48 with the help of social conditions that have become mature.”49 She made references to the Kavakçı-affair, believing that it would “not be the same as the pains veiled female lawmakers experienced in 1999.”50 The four women received positive support in the forms of greetings, hugs and smiles by other MPs. Compared to the controversy surrounding the Kavakçı-affair, the emotions expressed in Parliament during the 2013-event was significantly more modest. The only immediate critical expression was the display of a T-shirt with the portrait of Atatürk as the headscarved women entered the session.

5.3 Reactions

The following section will explore the diverse reactions to the lift of the ban, starting with the positive reactions from the AKP and following with the diversified opinions expressed by the CHP.

5.3.1 AKP

The public expressions from the AKP-members have been exclusively positive, and any possible contradictory views have not been visible in the media. The AKP-reactions will be divided in statements from Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and various expressions from AKP MPs.

5.3.1.1 Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

The currently ruling PM has effectively emphasised the need for a process of strengthening human rights in Turkey, however not without criticism from the opposition. In an article published on the English-version of the official AKP-website, he says “Those who wear headscarves and those who don’t, both are citizens and owners of this Republic, enjoying the same rights and freedoms. Preferring one over the other flies in the face of the principles of justice and equality.”51 In another article on the same webpage, he expressed the belief that the Turkish Parliament had reacted with “maturity” to the MPs entering Parliament wearing headscarves.52

48 Hajj referring to the islamic pilgrimage to Mecka, Saudiarabia
50 Ibid
51 Justice and Development Party, “PM pledges more reforms as Turkey surmounts headscarf taboo”, 1 November, 2013
52 Justice and Development Party, “Four headscarved female MPs enter parliament” 2 November, 2013
5.3.1.2 Bülent Arınç

The current Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç praised the reaction shown by the parties represented in Parliament during the re-entry of the headscarf in a speech, stating, “Those reactions are befitting to parliament. The parliament has shown a maturity. I thank all my friends.”

5.3.1.3 MPs

Member of Parliament Gülay Samancı said that she received positive reactions from fellow deputies and claimed, “Those who think differently voiced their objections. This atmosphere has suited Turkish Parliament and Turkey” Mihrimah Belma Satır, another AKP deputy expressed her support, saying “This is the picture that Turkey has been waiting for” and that “the development has ended a rough period as a result of the democratization process in Turkey.”

5.3.2 CHP

The entry of four women wearing the hijab into Parliament was received with varied reactions from the main opposition party, the CHP. From seemingly positive responses to deeply negative statements and visual protests, the CHP has, to this date, not produced a single, common statement but rather individual, and therefore, diverse, reactions in interviews with the media and though public speeches. This section will further investigate the reactions, starting with the reactions from the CHP leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and continuing with the reactions from CHP MPs.

5.3.2.1 Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu

The online newspaper Al-Monitor reported that Kılıçdaroğlu had expressed “happiness” over the action, indicating that Turkey had “turned a new page.” Hürriyet quoted Kılıçdaroğlu’s first public speech since the parliamentary session saying, “We are a party which believes in gender equality, which grants the right to vote and the right to get elected,” and expressed his determination to end the political exploitation of the headscarf-issue. Today’s Zaman quoted Kılıçdaroğlu saying, “the era in which the ruling party had been exploiting the headscarf

53 Ibid
54 Ibid
55 Ibid
56 Al Monitor, “Turkey Crosses Threshold on Islamic Headscarves”, 1 November 2013
issue is now over”

He furthermore claimed, quoted in the same newspaper, that the CHP made history by displaying only peaceful opposition to the headscarved women.

5.3.2.2 MPs

According to Al-Monitor, most of the CHP-deputies were not explicitly against the presence of the headscarf in the Turkish Parliament, but were opposed to, what they understood as, being “painted into a corner” through the AKP use of the issue. According to Al-Monitor, the CHP MPs claimed that the AKP was hoping that the CHP MPs would, similar to the event in 1999, react dramatically, but assured that CHP would not “fall for such ploys”.

Dilek Akagün Yılmaz

Actively opposing the presence of the hijab in Parliament, Akagün Yılmaz represents the more critical wing of the CHP. According to the news agency Reuters, she claimed, “All our members are in agreement, that is, we think the AKP is exploiting religion. We will never remain silent towards actions aimed at eliminating the principle of secularism”.

As the female deputies entered the Parliament, Akagün Yılmaz took off her jacket and revealed a T-shirt with the portrait of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, his signature and a Turkish flag, a sign of non-acceptance of the entry of the hijab into Parliament. In November 2013, she staged another silent, but exceptionally visual protest in Parliament, named “Standing Woman.”

Standing up in Parliament, she had a poster covering her back, displaying two pictures: one from Iran in 1960, showing men and women dancing together in a social gathering. The men are wearing western-style suits and the women are wearing dresses that reveal parts of their arms and legs as well as their hair. The fashion seems to follow the western-style fashion of the 1960’s. The second picture is from 2013 and stands in stark contrast to the previous picture, displaying women wrapping themselves in the black Islamic “chador”, meaning “large cloth” or “sheet” in Persian, referring to the black cloak extensively used in the public sphere in Iran. Under the two pictures reads, “Türkiye, iran olmayacak”, which can be translated to “Turkey will not be Iran.”

