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**INTERACTION OF RELIGION AND STATE IN TURKEY : THE JUSTICE
AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY CASE**

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APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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AUTHOR DECLARATIONS

1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

2. The program of advanced study of which this thesis is part has consisted of:

- i) Research Methods course during the undergraduate study
- ii) Examination of several thesis guides of particular universities both in Turkey and abroad as well as a professional book on this subject.

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ABSTRACT

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INTERACTION OF RELIGION AND STATE IN TURKEY: THE JDP CASE

The Justice and Development Party's success in the general elections of 2002 and its taking office was reflected differently at different levels of Turkish society. Some have become very hopeful and others very skeptical and anxious for many reasons, including the political past of the party leaders. Today the Justice and Development Party (JDP) has started its second term in office after a surprising victory in the 2007 elections.

The JDP has attracted the interest of many scholars, mainly because of its split from a religiously-orientated movement and taking office shortly after its establishment. As a student of politics, the issue attracted my academic interest.

My study will consist of three chapters in addition to the introduction and the conclusion. The first chapter will be a theoretical and historical discussion of interaction of religion and politics in the Turkish Republic. In this part, I will try to provide a framework for understanding and explaining problematic interaction of religion and religious actors with the secular establishment in Turkey.

In the second chapter of this study, I discuss political parties and movements, who have had relations with religion and religious movements at varying levels, and their problematic relations with the secular establishment. For better understanding I introduced two categories. Accordingly, the parties of the first category are secular parties, and in order to gain support of religious people they promise extending religious rights and liberties. The political parties of the second category are different than others since they put religion at the core of their party program, and therefore have had troubled relationship with the secular establishment, which generally ended in the closure of the parties. Interestingly, looking at the JDP from this two category perspective, I observed that the JDP leadership left the traits of second category and transformed itself successfully into the first category. This, in turn, opened their way to realize their "democracy and development"

program that brought Turkey to a compatible line with European democratic countries.

In the third chapter of this study I deepened discussion on the JDP, its ideology and policies. In this chapter I support the ideas that the JDP successfully became a political party at the center of the political spectrum, defending the rights of the periphery, and realized very important political and economic reforms within five years. Then I will finish my study with a brief conclusion.

Key words:

Religion and politics, Justice and Development Party, European Union, democratic reforms, economic improvement

KISA ÖZET

Ramin Ahmadov

Eylül 2007

TÜRKİYE'DE DİN-DEVLET ETKİLEŞİMİ–AKP ÖRNEK

OLAYI

Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin 2002 genel seçimlerindeki başarısı ve ardından iktidar oluşunun Türkiye toplumundaki yansımaları değişik seviyelerde gözlemlendi. Toplumun bazı kesimleri memnun olmuş, bazı kesimleri ise sonucu endişeyle karşılamışlardı. Bunun en önemli sebeplerinden birisi AKP liderlerinin siyasi geçmişi idi. Bugün AKP iktidardaki ilk dönemini tamamlamış, ve 2007 genel seçimlerinde % 46,66'lık oy oranıyla çoğunluğun desteğini alarak ikinci dönemine başlamıştır.

AKP dini kimlikli bir partiden ayrılan siyasetçiler tarafından kurulmuş olduğu halde hemen sonrasındaki seçimlerde büyük bir başarı elde etmiş ve bu başarı bir çok bilim adamının dikkatini çekmiştir. Ben de bu konuya ilgi duyan bir öğrenci olarak bu konuda bilimsel inceleme yapmak ve yapılan çalışmalara katkıda bulunmayı amaçlıyorum.

Bu çalışma giriş, üç bölüm ve sonuçtan oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm Türkiye'de siyaset ve din etkileşimi üzerine kuramsal ve tarihi tartışmadan oluşuyor. Bu kısımda ilk olarak Türkiye'deki siyasal ve dini faktörlerin problemleri etkileşimlerinin kuramsal çerçevesini çizmeye çalışacağım. İkinci olarak, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin siyasal tarihinde din-siyaset ilişkisine değineceğim.

Çalışmanın ikinci kısmında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti siyasi tarihinde din ile değişik seviyelerde ilişkisi olan partileri kısaca inceleyeceğim. Daha anlaşılır olması düşüncesiyle, bu bölümdeki incelediğim partileri iki kategoriye ayırdım. Birinci kategoride seküler olup dini sorun ve söylemleri oy kazanmak amacı ile söylem ve programına katan partiler; ikinci kategori de ise dini söylemleri programlarının merkezine yerleştiren partiler yer almaktadır. Bu bölümde ulaştığım sonuç, AKP'nin ikinci kategoriden başarılı bir şekilde sıyrılarak birinci kategoriye yerleşmesi ve bu şekilde seküler rejimle daha iyi geçinmeye çalışıp Türkiye'de önemli siyasi ve ekonomik reformlar gerçekleştirmiş olduğu yönündedir.

Çalışmamın üçüncü bölümünde ise AKP'yi mercek altına alarak, ideoloji, program ve politikalarını inceleyeceğim. Çalışmamda da görüleceği gibi, AKP endişelerin tersine, demokrasi ve kalkınmaya, özellikle de Avrupa Birliği üyeliğine çok önem vermiş, ayrıca Türkiye'nin demokrasisinin olgunlaşmasında, ekonomisinin kalkınmasında ve AB üyeliği yolunda önemli katkılarda bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Din ve siyaset, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Avrupa Birliği, demokratik reformlar, ekonomik gelişme

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DP	Democratic Party
EU	European Union
JP	Justice Party
JDP	Justice and Development Party
MP	Motherland Party
NOM	National Outlook Movement
WP	Welfare Party
RPP	Republican People's Party
UN	United Nations

INTRODUCTION

Students of Turkish politics have witnessed very important and surprising developments in Turkish politics and society since the second half of the 1990s. Though their roots were in earlier years, the signs of changes in Turkish society started to appear in the political realm after the second half of the 1980s. Turgut Özal's rule, as Prime Minister between 1983 and 1989 and President between 1989 and 1993 until his sudden death, had contributed greatly to the liberalization of Turkish politics, society and economy. This liberal period, though later wanted to be taken under control by the statist President Demirel, gave birth to many new developments in Turkish politics.

The first surprising development of liberal period came with the general elections of 1995. The Welfare Party of Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the National Outlook Movement, won 21,38 per cent of all votes and filled 158 seats, out of 550, in the Parliament. As the first party of elections, Erbakan was given rights to establish a coalition government with the True Path Party of Tansu Çiller. Having increasing popular support, Erbakan as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, attempted to realize some of his promises to his supporters in the area of religious rights and liberties. More than what Erbakan did or planned to do was the radical secular elite's exaggerated response. Through overloading symbolic events, the secular elite, including part of media, intellectuals, and the military,

forced the Erbakan government to resign, which was followed by the closure of the Welfare Party by the decision of Constitutional Court. This was seen as a considerable victory over the political Islamists and was seen as a time to clean them up completely from the political scene. As a result, with special role undertaken by the secular media, secular establishment attacked on the political Islamists with using other mechanisms available, such as judiciary. As a result, not only Erbakan was banned from active politics, but the very popular mayor of the Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan imprisoned with accusations of anti-secular speeches.

The Period between the resignation of the Refahyol government and the 1999 general elections was the period of governments under strong influence of the post-modern coup of 1997. As a result of years in political turmoil, political crisis was added by an economic crisis in the February of 2001, which was worst in the history of Republic. As a result, the coalition governments decided to hold early general elections in 2002. Understandably, 2002 elections was under strong impact of political and economic crises.

The results of the 2002 general elections, surprisingly, brought Tayyip Erdoğan's new Justice and Development Party to absolute power, and left all old and established parties, with one exception, out of parliament. This was not welcomed with the secular establishment. Not only reappeared in the political scene, but the Justice and Development Party of Erdoğan won

support of 34,43 per cent of people, which was more than that of the Welfare Party, and won 365 seats out of 550, in the parliament.

Erdoğan's success in attracting the votes of more than 34 per cent not only surprised Turkish seculars, but attracted the attention of many abroad. Having its roots in the National Outlook movement of Erbakan, the majority of the JDP colleagues, including Erdoğan and Gül, were received as potential threats to the secular regime while having considerable political power in their hands. Therefore, the JDP, since its emergence had been seen as anomaly, intruder (Dağı, 2006: 88).

The JDP's priorities and democratic reforms have been another, but more fortunate, surprise for students of Turkish politics. In contrast to the movement they were split off, the JDP leadership put the EU membership at the core of their government program and launched a broader wave of democratization and economic development. Another striking surprise came with the secular establishment's response to the JDP policies. This time part of secular elites of Turkey, who have lived with the dream of reaching the level of Western civilizations, attempted to break Turkey off EU membership and democratic reforms. Looking to the developments in Turkey from this perspective, I decided to go on to further study the issue academically. And this study is product of my academic interest in the issue briefly introduced above.

There are some other factors as well that convinced me about the importance of this issue for the students of Turkish politics and political

science. Firstly, from a conceptual perspective, this study is discussing the impact of a religiously oriented political party on the consolidation of democracy in a country where military is powerful and likely to intervene in politics. In other words, this is a study of interaction of religion, politics, and military. Results of this study may provide means for comparing and contrasting similar and different cases in other parts of the world, which interests students of comparative politics.

Secondly, and more specifically, this study is about Turkey, the democratic country in the most problematic region of world- the Middle East, which has been suffering because of ethnic, religious, economic and political conflicts for decades. Turkey is a Muslim democratic country, having historical and social bonds with the Middle East, while at the same time is a member of NATO and pressing for membership of the EU, two very important institutions of the Western world. Therefore her successful experience in accommodating the two, Islam and democracy, together may provide a model for other Islamic countries in the region.

In addition, Turkey has experience of civil-military tension that resulted in military coups in 1960, 1971, 1980, and a 'post-modern coup' in 1997, which ended the rule of an Islamically orientated Welfare Party rule. This was a great strike on Turkish democracy. Secular elites and military turned their weapons from 'separatist Kurdish movement' to the democratically elected 'Islamists'. However, in the 2002 elections, another political party with very moderate discourse and modern claims won the

general elections. Many questions were raised about the future of Turkish democracy. However, the JDP has realized successful democratic reforms, solved the economic and social problems of Turkey, though partially, and forcing the EU to open her membership to Turkey.

Under the conviction of the factors mentioned above, I conducted an academic research on Turkish politics in general and the JDP specifically. Main sources that I appealed were scholarly articles and books on the JDP, some public opinion polls and my direct observations in Turkey. As a result this thesis emerged, which consists of three chapters, in addition to introduction and conclusion.

In the first chapter of this study, I tried to provide a theoretical framework for understanding and explaining interaction of religion and politics- more specifically, interaction of religious actors such as orders, movements and political parties with political institutions- in Turkey. I tried to provide a framework, drawing on Şerif Mardin's center-periphery framework, to explain the ongoing struggle between secular establishment and religious political parties and movements.

In the second chapter of this study, I discuss political parties and movements, who had had relations with religion and religious movements at varying levels, and their problematic relations with the secular establishment. For the sake of better understanding, I divided those political parties into two categories. Accordingly, the parties of the first category are secular parties and for gaining support of religious people, they promised extending

religious rights and liberties. The political parties of the second category is different than others since they put religion at the core of their party program, and therefore had had troubled relationship with the secular establishment, which generally ended in the closure of the parties. Interestingly, looking at the JDP from this two category perspective, I observed that the JDP leadership left the traits of second category and transformed itself successfully into the first category. This, in turn, opened their way to realize their "democracy and development" program that brought Turkey to a compatible line with European democratic countries.

In the third chapter of this study I deepened discussion on the JDP, its ideology and policies. In this chapter I support the ideas that the JDP successfully became a political party at the center of political spectrum, defending the rights of periphery, and realized very important political and economic reforms within five years. Then I will finish my study with brief conclusion.

CHAPTER 1

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN TURKEY: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Introduction

The interactions of religion and politics, in other words, religious actors and political actors, have been problematic in the Turkish Republic. After establishing the secular Republic on the grounds of religious Ottoman society, the administrative elite of Turkey have displayed excessive sensitivity for the preservation of the secularism of the regime. Over the time, through struggling against the 'imagined' and 'exaggerated' threats to the secular Republic, secularism become the goal, instead of a tool, and a related fight was staged for preserving it at the expense of democracy, human rights and liberties, and the economic development of the country.

The interaction of, or struggle between, religious actors and the secular political establishment in Turkey has been a very complicated process, in terms of the mode of interaction and of the complexity of actors involved in the process. As a natural consequence of this complexity, we come across opposing interpretations and perspectives on the issue. The complexity also makes drawing an inclusive framework for analyzing the issue difficult. However, though there are challenging difficulties, there are very useful scholarly studies providing analytical tools for understanding the

issue. This study also aims to provide an analytical perspective for understanding the problematic interaction of religion and religious actors with the secular political establishment in Turkey. This study is an attempt to bring together various studies on the issue and provide a holistic perspective. For this aim, this study will focus on the process in general, and main actors, specifically. As the first part of this study, this chapter aims to provide a theoretical framework for analyzing the interaction of religion and politics in the Turkish Republic. For this aim, I will first review literature on Turkish politics and society and explore Şerif Mardin's "center-periphery" framework. Then I will discuss my framework for analyzing the interaction of religion and politics in Turkey. In the third part of this chapter I analyze secularism and the secularization process and its outcomes. Following this, I will discuss the Turkish state's official policy toward religion and religious institutions. Lastly, I will look at the situation today, and will explore changes in Turkish politics and society regarding the role and place of religion.

1.2. Center and Periphery of Turkish Society

Turkish society and politics have attracted the attention of many scholars and have been subject to many scholarly studies. As a result of my review of literature on this issue, studies that are based on dual structure of Turkish society- such as center-periphery, modern-backward, religious-secular- have attracted my interest. In my attempt to understand developments in Turkish society and politics I found those theories very

useful, and in my attempt to explain the interaction of religion and politics in Turkey I will resort to them.

One of the most influential frameworks for understanding/explaining the interaction of religion and politics in Turkey is Şerif Mardin's *Center and Periphery: A Key to Turkish Politics?* Mardin is the first social scientist who looks at Turkish politics and society from the center-periphery perspective. He introduced his study in 1973, and his study still has explanatory power, more than three decades later.

