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DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM:
THE REDEFINITION OF THE IDEOLOGY OF THE TURKISH REGIME
IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD

1) Introduction

The modern Turkish state had been built in the aftermath of the First World War, during the 1920s and 1930s. The political, economic, and ideological foundations of the current Turkish regime, however, were laid down after the Second World War, particularly during the transition from a one-party to a multi-party regime between 1945-1950 and the first experiment in multiparty politics between 1950-1960. Turkey's first democratic decade was closed with a military coup in 1960, again the first of its kind since the inauguration of the Republic in 1923. What happened between 1945-1960 -- transition, democratic experimentation, and military intervention -- does in fact constitute a pattern that repeated itself twice after 1960 (in 1960-1971 and 1973-1980). For a better understanding of the later evolution of the postwar Turkish regime it is therefore essential to have a closer look at this formative period. In this paper I will examine the ideological dimensions of the developments in 1945-1960. The basic ideological themes and debates of this period, as well as the actors who carried them out, have continued to shape Turkish politics long after 1960 and they keep exerting their effect even today.

2) The Postwar Ideological Shift: Democracy and Freedom Replacing the Six Arrows of Kemalism

a) The Rise and the Fall of the One-Party Regime

The Turkish Republic was officially founded on 29 October 1923 on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, following a four-year long Independence War which had been fought between 1918-1822 against the occupation forces of the four Allied Powers (Britain, France, Italy and Greece). Soon after the declaration of the Republic, an intensive process of modern state-building started. All through the interwar years, The Republican state was built under a one-party regime dominated by the Republican People's Party (RPP).

The RPP-dominated one-party regime continued intact until after the Second World War. By the end of the War, however, a combination of domestic and international factors forced a regime change. In the span of five years, from 1945 to 1950, the one-party regime was effectively dismantled by what can be called a reform-from-above. The Turkish transition followed the usual pattern of democratic transitions. The opening started with liberalization, including particularly the enlargement of press freedoms and the loosening of police repression. Liberalization was followed by measures of democratization, of which the most significant ones were the toleration of the foundation of opposition parties and the passage of a new electoral law based on secret balloting, open counting and judicial control of the electoral process (Karpat 1959).

Among the many opposition parties that were established, one -- the Democratic Party (DP) -- proved to be most successful. It is to be noted that the founders of the DP were not anti-systemic radicals. They came from within the RPP ranks and they had occupied important posts in the old regime. As such, they had enough credibility to give the power-holders the required assurance that they would not attempt to break down the basic institutions of the state and that they would basically limit their role to that of a loyal opposition. The DP soon grew into a major political force, drawing its support both from the people as well as from the elites (Erogul 1990 and Saribay 1991).

All the social groups and classes who had some kind of dissatisfaction with the one-party regime bundled behind the DP: The peasants and the urban lower classes who had suffered heavy shortages and skyrocketing inflation during the War; the large land-owners of Anatolia who felt threatened by the RPP's newly disclosed plans of land reform; the urban upper classes who disliked the government's bureaucratically-controlled statist economic policies; the intellectuals whose activities were under strict and constant police surveillance; and the Muslims whose religious acts and symbolisms were drastically curtailed by the Kemalist policy of secularism (Agaoglu 1972).

If left to itself, each of these groups had clearly the potential of sliding into radical and anti-state positions. The DP's -- and indeed the Turkish transition's -- main success was to channel all these diverse grievances into an anti-RPP platform, without letting them to grow into an anti-state force. The historical achievement of the DP was to unite the various oppositional tendencies under its umbrella, to domesticate them, to cool them down, and to assimilate them into the basic framework of the Kemalist state.

The first freely competed multi-party elections were held in May 1950. The DP won the elections with a landslide, getting 53% of the total votes and 84% of the seats in the National Assembly. The great divergence between the votes obtained and the seats gained was due to the winner-takes-all electoral system, applying the plurality principle to multi-member districts. The DP won the two subsequent elections in the 1950s. In the 1954 elections, the party's part in the total votes (58%) and its share in the parliamentary seats (92%) reached their maximum levels. From that point on both its votes and parliamentary representation began o decline, falling in the 1957 elections to 47% and 70%, respectively (Aygen 1962: 221-287) and (Republic of Turkey. National Assembly 1950: 24-44; 1954: 123-141; 1958: 145-165).

b) The Redefinition of the Official Ideology by the Democratic Party

The official ideology of the Republican state, beginning with its foundation in the early 1920s, was Kemalism. The term "Kemalism" was derived from the name of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938), the leader of the Independence War, the founding father and the first President of the Republic.

