

# HISTORY OF “LIBERAL CONSERVATIVE RIGHT” IN TÜRKİYE AND ITS EFFECTS ON TODAY’S TURKISH POLITICS

Türkiye’de “Liberal Muhafazakâr Sağ”ın” Tarihsel Serüveni ve Günümüz Türk Siyasetine Etkileri

Mustafa Çağatay OKUTAN\*

## ABSTRACT

It is possible to say that Right wing policy has always had the chance to express itself in every period of politics in Turkey and since the beginning of the practice of democratic principles; it has been almost the sole determinant of political power. Sociologic factors pushing the Right to being the determinant of Turkish politics are doubtlessly a subject of another discussion. Nevertheless, it is useful to make a point, which would not deter the integrity of this study and on the basis of this point, define its effects on today’s Turkish political dynamics. In this context, the first issue that has to be stated is that the conservative themes, whose roots are intertwined with the past and daily practices of Turkish society, make things considerably easy for Right wing politics. In a way, Turkish society, succeeding in synthesizing religion with nationalism, made a stance even only with this aspect of its. Also, society’s expressing its conservative concerns mostly over traditions has opened ways for both giving it a historical meaning and interpreting religion on the context of traditions. On this basis, the “liberal conservative right” was taken as the basis while examining the historical boundaries that affect its politics in general, and the effect of the Justice and Development Party’s success in power was used as the main theme or question.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Liberal Conservative Right, Political Parties, Turkey

## Öz

Türkiye’de Sağ siyasetin hemen her dönemde kendini ifade edebilme şansı bulduğunu ve demokratik ilkelerin pratik edilmesinden bu yana ise, siyasal iktidarın neredeyse tek belirleyicisi olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Sağ’ı Türk siyasetinde belirleyici konuma iten sosyolojik etmenler hiç kuşku yok ki ayrı bir tartışma konusudur. Yine de bu çalışmanın bütünlüğünü bozmayacak düzeyde bir tespitin yapılması ve buradan hareketle günümüz Türkiye’sinin siyasal dinamiklerine yönelik etkilerinin belirlenmesinde fayda vardır. Bu bağlamda ilk ifade edilmesi gereken husus, Türk toplumunun geçmişinde ve gündelik pratiklerinde kök salmış olan muhafazakâr temaların, Sağ siyasetin işini büyük ölçüde kolaylaştırdığı gerçeğidir. Bir bakıma, dini milliyetçilikle sentezleyebilme başarısı gösteren Türk toplumu, sadece bu yönüyle bile muhafazakâr bir duruş sergilemiştir. Ayrıca toplumun muhafazakâr kaygılarının büyük ölçüde gelenekler üzerinden ifade ediliyor oluşu hem tarihsel bir anlam katması hem de dinin gelenek bağlamı yorumlanması yollarını açık tutmuştur. Bu çalışmada, temelde günümüz siyasetine etki eden tarihsel birikimi irdelerken “liberal muhafazakâr sağ” temel alınmış ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi’nin iktidar başarısındaki etkisi ana tema veya soru olarak belirlenmiştir.

**Keywords:** Liberal Muhafazakâr Sağ, Siyasal Partiler, Türkiye

\* Prof. Dr., Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü, cokutan@ktu.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0003-2988-7285.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The fact of having religion synthesized with nationalism and traditions, made it easier for Turkish society to internalize liberal values. In other words, Islamic practices on nationalism context have, being true to Islam's basic rules, made it possible for other perceptions to live along. As a matter of fact, different sects of the religion of Islam being practiced together without problems in Turkey and even having different religions continuing their existences without problems, are noteworthy. This unproblematic association, which had existed throughout the Ottoman Empire, has settled on a route based on principles, as Turkey adopted a Republic regime; and in this context, secularity has been perceived by the Turkish society as the assurance of freedom of religion.

Freedom of religion is one of the meeting points of liberalism and conservatism in Turkey. It should be right away said that the meeting meant is a sociologic one. Such that, neither during the Ottoman period nor after the establishment of the Republic we could say that there was a completely unproblematic period in terms of legal regulations and political power practices. However, after Turkish society started to have a significant effect on the politics of the country, it had the chance to express its own traits and such traits became among the prior aspects of the agendas of political parties, who became candidates for political power. In a way, liberal and conservative social values have had a scale and effect that could not be ignored by political parties.

