

**THE ORIGINS OF ISLAMIC PARTIES IN  
TURKEY**



**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION SCIENCES  
OF  
NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY**

**By  
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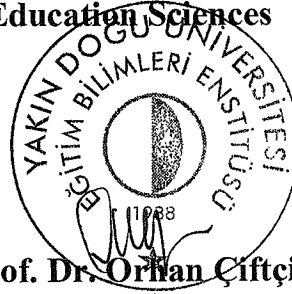
**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
The Degree of Master of Art  
in  
History Education**

**NICOSIA, 2016**

**PALA ISSA JIBO: THE ORIGINS OF ISLAMIC PARTIES IN  
TURKEY.**

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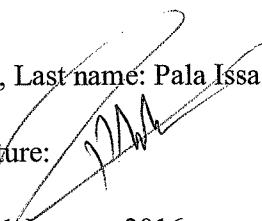


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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the help, support and patience of my principal supervisor, my deepest gratitude goes to Assist. Prof. Dr. Ejdan Sadrazam, for his constant encouragement and guidance. He has walked me through all the stage of the writing of my thesis. Without his consistent and illuminating instruction, this thesis could not have reached its present form.

I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slobodan Ilic and Dr. Pervin Yiğit who has been very helpful through the duration of my thesis.

Above all, my unlimited thanks and heartfelt love would be dedicated to my dearest family for their loyalty and their great confidence in me. I would like to thank my mom for giving me a support, encouragement and constant love which sustained me throughout my life.

## **DEDICATION**

To my Parents, Brother and Dear Friends...

## **ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this research is to identify the origins of Islamic parties in Turkey. In order to do this, our research investigated social, cultural and political changes, variations and mutations from the final period of the Ottoman Empire to the establishment of new republic in Turkey. Although westernization and secularism were adopted as a state policy during the new period, our research shows the existence of continuity and sustainability of a base of Islamic political movements and parties.

**Key Words:** The History of Political Parties; Islamic Movements; Turkish Political Culture; Secularism; Westernization.

## ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, Türkiye'de İslami partiler kökenleri tespit etmektir. Bunun için, araştırmada Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun son döneminden Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kurulmasına kadar sosyal, kültürel ve siyasi değişiklikler, çeşitlenmeler ve başkalaşımalar incelenmiştir. Batılılaşma ve laiklik yeni dönemde bir devlet politikası olarak kabul edilmesine rağmen araştırmamız, İslami siyasal hareketlerin ve partilerin tabanının sürekliliğini ve sürdürülebilirliğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Siyasal Partiler Tarihi; İslami Hareketler; Türk Politik Kültürü; Sekülerleşme; Batılılaşma.



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## **CHAPTER 1:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire—and then appearance of the republic of new Turkey is one of the most important breaking point within Turkey's –and its surrounding areas–history. On the other hand, Islamic parties have demanded to 'go back' Islamic culture and tradition, and indirectly demand return to Islamic state. The new era that described as westernization and imposed secularism had started by under leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Turkey passed multiparty system after 1945 and Islamic discourse could appear in political competition. Islamic parties established from 1970 to 2000 and they participated elections directly 1946 and onwards. If we do not take into account the short transitional period of the 1970s, the regime which took shape under secularism didn't give them chance to get power until 1997. In 1997 Welfare party (WP) succeed to get power by as a coalition forms by Prof. Dr. Necmettin Erbakan who tried many times to return Turkish culture from west to east. But the party also couldn't continue its partnership of power and was overthrown the government by a military coup. Islamic parties and its leaders remained under pressure of the regime again.

#### **1.1 Statement of the Problem:**

The researcher faced challenges on reading, writing and interpreting English.

#### **1.2 The Main Aim of the Study:**

The research will try to answer the following questions is to identify the origins of Islamic parties in Turkey. In order to do this, our research and deal with investigated social, cultural and political changes, variations and mutations from the collapse of Ottoman Empire to the establishment of republic in Turkey.

#### **1.3 An Overview of the Study:**

Chapter one consists of introduction and aim and problem and overview of the study, we talked about the Weakness of Ottoman Empire and the establishment of republic in Turkey in

second chapter, we refer to the new system of Turkey and its political system the one party system in third chapter, in the forth chapter we refer to introduced multiparty system and Islam and secularism in Turkey , and in the fifth chapter we talked about Islamic parties from 1970s to 2000s and finally results of the study in a concise manner are summarized in chapter six.

## **CHAPTER 2: FROM EMPIRE TO REPUBLIC**

### **2.1 The Weakness of Ottoman Empire**

Many of the great powers wanted to benefit from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire that was named 'A Sick Man'. The Agrarian peasant was now a target of ethnic nationalism that fought for partition. They was also a market for greedy western entrepreneurs who controlled the peasant's economy for their benefit. Hence, this was a small group of patriotic reformer willing to serve their country despite the results. The Ottoman military has a powerful force in this movement and often opened new days as it tried to catch up to the nation states of industrialized Europe. Change in the military came largely in form of technical schools and military academies for training new officers. There was introduction of periodic reform packages, which tended to polarize the officer corps along the lines of academy educated and regimental officers. European experts brought back as past tradition to train and organize the military and because of that, the army entered a period of German influence.

The boundaries were no longer easy to be identified and this led major defeats against Russia. Crete was lost to Greece, and the Italians took Libya and the Dodecanese Islands in 1911. The European Province longer belonged to them and were driven out of them. The disastrous losses of Albania, Macedonia, Salonika, and Kosovo, brought about many casualties approaching a quarter million men represent the downfall of Ottoman military fortunes (Uyar& Erickson, 2009, 175; Lewis, 1966, 118).

During the Balkan Wars, a newly energized and youthful officer corps emerged that changed the army. They failed to fought in the first world war because they were not prepared enough for that. Campaigns were not successful but in 1916 they won the Gallipoli Campaign and capture a small British arm at Kut al Amara. The reasons for these successes were the corps of highly trained Ottoman officers produced by the Ottoman military's educational institutions. The Ottoman won for the first time since 1680. In many ways, its performance

represented a renovation of Ottoman military capacity. At the end of this period, the Ottoman Empire was now helpless.

