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Turkish Politics: structures and dynamics

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Introduction

Turkish politics is, at the same time, a part of the general politic tendencies in the World following some universal ideologies such as nationalism or capitalism but also the fruit of a specific social and historical context. It has some solid structures due to the, on the one hand, ottoman and byzantine roots and on the other hand it copies western examples in its institutions. Nevertheless, the political *habitus* of this country possesses original political behaviours that are difficult to name with the usual political science vocabulary. For example, "right" and "left" as political categories cover in the Turkish context very different realities compared to their European (French) roots. There are in Turkey 5 major political currents that the external qualification by an observer does not fit with the internal qualification and the perception by the Turkish population.

Place in the spectrum	Sees it self as	Main political parties	Active years
Extreme Right	Nationalist - Statist	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Party of the Nationalist movement) Büyük Birlik Partisi (Party of the Great Union)	1969 – 1993-
Islamist Right	Nationalist - conservative	Millî Görüs movement (National vision) and it's parties Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi (Party of Justice and Development)	1969- 2001-
Liberal Right	Economically Liberal, nationalist, conservative	Demokrat Parti (Democrat Party) Anavatan Partisi (Party of the Motherland)	1946 – 1960 1983 - 2009
Secularist Right	Centre-Left, Kemalist, nationalist	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party) Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party)	1923 – 1985 -
Kurdish movement	Left – Kurdish nationalist	Partiya Karakerên Kurdistanê (Party of Workers of Kurdistan) tradition parties Halklarin Demokasi Partisi (Peoples' Democratic Party)	1978 – 2012 -

In the universal understanding of the political spectrum, Turkish politics, -in the sense of the management and governance of the public affairs of the country- is clearly situated at the right wing. In case of a "common enemy", these several right wing movements cooperate and

interact, creating *de facto* and sometimes *de jure* "National Fronts". During the second half of the 20th century and the first quarter of the 21st century these common enemies have been communism, political Islam and the Kurdish movement. Thus, the main characteristics of the Turkish politics are nationalism (Islamic and secularist), jacobinism, and statism.

This chapter aims to analyse the guidelines of the Turkish politics since it's foundation in a chronological and thematic perspective.

1. « First Republic » 1920's 1960's

Turkey, as a Republic, had three steps of foundation. In April 23th 1920, during the national war (called "the war of independence" in the Turkish historiography), the Great National Assembly has opened in Ankara as an opponent of the Parliament of Istanbul; in July 24th 1923 when the Lausanne Treaty has been signed, while recognizing the legitimacy of the Ankara Government; and in October 29th 1923 when Mustafa Kemal declared the foundation of the Republic and, by consequence, the end of the Ottoman Monarchy. Starting by this date and during the 1920s and especially 1930s, a new political system has been established. The main characteristic of this "new" system can find its roots in the Ottoman Empire: the sacralisation of the State. Indeed, since the establishment of the very strong state apparatus, much more centralized than the Ottoman system, the State, as the incarnation of the nation, has been placed above all, especially above liberal values such as democracy, human rights or the rule of law. The sacralisation of the State[1] justified an authoritarian regime, rarely contested, and especially 4 military interventions in 1960, in 1971, in 1980 and in 1997.

The foundation of the Turkish political system between 1930s and 1960s followed two main interconnected guidelines: the installation of structural fears and constant identity engineering.

The Turkish political system after 1923 is an authoritarian presidential unicameral administration, in a single party regime controlling the government, the state apparatus, the military and the local and regional administration. During this period, the Republican People's Party founded in 1923 is the master, at the same time, of the executive, legislative and judiciary but also of the media and civil society. This period can be divided into two different personalities: Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) (1923-1938) national hero who became over decades the main political reference of the Turkish Politics alongside with Islam; and Ismet Pasha (Inönü) (1938-1960), who followed a pragmatic Third-Worldism, at least until 1950s. Atatürk's period is characterized by heavy "reforms" in order to construct an homogeneous nation, with two attempts of multi-party system, in 1924 because of internal scissions in the RPP, and in 1930 by the will of the President Atatürk. Both attempts failed and the opposition parties were shut down. Inönü's period is more fragmented. Between 1938 and 1946 the authoritarian system worsened. Between 1946 and 1950, under the pressure of the UN Turkey adopted a multi-party system. And between 1950 and 1960, Democrat Party, more liberal in economic matters but more conservative on Islam, governed the country until the Military coup d'état of 1960.