## 2. METHODOLOGY AND/OR LIMITS

Since November 2002, Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP) has been holding the political power in Turkey. Discussing as a whole the election successes of AKP, who took position in Turkish politics with a "conservative democrat" identity, would have a nature that would exceed the limits of this study. Therefore the study will focus on only one of the elements that drove AKP to power and will be based on the presupposition that this element is one of the most important determinants. Said element, as in every country that adopted democracy as its regime, is the fact that the political parties, who used their skills of taking into account the sociopolitical values accepted by the majority of the population in Turkey, have achieved success. In this context, AKP must be considered as a political movement that has well-assessed the liberal-conservative values internalized in Turkish society. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that AKP's success

became possible with its ability to analyze the current situation as well as its background brought by history.

Study will examine the political parties that prepared AKP its political background, in terms of their liberal-conservative principles. At the end, the political values, which have been taken as basis by AKP, will be discussed and this way, an opportunity for deliberation on the historical-political background of Turkish society will be presented.

Although “liberal conservatism” definition implies the obligation of defining or describing both ideologies embodying this definition, it can be said that this study does not need such deployment. Focusing of what liberalism and conservatism singly implies might create the risk for missing the origin of the point. In other words, “liberal conservatism” has a meaning, implying the conjunction points of liberalism and conservatism. So, trying to understand what is meant by the said definition is more functional to comprehend the study.

Conservatism had its philosophical birth in Edmund Burke’s book *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Nispet, 1986, p. 1). There is no doubt that conservatism has reached its theoretical entirety as a result of the reaction against the French Revolution. In this context, the meaningful thing is that the said reaction has showed itself in two ways. As a matter of fact, conservatism’s having its Continental European and Anglo-American types is related to the magnitude of the resentment against the French Revolution. The first one rejects the change, while the second finds it positive (Özipek, 2003, p. 67). Liberal conservatism can be thought of the political practice of Anglo-American type conservatism.

### 3. ORIGINS OF LIBERAL CONSERVATIVE RIGHT

We can say that the democracy adventure of Turkey had a late start in comparison with developed Western democracies. Although year 1945, in which multi-party political life started, is shown as the period of transition to democracy, it should be noted that intellectual origins and practices went deeper into the past. In this context; modernizing efforts, and the intellectual and organizational reactions to Emperor’s absolute rule, especially during Ottoman Empire’s final periods, should be cited. Moreover, the intellectual and operational outbursts, which were much more emphasized on the last days of the Empire, against Emperor’s administrative approach, created important effects in Turkey’s later political life. Even so, in today’s Turkey, one should look for the origins of the current dominant political lines, within the Ottoman Empire.

In Turkey Right wing has had the chance to express itself in many different media. For example, nationalism could be expressed and politically represented, and Islamism had the chance to be seen on the political arena from time to time. However, with the statement and political representation of both nationalism and Islamism from within conservatism, a stronger Turkish right emerged. Therefore, conservatism had the chance to express itself almost in every period Turkey. Conservative politics, which succeeded to keep Nationalism and Islamism within itself, reinforced its success as long as it allowed liberalism. This way, there have been no disturbances for it to meet with the Turkish society.

Interest of conservatism and Turkish conservatives to liberal values is closely related to Ottoman Empire's entering into a process of collapse. As a matter of fact, while searching for ways to rescue the Empire from this drastic situation, the most important choice available for those who stood by the idea of "change" was related to the functions of the government. More precisely, Emperor's unlimited power was shown as the root of almost all problems (Tunaya, 2004, p. 39-41). They were not able to prevent the collapse of the Empire but each attempt, performed on the grounds of limiting the government, created areas where liberalism could display itself.