The death of Sultan Abdulmecid in 1861 was received as a defeat by the rivals. Abdulaziz lacked the elegance and refined manners of his predecessor. He had an angry manner as well as a bad attitude towards European diplomacy. The social and cultural reforms were suspicious for him. Abdulaziz has been a traditional autocrat, who made sure he widened his control by using modern technology and methods (Jorga, 2005, 442-443). He was seen as someone who had little understanding of modern life and most of commentators, contemporary observers did not understand his fascination with things of the military, and they labeled him as a reactionary and anti-reformist. Abdulaziz was like Mahmud because they had some similarities. He liked to view military parades and weapons firing exercises, to inspect units and barracks, to design uniforms and headgear, and even enjoyed wrestling with his soldiers. Thanks to his enthusiasm and emphasis on military matters, the Ottoman military managed to rid itself of the apathy and general lethargy that it had fallen into after the Crimean War (Mithat, 2004, 71-79). His fascination with the technical aspects of his army enabled Ottoman military purchasing agents to acquire and import thousands of new weapons and a variety of new equipment (Jorga, 2005, 449-453).

The new regulation lacked clauses about the conscription of non-Muslim citizens. When it came to the equality of all citizens regardless of their faith found in the Tanzimat Edict was reinforced by the Islahat Edict in 1856. After all this it meant all citizens had the right and obligation to serve in the military but, this was never enforced by the administration. They then decided that they would agree upon the continuation of a payment of poll tax in exchange for military service under a new name.

The Empire cannot deal with the nationalist movements. Christian peoples of the Balkans began to demand separate national states after the success of the Greek independence movement and were encouraged by increasing levels of Russian help and propaganda. Then the already autonomous provinces of Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro asked for more territory and full independence.

The new group called the *YeniOsmanlılar* (The New Ottomans) but was known in Europe, as *JeunesTurcs* or Young Turks, was very different from the interest-based opposition of the past.

Abdulaziz started firing some influential general without a solid reason. SüleymanHüsni Pasha a young superintendent of the Military Academy after many failures and much discussion they carried out a coup with cadets. This caused the dethronement of the sultan on May 1876. Abdülhamid II took over from Murat V who had reigned for a short time although he was mentally ill, ascended the throne on August 1876, by promising constitutional governance. Abdulhamid involuntarily proclaimed the constitution on December, and he had promised the conspirators, including the murder of chief conspirator HüseyinAvni Pasha, to play the conspirators against each other. Ottoman-Russian war was declared on April 1877 and the Ottoman high command could not agree upon a strategic plan (Uyar&Erickson, 2009, 180-183).

## **2.2 The New Republic of Turkey**

In some cities and towns because of the restoration of the constitution of 1876, a community was reborn after some time. A lot of people who were in exile began to return in the hope that they would establish careers for themselves, censorship was lifted and newspapers and magazines. Although feminism or liberation of women were not on the agenda, according to the Young Turk period, setting up female organizations enriched the communities. The expectations of Young Turks included overtaking sovereignty again as well as the abolishment of capitulations, and getting rid of the treaties which were privileging European communities in terms of rights.

Unionists and secret Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) members supported constitution and political regime. Autocracy was regarded as the first stage of the social and economic transformations to be performed by the government supporting constitution. This background of the case was different for the unionists and they intended to put pressure at the background (Ahmad, 1993, 31-35).

Turks believed that after four years of fighting they would have earned the freedom. However, it was the other way and that was not expected.

The Treaty of Sevres was then signed by the sultan's government on 10 August 1920. The treaty did not only caused problems for Anatolia and led to a shortened Turkish government.

According to the nationalist movement, which former Unionists, Islam was a way to unite mixed communities such as Circassia, Arabs, Kurds, and Turks for their own purpose. The words such as nation, national or nationalism which are equivalent to 'millet' from Arabic were used to describe an Islamic society. The term 'vatan' which means fatherland or patria would be used in order to refer to a secular national movement.

Mustafa Kemal was famous for his military achievements as an undefeatable soldier, especially in the Dardanelles campaign. He thought that he should have made big achievements in his land.

'Defense of Rights' which is a resistance group came to the East and Anatolia when it was clear that Turkey was under the invasion of others. They did not want Greeks in Anatolia or any establishment of Kurdish or Armenian governments in the East. At Erzurum Congress in 1919, they clearly showed that they did not want the integrity of the state to be divided and they wanted to keep the borders stated in the National Pact. Different institutions were linked to the Defense of the Rights at Erzurum and Sivas congresses and Mustafa Kemal became the chairman in order to fight for his nation.

The nationalists having succeeded in the elections earlier in the month, by January 1920 they now had full control over the last Ottoman parliament in Istanbul. This assembly adopted the National Pact which occupied the town in 1920. 150 nationalists were detained and deported to Malta. A parliament was intended to be recreated by Mustafa Kemal in Ankara. Consequently, a parliament was established on 23 April 1920 in Ankara under the name of Grand National Assembly. At a later stage, Mustafa Kemal was called the president of the Assembly.

Growing disunity between other states was seen at The Allied Conference in 1921 where they could not realize the articles stated in the Treaty of Sèvres. In this way, problems appeared rendering the active mediation difficult in Turkey. Thus, the governments of other countries signed treaties with the nationalists.

Mustafa Kemal seemed to have ended the Sultanate as the Parliament voted to end the previous institution. After the death of Mehmed VI Vahdettin, the Sultanate was ended, which took place in 1922.

Kemalists expected change to Turkey into a civilized and contemporary land. According to him, science, education and secularism were the key elements for a modern industry and



economy. However, as the Kemalists used to be in low numbers in the Assembly, the country should have been shaped in a Kemalist form.

Mustafa Kemal tried to get rid of the problems in terms of politics in the Assembly but he had a specific power of control as the country was getting ready for elections, to the party which he dominated totally. He had interest on wanting to another party to make changes and it was established and called People's Party.

President of the party became Mustafa Kemal. In the next elections, Mustafa Kemal and Kemalists took the majority. In the elections, Mustafa Kemal won the elections and became the president. He assigned Fethi (Okyar) as the prime minister of the government.

