

DISCUSSIONS ON “PRIVATE SPHERE” IN ISLAMIST-CONSERVATIVE PRESS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

In Turkey, debates about public and private spheres occurred predominantly within the framework of the ban on headscarf, which was gone into effect after the 12 September 1980 military coup. In this context, it is obvious that the struggle against the ban on headscarf is also a struggle on drawing the boundaries between these spheres. Although the sides of this debate have focused on the public sphere, they have ignored the private because of the fact that there has been no ban on veiling in private sphere. However, in 2006, Council of State made a decision about a teacher that she had to unveil in her private life and, hence the limits of private life/sphere became a problem in the context of headscarf problem. Besides this problem, “adultery debate” in 2004 and “abortion debate” in 2012 are other topics which make the public/private dichotomy a current issue.

These three sample cases, which have caused discussions about the limits of state intervention to the private sphere, indicate a discursive struggle that aims to erode and transform the hegemonic boundaries between public and private spheres and draw new borders on the base of Islamic identity and way of life. The main purpose of this research is to analyze how the boundaries between public and private spheres are drawn and how the concept of “private sphere” is evaluated in Islamist-conservative press within the framework of three sample cases mentioned above. The study aims at revealing the discursive articulations and displacements occurred in Islamic-conservative press in this struggle.

In the study, in order to evaluate the problem in depth judgemental sampling technique is employed and three dailies -Yeni Şafak, Zaman, and Milli Gazete - from the national press are chosen. The news texts and columns are analyzed after each case for a period of 15 days in line with method of critical discourse analysis

Keywords: public sphere, private sphere, Islamic-conservative pres, ban on veiling, abortion, adultery debate