58 Today’s Zaman, “CHP Leader: No one can now exploit the headscarf issue”, 15 November, 2013
59 Al Monitor, “Turkey Crosses Threshold on Islamic Headscarves”, 1 November 2013
60 Ibid
61 J. Burch, “Four Turkish MPs to attend Parliament in headscarves”, Reuters, 15 December, 2013
Muharrem İnce

Today’s Zaman reported that the CHP Deputy Group Chairman Muharrem İnce received applause from the AKP after stating that all women, regardless of wearing a headscarf or not, are his sisters. Al-Monitor, however, describes his speech as “fiery” and as an attack on the deputies in question, not attacking the headscarf as such, but rather reminding the Parliament that the headscarved women, to the date, had not spoken in Parliament.

Şafak Pavey

Şafak Pavey, a young disabled female CHP MP discussed the lift on the hijab-ban in a speech delivered in Parliament on October 31st, 2013, which was later was published on her own official website. In the speech, she begins with the recognition that the “true women” who have taken the AKP to power also possess the right to their deserved seats in Parliament. In the speech, she furthermore draws on her own experience as a woman with a prosthetic leg, forced to comply with the dress-codes of the parliament that prescribes her to wear a skirt. Therefore, in her view, the lifting of the ban is problematic, as inequalities persist and AKP is engaging in double standards regarding the promotion of women’s rights. The ban against trousers for women in Turkish Parliament has, since the publication of her speech, been lifted. In her speech, she emphasises that human rights and freedoms can be achieved very slowly, but have the possibility of being shattered very quickly. She aims to remind the “young girl with her flower-printed headscarf and tight fitting pants, who kisses with her boyfriend in the hidden corners of Çamlıca Park” that she owes her freedom to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and that the relationship between the headscarf and freedom is a “two-edged sharp knife” that, on one hand represents the freedom of belief but, on the other hand, represents the pressure of belief. She continues with setting high expectations for the newly headscarf-wearing MPs, expecting the women to “explain why my country is at the 120th place in the world in the field of women’s rights” and “why the average of the entire women’s rights in 57 Islamic countries cannot reach the level of Taiwan alone, which is not even a part of the United Nations.” and claims that it is “their responsibility to transform the headscarf from a violation of human rights to a human rights gain”.

---

64 Today’s Zaman, “CHP Leader: No one can now exploit the headscarf issue”, 15 November, 2013
65 Al-Monitor, “Turkey Crosses Threshold on Islamic Headscarves”, 1 November 2013
6 An Analysis of the Reactions to The Lifting of The Ban

The analysis will consist of three different components: the statements and comments by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Muharrem İnce, the speech delivered by Şafak Pavey and the protest actions by Dilek Akagün Yılmaz. As previously specified, the analysis will be conducted using Fairclough’s three-dimensional model for CDA, accompanied by the feminist criticism against orientalism. The aim is to create understandings about the underlying orientalist ideas and power-relationships that affect the discourse. The chapter will firstly discuss the various discursive practises and, secondly, connect them in the summary.

6.1 Discordance within the CHP

To this date, the CHP has not produced an official, uniform statement regarding the re-entry of the headscarf into Parliament. Instead, the CHP leader and several MPs, have produced discursive practises reacting to the event. The lack of a common standpoint and the great diversity within the individual reactions indicates the existence of discordance and a conflict within the CHP. The conflict concerns the view on the appropriateness of the headscarf in Parliament, but connects to the larger discourse of the appropriateness of religious symbols in secular states and the balance between different values in societies. The discursive practises analysed in this thesis: the speech by Şafak Pavey, the comments by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Muharrem İnce and the protests by Dilek Akagün Yılmaz, are creating and recreating the current discourse on the Islamic headscarf’s place in Turkish Parliament, thereby possibly affecting social actions.

6.2 Kılıçdaroğlu’s and İnce’s Comments

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Muharrem İnce belongs to the group of CHP-members who publically expressed positive reactions to the re-introduction of the hijab into the Turkish Parliament. Through their optimistic remarks, they are actively changing the discourse of the party regarding the hijab, emphasising women’s rights and marking the end of the political use of the headscarf.

İnce is underlining that all women are his “sisters”, using a religiously inspired language and
thereby effectively reaching out to the more religious sentiments of the Turkish society.\textsuperscript{70} His speech, received with applause from the ruling AKP-party, indicates respect for religious symbols, thereby contributing to a remaking of the secular, Republican opposition regarding the hijab and the appropriateness of any possible ban. However, by pointing out that none of the four women have held a speech in Parliament, İnce is indicating that the presence of their headscarves affects their inclination to speak in Parliament. By indicating a causal relationship between the headscarf and the willingness to speak in Parliament, İnce is, in an orientalist manner, stereotyping the Muslim women as being less motivated to speak in Parliament because of their religious beliefs. Instead of focusing on the general misrepresentation of women in Turkish society, politics and Parliament, he targets one group and problematises their lack of initiative. He thereby ignores the male dominance and female underrepresentation in the Turkish Parliament and political decision-making processes.

Kılıçdaroğlu have focused on the importance of ending what he perceives as a political use of the headscarf, enabled by the recent lift of the ban. For Islamist women, the right to wear the headscarf have historically dominated their activism, as they actively organised around the cause, attempting to end the discrimination against headscarved Muslim women. Through the recent lift of the ban, Kılıçdaroğlu argues that their cause is “lost” as the headscarf is legally accepted in Parliament. The CHP leader moreover noted that AKP is launching the human rights and democratisation-package closely preceding the next presidential election in 2014 and the next general election in 2015. Kılıçdaroğlu is claiming that the ban was removed due to political strategy and timing rather than actual concern for the protection of human rights. The comments from Kılıçdaroğlu, although limited in scope in English, constitute a discourse practise promoting an alternative to the traditional CHP-view of the hijab in Parliament. By displaying more respectful comments, focusing on the hijab as a right instead of a threat, the social actions performed by other members may be reflected by the leader’s view, contributing to a prospect of a more nuanced discourse between the groups in Turkish society.