According to Mustafa Kemal, an Islamic state was not possible in Turkey so it should have been changed. In 1924, the Caliphate was ended by the Grand National Assembly and they threw away the Ottoman Empire statesmen from Turkey. He also gave a new name to the party as Republican People's Party (RPP) (Ahmad, 1993, 45-57).

Since the birth of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the concept of the West has stood synonymous with modernity, prosperity, democracy, and development. Atatürk, the father of the Turkish Republic, reformed the system with the ideology known as "6 arrows of Kemalism": republicanism, populism, revolutionarism, secularism, nationalism, and statist. His famous words were that the Westers did not like Turkish people although Turkish people tried to be closer to them as it was the only way for civilization". He described the country's foreign policy-making strategies of the time. The newly born Turkish republic was busy with nation building, which resulted in the neglect of policies towards Middle East and Northern Africa countries (Amitina, 2012, 8).

## **CHAPTER 3: TURKEY AND WESTERNIZATION OF ITS SYSTEM**

### **3.1 The New System**

According to Kemal Ataturk Reforms, Islam was a problematic issue. When somebody looked at the Kemalist reforms it was clearly that most of them were related directly or indirectly to religion.

The religion problems and the Kemalist actions towards secularism intended to approach this issue by getting rid of religious statements in the community and pushing forward the democracy. These laws in some detail:

1. The caliphate was ended in March 1924, which intended to unify the community by the secularization and standardizing the institutions in terms of education, with this purpose a new law called (Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu) was passed. According to this law, Medrese schools which were religious schools should have been closed and they should have been linked to the National Ministry of Education. After this, many different reforms took place shortly. The University Reform Law No. 2252 which was passed in 1933 went over all the higher educational system in Turkey, also including medical education. It abolished the İstanbul Dar-ülfünun and founded the İstanbul University. In 1933, the state stopped the Dar-ülfünun and cancelled all its contracts. After that, it was opened again by inviting its German professors to the government. Later in 1933, Rockefeller Foundation invited Richard Courant and James Franck to Istanbul in order to evaluate the condition of University of Istanbul. In the status report, it was stated that: "Among the Turkish officials and circles interested in the cultural progress of the country we encountered a decided wish to create a promising scientific centre in Istanbul, which should contribute to the development of higher education in Turkey." (Çarmikli, 2011, 153) It was also concluded that the developments must be monitored in Turkey.

2. The Law of Wearing Hats, (1925) was passed in order to allow people change their way of wearing head accessories which are religious. The officials had to wear hats. Nevertheless, it was difficult for the community to wear hats as it was the first time of such rule.

3. Another law passed in 1925 closed down all Sufi convents (tekkes and zaviyes) and tombs of the saints, Ottoman sultans and other past dignitaries.

4. Another legal reform was getting married in a civilized way as described by the Turkish Civil Code (1925).

5. The Arabic alphabet was prohibited and Latin alphabet began to be used which was followed by the adoption of Turkish alphabet (1928) as a key element of the constitution. Moreover, the European numbers began to be used by another law in 1926. The main reason of this was enabling the Turkish community to learn reading and writing easily and to avoid any ruins of the Ottoman Empire.

6. 'The law regarding the abolition of certain titles and ranks such as Efendi, Bey, Paşa' (1934) intended to create a more modern country by getting rid of categorization of classes and privileging certain people, which a primary element of the French Revolution.

7. 'The law regarding the prohibition of the wear of certain attire' (1934) intended to avoid all kinds of Islamic clothes, thus Islam itself (Çarmikli, 2011, 152-159).

In 1924, a Constitution of Turkey was accepted new Turkish Constitution, accepting Islam as the religion of the country as in article 2 of the constitution. The "Six Arrows, which are the 6 key aims of the Republican People's Party (republicanism, nationalism, secularism, populism, statist and reformism) were available in the Constitution by a further revision in 1937 (Ünsal, 32-33).

This reforms had to be protected, and Atatürk started to be protected by the first law from in 1950; the further changes in the constitution were made after 1961. By this it was clear that Kemalism has been a stable idea in the history and will be always known (Çarmikli, 2011, 161).

### 3.2 The One Party System

The government of Turkey was viewed as a dictatorship (Zürcher, 176) and it was observed how fast the laws were created in 2 years to overcome the opposing parties, even Mustafa Kemal Pasha in his speech in 1927 he vindicated his control. The Republican People's Party (RPP) took a monopoly control over the country after 1931 and abolished the Law on the Maintenance of Order. Afterwards, one party system became the official political system in Turkey.

Until after the Second World War there was not any known opposing parties in Turkey even apart from the experiment using the tame opposition party in 1930. The communist movement was an unofficial known opposition as well as the active nationalists who were Kurdish. There were almost continuous small uprisings in the mountains of the southeast and one major insurrection in Dersim (Tunceli) in 1937–1938. It was controlled by placing a large number of Kurdish people in the west of Turkey (Zürcher, 176).

National sovereignty was represented by the Turkey's Great National Assembly according to the 1924 constitution. Most of the reactions of the RPP leadership to the opposition in 1924 had been to increase party discipline to such a point that free speech was only possible in meetings of the parliament. While in the assembly, delegates were bound by the majority decision to vote.

The RPP dominated the country politically, in terms of the prime minister, president, assembly members, etc.

There was change in the system and the head of the province became the RPP heads specifically in different provinces. One-party system witnessed that the parliamentary elections took place quarterly. The candidate records are drawn by the party chairman and the other senior members and citizens were not included in the process.

Fethi was approached by his friend Mustafa Kemal with the idea to form a party. But Mustafa wanted the party to stay republican and secular. After their agreement, Fethi established Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Free Republican Party) (FRP). Mustafa Kemal asked the colleagues to join the party in order to show his faith. In 1930, 30 of the 502 FRP members won the elections and the party in the government was surprised

and alarmed. Mustafa Kemal decided to break this environment with Fethi, which led him to stop the actions of the FRP in the end of 1930.

After that, Mustafa Kemal stayed as the president of the country, while Ismet Inonu worked as the prime minister for 12 consecutive years between 1925-1937.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk died on 10 November. Grand National Assembly of Turkey chose İsmet İnönü as the second president 11st of November (Zürcher, 176-184).