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[1] Symptomatically, in the Turkish political vocabulary the State is associated to the father, *Devlet Baba*, and the Homeland is associated to the mother, *Anavatan*, Delaney Carole, "Father State, Mother land and the Birth of Modern Turkey" in Yanagisako Sylvia, Delaney Carol (eds), *Naturalizing Power : Essays in Feminist Cultural Analyzes*, New York, Routledge, 1995, p. 179-181 (177-200).

During this period that can be qualified as the "first Republic" (that the internal political vocabulary refuses), the political system was based on two main "structural fears" that will be constant until today.

a) "Division"

Turkey has been founded on a fear: a disappearance due to the Treaty of Sèvres. This Treaty signed in 1920 between Allies and the Ottoman Empire, has, not only completed the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and the Middle East but also divided the Asia Minor for the benefit of the victors. The Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, guaranteeing the Turkish sovereignty on Anatolia and a small section of Thrace, has certainly avoided the measures imposed by the Treaty of Sèvres, but the *fear* remained, until today. Since, every time that some sections of the population of Turkey claimed rights, or every time that Western allies of Turkey claimed liberal reforms, the "Syndrome of Sèvres" has been reactivated[2]. During the first decades of the Republic, this fear was vivid and provoked repressive policies towards religious and ethnic minorities, that were remaining in the newly established Turkey such the silts of the Ottoman tide. Especially between 1930s and 1960s, the main target of these repressive policies was *Rums* (Constantinopolitan Greek orthodox) but also other small non-Muslim groups such as Armenians and Jews. The other target, resulting from this constant fear, has been Kurds, particularly during the fist decade of the republic.

The first decades of the Republic can be seen as the acceleration period of the Turkish Nation building process started in the second half of the 19th century. The "Empire" character of the *Ancient Regime* couldn't allow the accomplishment of this process. The new Turkish state used the whole ideological and repressive apparatus to complete this nation building by a nationalist discourse. As many other nations built *after* the establishment of a state, this process had three steps:

The <u>extermination</u> process to reach a dreamed homogeneity throughout a harsh un-mixing of population technique, started at the very beginning of the 20th century with Armenians, and (almost) finished in 1960s with Greeks. The main steps to this process are 1915 (extermination of Anatolian Armenians), 1923 (Compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey), 1941-1942 (abusive measures towards Jews, Armenians and Greeks), 1955 (6/7th of September pogroms) and 1964 (expulsion of Greeks).

Concomitantly, a second phase was coercively activated starting by 1920s: <u>assimilation</u> targeting non-Turkish Muslim groups, mainly originated from the Balkans (such as Albanians, Bosnians or Pomaks) and the Caucasus (Such as Circassians, Laz or Dagestaneese). This process worked as one of the main political structures of the Turkish State between of 1920's and 1960's. The linguistic and nationalistic assimilation of this period is a success.

The third step is an ongoing process, the <u>folklorization</u> of the regional, ethnic and cultural differences, applied to regional identities and also, (but only after 1990s) to the small remaining non-Muslim minorities.

Since the beginning of the Republic, the major systemic "problem" of Turkish politics is the way to deal with Kurds. The Kurds also were present at the beginning of the nation building process but the triangle of Extermination / Assimilation / Folklorization didn't (couldn't) work

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[2] Schmid Dorothée, "Turquie : le syndrome de Sèvres, ou la guerre qui n'en finit pas" in *Politique étrangère*, vol. 1, Spring 2014, p. 199-2013.