On this stage, importance of Young Turk movement must be mentioned. Finding Emperor Abdülhamid II's rule oppressive, Young Turk movement carried out its activities by its underground organization (Berkes, 2002a, p. 389-390) and finally succeeded in Ottoman Empire's transition to a constitutional monarchy in 1908. Empire's transition to constitutional monarchy was, without a doubt, extremely important. However, what is much more important than this development is the date when two important political lines, which have made their marks in Turkish politics until today, emerged. 1902 is a significant year that should be analyzed with the results of the congress held by Young Turks to stop their disorganization (Ülken, 1966, p. 191). As a matter of fact, at the end of the congress, which was held with the belief that they would be stronger against Sultan Abdülhamid's rule by acting together, there were discrepancies instead of unity. Committee of Progress and Union (Terakki ve İtilah Cemiyeti) was established after Ahmet Rıza, who was an influential name among the Young Turk movement, and his team came forward advocating a statist and centralist stance (Çavdar, 1995, p. 75). This group was followed by others in Turkish political life in later years, Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-CHP) has been its strongest representative. This Party was in power alone between 1923 and 1950, and in later years was in impor-

tant points as coalition partners in power or the main opposition party from time to time in Turkish political life.

The second political line created by the 1902 Young Turk congress emerged under the leadership of Prince Sebahattin, who was the nephew of Emperor Abdülhamid II. This group showed a liberal political stance favoring decentralization (Berkes, 2002b, p. 72), and had important followers in later years. In this context, we can cite the Progressive Republican Party (Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası) and the Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti).

Both Young political lines created by the Turk congress felt disturbed by the Emperor's rule and shared the common ideals for the transition constitutional monarchy. The difference was at the point of methods and the measure of the limits of the government. So, the fact that both movements actually opened the door to liberal values, despite their scales were different, cannot be ignored. However, the political line led by Ahmet Rıza was unsuccessful in meeting with the values of the Turkish society and continued its statist-elitist tendency. Because it was distant from liberal values, it could not find the chance to rule alone in Turkish political life after 1950. However, the political line led by Prince Sebahattin has become the determinant factor of post-1950 Turkish politics. The best definition for this line is "liberal conservative" politics.

Ömer Çaha points out, in respective chronological order; Progressive Republican Party, Liberal Republican Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası), Democrat Party and the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi) as the representatives of "liberal conservative right wing" in Turkish politics (Çaha, 2001, p. 126). These parties left AKP a significant background and legacy. Based on historical order, we can begin to assess the said legacy and finally, analyzing Justice and Development Party.

### 3.1. The Party is Respectful to Religious Thoughts and Beliefs

The first opposition political party established after Turkey adopted the Republic regime was Progressive Republican Party (Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası). The Party was founded as a result of a series of political developments and materialized as an extension of ideal differences among the military staff who commanded the Turkish War of Independence.

Established during the War of Independence, Turkish parliament became a stage for political groupings by time. Those who acted together with the leader of the war and the founder of new Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Pasha were named

as the First Group, and those who opposed the Pasha's administrative approach were named as the Second Group (Hale, 1996, p. 69). Both groups acted within the People's Party (Halk Fırkası), which was considered as the organization of the team who carried out the War of Independence. However, by time, ideological differences among the groups increased. As a matter of fact, in November 1924, Progressive Republican Party got its place in political life.

The name and founders of the new formation were eponymous for the identity of the Party. Party's name emphasized the support for progress but the disturbance felt for the destructive practices of this progress was declared in the program. In a way, with its name and program, the Party opted to advocate an Anglo-American type conservatism by changing the existing institutions without destroying them. Stressing the freedom-limiting characteristics of the current situation, Progressive Republican Party had the belief that Mustafa Kemal and his team chose an authoritarian administration, and the Party adopted policy a in this frame. Consequently, it made its presence felt as the first serious liberal conservative political movement after Prince Sebahattin.

Founders of Progressive Republican Party were among those who had significant effects in Turkish politics. These people were in the front lines of Turkish War of Independence as soldiers or politicians. Kazım (Karabekir) as a conservative nationalist, Rauf (Orbay) constitutional monarchist, Ali Fuat (Cebesoy) as a Bolshevik sympathizer, İsmail (Canpolat) as a Progress and Union supporter, Adnan (Adıvar) as a scientist and Hüseyin Avni (Ulaş) as a liberal, became the founders of the Party (Uzun, 2010, p. 118).