## **CHAPTER 4: REASONS OF IMPROVE OF ISLAMIC PARTIES**

### **4.1 The Multiparty System**

Turkey transitioned to multiparty system in 1946-1960, by the establishment of the Republic in 1923, and was now in the Western Europe. The Western League became closer to democracy as more countries in Western Europe opted for liberal democracy opposing the socialist democratic model of the countries behind the Iron Curtain. Turkey decided to conduct general elections whereby several parties compete hence did not defer the transition multiparty system.

The 1924 Constitution was given a special position to the national assembly and both parties were satisfied with the idea of unlimited majority rule.

The constitutional structure allowed the DP to exploit the majoritarian power structure pressurizing the minority votes. The new government could suppress the media, limit their freedoms of speech, thought and gathering, exert pressure on youth and universities, use religious sentiments of the masses in shaping policies, went into dialogue with Islamic establishments and Sufi orders, allow the dissemination of religious instruction at academic schools, spread religious schooling (Islamic divinity schools), and allow the use of Arabic in the call to prayer, which was previously in Turkish. The Party became the party of the peasants, the Sufi groups, businesspersons and the merchants on the one hand, and it tried to suppress oppositional voices.

Although the DP was against the former policies of the RPP, it adopted reflexes of a single party itself. The Turkish military intercede in civil sphere for the first time in its history and closed down the DP in 1960. The party leaders (Prime Minister Aydın Menderes, Foreign Affairs Minister Fatih Rüştü Zorlu and Finance Minister Hasan Polatkan) were executed. Many other party members were seized and some were banned from politics. The constitution was suspended and a council was appointed by the National Unity Committee (the junta administration) to make a new constitution, which would change the logic of the 1924

Constitution. The military stayed in power temporarily until the new constitutions were to be made official and the elections were held.

The 1961 Constitution was similar to the one in 1924 and was not the result of social consensus proven by the fact that it only received 62% of the yes votes due to bitter execution of the DP leaders by the junta. Whilst, it noticed the separation among the legislative, the executive and the judiciary powers in a fair way, the structure of the legislative body is difference in the new constitution. The 1924 Constitution was blamed for giving the power to the national assembly that led to the majority authoritarianism during the DP rule. Hence, the new constitution introduced the bicameral system composed of the Senate (150 elected senators) and the National Assembly (450 parliamentarians). The 1961 Constitution widened the rights and liberties (i.e. freedoms of thought, speech, press and right to assembly) and introduced the variety of checks and balances to limit the powers of the legislative, It also gave autonomy to universities and job security to civil servants.

The new constitution append the role of the military in politics with the establishment of a National Security Council which was established by the prime minister, the ministers of internal affairs, foreign affairs, defense and the army commanders. The President chaired the council and earned a privileged position constitutionally in defining the “internal and external threats” as well as the “national interest”, and weighted in civilian politics.

It was marked that the foundation of new political parties competing over the legacy of the Democratic Party throughout the 1960s in Turkey’s new special occasion.

The first election after the 1960 Military Coup took place in 1961. The Justice Party (JP) that claimed the legacy of the DP won 35% of the votes, whilst the RPP won 37%. The RPP formed the government, but while JP strengthened its position as the follower of the DP, it increased its votes over time. In the 1965 general elections, the AP gained 53%.

The other half of the 1960s witnessed political unrest, instability and rising of protest movements and ideological polarization. Students’ revolts, ideological violence plus chaos started on the streets. In due course, the military intervened in politics in 1971 for the second time. The JP government was suspended, the parliament was destructed and a technocrats’ government was established after command of the Head of General Members (Toktaş, 2013, 87-90).

## 4.2 Turkish Muslims and Secularism

Despite the legal splitting up of the government from the religion as well as the freedom to choose the religion, the government of the country continued to depend on religion. Although it called itself a modern government, it continued to be affected by the Ottoman in terms of religion.

The last vestiges of Islamic that influenced the state such as 'caliphate' and 'şeyhülislam' were ended.

The country took the form of modern Islam as a result of the secularization which took place in the country and the Turkish state was protected against religious influences (Griffiths&Özdemir, 2004, 82-86).

Individuals are sensitive to the world they live. A wider point of view should be adopted towards the world, taking into account all fields from sociology to theology (Görmez, 2012, 3).

Charles Taylor defined the concept of secularism as not having encountered God in the public sphere against one's own will (Görmez, 2012, 4). One might argue that the secularism is based on religion and traditions. Secularism is a way of tradition which includes certain amendments, rather than getting rid of metaphysics (Görmez, 2012, 5). Therefore, the way of secularism is different in each country according to their own cultural features and religion.

The religious effects are very concerning issues of the final era. It is also considered as one of the key factors in the politics. However, many people try to overcome the problem of religion as they see it as an issue (Görmez, 2012, 7). Communities under different styles of government but likewise applications harm people living in those communities. For example, in the Eastern countries, religion is not taken into account in the daily life while Western countries included it in their daily life.

Laicism was also implemented in different styles in different countries in terms of religions, symbols and their effects in the daily life, which was a subject of criticism.

Religion is seen as the key factor in solving the secrets of human beings. Religion has always been undervalued and its meaning was underrated (Görmez, 2012, 3-8).



After the end of the Ist World War and the end of the Ottoman Empire, Mustafa Kemal won a fight against the Ottomans and established the Republic of Turkey in 1922 . After a number of reforms took place, the government was secularized and adapted to the West countries and the religion was taken under control. The Republican People's Party (RPP) took the control over the country until the date when one party system ended. Different military coups were performed threatening the secularism of the government and caused authorities to take control over the country.

Nevertheless, the secularization dominated in the country was adapted in the Kemalist way rather than getting rid of it. Taking control over the Islamic scholars was another action taken in this method and the Ministry of Education took all the power in controlling and closing all the religious schools. The Islamic scholars could not wear religious clothes (and the fez and turban) and got rid of their religious titles. The alphabet was changed to Latin alphabet in 1928 and Arabic and Persian languages were prohibited to stop the effects of Ottomans in the country. The official holiday of the country was set as Sunday.

Due to the background knowledge of religious people, they could only work at mosques or other institutions linked to religion.