In his study, Mardin argues that "the confrontation between center and periphery was the most important social cleavage underlying Turkish politics and one that seemed to have survived more than a century of modernization" (1973: 170). For Mardin, this cleavage had its roots in the Ottoman Empire, where "the center and the periphery were two very loosely related worlds" (1973: 171). And "this aspect of Ottoman society, together with social fragmentation, set one of the primary problems of the Ottoman establishment: the confrontation between the Sultan and his officials on the one hand, and the highly segmented structure of Ottoman Anatolia on the other hand" (Mardin, 1973: 171). There were differences in the characteristics of the two worlds, or groups. Mardin, argues that, for a long time, "one of the distinguishing marks for a number of high- and low-officials was that many were recruited from non-Moslem groups," and "the official figured as a person with no ascriptive ties and as totally devoted to implementing the goals of the dynasty" (1973: 171). This way of recruitment

was accused of excluding free-born Muslims from official posts (Mardin, 1973: 171).

Another distinction between the Ottoman center and periphery was to be found in economic variables: "officials were not subject to taxation; when the Empire was flourishing their income compared favorable with that of the richest merchants" (1973; 172). For Mardin (1973: 172),

one aspect highlighting the difference between all types of officials and the masses, both rural and urban, was the operation of the bureaucratic core of the state. Its arrogation of the major control of the economy and society, its control of the commerce of foodstuffs, the limitations it placed on land ownership, and the strictness with which it tried to enforce social stratification through sumptuary regulations were all designed to maintain the states' authority over the nodal points of society and to built corresponding image of paramountcy (Cited from Inalcik, 1958: 68-79).

One other important point for understanding the dual structure of the Ottoman society is the differences in expressions and practices of Islam. As Taşpınar argues, Islam had always functioned at two levels during the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly,

The official Islamic Sunni orthodoxy of the state disseminated by the *medrese*, versus the popular, mystical, intuitive, folk Islam of the masses. The latter found its chief expression in Sufi brotherhood and all sorts of religious orders. Where official Islam was deficient or lacked the flexibility to connect the hearts and mind of the populace, the common people turned to these brotherhoods and their charismatic leaders (2005: 24).

When the role and place of religion in the Ottoman Empire is considered, another important point that should be remembered is the central administration's reinforcement of the religion as the core of the

Ottoman community (Mardin, 1971: 204). Despite differences in religious practices, as mentioned above, Islam had been a uniting factor in the Ottoman society. Despite differences of economic and social status, religion used to serve as a common language that brought different segments together. Sunar and Toprak identify this characteristic of the Ottoman rule as an extraordinary quality. As they demonstrate it, the center and periphery were in touch and in interaction through religion (2004: 156). In Sunar and Toprak's own words,

Some of the peripheral sects and religious orders had been able to penetrate orthodox Islam (in varying degrees, of course) while centralist *ulema* had aligned some of the local groups, again in varying degree, with the orthodoxy of the center. An alliance, a bargain, an accommodation, if you like, had been struck between the center and peripheral Islam in which the sharp edges of the both had been rounded off and a degree of overlap achieved. This imbricative pattern minimized conflict, allowed coexistence and served to bridge the gap between the two worlds (2004: 156).

Mardin claims that this mediatory aspect of Islam is the double function of the religion in the Ottoman Empire. According to Mardin, for the rulers, Islam was "that of linkage with the lower classes, for the ruled, that of an alternative to the polity and a buffer against officialdom" (1971: 204). In other words, Islam was the mediating link between local and social forces and the political structure (Mardin, 1971: 205), which diminished the danger and practice of conflict between the center and periphery.

Cleavage between the center and periphery of society continued to exist, even widened, in the Republican Turkey. The central actors of the

Turkish society, the secular elite, for example the Republican People's Party- the single party through which Republican policies were channeled- was unable to establish contact with the rural masses (Mardin, 1973: 183). Moreover, "the members of the bureaucratic class under the Republic had little notion of identifying themselves with the peasantry" (Mardin, 1973: 183). As a result of this, the old polarization in the Ottoman society was transformed especially, in the second half of the twentieth century. In Mardin's terms, the two differing worlds of the Republic were those who wanted to preserve Republican order and those who wanting to change it (1973: 186).

Many factors can be found behind this transformation, namely, the widening gap between the center and periphery. However, the most influential has been the radical secularization process introduced and pressed by the secular elite of the Republic as a result the cleavage between the center and periphery widened and the two worlds completely different without appropriate channels to meet and understand each other. This idea is also supported by Sunar and Toprak, who argue that,

With the secularization of the state, with the removal of religion from many aspects of social and political life, this major connection with the periphery was weakened, and the tension between them was exacerbated, and the distance between the central elite and the ascriptive, religious groups of the periphery greatly increased (2004: 160).

With the aim of founding a homogenized and secular nation, out of the multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Ottoman

society, the founders of the new Republic did not want to allow alternative identities, especially Islamic and Kurdish identities, to become institutionalized in ways that would challenge the state-centric national identity (Yavuz, 1997a, 64). The founder elite of the Republic preferred the Western way of life, and aimed to westernize, therefore secularize, all aspects of social and political life in Turkey (Rustow, 1957, 69-107). However, as Yavuz argues, secularism imposed from above subordinated religion to the political realm, and as a result, alienated society from the state (1997a, 64). The forced secularization, for Yavuz, also promoted the polarization of Islam and the struggle between secularists and Muslims for control of the state (1997a, 64). Over time, "the state-centric republican elite and its supporting groups have identified themselves as secularists, commonly known as *laikler*, and large masses as 'backward Muslims'" (Cited in Yavuz, 1997a: 64; Mardin, 1973, 169-90). Therefore, for Hakan Yavuz, "the history of Turkish politics is the story of complex tension between these two world-views" (1997a, 64).

1.3. A Framework for Analyzing the Interactions of Religion and Politics in Turkey

Mardin's "center-periphery" framework, which was put forth in the early 1970s, introduced a very important and a very useful analytic tool for understanding and explaining Turkish politics and society. Today, more than three decades after Mardin's article was published, students of Turkish

politics still use this framework in looking at the Turkish case. However, over the past three decades, Turkish society has underwent a massive social and political transformation. Especially in the 1980s and 1990s, as a result of this social and political transformation, I argue that, while the center-periphery structure has preserved, the traits of each have changed. Accordingly, today both the center and the periphery of the Turkish society is different from what they were when Mardin wrote his article in the early 1970s. As a result of these changes, while the revolutionary center has turned into the protector of the status quo, the so called "backward" periphery has become the motor of democratization, or consolidation of Turkish democracy.

The interaction of religion or actors identified with or representing the religious values and people and secular political establishment in Turkey is a very complex process, and various political and social actors are involved in it. Despite this complexity, some generalizations can be made, as I am going to do in this chapter. Here, I would like to introduce my model of interaction of religion and politics in Turkey. I build my model on Mardin's assumption that Turkish society has a center and a periphery. The center of Turkish society is characterized with elitism, strong pro-Western tendencies at the expense of Eastern values, and militant secularism. The problematic side of this has been the central elite's intention to forcefully project their own way of life on the masses of the periphery and see those who oppose them as reactionists and "backwards". I will call these elite "secular elite" because of their over-emphasis on secularism, in the form of domination, and even

exclusion, of religion by the secular political structure. The biggest support of the secular elite of the center is the Turkish military, which sees itself as the natural guardian of the secular regime of the Republic. On the other hand, the periphery consists of the masses. Though the periphery had been passive and suppressed until the 1980s, it transformed itself and has become much more assertive than their predecessors: not accepting any givens without questioning; showing strong tendencies of identifying with traditional national and religious values; and have established their own "counter-elite" (Göle, 1997). The periphery of Turkey not only transcended its predecessors, but it has overhauled the center as well in democratizing and modernizing Turkey.

The process, the struggle between the secular elite and representatives of the periphery, briefly mentioned above has been very complex and painful. As a part of this process, the history of the Republic of Turkey witnessed many military coups, violent ethnic and ideological clashes, executions and bans on political party formations and political participations. Despite all, the Turkish people, especially the periphery, continuously prefer democracy and press for democratization. Today, the political party representing the periphery, the Justice and Development Party is striving for democracy by way of membership to the European Union, while the secular establishment of Turkey resists to protect the status quo. Most importantly, as it appears in public opinion polls and general elections, the Turkish people

have sided with the Reformists and favor consolidation of Turkish democracy.

1.4. Secularization in Turkish Politics and Society

1.4.1. Secularization /Secularism from the Ottoman Empire to the Modern Turkey

Religion was very important in the Ottoman Empire, both in the daily lives of the people and the ruling of the administration. The Ottoman administration was, as Mardin describes, Islamic, since "Islam was the religion of the state and that the Sultan's primordial role was that of the leader Islamic community" (1993: 350), and the Ottoman central administration reinforced religion as the core of the community (1971: 204). In addition, as discussed above, religion had served as the mediating link between the rulers and the ruled as well.

Such Ottoman order continued until the beginning of territory losses to the European powers. This was a sign of improvements in Europe and decline in the Ottoman economic and military system. These times of recession also saw the emergence of new movements that were advocating reform and modernization in the Ottoman system. There were some who suggested reforming the existing system, while some advocated a complete change and adaptation of the Western model. The religion, which was the main target, was strong in the Ottoman Empire but absent in Europe. Therefore it was seen as a catalyst for slowing the Ottoman Empire down.

This started a struggle between the pro-Western modernist groups and the Ottoman officials which resulted in reforms in many aspects of the Ottoman life.

The Young Turks□ consisting primarily of members of the bureaucratic and military elites of the Ottoman Empire and who dominated Ottoman politics from 1912 to 1918, was one of the modernist groups of the time, who defined the thoughts and deeds of religious people and those intellectuals who advocated an Islamist version of reform and reorganization as inherently and categorically opposed to the civilization they aimed to reach (Kasaba, 1997: 28).

In their struggle with the establishment they achieved secularization reforms in some aspects, especially in education. The most significant secularist reforms of the Committee of Union and Progress era (1908-18) was (1) the removal of Sheikhulislam from the cabinet, (2) the initiation of secular control over the religious courts by the Ministry of Justice, (3) the inclusion of *medrese* under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, and (4) the foundation of a new ministry of Religious Foundations (Cited in Taşpınar, 2005: 19).

Members of these groups took important positions in the newly established Turkish Republic under the leadership of the Mustafa Kemal, and got a chance of realizing their projects. Given the role and place of religion in the Ottoman society and politics, it is not surprising that the young nationalist-secularist revolutionary groups of the late Ottoman and early

Republican Turkey faced religion in all aspects of life “as a strongly anchored basis of community, as a philosophy and world view which seemed to perform more substantive functions than ideas usually did, as one of the social and economic bases of power in provinces, and as a state institution and ideology” (Mardin, 1971: 207).

During the war of Independence, because of the lack of nationalistic ideals in the society, leaders applied for the support of pious people using religion. With great timing and his pragmatism, “Mustafa Kemal mobilized provincial notables and pious Anatolian masses in the name of saving the Sultanate-Caliphate,” and in that sense, “he personally witnessed the organizational strength and moral authority of religious leaders that joined the military resistance” (Taşpınar, 2005: 22). He had, even, sought and won the cooperation of Anatolian local *ulema* and the sheiks (Sunar and Toprak, 2004: 159), and Kemal, even, took the religious title “ghazi” (Kasaba, 1997: 22). During the time of the War of Independence, according to Tunçay, the level of the use of religion for political goals had extended beyond the Ottoman practice (2001: 91). However, with the end of the war, and after the establishment of the Republic, the Kemalist elite staged a radical secularization wave (Sunar and Toprak, 2004: 159), which came as a surprise to most religious leaders who had joined the resistance movement with Islamic ideals (Taşpınar, 2005: 22). Nevertheless they were disappointed, “the tired and defeated people of Anatolia were in no position to debate or resist Ataturk’s radical message” (Kasaba, 1997: 16).

The new "Republican elite's passion for modernization," Yilmaz argues, "seen as an escape from backwardness, translated itself into a total dislike and distrust of all things associated with the ancient regime and the old way of life," and "topping the long list of suspect establishments were religion and religious institutions" (Yilmaz, 2005: 387). In addition, the Kemalist concept of state and nation building, Kramer argues, could only be implemented if there were no competing sources of legitimacy of statehood. Therefore, banning Islam, the traditional source of legitimacy for all activities of the political sphere, was a natural corollary principle of the Kemalist ideology (2000: 5). Therefore, shortly after the founding of the Republic, a major campaign was launched against the institutional and cultural basis of Islam in society (Turan, 1991: 34), and Islam became the main target of the Kemalist elite's cultural revolution. Mardin's explanations are also supportive of this perspective. As he argues,

the Turkish Revolution was not the instrument of discontented *bourgeoisie*, it did not ride on a wave of peasant dissatisfaction with the social order, and it did not have a target the sweeping away of feudal privileges, but it did take as a target the values the Ottoman *ancient regime*..For the Turkish Revolutionaries [the so called Kemalist elite], the symbolic system of society, culture, seems to have had a relatively greater attraction as a target than the social structure itself. And within the culture, religion seems to have been singled out as the core of the system (Mardin, 1971: 202).

Such a perception of religion by the secular elite gave way to an unimaginable and careless mistreatment of Islam in the early years of the Republic (Tunçay, 2001: 94).

The secularization wave first hit the state apparatus, and shortly after the proclamation of the Republic, the Sultanate was abolished (1923), and the Caliphate abrogated (1924). The statement in the 1924 Constitution that “the religion of the Turkish Republic is Islam,” was deleted in 1928 and the principle of secularism was added in 1937.

The early Kemalist elite, above all, wanted change at a civilizational level, namely, the replacement of Ottoman-Islamic cultural symbols with European ones (Taşpınar, 2005: 23). For this aim, the secularization process continued and deepened to cover educational and judicial systems, and even the religious and civic life of the citizens of the Republic.

As Sultanate and Caliphate were abolished, secularist reforms continued with the radical re-modeling of the legal system along the European lines; the existing Ottoman legal framework was radically altered with the adoption of Swiss civil codes and Italian penal codes in 1926, which secularized family law completely (Taşpınar, 2005: 22). For Niyazi Berkes, this was, the Republican elite’s “most constructive achievement because the wheels of the society were thus put on a new truck” (1998: 467). The educational system of the new Republic was secularized completely. The primary and secondary schools had already been brought under the control of the Ministry of Education by the Unionists (Taşpınar, 2005: 22), following the establishment of the Republic, *mektep* and *medreses*, the Ottoman educational institutions, were closed down and incorporated into a

completely new and unified system of public schools under the rule of the Ministry of Education (Özdalga, 1998: 19).