Despite their different identities, the founders of the Party were named as the "Conservatives without Turbans". However, the Party's program was more in line with Prince Sebahattin's ideals and had opened the door to liberalism. They had different ideas than Mustafa Kemal for converting the new government through a group of revolutions. According to Progressive Republican Party; change had to be slow, and authoritarian, centralist and radical practices should not have been included (Uzun, 2010, p. 118).

The most remarkable elements in the Party's program were the articles in compliance with liberal principles. In this context, liberalism in economic area was stressed, foreign capital entrance to the country was deemed positive and decentralization was embraced in administration (Uzun, 2010, p. 118).

The Party also continued its liberal identity in terms of rights and freedoms. Accordingly, the Party declared that it considers personal freedom sacred in any area, they are the most fierce supporters of freedoms and emphasized their respectful stance towards religious beliefs. The last statement was shown as a ground for closing the Party.

Progressive Republican Party was met with great interest right after it was established and within a short time. However, its political life was ended by being associated with the Sheik Said Revolt, which burst in eastern Turkey. Especially, on the grounds of the expression in the Party program, saying “respect for religion”, the Party was decided to be closed by the Turkish government. So, first opposition party of the Republic of Turkey was erased from politics. Its founders and members were also banned from politics.

Progressive Republican Party left significant marks in Turkish political life as a political party that was mostly formed of conservative people who adopted liberal principles. Above all, they showed the determination criticize the pace of the revolutions in a new government and to advocate liberal values against a strong leader like Mustafa Kemal.

Mustafa Kemal accused the Party of being reactionary (Yerasimos, 1992, p. 98). In his “Speech-Nutuk”, which he delivered in 1927, he said the following on the issue (Nutuk, 2005, p. 632-633):

*“How could it be taken seriously and to what extent could it be considered sincere that those who even abstain to say the word “Republic”, those who want to strangle the Republic the day it was born, named their party (with the word) “Republic” and even (with the phrase) “Progressive Republic”. Had this party established by Mr. Rauf and his friends been named “conservative”, it could maybe have a meaning. However, it was of course not right of them to claim that they were more republican and progressive than us.*

*Could good faith be expected from those who gathered under the banner of the principle ‘the Party is respectful towards religious thoughts and beliefs’? Wasn’t this the banner of those who attempted to gain personal interests for centuries by tricking the ignorant, bigot and superstitious?...*

By 1927, when Mustafa Kemal delivered the Speech, all people and movements in the country, who could oppose were completely dissolved. Thus, the Speech was an expression against the anger of Mustafa Kemal against the Progressive Republican movement. This movement’s freedom demands or its ideas on slowing the change were found insincere; and Mustafa Kemal deemed it fit to define the Party

as the focus of reactionary movements. By 1930, Mustafa Kemal personally decided to have a new opposition party established.

### 3.2. A Guided Contribution to the Political Background of Liberal Conservative Right

This new movement, in which the liberal conservative Right in Turkey had a second chance to express itself, was banned from politics.

Liberal Republican Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası-SCF) was established in August 1930. Founder of the Party is Fethi Okyar, a close friend of Mustafa Kemal. SCF began its activities by the personal demand of Mustafa Kemal (Aydoğan, 2020, p. 367) and it was decided how many members of the parliament would be transferred from Republican People's Party. With this formation, SCF began its political life as a guided opposition party.

Although many things were said about the purposes of founding SCF, it is possible to gather these under a few points. The first thing that has to be stated is that it was realized by the party in power that the political and economical conditions of the country created discomfort among the public. The revolutions, which were quickly materialized by 1930, created a significant displeasure among Turkish nation. As a matter of fact, resorting to authoritarian practices from time to time for the execution of revolutions has been among the first reasons of the public's displeasure. On the other hand, economic decline that affected the whole world also affected Turkey, and the Turkish society, facing a new bottleneck while still wounded by the economic damages of War of Independence, began to express its reactions against the political power. Being founded under these conditions, Liberal Republican Party entered Turkish political life to control, detect or provide a chance to express opposing sounds.

Another issue that has to be stated as a founding purpose is the disturbance felt by Mustafa Kemal in his travels around the country. As a matter of fact, Mustafa Kemal stated that he received many complaints from the public in his travels, even so that this sometimes depressed him. So, the desires to keep Republican People's Party more active, to channel the social displeasure to a certain direction and to restrain İsmet İnönü's growing power were among Liberal Party's reasons of establishment (Zürcher, 2004, p. 260).