\textbf{6.3 Şafak Pavey’s Speech}

From the more critical CHP-reactions, the CHP deputy Şafak Pavey’s speech stands out as particularly suitable in identifying ideas and values based on orientalist principles. She begins

\textsuperscript{70} Understood here as religious language due to the fact that it is common between Muslims to refer to another member of the Muslim religious community as “\textit{brothers}” or “\textit{sisters}”.
the speech with criticising what she perceives as a general lack of respect from the government, and continues to mention that she has been forced to wear the veil during travels in Muslim countries. Thereby, it becomes evident that her view of the Islamic headscarf is highly affected by her own personal experience of being obliged to wear a religious garment in three non-democratic states with very poor human rights records: Afghanistan, Yemen and Iran.\footnote{Pavey, “Text of Şafak Pavey Parliament Speech October 31”, 31 October, 2013} By proceeding from personal experiences, she simplifies the connections to the situation of Turkey today, which possibly shares some similarities, but ultimately results in a failure to realise the different political, cultural, social and religious contexts of the four countries.

Pavey continues with embracing the new possibilities the headscarved women of the AKP have to take seats in Turkish Parliament. She says “I believe that the true women who have carried the AKP to power have the right to take their place in the seats of the Parliament”\footnote{Ibid} thereby explicitly promoting gender equality, believing that women should have a strong role in decision-making processes. However, she continues, “I will go further; it even offends me that some AKP deputies hide away the covered women that are with them”\footnote{Ibid} In this statement, she produces some clearly orientalist assumptions about AKP members, understood as Muslim men and women. Male, Muslim AKP MPs are assumed to believe that the only appropriate role for women is in the private sphere, hence they are hiding their headscarved wives at home. Although the issue certainly exists, Pavey is however guilty of an orientalist form of stereotyping and generalising and is simultaneously attempting to increase the polarisation of the Turkish political landscape. Through her speech, she clearly identifies herself as a part of the secular and intellectual “white” Turks and labels the AKP as the other, unintellectual “black” Turks. From a feminist critique of orientalism, she is identifying herself as a part of the group of liberated, independent, secular and uncovered women, as opposed to the headscarved women who are dependent, religious, covered and therefor in need of liberation from the supposedly already liberated women. Moreover, she fails to recognise any variations of her assumptions of the oppressive actions of the AKP-men or any similarities within her own party. She disregards the probable existence of secular men who disapproves their wives entering politics, religious men who encourage their wives to engage in political activities, and the women who are unmarried, divorced, widowed, single
or non-heterosexual. Additionally, Pavey neglects two significant factors that have delayed the entry of headscarved women into Turkish Parliament, and that still influence the active discrimination against headscarved women in other fields of the Turkish society. Firstly, the dramatic experience of the Kavakçı-affair presumably demotivated headscarved women to advance in their political career and/or joining the Parliament, unwilling to take the risk of enduring the same treatment as Kavakçı experienced. Secondly, the discriminatory legal framework created through the establishment of the Turkish Republic has, through its strict interpretation of secularism, efficaciously excluded the headscarved women from the Parliament.

Views based on orientalist assumptions can be identified in several passages in the speech. Pavey’s stated aim to “remind the young girl with her flower-printed headscarf and tight fitting pants, who kisses with her boyfriend in the hidden corners of Çamlıca Park, that she owes her freedom to Mustafa Kemal”74 consist of several problematic formulations. Firstly, the general tone is condescending, reinforcing the orientalist notions that Pavey, an educated woman with secular values has to inform the young, headscarf-bearing girl about her view on the appropriate way of acting in the public sphere, since her secularity and westernisation makes her superior. In this fictional story, Pavey orientalises and thereby, generalises the idea of the “Muslim woman” and specifically, the young, Muslim girl. The story, although fictional, presents an event that appears in the public sphere of the contemporary Turkish society. Pavey indicates that the event is conflicted: wearing elements of Western fashion and publically displaying affection, while simultaneously expressing religious views through the wearing of the Islamic headscarf are behaviours that are fundamentally incompatible. In other words, the girl in the story challenges Pavey’s own prejudices and stereotypes of young, Muslim girls. By the use of derogatory language and presuming that a conflict exists, Pavey is actively questioning the young girl’s right to her own life choices and identity. Additionally, Pavey suggests that the young, headscarved girl needs to be reminded of the man who gave her these rights, since she presumably is unaware of the importance of Atatürk’s contribution to Turkish human rights legislation. Departing from a feminist analysis of this particular statement, the criticism would concentrate on the absolute focus on the woman in the narrative, thereby reemphasising the responsibilities of the young girl and ignoring the boyfriend’s participating and therefore, responsibility. Feminist theory is

---

explicitly critical towards the action of judging a woman’s general moral compass based on her sexuality. Through her patronising tone, Pavey is implying that the public display of affection by a headscarved girl is bound to be problematic.

In terms of the origin and legitimacy of human rights, Pavey considers them “given” by Turkey’s founding father, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and warns that “A life of freedom is achieved very slowly but can be shattered very quickly.” The secular elite of Turkey often paints a cautionary image of “Turkey without Atatürk” as an authoritarian Islamic state completely deprived of women’s rights. In reality, any forms of auspicing where Atatürk is hypothetically erased from history are problematic and bound to be imaginary prophecies without any form of evidence. Moreover, the issue is portrayed as the alleged lack of knowledge regarding Atatürk’s contribution in the field of human rights, ignoring the naturally diverse understandings of Atatürk and his Kemalist principles.