The intense secularization process hit the non-political religious movements, too. The Sufi orders with their *tekkes* (lodges) and *türbe* (sanctuaries) were forbidden in 1925 (Özdalga, 1998: 26). The closure of lodges and sanctuaries meant that beloved places of popular worship were closed, and this caused bitterness and hostility among the pious people of Anatolia (Özdalga, 1998: 28). This targeting of folk Islam in such an aggressive manner damaged and undermined the deeply rooted Ottoman social tradition that operated on the basis of religious tolerance (Taşpınar, 2005: 25). Nevertheless, the animosity caused by these aggressive encroachments and mistreatments could not be channeled into any political opposition, but turned into silent suspicion of the regime, and therefore, mistrust of the new Kemalist ideology (Özdalga, 1998: 28). When pious people of the periphery are considered, it can be argued that these aggressive policies of the secular establishment miscarried the popularity of the Kemalist ideology and forced them to go underground. As Sunar and Toprak put it, "not allowed to come and expand outwards, peripheral Islam turned deeply inwards" (2004: 161) and survived until the political atmosphere softened with the transition to a multi-party system.

The role of common religion for a multi-ethnic group was seen when the Kurdish rebellions took strong religious overtones, shortly after the abolishment of the Caliphate, and introduction of secular and nationalist

reforms. As Taşpınar argues, the Sheik Said uprising of 1925 was only the first in a series of seventeen Kurdish rebellions that lasted until 1938, and gave way to the consolidation of Kemalist authoritarianism (2005: 25). As a result, “the rebellions provided an excuse to ban the recently formed opposition party and to establish martial law in Eastern Anatolia” (Taşpınar, 2005: 25). Nevertheless, within a short time, “all opposition to the regime- military, religious or political- had been silenced, and when elections were held in August and September 1927 for a Third Assembly of the Turkish Republic, only one party, the Republican People’s Party of Mustafa Kemal, was there to take part in them” (cited in Kramer, 2000: 7). To conclude with Toprak’s description, “these reforms were carried out under authoritarian auspices and were originally welcomed only by small elite. The radical secularism of the Republic was from the top down,” and was imposed on the population by a one-party regime (2005: 170)

1.4.2. Official Policy toward Religion: Control and Dominate Rather than Separate

I have already discussed that Islam penetrated the lives of the Ottoman society and administration. I also discussed the Republican elite’s decisive attempts to secularize state and society. Now, through combining the two, I would like to underline the fact that Islam was very much embedded in all aspects of life in the Ottoman Empire, to an extent that made complete separation very difficult, if not impossible. This led the

Kemalist elite to think that if religion and state are non-separable components, “then the best way to keep Islam out of public and political life would be to place it under the control and supervision of the state” (Yılmaz, 2005: 389). The Republican elite’s strong intention to realize control of the country and the community, made them ready to use Islam for realizing their ideals (Shankland, 1999: 23). Ihsan Yılmaz provides such a perspective and argues that “despite the rhetoric, there has always been an official version of Islam in Turkey,” which he calls Lausannian Islam (2005: 385). Accordingly,

to subordinate religion to the political establishment, the [Turkish] state has long tried to create its own version of Islam. In the state version of Islam, there is already no conflict between the religion and Turkish modernity that covers the modern nation-state, secularism, democracy and no public role for religion. The *raison detre* of the Directorate of Religious Affairs has been to create a tailor-made national modern Turkish-Islam, definitely suppressing the transnational links and role, cut off from all international and transnational ties, specific and limited to the nation-state’s official borders that were drawn with the Lausanne Treaty of 1924 between Turkey and the European powers... Although, it has been claimed that the state in Turkey has tried to make religion a private belief that does not affect the public sphere with its adamant secularization ideology, this is not entirely true. The state has tried to make religion a “helping hand” (Yılmaz, 2005: 388).

The Turkish state has even interpreted Islam in line of its ideological vision and assumed the role of a secular *mujtahid* (Yılmaz, 2005: 387). The idea that instead of separating religion and politics, the secular Turkish state preferred to control and dominate religion is supported by many other scholars as well. For Taşpınar, secularism initiated by the Kemalist elite of Turkey did not attempt to separate state and religion, but, instead, the republican regime maintained a firm control over religious establishment

through monopolizing Islamic functions and incorporating the religious personnel into the state bureaucracy (2005: 7).

Özdalga argues that all secularization reforms in the early years of the Republic “were made with the aim of accomplishing a separation between state and religion, in which religion was subordinated to the authority of secular state (1998: 17). For Toprak,

The institutionalization of secularism in Turkey initially followed a militant course, very much like the French experience. The series of changes that initiated during the 1920s were basically designed to establish state control over religion rather than to separate the two spheres (Toprak, 1995: 91).

However, “even though the Turkish state has always desired to have only the state version of Turkish Islam, unofficial Islam has persisted”; and “even though “civil Islam has been officially removed from public life, it is still deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of the Turkish people” (Yılmaz, 2005: 385, 393). On the other hand,

the Kemalist ideology, which had national, secular and modern elements, could not fill the gap that civil Islam was supposed to have forcefully vacated. The state, through its secular policies and programs of Westernization, threatened the value system of the Muslim people in the country without providing, at the same time, a satisfactory and all-encompassing ideological framework that would have mass appeal and was capable of replacing civil Islam. Bifurcation between the elite and the masses made it difficult for the Kemalists to carry out their reforms from above (Yılmaz, 2005: 393).

More unfortunate is the gap between the expectations and the results. While the goal of the Kemalist elite was to establish a Western like developed polity, at the end of this modernization and secularization process, “the

Turkish experience appeared culminating in economic backwardness and social flux, with Muslim and secularist, Turk and Kurd, reason and faith, rural and urban- in short, the old and new- existing side by side and contending with, but more typically strengthening, each other" (Kasaba, 1997: 17).

Binnaz Toprak's ideas about the consequences of the harsh secularization program of the Republican elite are also worth attention. According to her, the aggressive French type secularization brought two important outcomes.

The first was to produce important groups who were thoroughly committed to the concept of a republic founded on Enlightenment ideas of reason and progress and who considered the public display of religiosity as an attack on the secular republic. These included the intellectuals, the educated public, the bureaucracy, professional groups, the business community, the mainstream press, the judiciary and, most importantly, the army. Although their numbers were initially small, in time the secular reforms of the Republic came to be accepted by the majority of the Turkish population... The second consequence was to produce groups who stood in contrast to the former, who had been marginalized by the Republic and pushed out of the centers of political power, social status and intellectual prestige, because of their opposition to republican reforms and/or their provincial/religious backgrounds (2005: 170, 171).

As a result, the secularization program of the Kemalist elite, instead of bringing the bright future they dreamed of, resulted in polarization, and a widening of the gap between the poles, the center and the periphery.

1.5. Transformation in Turkish Politics and Society

As I discussed above, the majority of scholars of Turkish politics and society have used Şerif Mardin's center-periphery framework in understanding and explaining developments in Turkey. This tradition was also followed in this study. As mentioned above, Mardin put the center-periphery framework forward in 1973, more than three decades ago. Since then, Turkey has witnessed very rapid transformation, starting with Turgut Özal's- as prime minister and president of the Turkish Republic□□ successful liberalization process. Together with this political, social and economic transformation, the center and periphery of Turkey have also transformed. This transformation has had very important impacts on the periphery of Turkish society. As a result, the periphery recovered economically and improvement in the economy was followed by social and political recovery. On the other hand, the emergence of a strong periphery and its appearance in all aspects of social and political life, and especially its active attempts in democratic reforms turned the old revolutionary center into a conservative braking force of liberalization and democratization on the way to EU membership. As Yilmaz argues, "now, most practicing Muslims advocate Turkey's accession to the European Union, once perceived to be a 'Christian club,' and believe that 'the Copenhagen criteria' are *amr bil ma'rūf* (ordering the good), while the role of conservatism is now left to the Kemalist and 'deep state' elite" (Yilmaz, 2005: 406). With the changing environment and opportunities- peripheral groups' opportunity for liberal

education, life in the urban centers, and modern means of expressing themselves- peripheral actors started to seek Islamic sources of reference to redefine their life-world (Göle,1997: 52). Similarly, with the softening of the atmosphere,

the boundaries of the private enlarged in Turkey, an unforeseen development occurred. Private everyday life has increasingly been given new richness and variety; religion has become a central focus of life and acquired a new power. Religion has received a new lift from the privatizing wave; private religious instruction, Islamic fashion in clothes, manufacturing and music, Islamic learned journals, all of them aspects of private life, have made Islam pervasive in a modern sense in Turkish society, and have worked against religion becoming a private belief (Yılmaz, 2005: 393).

For Göle, this rise of Islam is not only a reaction to a given situation, "but also present a counter-cultural model of modernity, and a new paradigm for self-definition that has led to the formation of Islamist counter-elite" (1997: 53).

Another very important outcome of the Turkish people's experience with the aggressive secular elite and forced Westernization and secularization is well put by Kasaba. According to him, with the rise of consciousness in the last decades of the twentieth century, the peripheral Turkish people,

few of whom now remembered the early years of the republic, had grown extremely suspicious of, and downright cynical about, the latest incarnations of the promises of 'enlightened and prosperous tomorrows.' Instead of making further sacrifices for a future that kept eluding them, they were starting to inquire about the histories, institutions, beliefs, identities, and cultures from which they had been forcefully separated. This reorientation of the social compass spread to all segments of the

society, not only affecting people's political outlook but also influencing the way they dressed, which music they created and listened to, how they built their houses and office buildings, and how they thought about the history of modern Turkey...This also resulted in scrutiny and criticism of Kemalist programs (Kasaba, 1997: 16).

Kasaba interprets these developments as Kemalism losing its grip (1997: 18), while the reformed and re-established periphery extend its influence and power.

CHAPTER 2

POLITICIZATION OF ISLAM: PARTIES AND POLICIES

2.1. Introduction

Having its roots in the late Ottoman period, the secularization process gained a new dimension after the establishment of the Republic. Relying on state power, the secular Republican elite staged a harsh secularization process to clear religion from all aspects of public life. In spite of limited success, religion could not be removed from minds, hearts and lives of the Turkish people (Yilmaz, 2005). Soon after the inauguration of multi-party politics in Turkey, people who suffered from the one-party militant secular regime attempted to gain their religious rights, through establishing and supporting political parties that promised to provide religious freedoms. This political trade off contributed to the emergence of many political parties some of which claimed to be direct representatives of religious people. As a result, religion was politicized.

In this chapter, I am going to discuss the process of politicization of religion in Turkey through political parties and movements. With the coming of multi-party politics, the suppressed people of Anatolia found a new opportunity to represent themselves, claim a greater share from the resources of the country, and demand their rights and liberties back. As a result of my investigation on the political parties and their policies since

1946, I witnessed two levels of political representation of religion. At the first level, religion has been represented by secular or semi-secular political parties. They have claimed religious rights and liberties within the broader framework of human rights and liberties. These parties have had a goal and program of democratizing politics. Parties of this category wanted the votes of the religious people, rather than the religion itself. Therefore, for these parties, religion plays an instrumental role for gaining strength for implementing their program. However, as a corollary to the emerging liberal democratic environment, religion re-appeared in the public sphere, then alarmed the militant secular establishment and their fear of *irtica*. Therefore, for assuaging the 'virtual tension,' these parties have decidedly used the means and language of the secular regime. As will be discussed in this chapter, the Democratic, Justice, Motherland, and Justice and Development Parties are examples of this category.

The second level of representation of religion at the political level was through the political parties that were founded with the aim of defending and representing religious ideas, values and people, with direct reference to religion. Religion is not instrumental for these parties; rather, it constitutes the core and shapes their political program. These parties, from their establishment until their closure- generally on accusations of breaches of secular principles of the Republic□ struggle with the militant secular establishment. These parties pay special attention to the language they use, and prefer religious concepts in explaining their program. Parties that fall in

this category are the Nation Party of the 1950s, and political representatives of National Outlook Movement, which are the National Order, National Salvation, Welfare, Virtue, and Felicity Parties.

Looking at Turkish politics with this two- category framework, I concluded that the Justice and Development Party (JDP), having its root in the second category, successfully transformed itself, and become a successful representative of the first category. Founded on the ground of economic crisis and political turmoil of post-coup period, the JDP determined democracy, secularism, respect for human rights and liberties, and economic development as the key goals of the party and the government program.

In this chapter, the main representatives of the two categories discussed above will be briefly explored, paying special attention to their origin, ideology and relations with the secular establishment. Within this framework, I will discuss the Democratic Party, Justice Party and Motherland Party as the representatives of the first category; and National Order Party, National Salvation Party, Welfare Party as the representatives of second category.

2.2. The Multi-Party Politics and Emergence of New Parties

Turkey has entered a new era with, in Karpat's terms, "an unusual decision" (1961: 436) that opened the way of democratic competition of political parties for governing on account of their popular support and merit. However, this unusual decision was not a result of democratic inspiration or

the mercy of the one-party leaders, but was a consequence of necessity. Karaömerlioğlu's (2006) study on the reasons behind Turkey's "return" to multi-party politics in 1946 is worthy of attention. In his study, he prefers "return" instead of "transition," since, for him, "the multi-party politics...was not something that had never been experienced before the foundation of the Republic. Indeed, the aftermath of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 witnessed genuine parliamentary struggle between political parties" (2006: 89). On the reasons of Turkey's return to competitive politics, he argues that the İsmet İnönü factor, as one of the widely accepted interpretations, is not valid. Karaömerlioğlu does not accept the argument that Turkey's return was made possible thanks to İnönü's democratic intentions and aspirations (2006: 89). As he argues, İnönü "was certainly one of the most Machiavellian *realpolitik* figures in Turkish history whose commitment to democratic values is highly disputable," and he was the "infamous 'National Chief' of the single-party era known for his hard-liner political attitudes" (2006: 90). Karaömerlioğlu also rejects the interpretation that rests on the intrinsic factors supposedly found in the political culture of the single-party regime that, as he argues, "believed to pave the way for such a development" (2006: 90). The third interpretation that Karaömerlioğlu finds as more convincing is the impact of international dynamics. Accordingly, "the changing international political and cultural climate as a consequence of World War II forced the Turkish political elite to make democratic amendments" (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006: 92). Despite their varying levels of

explanatory power, Karaömerlioğlu argues that all three interpretations are “disregarding the impact of social discontent in society, thereby suppressing the demands and voices of all those who were not represented enough and did not belong to the political and intellectual elite who dominated the state structure during the single party era” (2006: 92). Instead, Asim Karaömerlioğlu propose a social interpretation that “the political and economic discontent experienced by different social groups, evidently skyrocketed in the society especially during the war years, [which] forced the Turkish political elite to make amendments in the political system for multi-party regime which they thought might be more convenient for the governmentality of the masses” (2006:93-4). Within this framework, Karaömerlioğlu discusses the peasantry that formed eighty-three percent of the population, different social groups among the urban dwellers, non-Muslims and bourgeoisie, who were tired of the RPP policies (2006: 94-7).

