

## Chapter 9

# WHAT SHOULD BE THE POSITION OF THE STATE IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION? -An Example from Turkey-

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### Introduction

Education of religion at schools in Turkey has always been a debated matter in every period since the ends of the 19th century. Until the western style schools, which were opened before Tanzimat Reform Era and got involve in education system, education of religion was arranged as the only main subject not as a branch subject in Madrasah which is an old education institution. But in western style schools this situation was vice versa education of religion was only a part of curriculum. (Zengin, 2004)

In this period until republic, education of religion continued to be a part of general education in western style schools but at the same time existence of madrasahs continued as well. And consequently traditional and contemporary education institutions coexisted.

As education of religion is a debated field this situation dates back to its being private branch in changing education system. However debates come until today. Different comments, which come up with the coming of new secularist system, re-awakened the education of religion and since 1946 with transition to multi-party system education of religion became a lively matter in the agenda of policy. In March 30, 2012 a new law, which regulates education system as 4+4+4 and makes it obligatory 12 years on and off, was accepted. In this system Life of the prophet Muhammed and Quran became elective courses in curriculum. As a result, arguments about the education of religion in Turkey grew violent again.

In this article, firstly history of religious education in Turkey is mentioned. Then necessities of religious education are discussed in the light of discussions on new education system. At last the position of State in Religious Education are discussed from the example of Turkish situation.

### Religious Education before 1980

Changes starting with republic affected education system as well. In March 3, 1924 a new law on unification of education came into force and according to this law all madrasahs were closed and all educational institutions in Turkey were joined to

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urge agency and personal responsibility, whether cognitively, volitionally, or morally. Thus, rather than a deductive perception of religious belief that urges blind obedience, the textbooks do seek to inspire and motivate. All of the moral arguments are grounded in both Muslim sources and the writings of Turkey's founder Atatürk, as well as utilitarian arguments about the good practical outcomes of moral personal conduct (Meral 2015:18- 19).

## Conclusion

There are a lot of examples from the history of Turkey for State should take or take not responsibility for religious education. When state does not take any responsibility for Religious education, Turkey suffered great hardships. In the light of all these experiences, Turkey take responsibility for religious education.

In recent education system coming in to force in March 2012 there are elective courses such as Life of Prophet Muhammed and Quran , but it does not necessarily require that religious culture and moral knowledge course should be removed from the curriculum. Because this course addresses all people in terms of its context and it keeps students away from alienation to his own society and world by means of gaining objective information about his own religion and other religions.

It is important for state to take responsibility about religious education to provide the correct religious knowledge and ensure to social cohesion. State should give information for their citizens about religious and cultural life of their community. Otherwise we meet the following three conditions are

1. People who take religious education in school.
2. People who take religious education in private individuals.
3. People who have never take religious education

This situation is dangerous for the establishment of social peace in multicultural world. Religious education and knowledge of other religions and beliefs are vital sources of awareness for good social relations and understanding of today's deeply religious World. Prevent the recurrence of these situations, and establishment of social peace, State must take responsibility for the religious education.

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