Although the speech is produced in order to address the event of the four headscarved women entering Parliament, Pavey simultaneously speaks about several other issues regarding women’s rights. She addresses the serious issues of child marriage and “girls who are covered at age 5.” Child marriage is a particular serious issue in acute need of public awareness, discussions and plausible solutions, but Pavey’s correlation of child marriage and the covering of young children with the voluntary decision by adult women to cover their hair in Parliament, can certainly be criticised for being arbitrary and incoherent.

Additional broad generalisations can be detected in the following statement: “I have great expectations from our headscarf-wearing female deputies; for example, I am expecting them to explain why my country is at the 120th place in the world in the field of women’s rights. I expect them to explain why the average of the entire women’s rights in 57 Islamic countries cannot reach the level of Taiwan alone, which is not even a part of the United Nations.” Pavey evidently believes that the four headscarved women in Turkish Parliament have a greater responsibility than Muslim women not wearing the headscarf, secular women or men do in explaining the country’s issues with implementing women’s rights. Since she fails to mention the reason behind this extra responsibility for certain women, the analysis becomes

---

76 Ibid
problematic, but the statement nevertheless reinforces Pavey’s view of a homogeneous group of headscarved Muslim women who, additionally are *more* responsible for ensuring the protection and implementation of women’s rights, than other members of the Turkish Parliament. Pavey is thus shifting the burden of responsibility to one particular group based on their headscarf. This logic is disregarding the responsibilities of the male deputies who are currently occupying 86% of the seats in Parliament.\(^{77}\) In order to include women’s rights in national legislation, the action from the majority group is vital, and notwithstanding the importance of the representation by the 14% women, the 86% men of the Parliament have a responsibility to promote gender equality in Turkey, a factor that Pavey ignores.

Obtaining the 120\(^{th}\) place on the Global Gender Gap Report 2013, launched by the World Economic Forum is an embarrassment and an alarming warning-signal to Turkey.\(^{78}\) However, by focusing on the poor records of some Islamic states, she disregards other factors affecting women’s rights in these countries such as poverty, wars, conflicts, democratic deficit, weak healthcare and poor education systems. Religion can constitute one factor, but by focusing solely on “Islamic states”, she neglects the other aspects and reaffirms the secular groups’ fear of a gradual “Islamisation” of Turkey. In regards to the comparison to Taiwan, Pavey avoids explaining, or is simply unaware of, the historical background to Taiwan’s non-membership to the UN: China has successfully claimed that Taiwan is under their territory and Taiwan can therefore not become a UN member as a sovereign state.\(^{79}\) The comparison to Taiwan is arbitrary and based on orientalist notions that Turkey, a country partly situated in Europe, should be better at implementing women’s rights than a geographically distant and culturally different East-Asian country. Thus, Pavey is neglecting to inform the audience of Taiwan’s high level of development and strong economy.

Pavey furthermore extends the responsibilities of the four headscarved women to the field of protection against discrimination. Addressing the issues of gender discrimination in the workplace, hate crimes based on, presumably, sexual orientation, discrimination against women in public office and religious discrimination, she states, “From now on, the safety of the one who was fired from her job because she wore a mini skirt, the one who was beaten because he had an earring on his left ear, the one who was lynched because her low-cut was

\(^{77}\) The World Bank, “Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (\%)”, 2013
\(^{79}\) S. Winkler, “Taiwan’s UN Dilemma: To Be or Not To Be”, Brookings, June, 2012
not liked by the cabinet minister, the one who was killed because he did not observe the fasting, those who changed their names to hide that they are Christian are entrusted to these female deputies more than anyone else. Now, it is their responsibility to transform the headscarf from a violation of human rights to a human rights gain." 

Pavey rightly mentions that discriminated groups often cooperate, seeking strength, support and solidarity in their common struggle against discrimination. However, her tone is demanding rather than encouraging, expecting, once again, more accountability from the four deputies with hijab, than the other MPs.

The speech continues in a tone of deep polarisation between “us” and “them”, stating, “Apparently, our myth of cohabiting has collapsed. If you have been intoxicated by arrogance, how can you hear the cry of the one who is not like you? While one side is searching for ways to live together, and if the other side wants to intimidate, transform, destroy their freedoms one by one; then when you finally destroy us, who will you find to put in the next Olympics presentation? In this statement, Pavey accuses the headscarved women of the AKP of arrogance and an inability to understand the sufferings of people belonging to other groups than their own. The polarisation is clearly evident: she is claiming that “her” group’s ultimate aim is to search for solutions in order to live together. The other group, represented by the headscarved women, is however aiming to destroy the possibilities of peaceful coexistence. The tone is dramatic, predicting the ultimate extinction of Pavey’s segment of society due to the actions of the currently ruling party and its forces.

The final sentence of the paragraph, regarding the Olympics presentation, would have benefitted from some further clarifications from the speaker. Istanbul was a candidate city for the 2020 Summer Olympics but later lost the competition to Tokyo, a decision that was welcomed by the government-critical protestors of the Gezi Park movement. In the promotion material for the bid, Turkey has, to a high extent, focused on highlighting the diversity of the city of Istanbul. In the final presentations for the 2020 Olympics, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said, “We believe that hosting the Olympics in Istanbul will give this signal, this spirit of friendship and sharing and peace. And our country is a place where there is a lot of unity and diversity, and that is the idea that we can share on a broader

---

scale with the Olympics Games being hosted in Turkey.”  