The fear of politics existed as the people who did not agree or intended to be against the general ideology dominant in the country were thrown out of the country. Ending caliphate was one of the problematic issues of the new republic because caliphate was kept when sultanate was ended in 1922. However, according to Ziya Gökalp and others believed that religious people and governing methods should not be included in the country politics.

Turkish Army was the power which supported Kemalist secularism highly. Army supported the Kemalists in the government throughout their government period as well as supporting them in achieving their different ideologies such as modernization, westernization, and secularism. Moreover, men should have joined the army to carry out military service which was reflected as the way to protect the country from religion and other nationalisms, following the Kemalist ideology. Due to this policy, many military coups were realized by the army which retarded the amelioration of the country in terms of constitution.

As a result of the army's power, the Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and his Islamist Welfare Party (WP) had to stop their duties in the country. This step was taken in order to allow the Turkish Grand National Assembly to rule when necessary. They were broadly

defined including not only war and natural disasters but also internal social movements and stronger measures against Islamist movements and stronger control over religious charitable foundations and schools. The 28<sup>th</sup> of February, the media and society showed great interest in the military action which took place which was mainly due to the Welfare Party.

Finally, religion was under the control of the state due to the republican actions available in the state.

The Kemalist state controlled the religion based educational system by using the Ministry of Education. Government changed the educational system from religious education to a more modern education system. Providing education on religion was narrow during the one-party rule of the RPP, but after multiparty democracy emerged, Imams and Preacher High Schools were brought and established in the 1970s (An-Na'im, 2008, 182-204).

## **CHAPTER 5: IMPROVE ISLAMIC PARTIES**

### **5.1 National Order Party (NOP)**

The results of high inflation, the rate of political tension, high unemployment and rapid social political change, Turkey dissolved into confusion in the late 1960s (Arslan, 2005, 136). The World amalgamates in the late 1960s and early 1970s to produce violent situation. Industrial growth rate created impossible expectations which proved difficult to meet. High inflation restricted consumption to an opulent minority. Unemployment kept rising, though mitigated by emigration to Europe.

In May 1968, Professor Necmettin Erbakan, take aggressive military action against government's economic policies which he said had made Turkey into 'an open market for Europe and America'. A year later, with the encouragement of the delegates from Anatolia, Erbakan demoralized Demirel's candidate in the election for the presidency of the Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ahmad, 1993, 144).

Professor Necmettin Erbakan became elected president of the Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry after a campaign in which he had made him the voice of the smaller businessmen who criticized Demirel and the JP for being accommodating to big business and, especially. A religious favor entered into Erbakan's argument when he denounced the JP for being an instrument of Freemasons and Zionists that had turned its back on Islam (Zürcher, 257). Demirel did not recognize him as president; Professor Necmettin Erbakan was elected president of the Union of Chambers of Commerce and industry after campaigning and made himself the voice of the small business. Even his candidacy for being a secondary candidate in parliament in 1969 was vetoed in general elections (Arslan, 2012, 45). He left the (JP) and was elected for the national assembly in Konya as an independent member in the same year, the stronghold of religious conservatism in Turkey (Zürcher, 257).

When Erbakan denounced the JP for being an instrument of Freemasons' and Zionists who had turned its back on Islam a religious flavor entered into argument. Small-and medium scale entrepreneurs of Anatolia, being supported by Religious Orders and under the

leadership of Erbakan (Arslan, 2012, 32-45), with the independents (Zürcher, 257), mobilized their political organization and formed National Order Party (NOP) on January 26, 1970.

NOP was established as a nationalist and sacred party in order to protect the class interests of provincial small entrepreneurs and transformation it to the masses via religious-cultural political discourse (Arslan, 2012, 45). Economy was another factor that led to Islamic party formation. But this did not mean the birth of the NOP was a result of the conflict between different fractions of Turkish bourgeoisie. On other hand, NOP played an important role in formulation and articulation of the interests of these classes (Özçetin, 2011, 31-32).

NOP formulated Association of Anti-Communism (KomünizmleMücadeleDerneği) as a youth organization. And it supported the idea of "Islam as the antidote to communism" (Elçi, 2014, 57).

The Islamist movement had become its party, Atatürk and Kemalism was openly rejected by the National Order Party (NOP). The social philosophies of the two parties were also different (Ahmad, 1993, 162).

Kemalism is seen as the official ideology of Turkey, and is based on the principles of Turkish nationalism and laicism. Secularism is the main characteristic of Kemalism that aiming to "separate" social and cultural life from religion and limits Religion with individual conscience (Sambur, 120). Religious freedom and pluralism had viewed religion as a sign that shows ignorance and backwardness and is not a part of Kemalist laicism, secularism (Ahmad, 1993, 162).

The first political Islamist party (NOP). Chronicles that Islam has been a political religion from the time it was born, the rebirth of Islamism and the unfolding of the first political Islamist party (NOP) will be analyzed by considering the socioeconomic and political issues. And to the protection of innovative moral values, the party's declared policy is mainly on economic policy goals, such as state-led industrialization, the expansion of heavy industry, and the protection of small businesses (Ahmad, 1993, 14).

When examining the party, it situates itself against communism and capitalism (Arslan, 2012, 42).

The military of 12 March 1971 by early 1971, Demirel's government, weakened by desertion from allegiance, seemed to have become disabled. It was meaningless to act to control the

violence on the campuses and in the streets and it could not hope to get to extreme legislation on social or financial reform passed in the assembly. This happened on 12 March 1971 the Chief of General Staff handed the prime minister a memorandum, which really amounted to an ultimatum by the armed forces. It obliged that a strong and credible government should be formed to end the 'anarchy' and carry out reforms 'in a Kemalist spirit', the army would utilize its constitutional duty' and took the power itself. The reaction of the politician to the ultimatum was negative. Demirel immediately resigned because the demands were not met and İnönü sharply denounced any military intervene in politics.

İnönü announced the support for the new government installed by the generals and it became clear that that government would be led by NihatErim, a member of the right wing of the RPP and a close associate of İnönü's for many years. On 27 April the National Security Council proclaimed martial law in 11 provinces, including all the big cities, and it was to be renewed after every two months for the coming two years. Under martial law the military, now had a free hand under the Erim government.