2.2.1. Democratic Party and Its Rule

When the UN Charter was discussed in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), Adnan Menderes stressed the importance and meaning of the signing the Charter and demanded realization of the democratic obligations (McCally, 1956: 310). Refik Koraltan, Celal Bayar and Fuat Köprülü also sided with Menderes and “presented a joint motion that the RPP respect the world and spirit of the Turkish Constitution and modify all laws of unconstitutional and dictatorial character” (Cited in McCally, 1956: 310),

which was rejected by the Party. In the following days, Menderes and Köprülü published articles claiming democracy, which were evaluated as a breach of the RPP discipline and both of them expelled from the Republican People's Party. The Democratic Party founded in 1946 by this group of expelled RPP parliamentarians soon become identified with agrarian economic interests, the commercial bourgeoisie and the conservative values of Anatolia (Taşpınar, 2005: 121). Having an experience in the RPP government and knowing the problems of the country, the leaders of the DP promised to be interested in the problems of peasants, change the bureaucratic structure of Turkey, and give people religious rights and liberties. As a result, the people, tired of one-party authoritarian rule, did not hesitate to give their support to the Democratic Party. As an only alternative party to the RPP, the Democratic Party attracted the votes of a wide range of society. As described by Yavuz,

new industrialists who were critical of statism, landowners...intellectuals who wanted greater freedom of speech, small merchants who resented the patronage of the state enjoyed by leading merchants, Sufi leaders who had been persecuted, and most villagers voted for the DP, which consciously depicted itself as the voice of the peripheral and marginalized masses of the society and depicted the [RPP] as the party of the oppressive bureaucrats (2003: 60).

The emergence of the DP was important for Turkish political life in many terms. First of all, with the DP, the masses of the periphery, for the first time since the establishment of the Republic, got the chance of

representation at the “modernist center.” The Democratic Party’s victory represented the victory of the forgotten, ignored and undermined masses of the periphery over the center, since “the common denominator of the DP supporters was their opposition to the center of officialdom” (Cited in Yavuz, 2003: 60-1). As Yavuz argues, with the victory of the Democratic Party, “the social bases of Turkish politics began to change, and for the first time a large segment of popular society had a voice at the center” (2003: 61).

Secondly, emergence of the DP was important for Turkish politics because it provided an alternative choice for the society and a rival for the RPP. Facing a strong rival, the leaders of the RPP began to see that they had to address the needs and demands of the society if they wanted to stay in power. Shortly after the first elections, “not only the newly-emerged DP, but the old guardian of the Republican virtues and Kemalist reforms, the RPP as well looked upon Islam as an important source of what they were after: namely, votes” (Sunar and Toprak, 2004: 161). As Taşpınar demonstrates, only a year after (unfair) elections in 1946, in the Seventh General Congress of the RPP in 1947,

The party’s understanding of secularism was subjected to extensive [self] criticism. Many of the party delegates argued that the RPP neglected the religious education of the youth as well as the religious training of clerics...To avoid defeat in the upcoming 1950 elections, the RPP took several steps to placate public opinion by proposing the ‘normalization’ of religious affairs. The wake of the Seventh Congress in 1947, the Ministry of Education prepared a program that introduced elective courses on religion in primary and secondary school curricula. Textbooks were to be prepared jointly by the Ministry of Education and the Presidency of Religious Affairs.

The RPP also decided to reintroduce the Preacher Training Schools to train preachers and religious functionaries” (2005: 122).

In March 1950, shortly before the first true democratic elections of the Turkish Republic, the RPP government opened twenty of the sanctuaries for prayer, which had been closed in 1925 (Cited in Özdalga, 1998: 34).

However, despite their efforts, the RPP could not avoid overwhelming victory of the DP in 1950 general elections. DP received 52.7 % of all votes and the RPP 39.4 % (See Table 1: 1950 General Elections).

Party	Votes %	MP
DP	52.7	420
RPP	39.4	63
Nation Party	3.1	1
Independents	4.8	3

After taking office, the DP started to address its promises during the election campaigns. After the landslide victory in the elections, the Democratic Party government nullified the Article 526 of the Criminal Code, which penalized the call to prayer, *ezan*, in Arabic with a jail sentence of three to six months (Cited in Taşpınar, 2005: 123). This was followed by

a series of measures aimed at giving a more room to religion and religious education in Turkish society. For instance, the state radio was allowed to broadcast readings from the *Koran*, and religious education was allowed to make a regular part of the curriculum in the elementary and secondary school levels. New *Imam Hatip* schools were set up as *Lysées* parallel to the secular education system. The budget of the Presidency of Religious Affairs was doubled (Cited in Taşpınar, 2005: 124). The Democrats also

encouraged the building of new mosques and permitted the creation of hundreds of Koranic schools. Finally, several religious brotherhoods, which were reduced to operating clandestinely under the RPP, were allowed to proceed relatively openly (Taşpınar, 2005: 124).

Without any doubt, the DP's popularity was because of its liberal and permissive approach to Islam and religious liberties. The DP leadership, however, remained pro-secular and fully supported the Kemalist programs (Yavuz, 2003: 61). The founding members of the DP were former members of the RPP, who were committed to Kemalist Westernization. However, their difference stemmed from their liberal interpretation of secularism; their party program included the following statements: "Our party...rejects the erroneous interpretation of secularism in terms of enmity toward religion. It recognizes the religious freedoms like other freedoms as a sacred human right" (Cited in Taşpınar, 2005: 121). This is the one of the important factors that led me to put the DP into the first category which I discussed above.

Democratic Party government's success was not restricted to the broadening of the political rights and liberties, but the DP was successful in its economic policies as well. Especially during their first term, the DP successfully turned the assistance and loans from abroad into unprecedented economic development. Economic welfare and freedom were two fundamental achievements (Karpat, 1961: 437-8) that brought the DP to power with the support of the 57.6 percent of the people in 1954 elections (See Table 2: 1954 General Elections).

Party	Votes %	MP
DP	57.6	502
RPP	35.3	31
Cumhuriyetçi Millet Partisi	4.8	5
Independents	1.5	3
Türküye Köylü Partisi	0.6	-

The second half of the decade was not a successful period for the Democrats. After 1955, the economy backfired: “the difference between the high rate of industrial investment and low production led to the inflation and consequently to a high cost of share-croppers of their living and forced them to migrate into cities” (Karpas, 1961: 437-8). The economic downfall hit the salaried functionaries of the state and military and civil bureaucracies who were strongly identified with the Kemalist revolution and led a significant drop in their living standards as well as a relative decline in social status with the rise of private sector (Taşpınar, 2005: 126). All these produced harsh criticisms toward the Democratic Party government. Unhappy with the Democrats rise, together with the fall of economy and their social status, the Kemalist elite started to accuse them with betrayal to the Kemalist principles, especially secularism. The rise of religion in terms of numbers of mosques, religious schools, and so forth doubled with the DP members’ emphasis on religious institutions as source of success during

their election campaigns were enough to convince the “guardians” to come and escape the regime, which was seen as under threat.

Another important catalyst to the anxiety of the Kemalist elite was the DP’s authoritarian manner. The DP’s authoritarianism, Taşınar argues, “increased parallel to the unrest among military cadets, university students, the Kemalist press, and the urban intelligentsia” (Taşınar, 2005: 126). For Sunar and Toprak,

When the DP had been liberal in opposition, it turned autocratic in power. Instead in a politics of compromise with the RPP, it chose confrontation, even while social coalition alliance behind it began to crumble. When the DP leadership began to undermine the power of the bureaucracy, made clientalist inroads into the state, conceded to religious demands and frontally attacked the intelligentsia, what it overlooked was a significant variable of Turkish politics: namely, that democracy could survive in Turkey on the bases of a compromise with the secular, progressivist bureaucratic intelligentsia. The RPP, on the other hand, allied with the secularist bureaucracy and military against the DP, was strong enough to challenge any majority-based electoral power (2004: 164).

All these resulted in the intervention of the military in May 1960. The volunteer guardians of the regime, the military, staged a coup to protect the Kemalist regime, which they perceived to be under danger.

The military intervention in 1960, I think, should not solely be explained by the Democratic Party’s failure. Actually, the DP brought successes more than failure and people of the Anatolia were satisfied with it. Turkey “has experienced great prosperity under the DP, and the farmers had a higher income than ever before” (McCally, 1956: 297), together with

greater political freedom, after the totalitarian single-party regime. Even in the time of decline in the economy, the DP received 47.8 % of all votes (while RPP received 41 %). Departing from this point, I would like to touch briefly on the ideological and political factors behind the coup. First of all, the democratizing political atmosphere undermined the privileges and influence of militant secular elite and the military in politics. Democratization also meant competition that would bring an end to the dominance of authoritarian Kemalist ideology. Thus, the weakening of guardians, who made guarding the interests and privileges difficult, alarmed the military and its supporters. Last, but not least, the RPP, having limited popular success, and having no perspective of re-establishing itself as a popularly supported party, has been looking for external support since then. The declining economy, the DP's policies about religious freedoms and the military unrest produced a great opportunity for the RPP to appeal to the help of military to overthrow its rival.

In conclusion, the Democratic Party was a party with democratic and liberal inspirations and interpretations of politics, religion and secularism. In the first fair elections of Turkey in 1950, the DP managed to get the support of the Turkish society. Its policies were awarded by increased popular support in the next elections, in 1954. However, the emerging problems in the economy were very well utilized by the undemocratic opposition. In addition to the undemocratic behavior of the opposition, the DP's mistake was, perhaps, overestimation of the electoral success and underestimation of

the survival power of the old centralist alliance, between the Kemalist elite (Sunar and Toprak, 2004: 162), which resulted a coup to “re-invigorated Kemalist ideology as the main source of public policy” through purifying the political arena and its own ranks as well by purging 2,000 officers, forcing 235 generals to retire, and executing Adnan Menderes and his top two ministers after a protracted military trial (Taşpınar, 2005: 128).

2.2.2. The Justice Party and Its Rule

Though the Democratic Party was cleaned from the political scene, the succeeding years carried the heritage of the DP to further points. Once delivered to the people, the religious freedoms have not been taken back by the succeeding governments. According to Taşpınar “the country had gone through too great of transformation since the transition to democracy in 1946 and Islam had become an integral part of the social life during 1950s. As a result, the military leadership refrained from undoing the religious liberalization of the DP era” (2005: 128). Interestingly, even the RPP-led coalition in the 1961-64 period, at the government immediately after of the coup, maintained the record of DP governments in terms of building Mosques (Cited in Taşpınar, 2005: 129). The new constitution was written after the 1960 coup, and

During the 1960s and 1970s, democratic political liberties guaranteed by this new constitutional framework and the international dynamic of the Cold War played a major role in the development of a more pluralist polity in Turkey. The legal framework, which allowed for greater ideological diversity came to be fully exploited from the mid-1960s onwards. As a result, for the first time since the foundation of the Kemalist Republic, a polarization along leftwing and rightwing ideologies seemed to surpass the age-old Islamist-secularist cleavage in Turkish society, and the country witnessed a gradual crystallization of class conflict (Taşpınar, 2005: 129).

In the new period, many new actors emerged in the political and social scene. Among them, the leftist movements were to change the order of the perception of threat to the regime. While communism was described as an external threat posed by Moscow in the 1940s and 1950s, as Taşpınar argues, in the 1960s it came to be perceived as an internal threat (2005: 131). This perception by the secular establishment changed the role of Islam in their minds. While looking for solution to the rise of communist threat, they noticed a significant solution: Islam. They also recognized the role and importance of religion in the daily lives of Anatolian people. In fact, in spite of three decades of forceful imposition of a different life-style, Islam still remained intact, and emerged in the political scene as well. As Taşpınar demonstrates,

By recognizing the significance of Islam in everyday life, the secularist establishment, started to treat religion not only as a political force that had to be contained but also as an ideology that could be co-opted for its own ends...Accordingly, as long as the religion remained within the realm of official secularist interpretation, the Kemalist leadership believed it could serve the interests of the state (2005:129).

The 1960s also witnessed the emergence of a new populist party, which was on the path of the DP. The Justice Party (JP), founded in the year followed the coup, 1961, established itself as the successor of the Democratic Party. According to Sherwood "as a popular party whose success has rested on responsiveness to the desires of the people, and particularly of the peasantry, the Justice Party, as did the Democratic Party before it, has responded to the obvious desire of many Turks for a relaxation of the militant anti-religious campaign carried by the republican reformers" (1967: 59). The JP successfully captured the organizational network and rural electoral appeal of the DP under the populist leadership of Süleyman Demirel (Taşpınar, 2005: 130). The JP received 52.9 % of the votes in 1965 general elections (while RPP received in 28.7 %).

Finding itself in the middle of an ideological polarization and conflict, the JP appealed to religion to re-unite the society. The communist ideology would not find a fertile ground in a Muslim community; therefore, the Justice Party JP resorted to the use of state's religious apparatus for checking and blocking communism (Taşpınar, 2005: 131). For this aim, the number of Imam Hatip Schools increased to 26 in 1965, and 72 new ones opened between 1965-7 (Cited in Taşpınar, 2005: 131). However, these attempts and measures could not solve the problem and prevent the intervention of the military in politics in 1971, as a response to the failure of civil political actors.

After the closure of the DP, the JP emerged as its successor and lanced itself as the party of people. However, the JP also wanted to repair the Democrat's reluctance in addressing the interests of the old elite alliance composed of the military, the bureaucracy and intelligentsia. Sunar and Toprak argue that "the new leadership of the JP, under Demirel, changed its political attitude towards the old centralist elites. Its strategy throughout the 1960s and 1970s was to strike a balance between the requirements of electoral success and the exigencies of elite politics" (2004: 165). And, though it "first used the support of the Muslim periphery to reduce the hegemonic power of the Kemalist bureaucracy, the Justice Party subsequently began to sustain the dominance of the secular center through its ties to state-supported big business" (Yavuz, 2003: 209).

2.3. Rise of *National Outlook* Movement: A New Page in Politicizing Islam

By above move, the JP lost support of small merchants, and a new empty space emerged in the political spectrum. Parallel to the JP's departure from its stance, Mehmet Zahit Kotku, a leading figure in of the Naksibendi order, was busy with formulating an agenda and action plan for its supporters (Yeşilada, 2002: 64). At Kotku's encouragement, Dr. Necmettin Erbakan entered into politics, and was elected to the Turkish Union of Chambers in 1966, with the claim of representing small and medium businesses and industrial men (Saribay, 1985: 98). However, the ruling Justice Party did not recognize him as the head, and expelled him from his

office immediately (Sarıbay, 1985: 99). Shortly after, Erbakan was expelled from the Justice Party as well. In response to these developments, Erbakan entered the 1968 general elections as an independent candidate, and was elected MP with the votes of his supporters. Then, Erbakan and his friends, Paksu and Aksay, founded the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*) in January 1970. However, the life of the party was very short: after the coup in 1971, the Constitutional Court closed it, claiming it had anti-secular views. Following the closure, Erbakan left Turkey for Switzerland, began publishing the *Sole Order* (*Tek Nizam*) newspaper, and established the National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*) Movement (Yeşilada, 2002: 65). Following the court's dismissal of his case, he returned to Turkey and established the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi*) in October 1972. The founding purpose of National Salvation Party (NSP), as it was argued by Erbakan, was to "fill the void left on the Right by the drift of the Justice Party to the Left" (Sunar and Toprak, 2004: 165).