for this population. They haven't exterminated because they were "Muslims" and have been included in the Turkishness taking the religious belonging to Islam as the main criteria of belonging to the nation. They participated in the southeastern Anatolia to the extermination process of other non-Muslim autochthonous groups such as Armenians of Cilicia. They have been only partially assimilated because unlike the other Muslim groups of Turkey as Balkanics or Caucasians, Kurds were autochthonous, having a specific clan-based social organization. And they were, (are) too many, -forming 15 to 20 % of the Population of Turkey- to be folklorized to become a "cute" local culture. Thus, the first violent reaction (actually, action) inside Turkey of the freshly established Turkish State was against Kurds, in 1925, so only 2 years after the proclamation of the Republic. The so-called Sheik Said revolt in 1925, was the pretext to legitimize a coordinated violent attack against Kurdish tribes, considered as dangerous in three ways. Kurdish identity wasn't welcome anymore in the Turkish nationalistic discourse of 1920s, Islamic character of the "revolt" was seen as incompatible with the secularist agenda but also, tribal organisation of Kurds was considered as rival to compete to sovereignty in a newly centralized Turkish State. Starting by the Nastourian revolt in 1924, until 1937, not less then 20 regional revolts to the central authority, leaded by sheikhs or Kurdish landlords were violently quelled by the Turkish army.[3] During the first decades of the Republic many central "reports" have been written to show the necessity to assimilate Kurds to the Turkishness and to annihilate their traditional social organization[4]. The last and the most known of this repressive policy, that became since a structural violence, took place in Dersim in 1937-1938, where the central authority of Ankara repressed harshly Kurdish clans with almost 14 000 killed and 12 000 exiled.

Starting by this pitiless repression, Kurdish question has been frozen, at least until 1980's.

b) Islam

The second structural fear, motivating the establishment of a specific Turkish political system, is "Islam", considered as dangerous in two manners. On the one hand, the founders of the republic were almost all of them secularized, westernized positivist soldiers and bureaucrats[5]. In their vision, Islam was one of the main responsible of the "backwardness" of the Turkish nation and may be one of the main causes of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the

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[3] Olson Robert, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion*, 1880–1925, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1989, p. 111-117.
[4] Report of the President of Assembly Abdülhalik Renda (1925)
Report of the Minister of Interior Cemil Uybadın (1925)
Report of the Inspector of Public Administration Hamdi Bey (1926)
Report of the Governor Ali Cemal Bardakçı (1926)
Report of the General inspector İbrahim Tali Öngören (1930)
Report of the General Fevzi Çakmak (1931)
Report of the General Ömer Halis Bıyıktay (1931)
Report of the Minister of Interior Şükrü Kaya (1931)
Report of the General inspector Abdullah Alpdoğan, (1936)
Report of the Prime Minister İsmet İnönü (1935)
Report of the General inspector Abidin Özmen (1935)
Report of the deputy Celal Bayar (1936)
Report of the People's Republican Party on minorities 1940
Report of the General inspector Avni Doğan (1943)
Report of the Inspector of Finances Burhan Ulutan (1947)
[5] Akgönül Samim, "'Young Turks' et Kemalist Reforms: Continuities or Ruptures" in Atabaki Turaj (ed.), *Modernity et its agencies: Young Movements in the History of the South*, New Delhi, Manohar Publishing, 2010, p. 113-130.

nation that should be built, in an endless and coercive identity engineering, should be without the visibility of this *islamity*, associated in their minds with the Orient. But there is also a second reason of the anti-Islamic measures of the first decades. After having removed from the power the Ottoman dynasty and after having quelled regional ambitions from Greeks, Armenians or Kurds, Kemalists saw in religious brotherhoods possible rivals to their complete domination on the society. Thus, in 1924 the caliphate had been abolished alongside with the creation of the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) for three purposes:

- To eliminate Ottoman dynasty as a possible rival
- To eliminate popular *islamity* in order to construct a normative and "national" Islam.
- To control religious discourse, this latter becoming more nationalist than spiritual