In an official promotion video on YouTube, a Muslim man is praying just before a female athlete runs through the streets in tight-fitting pants, a t-shirt and her hair in a ponytail. In fact, there are no headscarved women present in the movie. Given the commercial purpose of the video, the image portrayed seeks to primarily appeal to the West, indicating that Turkey wants to produce the image of a modern and secular society by effectively hiding its hijab-wearing women. Departing from the criticism of orientalism, the government is, in this case, guilty of an orientalist mind-set where modernity is, in the video, represented by a blond woman wearing a short dress on her way to the European part of Istanbul. Pavey’s point of her group being “used” is interesting in regards to Turkey’s self-identity in the international arena. However, Pavey’s use of orientalist language amounts to further polarisation in the Turkish society and thereby prevents further understanding and cooperation between the groups.

By highlighting that “We are the ones torched at and burnt in Sivas, the ones who were shot at and killed in Gezi, whose houses are marked, who are being punished because of our lifestyles...But, for some reason, you are the chronic victims...” Pavey addresses the victimisation of the headscarved women of the AKP. While identifying and highlighting the self-victimisation of the headscarved women and the ruling party, she is, in the same sentence, identifying several significant events where her societal group have been subjected to injustices. By emphasising these events, the justifications for the other group to identify themselves as victims are actively questioned, indicating that her group are the alleged “real” victims. The conflict between the more secular groups of Turkish society and the more religiously observant Muslims of Turkey stems from a history where the rulers have, to different extents, been unable to fully respect the needs and wills of various groups of the Turkish society. Previously predominantly ruled by advocates of Atatürk’s principles of Kemalism, the practising Muslims and various minority groups experienced extensive discrimination. When the religiously oriented AKP then seized power with 34% of the votes in the election of 2002, the power relations and the discourse from both sides changed dramatically. AKP reintroduced religious rights in the public discourse and embarked on a peace-process with the PKK. The CHP perceived the AKP discourse and new legislation as a

---

82 ESPN, “Decision on 2020 Olympics due”, 7 September, 2013
threat to secularism, directly attacking their way of life and freedoms. They also claimed that many of the new laws or removal of previous laws, including the lift on the hijab-ban in public institutions in reality were methods aimed at gaining popularity and public support before the forthcoming presidential election in 2014 and the general election in 2015.

As previously explained, CDA holds that various discursive practises create ideological effects through the creation and reproduction of unequal power relations between social groups. Hence, in Pavey’s speech, she presents her view of the reality of the headscarf-debate and the headscarved women while simultaneously promoting the interest of her own group, the CHP and the secular Turks. Throughout the history of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic there have been great inequalities between social groups: between men and women, the majority and minority groups, social classes and the rulers. Through the power of the more Islamic-oriented AKP party, the minority are experiencing what they interpret as the emergence of an immediate and serious threat to their lifestyles, values and freedoms. Pavey expresses: “It is not sustainable that the minority suppresses the majority. However, it is sustainable that the majority suppresses the minority.” Through this statement, Pavey is aiming to highlight the unequal power relations between the ruling AKP and the opposition party. Although the statement is emphasising the importance of respect for differences and all humans equal value, she fails to acknowledge certain contradictory views within her own party. The CHP party have a history of non-recognition of minority groups’ right to existence in Turkey. The minority groups, including the Kurds have, as previously mentioned, been accused of separatism on the grounds that any form of resistance against the values and principles of the Republic constitutes separatism and/or terrorism. The current Turkish Constitution of 1982 fails to mention any minority rights in favour of the intense focus on nationalism and unity. It states, “The recognition that all Turkish citizens are united in national honour and pride, in national joy and grief, in their rights and duties regarding national existence....” Although Pavey’s statement regarding majority oppression is relevant, she ignores her own party’s history and its inabilities of proposing any concessions regarding minority- or religious rights. Although the AKP is formally in power and thereby officially “stronger” than the opposition party CHP, the Turkish Republic is still extensively coloured by the CHP-stemmed ideology of Kemalism, visible clearly in the current

85 Jorgensen & Philips, pg. 63
87 Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Constitution of the Republic of Turkey”
Constitution. Therefore, the power relations between the AKP and CHP are incredibly complex.

Ultimately, Pavey’s speech is a discursive practise contributing to the upholding of unequal power relationships between the seculars and the Muslims in the country, through the polarisation between the two groups and through the orientalist ideas about Muslim women. Through the speech, Pavey reproduces and intensifies the already existing public discourse regarding a conflict that has been present since the 1920’s. Considering that she is one of the more vocal voices in the debate, delivering her speech in the Parliament and publishing it in Turkish and English on her official website, the reproduction of the discourse is particularly significant. The social practise, resulting from Pavey’s train of thought, could possibly lead to the impeachment of groups not belonging to the own social group, ultimately producing a deeper polarisation and, thereby, less cooperation between social groups in the Turkish society, increasing the number of conflicts, hate crimes and violence.

Thus, the speech by Şafak Pavey is an interesting discursive practice considering the status of the hijab in Turkish parliament. She reflects on many factors related to the topic of religious symbols in the Turkish Parliament, an important and traditionally secular space. Although she has proclaimed that she is not explicitly against the hijab in Parliament, her arguments are coloured by orientalist notions of her own group’s superiority, generalisations and homogenisation of the other group and a distinctive polarisation between them.