Kemalism is not a well-articulated and specified ideology like Leninism. In fact, Mustafa Kemal himself stood against many attempts to give Kemalism a definite and closed form and content. He instead preferred a more pragmatic and open-ended formulation, rejecting to associate his name with any set of dogmas. The most precise articulation of Kemalism was made long after the foundation of the Republic, at the 4th Congress of the RPP in May 1935. The 4th RPP Congress defined the "Six Arrows" of Kemalism, namely, republicanism, nationalism, populism, secularism, etatism, and revolutionism. The same Congress also took decisions that institutionalized the one-party regime and party-state unity, which had been in effect since the foundation of the Republic (Ahmad 1977: 4-6).

Shortly after the political transition had started in 1945, however, the RPP's political supremacy and ideological hegemony came under heavy attack from the part of the DP. Admittedly, the DP, being the loyal opposition, did not intend to undermine the Kemalist principles. First of all, as it was indicated above, the leaders of the DP had themselves been raised in the Kemalist tradition. Secondly, the ruling RPP had made it clear at the beginning of the transition that it would not have tolerated an opposition party whose acts might have fallen into conflict with the fundamental principles of the state. Hence, the DP remained loyal to Kemalism. It nevertheless brought a new interpretation to the Kemalist principles, gave them new meanings, by over-emphasizing three of them (republicanism, populism, and nationalism) and under-emphasizing the rest (statism, secularism, revolutionism).

The ideological counter-project of the DP did not remain limited to a reinterpretation of the Kemalist Six Arrows. The DP introduced two new themes, democracy and freedom, which were to become the ideological tenets of the Turkish regime in the postwar era. Especially after the DP's coming to power after 1950 the supremacy of the principles of democracy and freedom came to be admitted even by the main opposition party, the RPP. The rising new principles of democracy and freedom did not mean, of course, the disappearance of the old Six Arrows of Kemalism. It did mean, however, that from then on the old Kemalist principles were to be read and interpreted in the light, from the perspective, and through the ideological filter of the two new canons of democracy and freedom.

The new Turkish state had been built, in the aftermath of the World War I, upon the ideological foundations defined by the Six Arrows of Kemalism (republicanism, nationalism, secularism, etatism, revolutionism, and populism). The post-World War II Turkish regime, however, was founded on an ideological ground which was constituted by the twin axioms of democracy and freedom. Kemalism's Six Arrows, introduced by the RPP, had been the defining principles in building the modern Turkish state; the concepts of democracy and freedom, on the other hand, were launched by the DP and supplied the ideological ground for constructing the current Turkish regime.

To be sure, the ideological hegemony of democracy and freedom has not meant that each and every political actor have quickly turned into sincere democrats and liberals. This has meant,

however, that every mainstream political actor, with the possible exclusion of the radicals, has had to rationalize and justify its policy proposals and endeavors in terms of their compliance with the principles of democracy and freedom, whether or not their real intentions and actions have espoused these principles.

Even the military, which intervened three times in politics, had to vindicate their movements on the basis of their self-assigned duty of saving the democratic regime from its enemies and preparing the ground for a return to a more solid democracy. Similarly, the most important socialist party of Turkey in the 1960s, the Workers' Party of Turkey, defined its path to socialism as a three-staged process beginning with full independence, proceeding through democratization, and finally arriving at socialism.

How did the mainstream right-wing and left-wing political actors in the formative years of the 1950s understand democracy and freedom? The following chart summarizes the left's and the right's approaches to democracy and freedom:

	Democracy	Freedom
RIGHT	Delegative Democracy	Tanzimat Syndrome
LEFT	Tyranny of the Majority	Group Rights

c) Approaches to Democracy

The right's understanding and practice of democracy can be best captured by Guillermo O'Donnell's concept of "delegative democracy" (O'Donnell 1990). The Turkish version of delegative democracy envisaged a complete delegation of power from the people to the governing party, and from the party rank and file of the party to the party leadership. Elections, in that sort of delegative democracy, worked as the means through which "the nation" delegated its "will" to the winning party, and particularly to the party leader. The electoral majority was equated with the whole of the nation. The preferences of the electoral majority were elevated to the level of the will of the nation. The winning party was seen as the only and true representative of the nation. And the program and ideas of the winning party were taken as the embodiment of the "national will" (Insel 1990).