As mentioned above, Turkish society and politics were polarized on a left-right spectrum starting from the middle of the 1960s. The NSP emerged in such an environment that the left-right cleavage dominated the political agenda of Turkey, which undermined the importance of religious-secular cleavage. The NSP, Toprak argues,

emerged with a political spectrum which sought to place the Islamic appeal within a wider context. The NSP occupies a distinct place among other parties which have, with one time or another, entered the political arena with a similar concern for the religious question. The NSP is the only

explicitly religious party in the history of the Republic with a well-defined ideology and a relatively successful electoral record (Toprak, 1984: 122).

In one of her studies, Toprak (1984) discusses the ideological stand of the NSP. Accordingly, the NSP's ideological perspective mainly rested on the importance it attributed to the Turkish history:

This was in line with the Islamic emphasis on history as theologically significant: the Islamic state was said to have the historical mission of establishing a powerful community of believers which reflected divine design. The NSP's view of history was central to an understanding of its political vision, a vision which saw an almost religious calling of world leadership for Turkey. In conformity with the Islamic stress on history, the NSP considered the re-establishment of a powerful Moslem nation as its major goal (Toprak, 1984: 123).

According to Erbakan and other leaders of the NSP, an adequate analysis of Turkey's problems could only be undertaken after a correct evaluation of Turkey's relations with West (Toprak, 1984: 123). In this point, his stress was on Turkish leaders' unquestioned adoption of Western political and social models for Turkey. According to the view of the NSP, Turkish civilization was different than the West; therefore, exact imitation of Western ways of development was impossible, and Erbakan and his colleagues claimed their movement, the "National Outlook" was the only indigenous political philosophy with historical roots (Toprak, 1984: 126).

The second important element of the NSP and National Outlook Movement (NOM) was their stress on family and social life. As Toprak demonstrates,

The party leadership repeatedly voiced its concern about what it considered to be an "illness" among the elite of imitating the Western cultural patterns. Such imitation the NSP argued resulted in the disappearance of traditional family life and social relationships. Look around and witness the decadence: parents no longer had authority over their children; the young lacked respect for the old; the youth was impious; promiscuity and pornography were tolerated; women followed Western fashions which were designed to be sexually suggestive; nightclubs were mushrooming everywhere initiating the youth into drinking and sexual history (Cited in Toprak, 1984: 124). Cultural life fared no better. Television, movie, and theater programmers were heavily biased in favor of Western productions which inflicted corrupt social norms (1984: 124).

Another important element of the ideology of the NSP, as argued by Toprak, was the problem of industrialization (1984: 125). According to the NSP view, "Turkey had lost its leading position as a great power because it failed to industrialize," and they promised to initiate a rapid development of Turkey via revitalizing such indigenous cultural values (Toprak, 1984: 126).

As Toprak argues, the National Salvation Party's relative strength within the Turkish party system, in addition to its ideological appeal, stemmed from its organizational network (1984: 127) . Accordingly,

[It] maintained an ongoing network of close ties with a number of youth and professional groups. Of these, the most important was the *Akıncılar* (The Raiders), a youth organization with its headquarters in Ankara and with approximately 600 branches throughout Turkey. It was established as an NSP alternative to the highly politicized Turkish youth in various organizations on the Left and Right. The NSP also had organic ties with the National Turkish Student's Union (*Milli Tütük Talebe Birliği*), the oldest organization of university students among several others. Erbakan and other NSP parliamentarians were frequent quest-speakers at its meetings. In addition, the party opened several youth centers (*MSP Gençlik Lokalleri*)

where young people who were sympathetic to the NSP were educated according to the party ideology...There were a number of professional groups with which the NSP established close contacts although all of them were minor associations within the related professions...The NSP also attempted to establish organizational ties with the working-class and, for this purpose, founded the NSP Workers' Commissions (*MSP İşçi Komisyonları*) with approximately 300 branches in various industrial centers...In addition, the party had an affiliated labor union, the *Hak-İş* Confederation, although its membership and strength within various branches of industry was limited (Toprak, 1984: 128).

In addition, the NSP had ties with and influence on the Turks living in Europe, especially in Germany and Italy. They organized migrant Turkish workers in Germany through the National Outlook Movement headquarters located in Cologne and approximately 170 branches in other German cities (Toprak, 1984: 128-9).

NSP's informal ties with religious groups in Turkey were also important. It "appeared to have developed informal ties with the *Sufi* orders and *tarik*at-based movements," and "in terms of electoral mobilization, the NSP's rumored connections with one such movement, the *Nurcus*, during its formative years, and later with *Nakşibendi* order, probably enabled the party to strengthen its informal channels of communication" (Toprak, 1984: 129).

The National Salvation Party entered in elections in 1973 and 1977, and received the support of important percent of the population (See Table 3).

Table 3: NSP in 1973 and 1977 General Elections	
Year	Votes %
1973	11.80
1977	8.56

The NSP, under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan, entered in successive coalition governments with parties both from the left and right wings of the political spectrum. For Toprak, this was because of the NSP's lesson of democracy□□ that the voters care more economics than about religious issues (Toprak, 2005: 171). While in power, the NSP adopted a program of rapid industrialization; appealed to the Anatolian entrepreneurs, who had hitherto found it difficult to receive state favors because of their provincial/religious backgrounds; and appealed to the poor in its promises of cutting down inflation and providing social welfare (Toprak, 2005: 171). Mardin's interpretation of the results of elections in the case of NSP is important, because the individuals who had not been assimilated into the "modernist center" either in social or economic terms, made up the core of NSP supporters (Mardin 1973). Toprak also interprets the NSP's electoral base, as she argues, despite difficulties due to the absence of survey data. As she argues,

Nevertheless, the analysis of electoral data can be indicative of the social locations of the NSP supporters. Election statistics show that the NSP received its support overwhelmingly from rural areas. In 1973 and 1977 elections, 67.2 per cent and 63.2 percent of all votes cast for NSP,

respectively, came from rural districts. The NSP's strength also displays an inverse relationship with higher levels of development. In both 1973 and 1977 elections, the NSP did better in less-developed regions of the country, most notable in East and Central Anatolia (Toprak, 1984: 131).

Hakan Yavuz's ideas are also supportive of this perspective. According to Yavuz, the National Salvation Party's

main characteristics were its hybrid populism and representation of hitherto peripheral forces (new merchants, intellectuals, and shop owners) wanting an increased say in the affairs of the state. Its populism was based on a program of economic nationalism and cultural and religious mobilization, which was to be accomplished by invoking an Ottoman-Islamic ethos to provide moral stability and framework for a society suffering from dislocation caused by state-led industrialization and corporatization of economic activities (2003: 212).

The life of the National Salvation Party ended, like its predecessor NOP, with the military coup in 1980. Increased violence along ideological lines and the governments inability to solve the problem encouraged the Turkish military to intervene. Though the coup was not directed against the Islamists, but rather the increased violence between the left and the right, the NSP shared the fate of all political parties in Turkey (Toprak, 2005: 182).

Now I would like to address the main point of this chapter. Above, I tried to present the general characteristics and fate of a political party who put religion and re-organization of society and culture along religious values at the center of its program. The emergence of the National Salvation Party might be seen as a result of the failure of a secular party to address

demands— not only religious, but economic, political, and social as well— of religious people. Secondly, the NSP might also be evaluated as a response of the religious periphery of society to the suppressive and militant secular center in the form of producing more radical and marginal political parties after the DP and the JP. For a short period of time, the rise of the NSP as a voice of the religious periphery was welcomed as a means against the communism. However, after the disappearance of the communist threat, as will be discussed below, the representative political actors of religious people was to become the number one target of the militant secular regime.

2.4. 1980 Military Coup and Aftermath: A New Stage in Interaction of Religion and State

In the second half of the 1970s, ideological confrontation between left and right, reached its peak in Turkey. During the same period, the society was shattered by ideological polarization and strife-ridden communal violence vis-à-vis the weakened administration (Yavuz, 1997a: 67). During the same years, TGNA was unable to agree on a president, and the government was inept in providing law and order (Yavuz, 1997a: 67). Between 1976 and 1980, “political parties, state bureaucracy, labor unions, student organizations, and other interest groups were thoroughly politicized and ideologically factionalized” (Yeşilada, 1988: 351) and violent clashes between leftist and rightist movements were carried into the streets. According to estimated statistics that Yeşilada provides,

By the September 1980, the country the country faced conditions close to civil war. Rough estimates of deaths from political violence grew as follows: 1975, 35; 1976, 90; 1977, 260; 1978, 800-1; 1979, 1,500; and 1980, 3,500 (Cited in Yeşilada, 1988:351). When the military coup took place, the generals moved quickly to end domestic political violence. Within a year, 150,000-200,000 individuals were arrested and, by 1983, some 39,529 persons were given jail sentences (Cited in Yeşilada, 1988: 351).

These developments brought another intervention by the military. After taking control, the National Security Council “issued decrees which suspended the constitution, dissolved parliament, closed down the political parties, detained their leaders, and suspended virtually all professional associations and confederations of trade unions” (Ahmad, 1993: 182).

The post-1980 military coup period opened a new page in the history of the Turkish Republic. The military cancelled the existing political administrative structure and kept control until 1983. The social and political situation of the pre-coup period directed the military government to establish a new system to prevent the re-appearance of the same problems. Of many outcomes of the 1980 coup, two have been very important in terms of subject of this research. Firstly, the new constitution, prepared under the supervision of the military, created more authoritarian and restrictive political structure. The second outcome of the re-structuring of the political system is it’s conditionally accomodationist approach to Islam, as an instrument. These two factors need to be explained in detail.

As argued above, the military dominated National Security Council resorted to authoritarian measures to end the ideological violence. Similarly,

they established an authoritarian system for preserving peace and stability in the country. With this aim, they replaced the 1961 constitution with an authoritarian one that

gave the state extensive powers to achieve social and political order. The new constitution promoted the President to the position of a strong executive with important powers of appointment: the members of the Constitutional Court and the State Supervisory Council, the chief of the General Staff, members of the Institute of Higher Education, one-fourth of the members of the Council of State, the Chief Public Prosecutor and the Deputy Chief Public Prosecutor, members of the Supreme Military Court of Administrations, and the members of Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors (Cited in Yeşilada, 1988: 352).

The military junta attempted to re-design all aspects of social and political life. Higher education, universities and research institutes, considered very important to the secular republican elite. After the coup, with the new Constitution, the military junta established the Higher Education Council (*Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu, YÖK*) with excessive powers to “(1) dismiss and hire faculty and administrators, (2) regulate research on campuses, (3) establish curricula, (4) regulate university budgets, (5) issue guidelines for dress codes, (6) appoint deans and university presidents, (7) regulate student admissions, and (8) assign faculty members to universities in less developed regions of the country” (Cited in Yeşilada, 1988: 353).

The military also feared the re-emergence of pre-coup violence and ideologically polarized conflicts, and therefore banned many political parties and prohibited the participation of many of party leaders, such as Demirel

and Erbakan, in politics for five to ten years. They also allowed a few select parties participate in the 1983 elections. For example, first,

the NSC prohibited the new parties from having ties to the pre-1980 political parties and required that they be formed by at least thirty founding members. Second, the NSC evaluated each party's by-laws and list of founding members, and vetoed those individuals found unfit for political roles. Third, the parties which received vetoes then appointed new founding members and resubmitted their lists to the NSC. Finally, this process continued until the NSC ratified the party list (Yeşilada, 1988: 363).

Therefore, during their three year rule, the National Security Council tried to clean the politics from remnants of the pre-coup period and brought some restrictions to prevent their re-appearance. In summary, in Ahmet İnsel's words,

the architects of the September 12 regime desired to construct a political sphere with the state at its center. This project reflected a political conception that perceived the state as the center and the society as the periphery. The different wings of politics, its left and its right, were to be determined according to this center. With this aim in view, it was stipulated that political parties would conform to a single type in their establishment and operation, that organic ties between political parties and other social organizations would be prevented by means of a series of prohibitions, and that the clustering of votes around a few central parties would be made obligatory by means of the 10 percent threshold for representation in the parliament. To this was added the opportunity for military tutelage institutionalized through the strengthening of the political powers of the National Security Council (MGK, or Milli Güvenlik Kurulu). Because the 1982 Constitution was legitimized under the shadow of military intervention and by means of a referendum during which oppositional propaganda was prohibited, it was not difficult to put in place this new regime of military tutelage that went beyond the traditional military-politics relationship in the Turkish Republic (2003: 294).

The second important outcome of the post-coup re-organization was its approach to the religion. The military junta appealed to Islam as a resort for unifying polarized society, since the secular Kemalism proved unsuccessful to create homogenous, modern and civilized society. As Hakan Yavuz demonstrates,

the generals who came to power on September 12, 1980, instead of showing secular disregard for Islam, took several steps to strengthen it by opening new Qur'anic Schools (*Kur'an Kursları*), making religious courses compulsory, and employing new preachers (imams)...The leaders of the military coup, ironically, depended on Islamic institutions and symbols for legitimization; fusing Islamic ideas with national goals, they hoped to create a homogeneous and less political Islamic community. Islam, in this radical departure from the military's past practices, offered a way to reduce or even eliminate the cultural differences that led to the polarization of Turkish society (1997a: 67).

According to Yavuz, three factors which shaped the military's policies of culture and identity (2003: 69), were the perception of threat (from leftist movements), the personal Islam of Evren, and the availability of resources. Many Kurdish and Alevi activist groups were allied with Marxists, making radical the left powerful enough in the eyes of the military. Therefore, the leaders of the 1980 military coup intended to fuse religious ideas with Turkish nationalism to expand the social base and cohesion of the state

(Yavuz, 1996: 99). For Yavuz, "by encouraging the fusing of Sunni Islamic ideas with national goals, the military government planned to foster a co-opted and less political Islam to confront a much-exaggerated "leftist threat" (2003: 74). This formula, which was known as "Turkish-Islamic synthesis," was an attempt to "integrate secularism, Turkish nationalism and Islam" (Taşpınar, 2005: 139). As a matter of fact, this formula, which was strongly supported by military, had its ideological roots in the Heart of Enlightened (*Aydınlar Ocağı*) of the early 1970s. A group of conservative intellectuals gathered around the Heart to establish an intellectual resistance against the eroding effects of Marxism.