The National Order Party of Necmettin Erbakan had met the same fate in May. The closure of the NOP was acting as proof of the even-handedness of the anti-terror campaign, but Erbakan was not brought to court (Zürcher, 258-259). The Constitutional Court had dismissed the National Order Party on 20 May 1971 for violating the articles which guaranteed secularism in the constitution. But there were not any measures that were taken against the Islamists. Professor Necmettin Erbakan sought to refuge in Switzerland until the situation was back to normal (Ahmad, 1993, 158).

The party stopped in 1971 after the military intervention (Özçetin, 2011, 33). The NOP was soon dispersed by the Constitutional Court because it was opposed to republican secularism (An-Na'im, 2008, 216), and reappeared as the (National Salvation Party) in 1972 without changing in its party program (Özçetin, 2011, 33).

## **5.2 National Salvation Party (NSP)**

On 11st of October, 1972 the National Salvation Party was established after the closure of the NOP which was founded in 1970 (Aslan, 2012, 41). With support from provincial

merchants, the Esnaf, and the covert network of two leading, informally organized religious groups, the Nakshibandis and Nurcu (Narli, 1).

The main aim of the National Salvation Party was more on Islamic identity, close relationships with religious associations and drafted proposals that were mainly on religious doctrines and ideas (Mantilla, 2012, 188). The Islamists laid great stress on moral regeneration and the restoration of religious values if Turkey was to be saved (Ahmad, 14). NSP advocated the policies dedicated to protecting the class interests of petite bourgeoisie in its approach to economic issues.

There was trial for trying to pave way for development of capitalism in Turkey by the National Outlook parties by adopting agriculture to modern agriculture policies in favor of transition from traditional agriculture to modern agriculture. In NSP's party program, ethical order was defined as the base of economic order. NSP in 1970s attached great importance to establish a "heavy industry" under the leadership of the state.

NSP consistently mentioned the state intervention and it advocated for the protection of the domestic market (Arslan, 2012, 44-62). The overt appeals to religious identity, incorporation of religion were introduced into policy proposals.

The party was built on the aims of following Islamic principles and included conservative businessman and Sufi networks and retained its calls for the restoration of "national" values and traditions. The policy proposals of the party were also framed in terms of thinly veiled religious arguments, with party members demonstrating sustained interest in topics like promoting modesty via state censorship (Mantilla, 2012, 215-217).

Erbakan made many promises to the people that included drafting policies that would bring happiness and security via moral and material progress. Men were guaranteed rights and freedom as well as internal peace within a democratic regime. The NSP themselves needed democratic freedoms because their party was threatened with closure under Article 163 of the penal code which proscribed parties' committed to a religious state (Ahmad, 1993, 15).

Past predecessors of the NSP had not done much justice and so the NSP was trying by all means to portray a serious image. It based more on the growth of monopolies and dependence on foreign capital rather than on Islamic culture.

After the NSP came out third in the elections held in 1973 its propaganda became apparent and this suggested that people now had to take the Islamic reassertion seriously. And an economy based on Islamic values such as interest-free banking. The image that it cultivated was that it was a party preaching Islamic socialism rather than Islamic Fundamentalism.

The two parties decided on forming a coalition not because of their shared goals but because of political opportunism, but this same opportunism led to the breakup of the government a few months later. So for that period, both Ecevit and Erbakan wanted to establish the legitimacy of their respective parties and there was no better way of doing so than by becoming the government. The NSP still had issues simply because its predecessor, the National Order Party, had only recently been dissolved by the military regime. Erbakan because of all his knowledge knew that he was under scrutiny and that his position would be strengthened by joining the government led by the secular RPP. On the other hand Ecevit, for his part, was regarded with suspicion by the conservatives who exploited his radical populism to whip up the red scare. An alliance with Islamists would establish his credentials as a pragmatist and as a cautious and responsible politician who shunned dogmatism. It took three months of negotiations between the various parties (Ahmad, 1993, 162). In January 1974 a cabinet was formed, based on the surprising combination of Ecevit's RPP with Erbakan's NSP (Zürcher, 261). The RPP had strengthened its position by winning local elections in December with 39.5 per cent of the vote. Ecevit presented the government's programme on 1 February. It was a moderate programme designed to appease industry by leaving the profitable light consumer industries in private hands while the state assumed responsibility for the infrastructure (Ahmad, 1993, 162).

A crisis in Cyprus broke out a few months after the coalition was in power and Ecevit took advantage of the situation and became a hero because of the way he handled the situation. He wanted to use his new popularity to gain an absolute majority in early elections and he therefore resigned on 16 September 1974 (Zürcher, 261).

Demirel was finally able to put together a coalition of the JP, the NSP, the NAP, the RRP and a number of defectors from the DP, which announced itself to the public as the 'Nationalist Front'. As a result the new team included 30 cabinet ministers, the parties in the coalition, especially the NSP and the NAP, knew full well that Demirel depended on them, but still they wielded disproportionate influence. The coalition held together until the 1977 elections. These elections, held in an atmosphere of increasing violence and economic crisis, seemed to

show a return to a two-party system in Turkey. Demirel, formed a second 'National Front' coalition, in which the influence of the NSP and NAP was even greater than in the first, and which held out amid increasing chaos until December, when defections by JP Representatives brought about its fall. The defectors were rewarded when in January 1978 Ecevit formed a cabinet of RPP and independents. The independents were all given cabinet posts. Ecevit's cabinet survived until October 1979, but it accomplished little. It clearly could not master the rising tide of violence. The military leadership grew increasingly disillusioned with what it saw as Ecevit's 'soft' attitude to terrorism and Kurdish separatism, and there are strong indications that the army top brass decided in the summer of 1979 to start preparations for a coup, which it now regarded as inevitable.

The attacks from the opposition were made extremely difficult for Ecevit's cabinet by the savage attacks of the opposition, notably Demirel, who denied the very legitimacy of the government and even refused to call Ecevit 'prime minister'. The administration was partly paralyzed by the cabinet's efforts to purge the ministries and services, which the 'Nationalist Front' coalitions had parceled out among them.

In October 1979 elections for the senate showed a drop in support for the RPP. As a result defections began in the assembly. Ecevit lost his majority and had to resign. Demirel returned to power, but to the relief of many he did so with a minority government supported by his own party and independents but without the NSP or NAP (Zürcher, 261-262).