In this system, there was no place for state-independent, autonomous civil institutions. This last point was most clearly expressed in the words of Celal Bayar, the founder of the DP and the President of Turkey in the 1950s. Bayar said that in the West the democratic legitimacy of a law or policy had two sources. One was the decision of the parliamentary majority which conferred on it legality and the other was the negotiated consensus between the autonomous institutions of the civil society which guaranteed its social acceptability. Bayar argued that this was a peculiar characteristic of Western society which was divided into antagonistic social classes. It was through this mechanism that in the West class antagonisms were peacefully resolved and the society was held together. In Turkish society, claimed Bayar, there were no antagonistic social classes. Therefore, there was no need for

autonomous social institutions and the only source of legitimacy had to be the decision of the parliamentary majority (Bayar 1991: 46-47).

The mirror image of the right-wing conception of delegative democracy was the left-wing idea of "tyranny of the majority". Soon after the DP won the 1950 elections with a landslide, and continued its electoral successes in the subsequent elections in the 1950s, many left-wing intellectuals and politicians developed the idea that the DP, supported by the peasant masses of Anatolia, was electorally invincible. The DP, in the eyes of the left, was awakening and mobilizing for electoral purposes all the "reactionary" potentials of the masses, which the Kemalist revolution had tried so hard to eradicate and replace with modern values. In a word, the DP was believed to represent the "dark side" of the people. (Nadi 1960; Toker 1990, 1991a, 1991b).

Departing from these considerations, left-wing parties and intellectuals set out to formulate constitutional structures that they hoped would curb the powers of the elected representatives of the people. The two most demanded new institutions were a second chamber in the parliament (that would function like a House of Lords having a veto power over the decisions of the lower chamber) and a constitutional court (that would prevent the lower chamber from transgressing the stipulations of the constitution) (Feyzioglu 1956; Kili 1976:161-164; Mardin 1959). It should be noted that these and other new institutions, designed to curb the powers of the parliamentary majorities, made their way into the new Constitution of 1961, which was drafted after the 1960 military intervention had ousted the DP government.

d) Approaches to Freedom

The right, as well as the civil and military bureaucracy, looked at the issue of rights and freedom through the glasses of what can be called the "Tanzimat Syndrome". The Tanzimat Syndrome assumes that demands for rights, even those for the most innocent and basic rights, are not what they seem to be on their face value and that they all conceal a hidden agenda that might endanger the unity of the nation and the security of the state. Thinking through the Tanzimat Syndrome, the Turkish right has seen all European requests from Turkey to respect human rights as yet another manoeuvre to carve up the Turkish nation, by creating allies and protégés within Turkey who could be mobilized against the state. Finally, it is a syndrome because it presumes that its own reading of history is the only correct one and that history always repeats itself.

The term *Tanzimat*, which means ordering or rather re-ordering, refers to a series of modernizing reforms in the Ottoman Empire, which were set in motion in 1839 by the promulgation of the Imperial Decree of Gulhane. The Gulhane Decree was later supplemented in 1856 by the declaration of another major statement, called the Reform Decree.

The backbone of the Tanzimat reforms was to provide the Ottoman subjects with modern citizenship rights and to create a state based on the rule of law. These basic citizenship rights included equality before the law, irrespective of one's social status and religion; supremacy of law over the acts and decisions of the political authority; security of life, property and honor of all citizens; regulation of taxation and putting an end to the arbitrary confiscations of property (Cakirtas 1994: 183-184). The Reform Decree of 1856 brought special new rights

and privileges to the Christian subjects of the Empire, including freedom of prayer; the right to establish their own educational institutions; the right to enter into the military service; and equal taxation (Cakirtas 1994: 187-188, 206).