In summary, the first half of the 1980s marked a new stage in the interplay between state and religion in the framework of a relative 'Islamization of Secularism'" (Cited in Taşpınar, 2005: 139).

2.4.1. Rise of the Motherland Party

The Turkish-Islamic synthesis was carried into practice by the new victor of the first democratic elections of post-coup period: the Motherland Party (MP). Under the leadership of Turgut Özal, the party received the support of 45.14 % of people in 1983 (See Table 4: 1983 General Elections).

Party	Votes %	MP
MP	45.14	211
Halkci Party	30.46	117
Milliyetci Demokrasi Partisi	23.27	71
Independents	1.13	

According to Taşpınar, the MP “appeared to be an eclectic coalition of ideological currents and interest groups, which had joined the party because they had nowhere else to go under the military’s restrictive policies” (2005: 141). The party had electoral appeal of the old JP, NSP and Nationalist Action Party, which were closed by the military government and their leaders’ participation in politics were prohibited. However, this factor should not undermine Özal’s bright personality and pragmatist policies. He successfully balanced secularism and democracy. While campaigning for the elections in 1983, Taşpınar argues, Turgut Özal “did not hesitate to use the traditional networks of authority, such as the Sufi orders, kinship ties, and mosque associations in order to build dynamic bridges with the society at large. His liberalism, anti-bureaucratism, and pro-Islamic attitude made him very popular in the eyes of different segments in Turkish society” (2005: 141). He successfully instrumentalized the political conjuncture of Turkey as well. While he was in power, he not only included leading members of the defunct NSP and prominent disciples of Nakşibendi leaders, but also liberal, pro-Market, and secularist politicians in his leading cadre as well (Taşpınar, 2005:

141-2). Özal served as prime minister until 1989 and president until his death in 1993 (See Table 5: 1987 General Elections).

Party	Votes %	MP
Motherland Party	36.31	292
SHP	24.74	99
True Path Party	19.14	59
Democratic Left Party	8.53	-
Welfare Party	7.16	-
MÇP	2.93	-
IDP	0.82	-
Independents	0.37	-

During Özal's rule, throughout the 1980s, small and medium size businesses in Anatolia greatly benefited from his liberal economic policies. During tenure of the Motherland Party governments between 1983 and 1991, they utilized the opportunity to establish their own financial networks, organize themselves outside the control of the state and challenge the preeminence of state-supported large industrialists (Taşpınar, 2005: 142). During this process, some of Anatolian companies such as Ihlas and Kombassan Holding, surpassed the level of traditional small and medium size companies and became among Turkey's largest holding firms (Taşpınar, 2005: 142).

Another very important contribution of Özal was his strong support of Turkey's membership to the European Union. He intended full integration into the EU, also as a way to undermine the authoritarian position of the powerful Kemalist state-centric institutions (Yavuz, 2003: 75). "In line with application for EU membership, Özal in 1987 accepted the right of individual Turkish citizen to petition the European Commission on Human Rights. Since then Kurdish-speaking citizen of Turkey have used this forum to challenge the state's oppressive conduct" (Yavuz, 2003: 75-6).

Özal had no intentions of undermining the secularist order of the state (Taşpınar, 2005: 144). However, his "laissez-faire approach to political Islam gave rise to growing concerns among secularist circles," and "to its dismay, the military, which had promoted the Turkish-Islamic synthesis after the 1980 coup, did not realize that, under the newly adopted policy of economic liberalization, state control over society would become much more difficult" (Taşpınar, 2005: 144). As a result of the softened atmosphere under Özal's policy of incorporating Islam as an integral part of state policy, religious parties and movements flourished in the political scene as well. One of the best known was the Welfare Party (WP), established after the closure of the NSP as a representative of the National Outlook Movement. The WP received 7.16 % of votes in its initial foray into elections in 1987 (See Table 5).

2.4.2. Rise of the Welfare Party and the "February 28 Process"

Because of the ten percent threshold, the Welfare Party could not enter parliament in 1987. In the same year, the legal ban on the pre-1980 coup politicians was lifted by referendum and Necmettin Erbakan, leader of banned NSP, returned to politics as the leader of the WP. In 1989 local elections were held and the WP received 9.8 % of votes. This caused a doubt in the mind of the party policymakers about being able to pass the threshold, and therefore, they formed a purely pragmatic alliance with the Nationalist Action Party and Reformist Democratic Party on September 23, 1991 (Yavuz, 1997a: 71-2). However, it was unrealistic to expect to turn this alliance into union. A month after the alliance won 16.2 % of the vote and gained 62 seats in parliament in the 1991 general elections (See Table 6: 1991 General Elections), 22 deputies left the alliance and returned to their previous parties (Yavuz, 1997a: 72).

Party	Votes %	MP
True Path Party	24.01	115
Motherland Party	20.75	88
Welfare Party	16.88	62
Democratic Left Party	10.75	7
SP	0.44	
Independents	0.13	

In the 1994 local elections, the Welfare Party received 19.7 % of votes and took control of 29 cities including Istanbul and Ankara. This victory

was followed by 1995 general elections, in which the WP received 21.38 % of votes and become the largest party in the Grand National Assembly with 158 MPs. With these, the Welfare Party became one of the important actors in Turkish politics.

Party	Votes %	MP
Welfare Party	21.38	158
Motherland Party	19.65	132
True Path Party	19.18	135
Democratic Left Party	14.64	76
Republican People's Party	10.71	49
Nationalist Action Party	8.18	-
HADEP	4.17	-
Independents	0.48	-
YDP	0.34	-
IP	0.22	-
YP	0.13	-

The Welfare was in fact Party successor of National Salvation Party, that, as Toprak argues, represented those who were not fully integrated culturally and economically to the "modernist center" (Toprak, 2005). The NSP "stressed Islamic mores as a cure to social problems, and its goal was to return to traditional social and cultural life," while the WP, in contrast, attempted to modernize traditional norms and institutions (Yavuz, 1997a: 70). This shift was a result of experience in the political scene dominated by non-political opponents.

Welfare's success was a sign of change in Turkish Politics. The unexpected election results surprised Turkish elite. The results were reported as "The Other Turkey Wins the Elections," "The Black Turks versus the White Turks," or "Faith Won against Harbiye" in newspapers (Yavuz, 2003: 214). However, the Welfare's success in 1995, as Yavuz demonstrated,

was less the result of Islam than of a complex set of factors. Since the local elections in March 1994, WP mayors have offered better services than their predecessors and worked hard to improve public services. Moreover, they reduced corruption and nepotism in their municipalities. The WP also acted more professionally than the other parties on the left and right" (1997a: 72).

Electoral success of the National Outlook Movement in politics requires deeper inquiry into the reasons behind it. Hakan Yavuz, in his more recent studies, provides some possible factors behind the WP's victories. Accordingly,

the electoral success of political Islam in Turkey is an outcome of four factors. First has been the state policy of Turkish-Islamic synthesis introduced by the leaders of the 1980 military coup. Second has been the political and economic liberalization accompanied by the emergence of new Anatolian bourgeoisie...The third factor has been the prominence of a new class of Islamist intellectuals based in the print and electronic media. The final factor has been the internal organizational flexibility of the WP and its ideological presentation of the Just Order platform (2003: 215).

However, despite considerable popular success at the elections, the WP's tenure was very short, and "is remembered largely for being ineffectual and compromised by the constraints of governing with a coalition partner and the political boundaries set by the military establishment" (Mecham, 2004: 343).

After some years, the military re-emerged in the political scene and forced the popularly elected government to resign in 1997. However, this was not a sudden development, but, as Kramer argues, "has become all too obvious in the developments since the early 1990s when the military leadership with the Kemalist circles in the state bureaucracy, intellectuals and the media tried to roll back the political consequences of softening the strict respect of the Kemalist principles that had occurred during the government of Turgut Özal in the second half of the 1980s" (Kramer, 2000: 9-10). Therefore, for the military and secular elite, some symbolic movements by the WP were enough to push the button.

After the Welfare Party won as the first party and formed a coalition government with Tansu Çiller's True Path Party, many in the secular establishment perceived Erbakan and his party as a serious menace to Turkey's secular regime, and argued that their endorsement of the secular-democratic order in Turkey was no more than *taqiyya*, or dissimulating one's faith on grounds of expediency (Cited in Güney and Heper, 2000: 639). Rather, as they argued, the leaders of the Welfare Party "themselves had openly disclosed that their party was not only an alternative to other political parties but also to the secular-democratic order in Turkey" (Cited in Güney and Heper, 2000: 639).

Other factors that disturbed the military and secular establishment in Turkey, included the accumulation of large amounts of funds by the Islamic holding companies, and the growing number of students graduating from the

Prayer Leader and Preacher Schools (See Güney and Heper, 2000: 640). Erbakan's choice to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran and Libya increased the military's doubts. While Erbakan was in Iran, "he openly expressed doubt about the soundness of the earlier unfavorable briefing given to him by the Turkish National Intelligence Agency about Iran," and in Libya, when

Muammar Qadhafi had publicly accused past Turkish governments for having acted in the interests of the U.S. and Israel and called for the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey, Erbakan remained silent. In the same speech, Qadhafi had talked of a Supreme Council of Islamic Commanders under his command, and had disclosed Erbakan's being a member of that Council; Erbakan did not deny it (Güney and Heper, 2000: 642).

This behaviour by Erbakan and his colleagues continued to generate concerns in the military in Turkey. The most influential of these activities was the Jerusalem Night organized on 5 February, 1997 by the Sincan Municipality under the control of the Welfare Party. "In a play staged in a makeshift tent, the protagonists booed Arafat, made statements along the lines used by the militant Hizbullah, and called for the return of Shari'a" (Güney and Heper, 2000: 641). This event convinced the military to intervene. After four days, tanks roamed the streets of Sincan. "Everybody received the message; however, unwilling to make an overt intervention in politics, the military insisted that it was part of a preplanned military exercise" (Güney and Heper, 2000: 641)

The commanders first expressed concern about political Islam at the National Security Council meeting on 17 August 1996, and later again on 28 February 1997. In the February meeting,

the commanders pointed out that if those who govern the country overlooked the threat the secular democratic republic faced and, to add insult to the injury, they themselves used religion for political ends, the republic would tatter at its very foundations. The commanders urged the members of the council to recommend to the government the necessary measures, adding that otherwise a critical threshold would be crossed, the implication being that then the military would be obliged to deal with the threat unilaterally (Güney and Heper, 2000: 646)

The Military's warning targeted the Welfare Party did not meet much resistance by the coalition partner, and the President, Demirel "tried to make the recommendations more palatable to [the Welfare Party] so that Erbakan would sign the final document and the matter would not lead to a further escalation of the already tense political situation" (Güney and Heper, 2000: 646). The 28 February meeting of the NSC ended with eighteen recommendations to the government, including the closure of many Imam Hatips, strict control on religious brotherhoods, and restrictions on Islamic dress, especially of women. These demands were contrary to Erbakan's policies and his electoral supporters. However, he signed the recommendations and by June of the same year he was forced to resign, ending the tenure of the coalition government between Welfare Party and True Path Party. Hence, the very famous repeated phrase "February 28 process" was coined to indicate not only the far-reaching implications of the

NSC decisions, but at the same time meant the suspension of normal politics until the secular correction was completed (Cizre and Çınar, 2003: 310).

2.4.3. The Virtue Party and Division in the Movement

After Necmettin Erbakan resigned from his office and the coalition government was dissolved, the military continued its pressure to clean the state apparatus from the elements they perceived as threat and challenge to the Republican regime. As Mecham argues, "this was done to a large extent by providing judicial system with incentives and resources to define Islamically orientated political groups and their leaders as anti-system" (2004: 345). Within this framework, the Constitutional Court started judicial process in May 1997, which closed the Welfare Party in January 1998 on accusations of anti-secular activities. In the aftermath, the above mentioned judicial cleaning process was directed towards the central figures of the closed Welfare Party. In December 1997, the Court accused Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of "dividing people by inciting them along the lines of...religious...differences," too (Cited in Mecham, 2004: 345), because of his reciting of Ziya Gökalp's famous lines in Siirt. As a result, the state security court decided against Erdoğan, who was the mayor of Istanbul, ended his duty and sentenced him to prison. Several similar prosecutions continued against the businessmen who were accused of being "Islamic".

When it became clear that the WP is going to be closed, the colleagues of Erbakan started the process of re-organization around a new

party, and after the closure of the WP, they founded the Virtue Party. Recep Tayip Erdoğan was expected to be the official leader of the new party. However, shortly after, it became obvious that the fate of Virtue Party was not going to be different than its predecessors. The split that emerged during the last years of the Welfare Party re-appeared between the “young reformists” led by Recep Tayip Erdoğan, Abdullah Gül, and the “old guards” of the National Outlook Movement, who were the loyal supporters of Erbakan and were represented by Recai Kutan.

The younger generation of the WP, then the VP, was critical of the internal structure of the party and pressed for greater internal democracy, against Erbakan’s insistence on rule by his loyalists. Necmettin Erbakan’s ongoing reputation as the “phantom of the Virtue Party” was criticized both by the secular establishment and by the reformist group in the party (Mecham, 2004: 347).

The two groups, “reformists” and “loyalists of Erbakan” differentiated in many aspects. For example, as Mecham demonstrates,

while Erbakan had argued that the party’s electoral disappointment was a result of its increased moderation and compromise with the establishment, Gül and Erdoğan made the opposite case. They asserted that Erbakan’s style of leadership was increasingly out of touch with the Turkish electorate, and argued that Virtue should redefine itself as a contemporary political group with internal party democracy and European-style sensitivities. In the conference’s balloting for party leadership, Kutan managed to retain control of the party, but with an unconvincing margin of 633 delegates to Gül’s 521. The success of the reformists sent a clear message to Erbakan, who now saw them as a real threat to the party. (2004: 349)

After the closure of the WP, its parliamentarians signed as members of the new VP and re-appeared as the largest group in the Parliament. The secular establishment was unsatisfied with the WP's closure, therefore started the judicial process to close the VP as well. This was the time when the split in the VP materialized and two new parties emerged out of the Virtue Party. One of them, the Felicity Party, was established by Erbakan's loyalists, which was headed by Kutan. Another, the Justice and Development Party, was established by the young reformist group, which was headed by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

In general elections of 2002, Erdoğan's party, the JDP, won 34.43 % of votes and gained 365 seats in the TGNA, while the Felicity Party received only 2.49 % of votes nationwide. This success of the JDP was the result of the reformist's true reading of the power structure in Turkey. The JDP leadership has behaved sensitively toward the secular establishment.