6.4 Dilek Akagün Yılmaz’s Protests
The silent but yet particularly visual protest by Dilek Akagün Yılmaz, taking her jacket off displaying a t-shirt with a portrait of Atatürk, his signature and a Turkish flag as the headscarved women entered Parliament, was a clear expression of dissent towards the latest developments. As Jorgensen and Philips point out: Discourse incorporates not only written and spoken language but also visual images, making Akagün Yılmaz’s visual expressions suitable for discourse analysis.88

Due to the four women’s early announcement of their planned veiling in national media, Akagün Yılmaz had the opportunity to prepare her action of resistance beforehand by

88 Jorgensen & Philips, pg. 61
wearing a T-shirt with the face of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk under her jacket. As an attempt to visually "remind" the headscarved women of the Parliament of the founding father and his principles, Akagün Yılmaz protest shares distinctive similarities with Pavey’s speech, although expressed in a less vocal and more visual manner. The perceived need to “remind” these women of Atatürk and the principles of the Republic stems from a conviction that the issue stems from a perceived acute lack of knowledge regarding Atatürk within certain groups, rather than an acceptance that there are different values, opinions, morals and beliefs in a highly diverse and pluralist society. Similar to Pavey’s phrasing, reminding the young Muslim girl of the man who gave her rights, Akagün Yılmaz’s protest action recreates and further polarises the discourse, presuming that the decision to don the hijab excludes any form of knowledge of, or appreciation towards, the positive developments introduced by Atatürk.

The “Standing Woman” protest, consisting of two pictures on a poster attached to Akagün Yılmaz’s back, is her latest graphic protest. A Google image-search of the 1960’s picture on the poster reveals that it was originally used in a photo-reportage by Foreign Policy called “Once Upon a time in Tehran”, accompanied with the caption “The Tehran Twist? The jet set kicked off their shoes and danced to rock-and-roll music in the early 1960s” 89 The Iranian, Islamic revolution of 1979 effectively restricted the Iranian women’s freedoms by introducing laws prescribing the covering of the hair in public. Hence, Akagün Yılmaz highlights an important shift in the occurrence of the Islamic veiling in Iran since the 1960’s, but oversimplifies by choosing two pictures representing two extremes. Thereby, she disregards the nuances that existed in the 1960's Iranian society and continues to exist in the contemporary Iranian society. The swing-dancing and partying young Iranians from the 1960’s picture are, according to the reportage in Foreign Policy, a part of the “jet set”, referring to the economic elite who had the opportunities to indulge in international travelling and the consumption of western-style culture, including music, entertainment, fashion and trends. By focusing on the elite segment of society, Akagün Yılmaz is disregarding the middle- and lower classes of the Iranian society, who did not possess the economic means required to belong to the “jet set.”

The picture from 2013 displays chador-wearing women walking together in what appears to be an organised walk or demonstration. The chador represents a common form of Islamic veiling in Iran, although Iranian law does not prescribe it. The use of this picture thus represent orientalist views of an oppressed, homogeneous group of Muslim women, wrapped in a black cloth. Similar to the women in the picture from 1960, however, many Iranian girls with economic opportunities are currently following western trends, while still (more or less) observing the dress code prescribing loose-fitting clothes and a hijab that is at least partly covering their hair.  

Hence, Akagün Yılmaz is protesting against the hijab in Turkish Parliament through an oversimplified comparison with the case of Iran, ultimately attempting to warn the Turkish public of the dangers of Islamism. Yeşim Arat, a researcher of women in the Islamic movement in Turkey summarises the situation in the following statement. “The secularists feared the gradually spreading wave of Islamism and the Islamists claims to political power through the parliamentary system. The Islamists resented this fear. The secularist assumed that Islamists were all authoritarian, illiberal reactionaries, and the Islamists believed the secularists to be the same. This exclusionary polarization foreclosed dialogue and mystified claims of each side.” Although Arat’s research focus on the politics in Turkey in the 1990’s, it is clear that these tendencies remain and are furthermore recreated through the use of orientalism in the discourse. As visible in Pavey’s speech and Akagün Yilmaz protest actions, there is an extensive fear from the threat of a possible “Islamisation” of Turkey. In Pavey’s case, this perceived threat is illustrated by the fear of lack of accountability for any possible decline of women’s rights, and in Akagün Yilmaz case, a fear and opposition against “becoming like Iran.”

The two pictures are compared in a manner of orientalism, using simplifications, homogenisation and polarisation. They are depicted as each other’s antipodes, failing to take any variations within the country and historical context intro consideration. Consulting Fairclough’s three-dimensional model for CDA, the “Standing Woman” is a graphic protest action and thus a contribution to the discourse practise reacting to the legal re-entry of the Islamic headscarf into Turkish Parliament. Akagün Yilmaz discourse practises recreates an

---

91 Arat, pg. 2-3
already polarised and conflictual discourse, adding visual images and orientalist statements, thus affecting the broader social practise by actuating stereotyping of, and disrespect for, other groups in society. The social practise is affected by the discourse, and Akagün Yılmaz contribution of a deep polarisation leads to a more profound split within the political forces in Turkey, justifying discrimination and disabling cooperation and understanding between the groups.

6.5 Summary

This chapter began with the observation that there is discordance within the oppositional party regarding the views and attitudes towards the headscarf in public. The more critical approach is believed to reach beyond the scope of the hijab, operating in the larger discussion regarding the appropriate place of religion in a secular state and religious rights. From the seemingly positive responses by CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and CHP MP Muharrem İnce, emphasising equality and the end of the political exploitation of the Islamic headscarf in their statements, to the critical responses by Şafak Pavey and Dilek Akagün Yılmaz, there has, to this date, not been released any single, uniform response by the CHP, indicating the existence of a conflict within the party.