One particular expectation of the Palace from launching this reform program was to regain the allegiance of the Empire's Christian subjects (mostly Greeks and Armenians) and thereby to contain their separatist tendencies. Another expectation was to stop the Great Powers of Europe from interfering in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the European states, particularly Britain and Russia, had long been active in mobilizing the Christians against the Ottoman state, and they were putting demands on the Palace to grant the Christians with economic, political and cultural liberties and advantages. By engaging itself in the Tanzimat reforms, the Ottoman center was hoping to satisfy some of the demands of the European Great Powers and thereby to put an end to their provocation and support of the Ottoman Christians towards separatism.

This is not the place to judge the value, wisdom or success of the Tanzimat reforms. However, even a cursory look at Ottoman history after the initiation of the Tanzimat reforms in 1839 reveals a constant process of imperial collapse, which was brought about by the successful separatist movements of the Christian and non-Turkish peoples supported by this or that European power. Between 1839 and 1908 the Empire lost its remaining east-central European lands, namely Moldavia, Wallachia (roughly corresponding to today's Rumania), and Serbia. The Balkan and North African territories were gone between 1908-1918, during the Balkan Wars, the Italian invasion of Ottoman North Africa, and the First World War. Finally, during the Allied occupation of the Empire between 1918-1922, the defunct Treaty of Sèvres detached large chunks of Anatolia from the Empire, which had been already reduced to a symbolic entity.

This historical record taught the Ottoman statesmen and the Republican founding fathers two lessons. One was that giving rights and freedoms to a people would not make them more loyal to the state; on the contrary, this would even supply them with more opportunities to organize a stronger assault on the state. The second lesson was that the real intention behind the European demands of respect for human rights was to divide the Turkish nation and weaken the Turkish state. The combination of these two lessons, which are so deeply engraved in the historical memory of the Turkish state and society, and which makes up the main axis of the mentality of contemporary Turkish conservatism, I call the Tanzimat Syndrome.

Perhaps the best exemplification of the Tanzimat Syndrome can be found in the words of Sultan Abdulhamid (r. 1876-1909), who had eliminated the Young Ottomans to consolidate his powers and who lost his throne to the Young Turks. In his political memoirs, Sultan Abdulhamid writes:

> "The reform demands of the great powers never end. They know nothing about our country, yet they still play the role of the all-knowing counselor. ... Though they disagree among themselves as to what our problems are and how we are going to deal with those problems, there are two points which they all agree on: First, to create the impression in our public opinion that all reforms are done because of their recommendations and pressures, and thereby to put us down in the eyes of our own nation; and second, to enhance the position of the Christians in our country, and to make them come forward with even more excessive demands from us. This reform thing is a dirty trick. They should take off their

hands from our business. The reforms they are recommending cannot possibly be taken seriously and implemented without doing serious harm to the interests of our nation. If we proceed in our own way I am sure that we will develop more slowly but more smoothly." (Sultan Abdulhamid 1984: 110-111).

Another illustration of the Tanzimat Syndrome comes from Recep Peker, a prominent bureaucrat, prime minister, and ideologue of the one-party regime. In his *Lectures on the Revolution*, which he gave at the Ankara University in the 1930s, Peker sharply criticized the Ottoman constitutional regime as an unwarranted imitation of the Western model. He argued that the Ottomans had borrowed the Western conception of freedom, which was not suitable to the local conditions and traditions. According to Peker, Islamic reactionaries and Christian separatists exploited freedom to achieve their ominous goals:

"...The destructive elements found many supportive opportunities in the atmosphere of constitutional monarchy. In this air of freedom, and in the name of freedom, a fool named Dervis Vahdeti began publishing a newspaper called *Volkan* and founded a party called The Mohammadan Union (*Ittihad-i Muhammedi*). ... Such a newspaper would have done great damage even today, if we had allowed its publication. Back then, however, the Empire was tolerating such newspapers in the name of freedom, and when legal measures were being taken to stop such unwanted developments, a chorus was starting to shout that freedoms were being violated. Again using this freedom, a deputy of Greek origin could say "My exterior is Ottoman, but my interior is Greek" in the Assembly of Deputies, and the Ottoman Assembly showed no reaction to this in the name of freedom." (Peker 1984: 33).

Finally, Celal Bayar, the founder of the DP and Turkey's President during the 1950s, argued that demands for political freedom and democracy were voiced by communists and Soviet agents who wanted to carve up the proper conditions for conducting their destructive operations. Communists, said Bayar, aimed to manipulate freedom and democracy in order to weaken the government and decompose the social fabric. According to Bayar, the RPP, by championing the cause of freedom and democracy, fell into a communist trap (Bayar 1991: 74-75).