The National Outlook Movement has been in a transformation process for some more than a decade, and this resulted in the emergence of the JDP, which established Turkey's most successful government in the second half of the twentieth century. Leaving detailed discussion about the JDP to the next chapter, I would like to put an end with a brief evaluation on the WP with respect to the two-level categorization discussed in the beginning. Accordingly, the WP was the continuation of the NSP and political representative of the National Outlook Movement. In spite of experiences of

the problematic relations with the secular establishment, the new liberal atmosphere and its success in the elections of 1994 and 1995 encouraged the WP leaders to explicitly pronounce their goals for Islamic revival in Turkey. It is also noteworthy that the activities and their possible outcomes were exaggerated by the secular establishment, especially by the media. Looking at the WP as a whole, which gives chance to see differences between the start and the end, obviously demonstrates the change in the view of the party and its leadership regarding the religion and secularism. However, the radical secularism of the Republican elite preferred undemocratic means, which re-introduced a military coup, though indirect, to the agenda of Turkey in the eve of EU membership.

CHAPTER 3

THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY

3.1. Introduction

The results of the 2002 general elections in Turkey surprised many. It was remarkable that a party less than two years old and participating in its first election received 34 per cent of the votes, and obtained the right to rule the country alone, while all of the older, established parties on left and right fell under the ten per cent threshold, with only one exception. In reality, this was not a welcomed surprise for all in Turkey, since the founders and leaders of this party split from a political movement that was refused and closed down by the secular establishment a few years ago, short after the February 28, 1997.

It was a few years after the “post-modern coup” of 1997, which ousted the Welfare Party from power and closed it down, when a group of its ex-members established a new party, the Justice and Development Party, under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who, in addition to his active involvement in the National Outlook Movement of Erbakan, was given a short prison sentence on accusations of his “anti-secular” speech. Given the political atmosphere of post-coup years, these were more than enough for a party and politicians to be denied the right to rule

Another factor that made the election results a bad surprise was the secular establishment’s aim to clean Turkish politics completely from parties

and politicians who were, in oneway or another, involved in political Islamic movements. However, contrary to this aim, Erdogan's party won even more seats in parliament than the WP and all other parties as well, and became the majority party in the parliament.

The results of the general elections showed that Turkish people thought differently, and elected the "much convicted" politicians to rule the country. While secular "center", a part of media and military used their pages and weapons to give their undemocratic message, people of the periphery preferred their democratic tool and gave their message. They preferred new faces that they hoped and trusted to recover them from economic crises, despite the risk of political crisis. In this picture, the contrary interests of secular elites and common people marked the differences of "center" and "periphery" of Turkish society.

Problematic relations of "assertive secular" establishment, in Ahmet Kuru's terms, and religio-political actors, or political Islamists, were discussed in the first and second chapters of this study. As explained in the first chapter, the Turkish society, starting from the Ottoman times, had evolved towards a structure of two differentiated poles, namely "center" and "periphery," and this dual structure continued and evolved during the Republican period. And it was also argued that these two poles of society had been in contact through religion and religious institutions. However, aggressive and intolerant secularization of the new republic removed religion, the main contact tool between the center and the periphery, and the mode

of interaction evolved towards domination, marginalization and hate by the former. Through the time, the gap between the two widened until peripheral recovery. Especially after 1980s, the periphery of Turkish society started to recover and re-establish itself, in all aspects from economy to politics, from education to the use of modern tools of technology and communication. As a result, the periphery established its own market and elite, and started to challenge the monopoly of the Kemalist center. The periphery started to demand their share in economy and politics as well. They established and supported political parties with popular promises, and some of which even carried religious demands at the core of their program. As discussed in the first chapter, this recovery of pious periphery and its appearance in all aspects, especially in critical positions, alarmed the skeptic secular center and exacerbated their fear of losing control of the country and secular regime. Their responses came in the form of death sentences, political bans and shut-downs. They managed to close a dozen political parties and ban politicians from politics whom they accused as a threat to the secular regime. However, the periphery's struggle for popular demands, and especially religious rights and liberties, has not been exhausted. As demonstrated in the second chapter of this study, popular demands for religious rights and liberties have been continuously represented by political parties one after another and at varying levels. In the second chapter, for analytic purposes, two categories were developed and defined to differentiate between the political parties with respect to the role of religion in their programs and

activities. The survey of the second chapter ended with the religio-political movement, the National Outlook Movement whose political parties were closed down during the February 28 process. The dense pressure by the secular establishment resulted in a split in the movement and two political parties emerged, one of which is the main subject of this chapter.

In this chapter of my study, I am going to focus on the victorious party of 2002 general elections, namely the Justice and Development Party, through looking at its ideology and program, its relations with the secular establishment and the place in the political scene, and the outcomes of its policies and reforms during its five-year tenure between 2002 and 2007. Hopefully, the analytical frameworks and discussions of previous chapters will play a supplementary a role and will provide an analytic context for better understanding of the issue that will be discussed in this chapter.

As a result of my research on the Justice and Development Party, which were in the form of reading and observation, I concluded in some theses that I am going to discuss in this chapter. The first of my theses is that, in comparison to earlier years, it is observed that the JDP and its leaders successfully transformed themselves, from a religious-oriented party and movement to a secular political party, and have taken their place at the center of Turkish political spectrum. After leaving the NOM, the JDP leadership adopted a new ideology that they call "conservative democracy", and have decidedly attempted to dislocate themselves from old confrontation of secular establishment and political-religious movements. In this line, the

JDP leadership sensitively managed to refrain from deep conflictual relations with the military as well, and even in some cases openly sided themselves with the military. This move by the JDP contributed to its gradual and partial recognition by the secular establishment. Secondly, after coming to power, the JDP launched an intensive EU membership program, and staged considerable reforms in many aspects which contributed to the consolidation of Turkish democracy. Thirdly, the JDP adopted a poised economic policy that gradually uplifted the Turkish economy from the condition of crisis to the level of the sixth fastest-growing economy in the Europe. More importantly, as the outcome of realization of its ideology, party program and promises, the JDP have caught the pattern of becoming the party of people, and the party of all Turkey. This argument was proved by the results of 2007 general elections, which is out of the scope of this study.

In the following paragraphs of this study, all above-mentioned arguments will be discussed in detail. For this aim, I will firstly discuss the political context in the post-coup and post-economic crises period, which gave birth to the JDP and brought it to power. Later, I will explore the JDP's ideology, which was named as "conservative democracy." After these theoretical discussions, I will focus on the practices of the JDP during its five year rule. Within this part, I will demonstrate some of critical political and judicial reforms that, I think, contributed to the consolidation of Turkish democracy. Role of the EU membership will also be discussed because of its

critical impacts. Lastly, I will present some statistical data to demonstrate improvement Turkish economy during the rule of the JDP.

3.2. The JDP in Turkish Politics in the Early 2000s

The Justice and Development Party emerged at a very critical time, when the impact of both the soft-coup and economic crises was at their peak, and attracted the skeptical attention of the secular establishment. Because of their active involvement in the political Islamic movement of Erbakan, the leaders of the JDP spent great effort to make skeptics believe that they left National Outlook ideology. Since its establishment, the JDP has been seen as an outsider, intruder, and even as an anomaly by the same skeptic secularists (Dağı, 2006: 88), and this image made the JDP colleagues' burden harder.

However, in addition to the disadvantage briefly mentioned above, there were some advantages as well for the JDP. Therefore it would be appropriate to mention two important factors, negative and positive, that shaped Turkish politics in the early 2000s. Firstly, shortly before its establishment, the political parties that were established by the politicians of the political Islamic movement, the NOM that Erdoğan and some of his colleagues belonged to, was closed down by the Constitutional Court on accusations of anti-regime activities. Erdoğan was even sentenced to prison because of these accusations. In other words, the late 1990s and early 2000s were the time "when the Kemalist/secularist center represented by the

military and judiciary had displayed its determination to eliminate any Islamic-popular opposition as its social and economic networks” (Dağı, 2006: 88-9). Therefore, the JDP had been under skeptical scrutiny and pressure by the secular establishment.

Secondly, on the other hand, in addition to the negative factors mentioned above, the political, economic and social climate in Turkey welcomed the JDP. Since the Turkish party system was paralyzed by the soft-coup, “where all other major parties were discredited because of their inability to prevent the political and economic crises” (Tepe, 2006: 114), the economy collapsed and Turkey witnessed its worst economic crisis in its modern history; and the common people were resented because of the uneasy atmosphere caused by continuous military tutelage on social and political issues, which ousted popularly elected government, and looked for trustable and skillful leaders. While the first bulk of reasons functioned as obstacles in front of the JDP, these factors welcomed the successful and “trustworthy” mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to rule the country. In the 2002 general elections, more than one third of Turkish voters supported Erdogan and his colleagues, and gave them 365 seats in the 550 seat Turkish parliament.

Aware of the difficulty, Erdogan and his colleagues attempted to overcome this impasse through adopting, as Dağı argues, a three layer strategy:

first, adopt a language of human rights and democracy as a discursive shield; second, mobilize popular support as a form of democratic legitimacy; and third, build a liberal-democratic coalition with modern/secular sectors that recognize the JDP as a legitimate political actor (2006: 89).

To overcome pressure by skeptics, the JDP insistently declared its complete split from the NOM both ideologically and institutionally, and launched an intensive EU membership initiative for legitimizing their democratic reforms.

Öniş and Keyman's evaluations of the political situation of the early 2000s and the JDP's policies are also worth of attention. First of all, Öniş and Keyman interpret the 2002 general elections in Turkey as "a peaceful, democratic expression of the deep anger felt by Turkish voters toward a political establishment known more for economic populism, clientalism, and corruption than for democratic accountability" (2003: 95). Asking differences between 1995, 1999 and 2002 elections, authors conclude in a twofold answer. For Öniş and Keyman, looking from the perspective of the voters, first, in the 2002 elections, the central issue was not Kurdish nationalism or political Islam, but the troubled economy (2003: 95). This was so because the Turkish people suffered hardly from the worst economic crisis of the Turkish Republic and looked for urgent and smart recovery. Öniş and Keyman's second point is that "while the *dramatis personae* of the 1995 and 1999 elections were political parties and the state or its organs, the 2002 results were swayed not only by parties but by non-state actors such as

economic pressure groups, civil society organizations, and even international institutions such as International Monetary Fond and the European Union” (Öniş and Keyman, 2003: 97). Accordingly, these two factors demanded a strong and stable government for dealing with problems, especially economic ones. In other words, this time “the distinctive themes of the 2002 election... were society and its prosperity, rather than the state and its security” (2003: 97). Under these circumstances, for Öniş and Keyman, three dimensions helped the JDP to win support of various segments of Turkish society (2003: 99). First, “the JDP leaders...distanced their party from Islamist label and sought to appeal to the widest possible swath of voters by representing their party as a center-right formation that was ready to face the urgent problems of Turkish economy with well-thought-out policies energetically pursued” (2003: 99). An important point I want to add here is that, as it is observed, though skeptic seculars refused trusting Erdoğan and his colleagues, results show that the common people did. Second, for Öniş and Keyman, the JDP leaders, after their emphasis upon competence over ideology, stressed the message of integrity and fairness (2003: 99). The JDP “argued that sustainable economic recovery could never happen without honesty and accountability in government. Party leaders also pointed out that respect for justice would require not only strict probity, but also readiness to listen caringly to different segments of society, especially those hardest hit by job losses, poverty, and insecurity” (Öniş and Keyman, 2003: 99). Thirdly, the JDP “said over and over that democracy constitutes the fundamental and

effective basis for the long-term solution to Turkey's problems" (Öniş and Keyman, 2003: 99).

To conclude, for Öniş and Keyman, the three themes- competence, integrity, and democracy- were the keys that the JDP used to forge organic links with Turkish society, convince voters that it was more center-right than the Islamist parties were and, as a result, won the election as the first runner party (2003: 99-100).

3.3. Conservative Democracy: JDP's New Vision

Heightened tension in the second half of the 1990s and following "soft-military intervention" in politics re-emphasized the importance of democracy. After their split from the NOM and Welfare (and Virtue) Party, Erdogan and his colleagues re-appeared with a new party and formula which they called "conservative democracy." Among many goals, consolidating and maturing Turkish democracy, and through this was legitimizing their existence in a democratic environment seemed prevailing.

The JDP's conservative democracy, as a matter of fact, was a new interpretation of democracy rather than the invention of a new ideology. Yalçın Akdoğan, the author of *AK Parti ve Muhafazakar Demokrasi* (The JDP and Conservative Democracy) and main contributor of the JDP's new interpretation, provides the main pillars and tenets of conservative democracy in his study. Now I will briefly summarize key elements of conservative democracy below.

According to the conservative democrats, firstly, "the field of politics should be firmly grounded in the culture of reconciliation," since they believe that "it is possible to solve social differences and disagreements in the political arena on the basis of reconciliation" (Akdoğan, 2006: 50). For them, "variety of social and cultural groups should participate in politics in order to add diversity to public debate in the forum of tolerance that is generated by democratic pluralism" (Akdoğan, 2006: 50) and this is expected to improve participatory democracy in Turkey. So, this is a different expression of democratic pluralism by the JDP.

Secondly, conservative democracy of the JDP expressed by Akdoğan "favors limited and defined political power," which rejects "authoritarian and totalitarian practices that would lead to a repressive state" (Akdoğan, 2006: 50). Conservative democrats see authoritarian and totalitarian tendencies as the greatest enemies of civil society and democracy, and suggest to curtail them to prevent arbitrariness in application of laws, downplaying of genuine representation and participation, and disregard for individual and collective freedoms (Akdoğan, 2006: 50). As is seen, this is another very valued pillar of Western liberal democracy.

Another important tenet of the conservative democracy of the JDP, as demonstrated by Akdoğan, is the source of political legitimacy. "Conservative democracy considers political legitimacy to be based on popular sovereignty and the rule of law, which in turn, is based on constitutionality and universally accepted norms" (Akdoğan, 2006: 50).

These were accepted as the main bases of political power that political leaders must seek for to achieve legitimacy.

One other factor that the conservative democracy of the JDP stresses is rule of law. As Akdoğan puts it,

By necessity, political power and institutions must remain within a designated legal framework, thereby ensuring rule of law. The state should be functioning, small but dynamic, and effective, and excessiveness and waste in government should be prevented. The state should never insist on specific preferences for its citizens, or retreat to dogmatic and ideological stances. Instead, the state must be defined, shaped, and controlled by its citizens. Democracy becomes acceptable if it is able to mix a wide variety of social and cultural differences, and demand in the political arena. A truly democratic political arena is one in which all of the society's problems are referred and discussed, all social demand are given a voice and social programs can be tested and modified. In the case of Turkey, the heterogeneity of its society will work to enrich pluralist democracy (2006: 50-1).