There are, on one hand, the contributors to a more concessional and evolving discourse, admitting that certain groups have been subjected to discrimination due to their religious observance of certain canons regarding clothing and covering. However, reactions recognising discrimination are concurrently influenced by an orientalist language, stereotyping the headscarved women and focusing on the believed AKP-exploitation of the issue, as being used as a political tool to gain support through the process of victimisation.

On the other hand, critical voices, in this research exemplified by the discursive practices produced by Şafak Pavey and Dilek Akagün Yılmaz, use an exceedingly orientalist language in the description or display of the issues with the headscarf’s entry into Turkish Parliament. The orientalist ideas thus contribute to the discursive practises, affecting social actions to become more polarised and discriminatory, decreasing the potential understanding and cooperation between the segments of Turkish society.

Although one can expect that several CHP members take inspiration from several voices in the discourse, thus producing a nuanced balancing force between the reformist and the critics
within their party, their presence in the English-speaking Turkish media, have not been visible. Hence, the polarisation created by stereotypes and the unwillingness to understand the other group has the risk of spreading to the own party, creating serious conflicts within the CHP.
7 Results

Through the use of criticism against orientalism and critical discourse analysis, the results of this research show that there is a distinctive difference in attitudes towards the re-entry of the Islamic headscarf in Turkish Parliament among the CHP-members, including the leader and several MPs. The differences are so extensive that they can be divided into two groups: one reformist group indicating a more tolerant view of the Islamic headscarf and its place in the Turkish parliament, and one group that is more critical, emphasising the importance of the preservation of the Kemalist principles of nationalism and secularism. The statements made by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Muharrem İnce, are signifying a process of creating a new discourse within the CHP, a discourse where the hijab represents a right rather than a threat, and where male decision-makers leave the choice of what to wear to the women in question. However, as noted earlier, Kılıçdaroğlu emphasises that the headscarf issue has previously been politically exploited by the AKP, using the ban on a religious symbol for political gains. The headscarf has thus become a heavily symbolically charged term, encompassing all that is “backwards” and “conservative” in Turkey. This interpretation is however blindfolded as it entirely fails to see the human rights-dimension of the issue, focusing solely on the hijab as a political symbol, although most women in Turkey argue that they wear the Islamic headscarf due to religious obligations rather than political affiliations.92 Moreover Kılıçdaroğlu has emphasised that the intentions of the AKP’s Democratisation and Human Rights Package are more associated with timing and political strategy than a genuine belief in human rights, as two important elections are approaching: the presidential election in 2014 and the general election in 2015. Additionally, Kılıçdaroğlu’s statements, have, compared to for example Şafak Pavey’s speech, been very reductive and sparse, never clearly showing support for the headscarved women or giving any longer explanation for his position on the topic.

İnce expressed content over the lifting of the headscarf-ban, emphasising the importance of equality and thus received positive reactions from the AKP-members. However, he subsequently reminded the audience that none of the headscarved women had spoken in the Parliament. Thus, he effectively merged the topic of the recent lift of the ban with the issue of misrepresentation of women in Parliament, leaving the complete responsibility of this issue

92 Kavakçı İslam, pg. 24
on the women themselves, instead of acknowledging the societal responsibility regarding the issue of women’s underrepresentation in politics and decision-making processes. Hence, İnce is partly creating a discourse within the CHP that indicates a heightened tolerance, but is, in the process, partly expressing orientalist ideas as he connects wearing the hijab with the unwillingness to speak in Parliament. However, since Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and Muharrem İnce have expressed positive opinions regarding the lift of the ban, focusing on women’s rights, it has effects on the discourse of the CHP, indicating a shift towards more tolerance for religious rights, thereby possibly changing social actions.

As this research has revealed, the other group, represented by Şafak Pavey and Dilek Akagün Yılmaz, are producing discursive practises regarding headscarved women that are extensively coloured by orientalist notions of superiority, homogenisation and stereotyping, leading to an alarming polarisation between “us” and “them.” The enormous polarisation has the ability to affect social actions i.e. less understanding and cooperation between the groups, and, thus, an increasingly active presence of discrimination, conflicts and violence in the Turkish society.

In terms of the efficiency and power of the main oppositional party, the CHP, it is reasonable to assume that a broad internal conflict will affect the CHP negatively. The different opinions regarding the Islamic headscarf’s appropriate place in the Parliament in Turkey, illuminates a possible wider disagreement: between reformists who aims to develop the party’s policies vis-à-vis religious and minority rights, and the proponents of “classical” Kemalism, aspiring to maintain the Turkish society as permeated by republicanism, nationalism and the laïcité- form of secularism.

The thesis stated aim of, in accordance with CDA, expose inequalities in power relationships between social groups, created by social practises, has proven to be complex in the context of Turkey. Firstly, Turkey has a history of ruling parties who have shown an acute absence of respect for the oppositional parties and for various minority groups and religious rights.

Against this historical background and with the presence of a currently ruling party rooted in an Islamist ideology, a constitution heavily influenced by Kemalist values with an oppositional party with internal conflicts, the power relationships are exceptionally complex. Considering the historical dominance of the secular, Kemalist parties since the foundation of Turkey in 1923, the CHP are informally exercising power, through the Constitution and through laws that have been created according to the principles of Kemalism. However, as the
AKP are now entering their twelfth year of rule, they are in the process of revising the Constitution and are actively legislating in accordance to their perception of the appropriate source of values and morals, often deriving from the Islamic faith. The legislation is naturally affecting the Turkish society and displeasing the secular opposition, who claim that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is becoming increasingly authoritarian, inciting fear amongst the secularists that their lifestyle and freedoms are threatened.