As the right treated the issue of freedom from the perspective of the Tanzimat Syndrome, the left's approach to the same question was marked by its insistence on group rights, to the exclusion of individual rights. All through the 1950s, "freedom" was the keyword in the writings and speeches of left-wing intellectuals and political parties. This was not, however, "freedom" in the Western-liberal sense of the term, which basically denoted the rights of the individuals which were untouchable by the government.

Isaiah Berlin, in his well-known essay "Two Concepts of Liberty", put down the following principles as the necessary conditions of the freedom of individuals and, thereby, of society: 1) No power, but only rights, can be regarded as absolute, so that all men, whatever power governs them, have an absolute right to refuse to behave inhumanly. 2) There are frontiers, not artificially drawn, within which men should be inviolable. These frontiers are defined in terms of rules so long and widely accepted that their observance has entered into the very conception of what it is to be a normal human being. It would be absurd to say that these frontiers could be abrogated by the sovereign bodies. The freedom of a society, or a class or a group, in this sense of freedom, is measured by the strength of these barriers, and the number and importance of the paths which they keep open for their members (Berlin 1969: 28-29).

For the Turkish left, however, "freedom" did not mean the constitutionally guaranteed rights of the individuals. It meant the autonomy of some groups, and mostly bureaucratic groups (such as the political parties, the judiciary, the universities, the press, and the army), from the control of the elected representatives of the nation. What the left was demanding was a set of institutional measures which, if put into action, would significantly curb the power of the parliamentary majority and protect the rights of the minority. And that was what "freedom" essentially meant to the leaders and supporters of the left.

Before everything else, the left demanded the institution of an upper chamber of the parliament (a senate) and a constitutional court. The driving idea behind this demand was to create institutional checks on the lawmaking powers of the parliamentary majority. Another demand was judicial independence, by means of establishing an autonomous judiciary council that would be solely responsible for the appointment and retirement of the judges and public prosecutors. A third demand was about the freedom of the press and the autonomy of the universities. And a final demand was to create an autonomous economic council that would control the economic policy of the government (Basgil 1960 and Basar 1960)[1].

e) Radical Approaches to Democracy and Freedom

As the ideological mainstream, both on the left and on the right, was being shaped around the axis of democracy and freedom, radical movements began to delineate their radicalism in some form of repudiation of democracy, in the name of state security, rapid economic development, or for achieving a higher form of democracy in the distant future.

For right-wing radicalism, such as the Nationalist Action Party (NAP) of the 1960s and the 1970s, what came first was the security of the state and democracy was to be sacrificed if the state was under threat. Moreover, the NAP ideologues argued that the state, at least for a temporary period, had to assume an authoritarian form in order to be able to rapidly solve the country's problems, without being hampered by the procedural subtleties of a democratic regime.

Left-wing radicalism, of which the most significant representatives were the *YÖN* (Direction) and *Dev-Genc* (Revolutionary Youth) movements of the 1960s and 1970s, belittled the existing democratic regime as "petty democracy". In the radical leftist jargon, Turkish democracy was only a form, a cover which served to shield the rule of the oligarchy and imperialism.

There was, however, an important difference between the rightist and leftist radicalisms' approaches to democracy and freedom. For right-wing radicalism, democracy was a not goal to achieve, nor an ideal to attain. Democracy did not have any value in itself. What was

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[1]Also see the editorials in the leading liberal journal *Forum:* No. 119, March 1959 and No. 120, March 1959. Also see the following articles published in *Forum*: AydinYalçin "Türkiye'de Demokrasi" (Democracy in Turkey), No.41, December 1955; and Turhan Feyzioglu, "Demokrasi Davamiza Genel Bir Bakis" (A General Look At Our Cause of Democracy), No.46, February 1956.

valuable was the security and perpetuation of the state, and democracy could be tolerated so long as it worked to that end. Left-wing radicalism, on the other hand, valued democracy as an ideal but rejected the existing democracy for being a mockery, a mere imitation of the real thing. Leftist radicals always spoke of a higher form of democracy as their ideal, which they argued could only be achieved after the oligarchic and imperialistic yoke was smashed by a national-democratic revolution.