In a way, SCF came to existence as an extension of Mustafa Kemal's desire for a democratic country. Its most obvious indication is his request during his meeting



with Fethi Okyar, for not wanting to leave an institution of autocracy after he died (Yerasimos, 1992, p. 103).

Established under the leadership of Fethi Okyar, who was known for his Liberal identity, SCF comprised of important names of Turkish politics. For example, one of these was Ahmet Ağaoğlu, a person distinguished with his liberalism. The Party's program was also based on liberal principles. SCF was given a modern image with principles such as one-phase elections, suffrage and election rights for women, tax reductions and economic liberalism. Public interest grew quickly for the Party, who emphasized free enterprises, removing monopolies and freedom of expression; and within 12 days, 130 thousand people applied for membership (Uzun, 2010, p. 122).

Interest towards SCF grew day by day, and from all over the country, requests were sent to the Party for participation. The Party's outdoor meetings were held with the attention of thousands. With the intense involvement of all circles displeased by the Single Party rule, SCF began to include conservative and Islamist populations. So, SCF became a political formation that also included conservative tendencies in the political arena, which it had entered with liberal policies.

SCF's fast rise was not welcome by the elite section of the ruling party. While aiming for a controlled opposition, the Party came to an unstoppable situation in the current case; and reasons for closure started to become mature.

SCF experience gave the signs that a political party, which would oppose the Single Party rule in Turkey, would have great success. In a way, this experience indicated that Turkish people could easily synthesize conservative and liberal political line. Until 1945, transition to multi-party political life was not possible in Turkey. A new movement, which realized that liberal conservative political synthesis would open the way to become the ruling party, was born within Republican People's Party and this time, said political approach and the social expectations in this context had a great success. Democrat Party successfully practiced the liberal conservative political approach and left the legacy of the political line that would almost single-handedly dominate the Central Right Turkish in later years.

### 3.3. First Ruling Period of The Liberal Conservative Right

Turkey, with the founding of National Development Party (Milli Kalkınma Partisi) in 1945, began a multi-party political life. However, the political influence of this newly established party remained extremely low, and it was needed to wait for Democrat Party's founding for an influential opposition.

Some developments before the founding of the Democrat Party indicated that a political movement on a liberal-conservative line would enter Turkish politics. The most important development that has to be mentioned in this context occurred in June 1945. On this date, Republican People's Party Parliament Group was presented a proposal, called the Quadruple Proclamation. The proposal included emphasis on democracy, criticism on political freedoms being restricted, and suggestions for Turkish society's ability to practice democracy and for keeping political participation ways open. The people who presented the proposal are Adnan Menderes, Celal Bayar, Fuad Köprülü and Refik Koraltan, who would leave their marks on Turkish politics in later years.

The proposal was rejected, Menderes, Koraltan and Köprülü were expelled from Republican People's Party, Celal Bayar resigned from being a Member of the Parliament, and then, from CHP. These four names established Democrat Party after a short while, and returned actively to politics.

Stressing CHP's authoritativeness, Democrat Party had the chance to become the sole ruling party in 1950. Without a doubt, this was affected by the displeasure in Turkish society against the political rule. Democrat Party's liberal political stance and caring about the values of the people had a significant effect as well.

Turkish society's expectation was to be relieved of poverty and having democratic ways open. Democrat Party answered these expectations quickly and achieved significant improvements in the economic situation of the country. Also, with some adopted right after Democrat Party's rise to power, pressure on media were reduced, and a legal infrastructure was formed to express and organize ideas (Erdoğan, 2008, p. 95).

Performing liberal policies in economy, Democrat Party rule did not ignore the sensitivities of Turkish society. In this context, the issue that most needs to be expressed, is the answers given for the religious expectations of the people. In fact, these answers, in a way, meant the rejection of the attitude of the Single Party rule on religion. The desire of the political attitude to control religion due to the concern that Kemalism and especially the principle of secularity would be eroded, created a negative political attitude from Turkish people, who felt their religious practices were repressed. However, neither secularity had been practiced in its real meaning nor religious practices were repressed as claimed. However, it was taken into account by almost each Turkish political party that religion is an important determinant and policies were produced in this direction.