Therefore, it is not possible to qualify Turkish politics between 1920's and 1960's as "*laic*", if this term means, as in France of the same period, the separation between religion and the State. Quite the contrary, the Turkish *laiklik* of the period is an *apprivoisement*, a domestication of the Islamic religion in the service of the Nation-State. The *Diyanet*, was a minor institution between 1924 and 1960. But, especially since the military coup d'état of 1980, it became, step by step the major, if it's not the biggest State apparatus[6]. One may see four steps in the evolution of this institution, creating a specific political system:

1924-1960 : Creation of *Diyanet* and the control of popular Islam
1960-1980: A more liberal political system, institutionalisation of the political Islam against *Diyanet* considered as the tool of secularisation
1980-1990s: *Diyanet* becomes the tool of military junta and then bureaucracy and political elite for an ultranationalist discourse ("Turkish-Islam synthesis") mainly against leftist and Kurdish movements
1990s- 2018: *Diyanet* becomes the largest State institution with huge financial and human resources, meant to de-secularize the society.

Another measure against popular Islam as major policy of the Turkish State has implemented in 1925, with the reunification of the National education, in order to diminish the power of the religious education by brotherhoods and in order to complete the identity engineering mentioned above through the main ideological apparatus of the State. The same law in 1925 banned sacred places of brotherhoods as *Tekke*s. Thus, one of the main social organizations of the Anatolian society, these *tarikat*s had to get underground, at least until 1960s where, step-by-step, they have been legitimized, until becoming an important part of political and social power after 1990s.

Thus, if the "fear of division" as a structural constant of Turkish politics motivated repressive policies that succeeded until now, the "fear of Islam" had an opposite effect, created a reaction and brought this Islam to the power, that uses the same oppressive policies to non-Islamic behaviours especially in 2010s.

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[6] Gözaydin Istar, "Religion, Politics, and the Politics of Religion in Turkey", Jung Dietrich, Raudvere Catharina (eds), *Religion, Politics, and Turkey's EU Accession*, New York, Palgrave, 2008, p. 159-176.

2. "Second Republic" 1960s-1990s

Between 1960s and 1990s, what characterises Turkish politics is violence. This violence should be understood in two sense of the term: a physical one and a symbolic one that Hamit Bozarslan sees in the entire region called "Middle-East". According to Bozarslan this violence is defined in two registers, material and emotional[7]. In the same manner, Etienne Balibar considers this "state of violence" as "ultra-objective" because it is institutional in the sense of State violence or non-State political movement's violence, but also "ultra-subjective" because the violence is sacralised, passionate, and sometimes the only source of legitimation of an institution or movement[8]. In the Turkish context, these both registers are present, both targeting the same social and identity categories: non-Muslim minorities, Alevis, Kurds and left wing political movements.

a) Physical violence

Physical violence has been one of the constants of the Turkish politics since the Committee of Union and Progress (1908-1912 / 1913-1918), so before the foundation of the Republic (1923), and still is nowadays. However, this violence is often concentrated in some areas and relatively short slots in the country, except during the second half of the 20th century where a generalized violent context has dominated the entire Turkey. The first responsible of this context is unquestionably the Army. If the Turkish State was founded by soldiers, during the first decades of the Republic these former soldiers who became civilian politicians (such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Ismet Inönü, or Kazim Karabekir) continued to dominate the Army, and thus, military considered itself as the owner of the country. Dynamics changed in 1950s when civilian leaders who did not participated in the Turkey's liberation as military officers such as Adnan Mender or Celal Bayar took, step by step, the power, pushing the Army in a defensive posture. Therefore, between 1960 and 2000, four military interventions (two direct in 1960 and 1980 and two indirect in 1971 and 1997) placed the Turkish politics solidly under military patronage.

The May 27th 1960's coup is relatively soft compared the following ones. After 10 years of Democrat party rule, who took the government of the country from its military founders united in the PRP, the army intervened for several reasons, especially because of the dissatisfaction of the officers about their weakened position, but also because of some pro-soviet foreign policy choices. After the coup, DP politicians was jailed and three of them, the Prime minister Adnan Menderes and ministers Fatin Rüstü Zorlu and Hasan Polatkan were hanged, becoming since, martyrs of the right wing politicians.