As for freedom, radical rightists spoke more about the duties of the Turks towards their state rather than about any fundamental individual freedoms. The "individual" did not make much appearance in the radical right-wing discourse which was permeated with references to the "nation". Leftist radicals, on the other hand, understood freedom to mean liberation: the people's liberation from the domination of the oligarchy and the country's liberation from imperialistic control. Just as in the right-wing radical discourse, the individual and its rights did not occupy any significant place in the ideology of the left-wing radical movements.

Islamic radicalism, which made its first significant appearance on the playground of Turkish politics in the late 1960s, attacked not only the mainstream ideology of the regime (which revolved around democracy and freedom), but also, and unlike other right- or left-wing radical movements, the secularism component of the Kemalist ideology of the state. The Islamicists' main criticism of democracy was that the Turkish regime had a basic deficiency because it excluded Islamic politics. Similarly, one could not speak, according to the Islamicists, of the existence of freedom in Turkey so long as religious freedoms were suppressed by the secularist state. In a word, the Islamicists interpreted democracy and freedom on the basis of their own exclusion from or inclusion into the system. Just like the nationalist far-right, the Islamicists did not value democracy in itself. They surely preferred democratic secularism over its authoritarian version. However, democracy, even in its ideal form, was not a goal to achieve for the Islamicists who looked forward to an Islamic state and regime.

3) Recent Developments

Many authors have argued that the 1980s, which opened with a military coup, witnessed the growth and proliferation of civil society in Turkey. The growth of civil society brought, for the first time in modern Turkish history, the individual and its inalienable rights and freedoms to the forefront of Turkish politics. Accordingly, the leftist discourse about rights began to shift its focus, from the traditional emphasis on group rights to a new stress on individual rights (Gole 1994). The collapse of the Soviet system in 1989 alleviated the fear of Soviet-manipulated communist subversion in Turkey, and it thereby mitigated the Tanzimat Syndrome which had dominated the conservative thinking on rights and freedoms.

This social development was paralleled by an equally congenial political development, marked by an ideological and political rapprochement of the center-right and center-left parties. Hence, the right stopped to regard democracy from the perspective of "delegative democracy", and the left, on its part, ceased to see in the right-wing governments the embodiment of the Tyranny of the Majority. The left-right rapprochement was crowned by the coalition government of the True Path and Social Democratic Populist parties, founded in 1991 and lasted until the early general elections of December 1995.

It seemed for a short while that the traditional postwar discourses on democracy and freedom did finally come to an end and were about to be replaced by their contemporary and conciliatory counterparts found in the more developed democracies of western Europe. These political hopes were being further enhanced by the rapid improvements in the area of the economy, as the country, led by the center-right governments of the Motherland Party was leaving behind the old inward-looking economic structures for an outward-oriented growth strategy.

However, this rosy picture was soon shadowed by two counter-developments. One was the emergence of an armed Kurdish separatist movement in southeastern Turkey. And the other was the continual decrease in the electoral support of the center parties, both on the right and the left, together with the rapid growth of the powers of the nationalist and Islamicists parties.

Kurdish separatism re-introduced the concept of group rights into Turkish politics. The Kurds were followed by other ethnic and religious groups, notably by the minority Islamic sect of the Alevites, in putting forward demands for political, cultural and economic rights and privileges for themselves. In this way, the concept of group rights re-entered Turkish political discourse with a force unseen since the last years of the Ottoman Empire. The "individual", which was discovered in the optimistic years of the 1980s, was buried again under the blanket of the communitarian demands of ethnic and religious groups. Under these circumstances, the left had to re-accommodate into its ideology some of the emergent group rights demands, thereby re-traditionalizing its outlook.

As expected, ethnic separatism forced the right too into reconsidering its approach to the question of rights and freedoms and quickly re-adopting its traditional outlook of the Tanzimat Syndrome, this time in an even more accentuated manner. Although the Soviet Union had collapsed, the Turkish right did not lose time to detect the new external enemies of Turkey. The new external enemies, which are believed to give their support to the ethnic, religious and other terrorist movements inside Turkey, included almost all of the neighboring countries (Syria, Greece, Iraq and Iran) and some Western powers (notably the US, Germany and France). As Russia recovered after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it too was added to the list of the external enemies.