It is a fact that the negative effects of the authoritarian practices on public before Democrat Party, was most disturbing when the issue was religion. Therefore, one of the first actions of Democrat Party was focusing on the issue of religion. Prime Minister Adnan Menderes classified Atatürk's revolutions in his speech at the Parliament, when he declared his government program, and stated that the revolutions welcomed by the public would be protected. Menderes, this way, wanted to imply that secularity was not welcomed by the people (Sayarı, 1978, p. 182-183). Menderes, while 1955 talking about the power of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, said "right now, if you want, you can even bring back the caliphate" (Işıklı, 1997, p. 161).

Democrat Party rule also brought some regulations to meet the expectations of Turkish people. For example, azan was began to read in Arabic, radio religious program ban in radios were cancelled, and religion lessons at schools became obligatory (Cumhuriyet Encyclopedia 1941-1960, 2002, p. 179-181). Ruling party's moderate attitude on religion was shown to be constant. A group of issues were influential together in Democrat Party's attitude and regulations on religion. The first one was that a political party, who cared about freedom and placing this on the basis of its political stance, could not ignore religious freedoms. The second one was that political parties unable to answer the religious demands of Turkish society, who is extremely sensitive on this issue, could not have a chance on power. Democrat Party was aware of this and turned being in contact with the conservative population of Turkish society into a political advantage.

With the Democrat Party, politics in Turkey was once again expressed through liberal-conservative values. This political approach had great success this time, and Democrat Party, who adopted this stance, managed to rule the country for ten years. However, Democrat Party rule was ended with a military intervention in May 1960. This was a first in Turkish politics. A democratically elected political party was removed from power in an anti-democratic manner. Thus, liberal conservative Right's influence in Turkish politics was suspended for a long time.

Led by Özal, ANAP did not hesitate to apply liberal economic policies, and greatly strived to meet the conservative demands of Turkish people. After Turgut Özal's death in 1993, ANAP was rapidly erased in the political arena and thus, liberal conservative Right did not have the opportunity to perform politics in Turkey. The parliamentary elections of 2002 became the start of a new era for Turkey. This new period had the support or utilized the background of the political challenge of the liberal conservative Right from Ottoman Empire's final periods.

Dominance of liberal conservative Right in Turkish politics was brought again in 1983. Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi-ANAP) led by Turgut Özal, succeeded in becoming the sole party in power after the 1980 military intervention. Turgut Özal became a politician who landed his mark on Turkish politics with his personality, attitude and policies. Under his administration, Turkish political life has comprehended the synthesist politics approach, which covers many trends. Turgut Özal, being the architect of the historical measures of 1980, also known as the 24 January Resolutions, that joined Turkey into world's liberal policies, became a good liberal in this aspect, and a good conservative with his lifestyle. ANAP has adopted a synthesist identity as a political party covering nationalist, conservative etc. tendencies. Led by Özal, ANAP did not hesitate to apply liberal economic policies, and greatly strived to meet the conservative demands of Turkish people.

## 4. RESULT of the BUILD-UP: "CONSERVATIVE DEMOCRATS" at WORK

Turkey held a parliamentary election in November 2002. As a result of the election, Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP) became the sole ruling party. It has continued in every election since 2002. Although there are many elements to AKP's great success, we have to state two issues that have to be assessed under this study: First; AKP comes from and embraces the legacy of a political movement with high Islamic tones that had the opportunity to perform politics in Turkey. Second; it has utilized the historical background of the liberal conservative Right, which has been defined since the beginning of this study. In a way, AKP is the product of the leader staff, who separated from a political approach that had heavy Islamic tones while not being too far away, and who adopted liberal – conservative values. Consequently, AKP's success must be looked for in its ability to blend Islamic, liberal and conservative values.