The March 12th 1971 memorandum is an indirect coup, installing not the military at the power but a technical civilian government. Following the coup, left wing political movement and student movements was harshly repressed. The Worker's party of Turkey and the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey were shut down. Following the coup, more than 10 000 people, especially leftists, intellectuals and Kurds were jailed.

The following years in the country were particularly violent. After 1975, the military violence transformed the whole country on a permanent tension arena. During the decade leading to the 1980's coup, a polarization between "left" and "right" engraved in the political vocabulary, categories such as "nationalist", "islamist" or "revolutionary". Especially between 1977 and

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[7] Bozarslan Hamit, *Révolution et état de violence. Moyen-Orient 2011-2015*, Paris, CNRS Editions, 2015, p. 8.
[8] Balibar Etienne, *Violence et civilité*, Paris, Galilée, 2010, p. 34.

1980, streets of Turkey became permanent crime scenes where the ideological divisions led to a physical segregation, through specific cities and neighbourhoods. During these three years, each day brought hundreds of deaths from one "side" or from another. The "state of violence" increased to such a point that a popular newspaper summarized the situation in its front page with a sharp sentence: "to survive has become difficult!"[9].

Paradoxically, the September 12th 1980 coup cut the street violence of 3 years in one single night. Much later, Turks understood that the "Anarchy" (as Turkish newspapers and politicians were calling "political violence") was encouraged by the Army to justify and to legitimize their direct intervention. Between 1980 and 1983, Turkey lived under a ludicrous junta that installed a civilian regime after 1983 but under solid military control. Between 1980 and 1990, 650 000 people were jailed, almost 10 000 were tortured, and thousands were killed. If, as Ilter Turan says, the Turkish democratisation process advances with two steps forward and one step back[10], like Janissaries' walk, 1980-1990 period is, doubtless, a many steps backward period.

b) Symbolic violence

The physical violence of these thirty years was a part of general political, social, cultural and economic violence that characterizes Turkish politics. Indeed, these three decades were under constant direct or indirect military patronage and, thus, adopts the codes and behaviours of a military structure: hierarchy, chain of command, strict and without questioning respect of all instructions coming from the top, sacralisation of the State and it's chief and, legitimation of generalized violence in every day life, etc. Another reason of this generalized atmosphere has been the confirmation of Jacobinism and the reinforcement of bureaucratism. During these decades, Turkish politics was firmly against decentralisation process (and claims) because the centre doesn't trust at all the periphery. For example the seven "regions" of Turkey, invented by military junta have never had any administrative reality. Correspondingly, the political and bureaucratic class were decidedly against the development of a "civil society" and / or a "participative democracy" because simply the State doesn't trust its citizens[11].
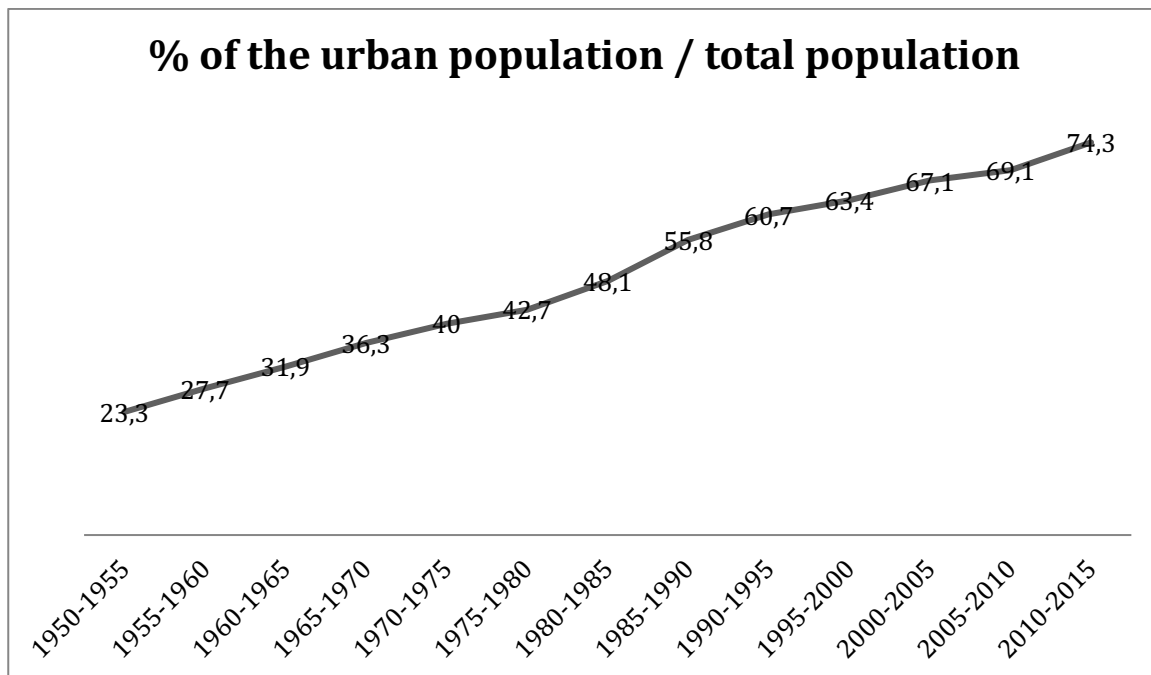
Paradoxically, the same years coincide with the increase of the number of "citizens" in the sense of urban inhabitants. Between 1960s and 1990s, Turkey witnessed an unprecedented rural exodus, creating, consequently, more "citizens" living in the cities and not in rural areas where the socialisation respects other rules. This trend that begun in 1960s became then structural, preparing an electoral basis for populist, conservative and eventually Islamist movements.