While in government, the party pursued policies including stricter enforcement of alcohol-sale and nightclub regulations. It also used its position in the ministries to reward religious activists, strengthening its presence in the state bureaucracy. In this fashion, the party managed to continue to appeal to religious voters and promote a doctrinally-informed policy agenda without formally overstepping the red lines set out by the military (Mantilla, 2012, 218). The coalition governments of the period between 1973 and 1980 were without exception weak.

In Turkey, Islam was affected by the threatening of military interventions very much. In 1979, the Islamic reform which took place in Iran in 1979 enabled other Islamic groups and countries, which showed its effect in 1980 in Konya, when people demanded the senate, Islamic regulations and did not want the Turkish national anthem as their anthems (Zürcher, 262-268).



The main reason why military interventions took place is the fundamentalist threatening. The invasion was planned in 1979 and an ultimatum was drawn towards the politicians of the government by the generals of the army. This took place in 1980 and it was observed that politicians did not take that into account by the political elections that was held. Nevertheless, in 1980 the power was retaken by the army of Turkey (Zürcher, 269).

The armed forces, led by General Kenan Evren, the NSP and even military intervention was banned following the September 12, 1980, along with all other political parties, and were banned from political activity (Heper&Toktaş, 159; Narli).

### **5.3 Welfare Party (WP)**

Turkey introduced into a new political era with a new constitution after the 1980 coup. The launch of a new constitution had some effects for the role of religion in Turkish political and public lives (Kesgin, 64; Dinç, 2006, 2). The Welfare Party, reintroduced by Erbakan as an Islamic party in 1983. The Islamic politics of the junta prepared the path for its success. The party's supporters were mainly among the local shopkeepers and traders (Griffiths&Özdemir, 2004, 81).

The municipal elections of 1994 proved to be a second crucial moment for the RP hence managed to have 19.7% of the national vote and the mayor offices in Istanbul and Ankara, along with 27 other major cities. The party continued along the road of electoral success the following year (Mantilla, 2012, 233; Taşpınar, 2008, 11).

For the first time in the republican history of Turkey an Islamist party came to power as a major in 1995, securing 21.4% of votes and 158 seats in the legislature, a result that made Welfare Party the largest party in the assembly. When the Welfare Party agreed on the terms of a coalition government with the True Path Party, Necmettin Erbakan became the prime minister in 1995 (Kesgin, 38; Mantilla, 2012, 233; Taşpınar, 2008, 11). This tenuous alliance, built largely on the threat of exposing corruption by Çiller's previous administration, was clashed with its religious mobilization strategy (Mantilla, 2012, 234).

When the Welfare Party won the elections, economy and politics were affected by a performed protest voting towards the end of secular political parties in Turkey (Taşpınar,

2008, 11). The reason for the popularity and success of the Welfare Party was not attributed to the Islamic and conservative ideology of the party.

The result of the 1995 elections was affected by services of local governments under the Welfare Party administration. The municipalities reduced corruption and nepotism in their municipalities. This gave power to the Welfare Party (Kesgin, 38), since it was subjected to corruption in Turkish politics and the slogan was "service to the people" (Halka Hizmet) (Wuthrich, 2011, 361).

The Welfare Party maintained the secular emphasis on the problems of daily life and decided to broaden its support base beyond the mosque mass. It was during the Welfare Party period that political Islam became a major player in Turkish politics.

Turkish politics faced with a different ideology than the state ideology. The ideology of the Welfare Party was in stark contrast to the Turkish political establishment where the legal system was geared to secularism. The Welfare Party's and its leader's ideology were closer to the Islamist ideology than the state ideology of Turkey.

Islamist political movements are not about individual liberties, also about national liberation (Kesgin, 32-64). The Welfare Party elite had a distinct understanding of the modern concepts brought about by the Turkish modernization project. It seems that Welfare Party members also advocated a union among the Muslim countries (Dinç, 2006, 1-2), and Erbakan's interest in improving Turkey's economic and political ties with the Islamic world reached an unprecedented level in 1997.

Erbakan signed an agreement with Ankara in order to send natural gas to Turkey from Iran at a cost of \$23 billions (Taşpınar, 2008, 22).

The purposes of the government continued by Necmettin Erbakan from the Welfare Party (RefahPartisi) were not clear at all. The establishment of D-8 (Developing 8 Muslim Countries) The external opinion supported that the Welfare Party was not warm towards the EU, although they were closely related to the EU companies. According to a previous minister, Abdullah Gül, the EU had a different cultural characteristic and a different economy than Turkey. Erbakan alluded that they are not against the customs union. But against the form of the agreement, the text and the way it is applied (Bağcı, 1998). Erbakan wanted to establish economic ties with Islamic countries D-8 custom agreements with other Muslim countries rather than the European countries (Kesgin, 66-67; Bağcı, 1998).

In these terms, Erbakan did not react against the membership of the EU (Bağcı, 1998). Turkey's accession process to the EU, and the membership of Turkey in NATO Criticize relations with Israel and its regional politics and supporting Palestine against Israel were the main foreign policies of the Welfare Party.

Therefore, as the Welfare Party won the election, the agenda was not to take an action for the country's economic, political, and social problems. The party's ideology and some of its specific actions provoked reactions from the secularist/Kemalist side. As a result of these (Kesgin, 38-65), Erbakan's short tenure in power (Taşpınar, 2008, 22), the military coup intervention's by Memorization on February 28, 1997, the National Security Council took some decisions to reinforce the secular character of the Turkish state threatened by the Islamists. They were trying to curb Islamist activities in the state and society, this date was later dubbed as a soft coup in Turkey, or known as the February 28 process because, the Welfare Party government had to step down in July 1997. The Welfare Party prime minister was forced to resign after the intervention of the National Security Council (the military) in January 1998. The Constitutional Court closed the Welfare Party since it had become the center of anti-secularist activities. An argument was that the party's activities threatened the principle of secularism protected by article 2 of the Constitution. Specifically, the court highlighted the party's efforts to permit the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in universities, its plans to expand religious education. The guilty verdict was handed down on January 1998, and the party was officially closed down. Five party leaders, including Erbakan, were banned from politics (Kesgin, 39; Griffiths&Özdemir, 2004, 83; Mantilla, 2012, 235-236).