Another predicament of the center-right parties was the continual erosion of their electoral support, from nearly 60% in the mid-1980s to less than 40% in the mid-1990s. In the meantime, public support of the nationalist and religious far-right parties showed a steeping trend, from a combined electoral capacity of around 10% in the mid-1980s to more than 30% in 1995. Support for the center-left, on the other hand, dropped from around 35% in the mid-1980s to 25% in the mid-1990s (Tanor 1995).

Socialist and communist left, on its part, which had commanded a significant following in the 1970s, has nearly disappeared from the political scene by the 1980s, except for fringe parties with negligible support. Four major reasons accounted for the dissipation of the socialist left. One was the severe anti-communist suppression applied by the military regime between 1980-1983. Many leftist leaders and militants were put in jail, and a significant number of them have gone into exile. Many of those who remained in the country retreated from active politics and went on to non-political activities, such as business, most particularly the

computer industry, advertising, tourism, publishing, and finance. The movement from socialist politics to capitalistic entrepreneurship took on such dimensions that quite a number of movies and novels were produced about the socialist-turned-businessman type, called the "converts" in the Turkish socialist jargon.

The second reason for the weakening of the radical left was the separation of the Kurdish and Turkish leftist movements, as the Kurdish left abandoned Turkish parties to fight in the ranks of the Kurdish nationalist groups. The third reason was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the global defamation of socialism and communism. And the fourth was the rise of the religious parties and groups, most notably the Welfare Party (WP) which successfully combined socialist and Islamic discourses and symbols, and captured the hearts and minds of the people (such as the urban poor) who had formerly given their support to socialist left.

It is to be noted that, one factor which greatly contributed to the displacement of socialism by Islamicism was no doubt the policies of the military regime of the early 1980s. The military junta, and indeed the elected civilian governments which followed suit, have relentlessly and ruthlessly suppressed socialism while giving a free rein to Islamic politics, with the hope of containing the "red danger" by surrounding it with a "green belt". The Kemalist officers who had designed this anti-socialist green belt policy, which had been previously applied in Egypt in the 1970s, were hoping that they could easily stop the Islamicists once the latter have completed their mission of eradicating the left. Islamicism has indeed supplanted socialism as expected, but it has not stopped there. Islamic politics, which was for long consentingly supported by the state, has grown far beyond the initial estimations of the designers of the green belt policy. Ironically, today the military is wary of the scope and extent of religious politics, and the big business is complaining about the lack of a genuine socialist party that can channel the grievances of the poor masses, who would otherwise flow towards the ranks of the anti-systemic WP.

4) Prospects for the Near Future

The most optimistic scenario for the solution of Turkey's ideological problems regarding democracy and freedom would be a definite positive answer from the European Union regarding the issue of Turkey's full membership in the organization. The most important ideological effect of such an inclusionary signal coming from the EU would be to alleviate the Tanzimat Syndrome, which has been the historical operational code of the state and conservative majority of Turkey in their dealings with the question of rights and freedoms.

The prospect of EU membership would placate the Turkish right's deep-rooted suspicions that the Europeans have never given up the crusaders' cause of crushing the Turkish state and driving the Turks out of Istanbul and Anatolia. The promise of being admitted to the EU would be taken by most Turks as the West's affirmation of the legitimate existence of Turkey within its existing borders.

Under these circumstances, it would be easier for the Turkish left to argue that there is no hidden agenda behind the EU's demands from Turkey to recognize the cultural rights of the Kurds and other ethnic and religious minorities. These circumstances would supply a fertile ground for the solution of the most pressing group rights problems, particularly of the Kurds

and the Alevites, without violating the territorial unity and national integrity of Turkey. It can be expected that, the settlement of the group rights issues would then open the way for a historically new stage in the ideological domain, in which the rights discourse would be centered around the individual.

Let us consider now the more pessimistic, and admittedly more realistic, scenario of the EU's rejection or indefinite suspension of the Turkish membership and the continuation of Turkey's existing relations with the EU within the framework of the Customs Union. The net result of this exclusionary attitude of the EU would be to enhance the Tanzimat Syndrome and the already intensified powers of the religious and nationalist far-right. Under these circumstances, the issue of group rights would have no political solution. Furthermore, the left would have no arguments in defending the European demands for respect for ethnic rights. The current imperfect democracy might go on as it is or the regime might drift towards some sort of military or civilian authoritarianism.

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