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[9] "Sağ kalmak zorlaştı", *Tercüman*, Septembre 7th 1978.
[10] Turan Ilter, "Two steps forward one step back, Turkey's democratic transformation", Rodrigez Carmen, Avalos Antonio, Yilmaz Hakan, Planet Ana (eds), *Turkey's Democratization Process*, London, Routledge, 2014, p. 43-66.
[11] Dönmez Rasim Özgür, "Beyond State-Led Nationalism: Ideal citizenship for Turkey" in Dönmez Rasim Özgür, Enneli Pinar, *Societal Peace and Ideal Citizenship for Turkey*; New York, Lexington, 2011, p. 9, (1-26)

Urbanization of Turkey[12]

% of the urban population / total population

23,3   27,7   31,9   36,3   40   42,7   48,1   55,8   60,7   63,4   67,1   69,1   74,3

1950-1955   1955-1960   1960-1965   1965-1970   1970-1975   1975-1980   1980-1985   1985-1990   1990-1995   1995-2000   2000-2005   2005-2010   2010-2015

Especially 1970s and 1980s are the age of *gecekondus[13]* and *arabesk*[14]. It's obvious that until 1990s former kemalist, secularist and statist political elite didn't or couldn't produce a comprehensive policy for this specific social category that became over the years the majority and took the power at the end of 1990s. As this section of the population suffered from constant domination and social symbolic violence in its everyday life, because devoid of social, cultural and financial capital to participate in the city's public life (*i.e.* politics) despite its growing number, that period left resentment, frustration, and vindictiveness. That is maybe why when the *plebus* took finally the economic and political power at the end of 1990s it's oppression became more violent than in previous periods but towards former secular bourgeoisie[15]. All the more so, the very same period is the beginning and the acceleration of an economic liberalization, under strict state control (a Turkish paradox[16]) that improved thereby widening the already existing gap between rich and poor classes. Unsurprisingly, the children of the former rural populations in the big cities formed, step by step, a new bourgeoisie, conservative but capitalist, economically liberal but ultranationalist, creating one of the several contradictory

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[12] Data compiled from the figures of Turkish Statistic Institute, *TUIK* :
https://biruni.tuik.gov.tr/medas/?kn=95&locale=tr

[13] Gecekondu means a house put up quickly without proper permission. The zones of Gecekondus constructed in 1970's became electoral basis of populist and Islamist movements in 1990's promising them a regularisation. Erman Tahire, Eken Aslihan, "The "Other of the Other" and "unregulated territories" in the urban periphery: *gecekondu* violence in the 2000s with a focus on the Esenler case, Istanbul", in *Cities*, vol. 21, n° 1, 2003, p. 57-68.