Thus, the both segments of society exercise a certain amount of power over one another: the seculars in the form of a historically dominating influence over society and politics, and the ruling party in the form of changing and creating legislation according to their values, morals and interests. Historically, the headscarved women of Turkey have been discriminated through their formal exclusion from the public offices, the police and the army, as well as the legislative field. Through the new human rights and democratisation-package, the formal discrimination in the public offices have ended, but still remains in several other fields of Turkish society. The worries expressed by the CHP should, however, not be ignored; the religiously sensitive laws can serve to protect women’s rights, as in the case of permitting the headscarf in Parliament, but also have the possibility of restricting women’s rights on the basis of patriarchal interpretations of religious obligations.
8 Conclusion

This thesis has answered the research question: “How are orientalist ideas visible in the discursive practices regarding the re-entry of the Islamic headscarf into the Turkish Parliament?” through the critical discourse analysis of the discursive practices produced by the CHP’s leader and members of Parliament. It discovered that there is discordance within the CHP, with some members recognising a need to reformulate the party’s policies regarding religious rights, and others who continue to emphasise the secular and nationalistic principles of Atatürk’s Kemalism. Both groups have used a language coloured by orientalism in their speeches focusing on the perceived homogeneity of the headscarf-wearing women. Through the CHP’s stereotyping of this particular group in their discursive practices, the party is contributing to the recreation of a general discourse about headscarf-wearing women that is, in Turkey as well as internationally, heavily influenced by orientalist ideas. The discourse is thereby affecting social practices such as discrimination and is contributing to the scarcity of understanding and cooperation between different groups.

The visualisation of power relationships through the use of CDA has proven to be complex, but some factors have been successfully identified. The history of Turkey with authoritarian leaders, interested mainly in the wellbeing of their own group, has created a scarcity of respect for other groups’ political opinions and/or religious beliefs. The AKP are currently proposing and enacting laws and regulations in line with their religious beliefs, and the CHP and other secular groups are opposing what they consider a gradual adjustment of their freedoms related to their lifestyle. A new alcohol law, discussions on altering the abortion-law and discussions on possible restrictions of mixed-gender student dormitories have displeased the opposition. Thus, members of CHP sees the lifted ban on the hijab in public offices as another step on the way to “Islamisation” and are, thereby, ignoring the discrimination that the headscarf-wearing women have endured and continue to endure in certain fields. It should however be noted that the more reformist members of the CHP have publically supported the lift of the ban, indicating a shift where a segment of the CHP are open for a degree of self-criticism and possible revaluation of the concept of strict secularism. Self-criticism and recognition of past mistakes is vital in order for cooperation to take place, finding solutions and compromising in order to develop human rights in Turkey.
The power relations are additionally complex due to the historically extensive influence enjoyed by the CHP by successfully promoting the principles of Kemalism in the Turkish Constitution and other laws, affecting the contemporary Turkish political arena. Although formally in power, AKP can thus be considered restricted in their use of power, due to the previously great influence by the CHP. This research has illuminated that the power-relations in the Turkish political arena are complicated due to these identified factors.

The thesis has demonstrated that the use of orientalist ideas in discourse practices have consequences for the discourse in the form of a heightened polarisation between groups in society, creating less opportunities and incentives for cooperation between the groups, possibly resulting in more frequent conflicts in the civil society.

Previously unable to attend the Parliament wearing the Islamic headscarf, headscarved women were previously efficiently excluded from participating in the highest level of the Turkish political decision-making. The lift of the ban marks an end to the formal discrimination in the Parliament but remains in a number of fields. The critical reactions indicate that prejudices remain, affecting the discourse regarding headscarved women. Hence, this research can function as a contribution to the knowledge regarding the widespread and global discrimination against women, stemming from the global patriarchal system. The discrimination means, in reality, that women cannot fully enjoy their human rights, with the outcome of exclusion of women’s experiences, knowledge, needs and wants. Headscarved women have for long been excluded from the Turkish Parliament, but have actively resisted against discrimination by acting against the prescribed identity as a woman of the Turkish Republic: they are neither showing their hair nor necessarily identifying themselves as secular Republicans. However, as human rights are indeed human, the Islamic headscarf on a Muslim woman’s head should not connote a hinder for her participation in the national Parliament or in any other field in society.

As many European countries recently have imposed laws restricting the wearing of different forms of Islamic veiling in public, Turkey has proven to be unique in the sense that the state has lifted laws restricting the use of the headscarf in public offices. However, the recent trend of many European countries is founded on similar characteristics observed in the Turkish oppositional reactions. Their discourse practices are similarly homogenising the group of women as being backwards, traditional and oppressed. Concurrently, the proponents for the
restricted use of the public use of the Islamic headscarf are emphasising the own group’s “modernity” and thereby, implied superiority. Hence, this research indicates that orientalist arguments regarding the headscarf in public are not exclusive for the Turkish context. Orientalist ideas are affecting the global discursive practises and, thus, the societal practise of the continuous global discrimination against women in general, and Muslim headscarved women, in particular.
9 Bibliography

Newspaper articles


Winkler, S. (2012, June). *Brookings*. Retrieved December 20, 2013 from Taiwan's UN Dilemma: To Be or Not To Be: http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2012/06/20-
http://www.worldbulletin.net/?aType=haber&ArticleID=122306

Encyclopaedias


Academic Literature


Legal instruments


Statements


Videos

Journal articles


Speeches


Statistics


Reports