Professor Nur Vergin, one of the leading sociologists of Turkey, said the following in a 1994 interview (Türkiye Günlüğü, 1994, p. 7):

*I think that Turkey's beginning to include being a Muslim country into secularity, which it has as a type of sociopolitical order, will be the most important political determinant for the upcoming decades. In Turkey's near future, the formations that completely exclude or distantly approach religion might become minorities or even sociologically marginalized. Here, this would be the problem: How and at what extent will religion be integrated into the system as a fact; on what approach and understanding will religion be possible to integrate, which religion approach will help Turkey's internal integration*

*and being considered as a foreign policy element that would bring advantages in the international arena.*

Since its founding, AKP has produced and continues to produce policies in a route that would justify to Nur Vergin's insights. AKP movement expresses its philosophical basis in the book "Conservative Democracy (*Muhafazakar Demokrasi*) prepared by Yalçın Akdoğan and published by the Party. The book majorly includes ideas parallel with neo-conservatism, and focuses on the conservatism style open for innovations and the necessity of political methods based on reconciliation (Akdoğan, 2003, p. 6-7-128-129).

AKP states that it will carry out its politics apart from ideologies, and over modern, democratic values (AKP Program, 2002, p. 7). Religion is seen as a part of traditions and perceived as a social fact. Thus; religion is taken away from the political scene and the necessity of a government's being at an equal distance to all religions and ideas is being emphasized. Consequently, secularity is seen as a principle that would establish social peace (Akdoğan, 2003, p. 113-132).

For AKP, freedom of religion is important like any other freedoms and it must be among the government's duties to provide this. This approach, in a way, is extremely functional politically, for compliance with the demands of the religious sections that complain about the practice of secularity. This can be considered as AKP's meeting point with conservative and religious sections. In another aspect, with its emphasis on freedoms, it is a political approach that embraces liberal values as much as possible. Thus, AKP has become successful in meeting the expectations of a great majority of Turkish society by both embracing hem Islamic values while presenting a conservative stance, and embracing liberal principles.

Defining itself as "conservative democrat", AKP has made Turkey a strong country and an influential country in international relations, and with a ruling party practice integrated with the people, has carried the actors of the Central Right politics in Turkey to Ankara.

## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

**Çalışmanın Amacı:** Türk siyasetine Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun son dönemlerinden itibaren rengini veren bir başka ifadeyle siyasal hayatın dinamiklerinde kendini net çizgilerle ifade eden ideolojik referansların çokluğu konuyla ilgili akademik literatürün dikkatinden kaçmamıştır. Bu bağlamda söylenebilecek farklı siyasal çizgiler mevcuttur. Türk siyasal hayatındaki etkisi nispeten az olmasına rağmen Sol ve İslamcı siyaset anlayışlarının çoğu zaman etkisiz kaldıkları, marjinal ideolojilere yaslananların ise neredeyse hiç yer bulamadıkları bir gerçektir. Bunun nedenleri üzerinde durmak başka bir çalışmanın konusu olabilecek kadar önemlidir. Bu makale bağlamında ifade edilmesi gereken asıl husus, Türk siyasetinin ana eksenlerinin içinde de zaman zaman hem Sol hem de İslamcı yaklaşımların iktidar ilişkilerinde yer bulabilmiş olmasıdır. Bir genelleme yapmanın risklerini de göze alarak, söz konusu ana eksenini Sağ siyaset olarak ifade etmek mümkündür. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Sağ siyaset içinde kendine yer bulan bütün siyasal akımları veya yaklaşımları irdelemek değildir. Sağın bu denli kapsayıcılığının Türk siyasetine yön verebilme kabiliyetiyle okunabileceğini göstermek ana amaç olarak ifade edilmelidir. Öyle ki Türk sağının milliyetçi, muhafazakâr, İslamcı, mukaddesatçı ve benzeri siyasal yaklaşımları sentezleyebilme başarısı gösterebilmesi hatta yukarıda da ifade edildiği gibi ve Anavatan Partisi ile de özdeşleştirilen dört eğilimden biri olarak kabul gören sol siyaseti de bünyesine katabilecek çapta bir siyaset anlayışı üretebilmesi dikkate değerdir. Bu makale ile amaçlanan söz konusu bu kapsayıcılığı sağlayan veya Türk sağını bu anlamda elverişli kılan koşulların neler olduğunun tespitidir.