[14] *Arabesk* is an urban underclass music produced and consumed by former rural fringes born in the city, particularly considered as the symbol of degeneration by elite urban population. Yarar Betül, "Politics of/and popular Music: An analysis of the history of arabesk music from the 1960s to the 1990s in Turkey, in Cultural Studies, vol. 22, n° 1, 2007, p. 35-79.

[15] The best work drawing a long-term overview of this transformation is not an academic but literary one, Orhan Pamuk's, *A Strangeness in My Mind*, (New York, Penguin, 2015), tells the story of Istanbul from 1960's until 2000's from the eyes of a street yogurt vendor.

[16] Szyliowicz Joseph, *Politics, Technology and Development: decision making in the Turkish Iron and Steel Industry*, London, MacMillan, 1991, p. 71-74.

bourgeoisies in the Middle East like in Egypt or in Tunisia[17]. Therefore, the new dominant population of Turkey was ready to take the power, in the all senses of the term, but it confronted a resistance from the old bureaucratic, military, and business establishment, at least until the end of 1990's.

3. "Third Republic" 1990's – Today

Despite its specificities, Turkey has relatively open political system and society in the World. Therefore, the upheaval of the world that occurred at the beginning of 1990s touched strongly Turkish politics too. In the "second new deal" of the century, Turkish politics adapted while keeping some structural characteristics such as nationalism, centrism or statism. This adaptation had two directions: inside Turkey, Turkish politics mutated towards populism and Islamism step by step, and outside Turkey Ankara had to search a new role in the new world. This period can be divided into two sub-periods. From the half of 1990s until the end of 2000s a quick transfer of political capital has occurred from the ancient dominant class, to a new conservative but pro-European regime. 1990s are characterized by a low intensity war between Kurdish militants and Turkish Army and establishment. In the same period the main problematic of Turkish politics re-became the place of Islam in the public and political sphere. The second period that coincides to the last decade, witnesses a very strong authoritarian, Islam and capital based regime that is changing the tenets of the politics.

a) Kurdish issue and Islam issues are back

Turkish politics is a matter of fears, and the resurrection of "old demons" is lumpy but cyclical. After the period of 1920s, the Kurdish question did come back in the Turkish politics in 1960 within the general Turkish leftist movement. Its third resurrection is in 1990s making of this period one of the worst sanguinary eras of all the time with not only a military repression of the PKK[18], founded in 1978 and entered in a violent cyclone since 1984, but also through extra-judicial executions and assassinations of Kurdish business men, kidnappings and murders of intellectuals, torture in prisons, and so on and so forth. In the meantime, all political parties defending the Kurdish rights have been, one by one, shut down.

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[17] Osman Tarek, *Islamism: What It Means for the Middle East and the World*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2016.

[18] For a general view of the cruelty of 1990's see Bozarslan Hamit, "Human rights and the Kurdish issue in Turkey: 1984–1999", in *Human Rights Review*, Vol. 3, n° 1, 2001, p. 45-54.

Political parties banned because of Kurdish question[19]

Name of the Party	Date of closure	Political current
Türkiye İşçi Partisi (Turkish Workers' Party)	1971	Socialist
Türkiye Emekçi Partisi (Turkish Labour Party)	1980	Socialist
Türkiye Birleşik Komünist Partisi (Unified Communist Party of Turkey)	1991	Communist
Sosyalist Parti (Socialist Party)	1992	Socialist
Halkın Emek Partisi (Party of People's Labour)	1993	Pro-Kurdish
Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi (Party of Freedom and Democracy)	1993	Pro-Kurdish
Sosyalist Türkiye Partisi (Socialist Party of Turkey)	1993	Socialist
Demokrasi Partisi (Party of Democracy)	1994	Pro-Kurdish
Demokrasi ve Değişim Partisi (Party of Democracy and Change)	1996	Pro-Kurdish
Emek Partisi (Party of Labour)	1997	Socialist
Demokratik Kitle Partisi (Party of Democratic Mass)	1999	Pro-Kurdish
Halkın Demokrasi Partisi (Party of Democracy of People)	2003	Pro-Kurdish
Demokratik Toplum Partisi (Party of Democratic Society)	2009	Pro-Kurdish