In his party's first congress, Recep Tayyip Erdogan introduced the party as a movement that brings the "political wisdom" and "the demands of society" to the politics of Turkey, and argued that

The JDP represents the feelings of our cherished nation in the government of Turkey. This is our mission as a party. Values which constitute these feelings have become and shall continue to be the fundamental values to form policies. We have achieved a great convergence by opening our door to everyone who embraced the aspirations of the nations. A sulky and burdensome state shall be eliminated, and will be replaced by a smiling and capable state. The concepts of "a nation for the state" will not be imposed any longer; the concept of "a state for the nation" shall flourish instead. The state shall be prevented from becoming fetters around the legs of the nation which prevents its progress" (Tepe, 2006: 119-20).

The conservative democratic ideology put forward by the JDP also addresses one of the very rooted fears Turkey's sceptic seculars. As observed

in modern Turkish history, many of political parties and movements were rejected or closed down by the secular establishment on accusations of their “so called” desire to change the secular regime of Turkish Republic. As a response to such an accusation, in his text, Akdoğan argues that “a radical rejection of the existing political structure through the establishment of a totally new order is not viewed as viable or feasible. In order to enable gradual change vis-à-vis the overall structure, it is necessary to maintain some of the values and features of the existing structure” (2006: 51).

Last, but not least, conservative democracy stresses the necessity of balance between idealism and realism. Akdoğan argues that “it is natural that some people possess utopian visions, but conservative democracy does not implement these utopian ideals by forceful means and does not insist on the truth of these ideals over the truth of others,” but instead insists on balance and gradual, evolutionary change (2006: 51). The party program touches this issue as well and follows as below:

[O]ur Party is one which aims to offer original and permanent solutions to our country’s problems, parallel to the world realities with the accumulation of the past and tradition, making public service its basic purpose, conducting political activities in the platform of the contemporary democratic values, rather than ideological platforms. The JDP is not and shall not be a party forcing ideologies or distributing favors. The most important aspect of this program is that it does not include rhetoric, which can not be converted to action. Its correctness; realism and applicability are the salient characteristics of our Party’s policies.

Looking at above-briefed summary of the conservative democracy of the JDP convinces me to argue that it is, as also expressed by Fuat Keyman

(2007), not much different, and even same but a different interpretation of the Western liberal democracy. Meanings attached to the concepts that conservative democrats stress continuously- such as democratic pluralism, constitutionalism, rule of law- coincide with their Western liberal democratic counterpart. As a matter of fact, this is the main reason behind Western support to the Erdogan government. Departing from discussions on the conservative democracy, I would like to argue that more fortunate than the JDP's ideological and theoretical proposal has been its practices as an acting government since 2002.

3.4. The JDP, the EU and Democratic Reforms

As argued in the beginning of the chapter as the second important point of this chapter, the JDP, after coming to power, staged a dense reform wave in many fields, including human rights issues, minority rights, judiciary, and economy. The JDP government's program, named the "Democracy and Development Program," reflected the priorities of the new conservative democratic movement, theoretical pillars of which demonstrated above. As Dađi interprets, while the "development" part of the program has been the legacy of center-right politics since 1950, the "democracy" is a new-found, objective that the JDP leaders regarded as convenient for dispersing the excessive pressures of the secular establishment, namely the judiciary and the military as exemplified in the February 28 process (2005: 30). In addition, it is important to remember that the EU membership constituted the core and motor in JDP's attempts to realize its program. During their

rule, the "Copenhagen Criteria" was used as a blueprint for reforms, and as of March 2005, a record high number of 553 laws were proposed by the JDP government and adopted by the JDP dominated parliament (Tepe, 2006: 107). These reforms initiated and realized by the JDP government, argues Tepe, amounted to Turkey's first civilian-initiated reforms, which Abdullah Gül titled as "a silent revolution" (Tepe, 2006: 107).

The first wave of reforms, known as the first harmonization package, came in January 2003, which enhanced freedom of association, deterrence against torture and mistreatment, and safeguarded for the rights of prisoners (Dağı, 2006: 99). This package amended laws concerning political parties too. The package made closure of political parties more difficult, and brought them under constitutional protection. These improvements were important for the JDP colleagues who had had an unfortunate and undemocratic experience of political party closure prior to the JDP.

The second harmonization package was passed by the parliament in February 2003, which improved conditions for retrial in light of the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights (Dağı, 2006: 99). These were followed by the abolishment of the Article 8 of antiterrorism law in July 2003 in addition to the introduction of provisions that allow political propaganda in languages other than Turkish. August 2003 witnessed another very important step toward consolidation of Turkish democracy. In that month, Turkish Grand National Assembly, under the domination of the JDP

introduced a significant reform with regard to civil-military relations, limiting the jurisdiction of military courts over civilians, enabling the auditing of military expenditure and property by the court of auditors, repealing executive powers of the NSC, increasing the time period of regular NSC meetings from once a month to once every two months, and opening the way for appointment of civilian secretariat general for the NSC" (Dağı, 2006: 99).

In addition, in September 2003, upon the EU's insistent demand for a mechanism for monitoring the effective implementation of these reforms, the JDP government established the Reform Monitoring Group, which included ministers of foreign affairs, interior affairs, justice, and high-ranking bureaucrats. As the initiators of these important developments, the JDP leaders expected to pick up the fruits of their efforts in the European Council's meeting in December 2003 in Brussels. The Council's response was hopeful but not satisfactory enough. Accordingly, the Council welcomed the "considerable and determined efforts" of the JDP government and expressed that the reforms "have brought Turkey closer to the Union". However, additionally, the European Council "underlined the need for sustained efforts to strengthen the independence and functioning of the judiciary; the exercise of freedom of association, expression, and religion; the alignment of civil-military relations with European practice; and the exercise of cultural rights" (Cited in Dağı, 2006: 100). Decided on accomplishing the democratic criteria of the EU, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister of Turkey declared his government's decidedness to complete the requirements and "make the Copenhagen Criteria as Ankara's own criteria" (Cited in Dağı, 2006: 100).

The incumbent government of Turkey continued democratic reforms in 2004. In April 2004 a new package passed by the Turkish parliament, and with passage of the package,

State Security Court were abolished, all references to death penalty including in times of war were removed, international treaties were accorded precedence over Turkish law, and the military representative on the higher education board was removed (Cited in Dağı, 2006: 100).

In July 2004 another harmonization package were passed; in June of the same year, four deputies of the pro-Kurdish Democracy Party, including Leyla Zana, were released from prison; and state-owned TV channel, the TRT, started to broadcast in Kurdish (Cited in Dağı, 2006: 100).

The Erdogan government did not stop improving the Turkish legal and political system toward the European Standards. The government signed and ratified many international conventions, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights (Dağı, 2006: 100).

After its second intensive year marked with reforms, the government expected to be rewarded by the European Union. Finally, in its 2004 progress report, the European Commission noted that Turkey has "sufficiently fulfilled" Copenhagen political criteria, and has recommended the European Council to start accession negotiations. On December 17, 2004, in the Brussels

meeting, the Council decided to open accession negotiations in October 2005. This was a very important turning point in the history of Turkish Republic, who has continuously attempted to enter to the EU but was rejected repeatedly mainly because of breaches of democracy, and military interventions.

As important as opening of accession negotiations is the JDP's role in this achievement. A party whose leadership has record of active involvement in religio-political movement, which was ousted from government and accused of having a hidden agenda to replace secular order with religious one, pioneered democratic reforms and brought Turkish democracy to the point that is compatible with the Copenhagen criteria. However, though their ceaseless efforts for the EU membership, Erdogan and his colleagues had continued to be criticized.

As a matter of fact, the JDP's activities and reforms welcomed by a wide section of society, especially by liberal intellectuals and business circles. However, there have been some who have still been skeptic of the Erdogan and his colleagues' "hidden agenda" of replacing secular republic with religious one. Those skeptics criticized the JDP with insincerity and instrumentilizing the EU and democratic reforms for reaching their goals. Here, in contrary to such accusations, I am going to argue the inverse, and try to refute them through putting forward opposing facts and counter arguments.

First of all, it should be remembered that the Turkish Republic has more than seventy years of experience of secularism, which is well established and sensitively protected by almost all of the political, bureaucratic and judicial actors. Turkish society does not have an objection as well. As Çarkoğlu and Toprak's survey in 2006 show, 76,2 per cent of society said that they do not want religious order (while 14 per cent was undecided, and only 8,6 supported Şeriat), and 84,2 argued that they political parties they vote for have to respect secular values of the Turkish Republic (2006: 74, 81). It can even be argued that secularism have been transcended and violated the borders of democracy. As mentioned in previous chapters, secular elite of Turkey expanded borders of the secularism in expense of democracy. Similarly, looking from the EU membership perspective, it was observed that it was lack of democratic institutions that prevented Turkey from membership to the EU since the 1960s, but not lack of secularism.

Secondly, the EU membership was not invented by the JDP government, but the Republican elite dreamed it for decades, and seen as a step on the way of reaching the level of modern civilizations. What the JDP has done was to prioritize it and fulfill requirements demanded and supported by the EU institutions. However, this is not to deny the benefits of abovementioned reforms for the JDP. In spite of its popular support, the JDP was not trusted by the secular establishment, and even, as mentioned above, was seen as anomaly and outsider. Coming to the main point, what

happened was that the JDP leadership, after the closure of the WP and VP, “realized that they needed the West and modern/western values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in order to build a broader front against the Kemalist center, and to acquire legitimacy through this new discourse in their confrontation with the secularist establishment” (Dağı, 2005: 31). As Dağı argues,

In the face of pressures originating from the military’s adamant opposition to the Islamists, which influences the attitudes of the judges and the upper tiers of the state bureaucracy, as well as the mainstream secular media, they realized the legitimizing power and the virtue of democracy, which turned out to be a means to highlight “people power” *vis-à-vis* state power. They knew that they could survive only in a country that was democratically oriented, respecting civil and political rights, and moreover integrated further into the western world, particularly the EU (2005: 31).

In addition, the JDP leaders’ intense support and efforts for the EU membership is not an elitist project, but is supported by its grassroots as well. A public opinion poll conducted in July 2004, shows that 79 per cent of the JDP voters responded in favor of the EU membership, which was above the national average of 73 per cent (Pollmark, July 2004). According to the results of the same public opinion poll, 60 per cent JDP voters viewed the NATO more positively when compared to national average of 48 percent. Similarly, the JDP voters have had a more positive view of “Western civilization” than the national average, which is 54 percent, and favored aligning with the West (53 per cent) instead of the East (Pollmark, July 2004).

In conclusion, the much feared JDP leadership proved their commitment to the path of democracy and EU membership. The JDP government's further attempts for further reforms even turned the secular elite of the center into protectors of the status quo.

3.5. A Postscript: Turkish Economy during the JDP Government

Turkish economy has been another the very visible indicator of stability and development in the last five years ruled by the JDP. The JDP government followed regardful economic policies through staying away from populist policies, and achieved a considerable success in less than five years.

From the Turkish political perspective, I would like to argue that economy has been a very important test for the JDP, and the JDP passed the test with a considerable success in economic issues, and "soft issues" in general, which have had special importance for the JDP because of limited authority and maneuverability in the fields of "hard and sensitive issues", such as religious rights and liberties. Unable to act in a way that they wanted and promised in election campaigns- in issues such as the ban on headscarf and obstacles on the Imam Hatip graduates university entrance exam- the Erdogan government had tried to be very successful in soft issues such as economy, health, for popular support. The expected happened; the government acted sensitively in "hard issues". On the other hand, as will also be demonstrated below, the JDP government demonstrated a considerable success in economic issues.

Between 1993-2002, Turkey displayed average economic growth of 2,6 per cent. However, during the JDP government, Turkish economy, for the first time in its history, had grown continuously and reached its peak of 7,3 per cent, and became Europe's sixth biggest economy. In addition, during same period Turkey's GNP increased from 181 billion to 400 billion dollars with growth percentage of 120. As a part of this increase, the GDP per capita increased from 2,598 to 5,477 dollars within the five years term of the JDP government. Another increase has been observed in the reserves of the Turkish Central Bank. Statistics show that the Central Bank reserves increased from 26 billion dollars, in 2002, to 65,8 billion dollars. Along with increasing its reserves, the government managed to pay Turkey's debts to the IMF, and decreased Turkey's debts from 23,5 billion dollars in 2002 to 8,7 billion dollars. Another very important indicator of improvement in the economy has been the decline in inflation rates. During the rule of the JDP government, the inflation declined to single digit level in 2005 for the first time in the last 34 years, and had been protected at one digit level during 2006. After reaching stability at lower level inflation, the central bank dropped six zeros from Turkish Lira. This was a symbolic achievement that added credit to the JDP government. Finally, one of the problematic issues of Turkey, unemployment, was partially solved by the JDP government. After long years, the JDP government managed to decrease unemployment rates from 10,3 to 9,9 in their fourth year of rule. In addition, the government increased the type and amount of credits and subsidies to the farmers and

small and medium sized businesses. All these, which were felt in daily lives of the people, were to be reflected in the forthcoming elections.

CONCLUSION

This study started after observing Turkish political life six year as a student of international relations in Turkey. When I arrived in Turkey in 2000, therefore when my direct observation started, Turkish politics and society were under strong influence of military intervention in politics. Uneasy social and political situation hardened with the coming economic crisis of 2001. While attempting to recover, decline in the economy brought Turkey far away from the comfort that Turkish people expected. Politicians, while looking for ways to escape from the existing situation, decided to hold general elections earlier than its normal time. The 2002 elections of Turkey, as well seen from results, was under strong influence of the political and economic crisis. As discussed in previous chapters of this study, people presented their protest in the general elections of 2002. They elected a political party, which wanted to be excluded from political scene, and trusted it more than other political parties.

The Justice and Development Party started and continued its governance under the strong pressure of the secular establishment. However, the JDP government, as discussed above, demonstrated successful democratic political capability and economic performance, which brought Turkey to the line of democratic countries of Europe and improved its economy to the level of bigger economies of Europe.

The JDP entered its second elections in 2007, less than five years. Both as a part of political competition, but unfortunately, as part of the anger of aggressive seculars, rivals of the JDP continued harassing attacks at the expense of democratic norms. Nevertheless, the results of 2007 elections were more surprising than all before. The JDP won support of 46,66 per cent of Turkish society, and the people gave the message that they prefer democracy, development, instead of conflicts and struggle with their values.

In conclusion, after splitting from the religio-political movement, the National Outlook Movement, both ideologically and institutionally, the Justice and Development Party successfully recovered Turkish economy, and contributed much to the consolidation of Turkish democracy.

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