#### **5.4 Virtue Party (VP)**

When the Welfare party closed the Virtue Party became home for the Islamists because it was successor of the banned party (Özçetin, 2011, 47; Çakmak&Cengiz, 2010, 75; Heper&Toktaş, 159; Mantilla, 2012, 237; Hale, 33). It's now a fact that what happened on 28 February played a huge role in the change of Islamism in Turkey and transformation of Islamists politics. The day came as an environmental shock and caused the Welfare party to change policies on a number of important policies. The military tried to intervene and this clearly showed that it was a dead end to try and change the policies especially secularism. In

the end the party had to base its policies on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law (Özçetin, 2011, 47-48).

Political Islam redefined itself and democracy became the new platform. After the Welfare Party was banned most of its members moved to the Virtue party. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 1998, the head of the party was replaced by Recai Kutan (Gülalp, 1998, 41), who was seen to be an effectively proxy of Erkaban (Hale, 40), and he was able to get along with the military as well as the young and radical elements within the party (Gülalp, 1998, 41). Erkaban also continued to be the de facto head of the party (Mantilla, 2012, 237).

The Virtue Party became a liberal conservative party with a powerful social state; it had inclination and a strong interest in nationalism, in theory the Welfare party defined itself with reference to Islam, the Virtue party strived to define itself with reference to politics. The target group of the Virtue party was the people. The most recurrent and important themes of the party were mainly focused on the welfare of the people. The party regarded basic rights and freedoms as inalienable rights of individuals and declared that realization of these rights depended on the complete implementation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Özçetin, 2011, 47). That same evening Recai Kutan came on a live interview program on the pro-Islamist TV channel (Kanal 7) and announced that their new party was different from Welfare. The primary goal of the new party was no longer the establishment of the just order; their goals now included the promotion of democracy, human rights, political liberties and freedom in Turkey. When asked why, he answered that they had learned from their experience in the last couple of years that democracy comes first -without it, nothing else can be accomplished (Gülalp, 1998, 41).

Abdullah Gül started an official challenge to Kutans leadership at his party's congress in May 2000. But he did not win. He only got 45% of the votes and thus narrowly losing to the traditionalist camp (Mantilla, 2012, 238; Yavuz, 2003, 251). In the 18 April 1999 elections, the Virtue Party received only 15.4% of the general vote, 107 seats, and a notable decline from its 1995 performance (Mantilla, 2012, 237; Şahin, 2010, 104; Yavuz, 2003, 240). Most people did not vote for the Virtue party because of its tension with the military and instead opted for the nationalist movement party which presented itself as an untried party that deserved a chance, a powerful argument for undecided voters. Despite these attitudes, as well as pressure from the military and the media cartels, the Virtue party did not do badly, and it

retained control of the major municipalities, including Ankara and Istanbul (Yavuz, 2003, 253).

The changed Virtue party's opinion towards European countries suffered Kemalist aggression. The story of Merve Kavakçı, trying to take her oath while wearing her headscarf sparked different reactions from members, she was stopped doing this, and she attracted all the attention of her and she was to be banished. According to the President Demirel, she was representing Islamic countries and groups and the government took the case to the court by opening a case against the Virtue party on 7 May 1999 (Mantilla, 2012, 237; Yavuz, 2003, 250). The incident led to a judicial process against Virtue (Mantilla, 2012, 237).

The Virtue party was accused by the public prosecutor of being vampires touring the country and for being ignorant. The party came from a prohibited party which committed crimes against the secularist regime. The link between the Welfare party and the Virtue party was real. In fact, the Virtue party was under the indirect control of Erbakan, who ran its everyday affairs through Kutan (Yavuz, 2003, 250). In June 2001 the Constitutional Court closed the Virtue Party, the fourth political party of the National View Movement (Çakmak&Dinç, 2010, 77; Şahin, 2010, 106; Mantilla, 2012, 238), which was closed down for the same reason, on the grounds of violating the secular principles (Çakmak&Dinç, 2010, 75-77).

After the Welfare Party was banned, nobody expected a ban on the Virtue Party, which was different from its predecessors. The reason for this legal action by the state was that Erbakan though legally banned from politics and was involved in inner party disputes on behalf of his associates (Şahin, 2010, 106). The Virtue party was deemed important because it pointed to the most important braking point in the history of the National Outlook Movement (Özçetin, 2011, 48).

The poor performance of the party in the 1999 elections and the years following the soft coup witnessed a growing schism between the traditionalist and reformist, the traditionalists led by Erbakan and Kutan, and reformists represented by Erdogan and Gül (Mantilla, 2012, 237-238).

Kutan and the traditionalists acted first, organizing the Felicity Party (FP) (Saadet Partisi – SP) founded in July 2001, emphasizing their continuity with the national outlook tradition and its approach to assertive religious mobilization. And it was linked to Erbakan and the old guard (Mantilla, 2012, 238; Yavuz, 2003, 251; Şahin, 2010, 106). Erdogan and Gül formed the

reformist's formation of the Justice and Development Party. And fifty-two lawmakers of the banned Virtue Party joined the Justice and Development Party (Özçetin, 2011, 48; Yavuz, 2003, 251; Şahin, 2010, 106; Mantilla, 2012, 238).

The Justice and Development Party managed to redefine itself as the center-right supporting strongest conservative party. The three main characters of the Justice and Development Party, Erdogan, and Gül, all came from the Islamic background (Yavuz, 2003, 251). Islamic policy has been reached its zenith (peak) at Justice and Development Party.

## **CHAPTER 6:**

### **CONCLUSION**

Our research investigated that the political changes from the collapse of Ottoman Empire to the establish of new Turkish Republic and its reflections on Islamic Movements and Parties. It is a socially, culturally politically breaking point of history of Turkish Republic. Although westernization and secularism were adopted as a state policy during the new period, our research shows the existence of continuity and sustainability of a base of Islamic political movements and parties. Despite the regime's efforts to change, the people of Turkey, has evaluated a multi-party system as an opportunity to return to tradition and to live in Islamic base.

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