**Araştırma Soruları:** 1902 yılında düzenlenen Jön Türk kongresi, etkisi günümüze değin sürecek iki ana siyasal çizgi üretmiştir. Devletçi/merkeziyetçi ve elitist siyasal çizgi ile liberal ve adem-i merkeziyetçi siyasal çizgi, Osmanlı Devleti'nin son birkaç yılına damgasını vurmuştur. İmparatorluğun yıkılması ile söz konusu siyasal çizgiler yok olmamış aksine etkileri artarak devam etmiştir. İlgili literatürün genel hatlarıyla incelenmesi halinde bile hangi partiler tarafından bu siyasi geleneklerin sürdürüldüğü rahatlıkla anlaşılabilir ve çok sayıda çalışmaya ulaşmak mümkündür. Ancak bu türden çalışmaların genellikle tematik mahiyette olması ve arka planını sorgulama ihtiyacı hissetmemesi büyük bir eksiklik olarak karşımızda durmaktadır. Türk siyasal hayatının tarihsel seyrini bilmek elbette önemli ve anlamlıdır. Nitekim İkinci Meşrutiyet dönemi ile başlayan siyasal partili hayatı günümüze gelene kadar kronolojik sapma olmaksızın bilmek ve izlemek kuşku yok ki akademik bir çabadır. Bu çabaya eklenecek analizlerin ilgili çalışmaları bilimsel düzey bağlamında çok daha ileri noktalara götüreceği de şüphesizdir. O halde şu soru rahatlıkla sorulabilir: 2002 yılından itibaren siyasal iktidarda olan Adalet ve Kalkınma Parti-

sı'nın bu başarısının arkasında yatan etmenler nelerdir? Çok sayıda cevabı olan bu soruyla baş etmek, bir makale ile mümkün değildir. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma söz konusu etmenlerden sadece birine odaklanmayı tercih etmiş ve ana hipotezini tarihsel birikim üzerinden kurgulamıştır. Araştırma, günümüz siyasetine etki eden tarihsel birikimi irdelerken “liberal muhafazakâr sağ”ı temel almış ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin iktidar başarısındaki etkisini ana tema veya soru olarak belirlemiştir.

**Literatür Taraması:** Türk siyasal hayatını konu edinen çalışmaların düşünce tarihinden bağımsız ele alınması bir hayli zordur. Veya Türk düşünce tarihini dışarıda tutan siyasal hayat çalışmalarının analizden yoksun olacağı bir gerçektir. Makalede, söz konusu yoksunluğun yaşanmaması hedeflenmiş bu bağlamda Hilmi Ziya Ülken'nin Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi, Tarık Zafer Tunaya'nın *Türkiye'nin Siyasi Hayatında Batılılaşma Hareketleri* ve Niyazi Berkes'in *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma* başlıklı çalışmaları rehber edinilmiştir. Öte yandan tematik çalışmaların arasında Tefik Çavdar'ın kaleme aldığı Türkiye'nin Demokrasi Tarihi adlı kitap önemli katkı sağlamıştır. Ve referans gösterilen diğer eserler de çalışmanın ana temasını destekleyecek bilgilerin devşirilmesi açısından önemli olmuşlardır.

**Yöntem:** İlgili literatürde yer alan çok sayıda çalışmanın içinden, makaleye azami katkı sağlayacağı düşünülen eserler tercih edilerek analiz ağırlıklı bir yöntem tercih edilmiştir. Çalışmanın betimleyici bir mahiyetle sınırlı kalmaması için her konu başlığının altında analizlere ağırlık verilmiştir.

**Sonuç:** Makale, günümüz Türk siyasetine etki eden unsurlar arasında liberal muhafazakâr sağ çizginin ciddi bir tarihsel birikim sağladığı; Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin iktidar başarılarının ardında yatan nedenlerden birinin de bu olduğunun dikkate alınması gereği sonucuna ulaşmıştır.

**Ethics Statement:** The authors declare that the ethical rules are followed in all preparation processes of this study. In the event of a contrary situation, the Journal of Public Administration and Policy has no responsibility and all responsibility belongs to the author of the study.

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**Çıkar Beyanı:** Yazarlar ya da herhangi bir kurum/ kuruluş arasında çıkar çatışması yoktur.

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