It is true that with 2000s and with the relative détente in the Turkish politics, the Kurdish question have loosened, for a short moment, its intensity. Especially after 2002, when the AKP (Party of Justice and Development), defending at the time liberal values, came into power, the approach to the Kurdish question, exclusively militarist, changed. AKP came to the power in 2002, with a discourse of rupture in many structural fears of Turkey. When the traditional Turkish establishment was sceptical about the Europeanization process, thinking that it was a trap, AKP and its leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan, accelerated Europeanization reforms, not only economic liberalization but also society subjects such as the compatibility of Islam and democracy and, also, the Kurdish question. Indeed, after the second election of the AKP in 2007, consolidating firmly its power on the State, an unprecedented policy of "opening" was applied towards Kurds, aggregating Kurdish vote especially those who were committed to Islam. This policy did not last for long. AKP saw that it was easier to go back to the former nationalist and warmonger discourse to attract nationalist vote than resolving this one-century problem. Thus, since 2010, especially since the referendum of September 12th of that year, Turkish policy re-became traditional, using societal cleavages to keep and strengthen the power. Among these cleavages, the long-term rivalry between conservative Muslims and seculars, Sunnis and Alevis, and, as expected, between Turks and Kurds, have been instrumentalized successfully. AKP came to power to heal cleavages; it understood that the opposite was more beneficial and easier.

Precisely, another structural divide of the Turkish society was the opposition between traditional Sunnis on the one side, secular Sunnis and Alevis on the other. It's true that Islam has always been one of the main political parameters of the Turkish Politics. But, the outbreak of the Political Islam in 1970s changed radically the Turkish political deal. Nevertheless, this Political Islam, - organized under the Millî Görüs movement (National Vision) and embodied

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[19] Sancar Mithat, Akgönül Samim, « İnsan Hakları », in Oran Baskın (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası 2001-2012*, İstanbul, İletişim, 2013, p. 747.

by Necmettin Erbakan- was controlled by Military and Bureaucratic elite between 1970s and 1990s. As it is the case for the Kurdish movement, for political Islam too the main tool of brake was party bans.

Political parties banned because of Islamic activities

Name of the Party	Foundation	Closure	By	Reason
Millî Nizam Partisi (Party of National Order)	1970	1971	Constitutional court	"Activities against secularism"
Millî Selamet Partisi (Party of National Salvation)	1972	1981	Military court	Banned with all political parties
Refah Partisi (Party of Prosperity)	1983	1998	Constitutional court	"Activities against the principles of Secular Republic"
Fazilet Partisi (Party of Virtue)	1997	2001	Constitutional court	"Continuity of a banned party"

In 1990s, Millî Görüs movement became very successful especially in local elections. Thus, the local elections of 1994 asserted this success where municipalities of Ankara and Istanbul were obtained. In Istanbul, a young Islamist of 40 years old, Recep Tayyip Erdogan became the mayor. Between the general elections of 1995 and the indirect military Coup d'état of February 28th 1997, the Party of Prosperity settled as the fist political movement of the country and its leader Necmetin Erbakan became prime minister. During this period, Islamic activities and de-secularisation of the Turkish society accelerated and caused precisely the secularist reaction of the coup d'état. Paradoxically, "February 28th" provoked a democratic reaction in the country, resulting the foundation of the AKP in 2001, which took the power in 2002 and kept it until today under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Therefore, Islamization of politics and society started in 1990s continued since, becoming one of the three mainstream political currents of Turkey, alongside with the secularist movement and the Kurdish one.

b) More authority, less ethics

Since its foundation in 2001, the AKP won
- Five General elections: 2002 (34%); 2007 (46,5%); 2011 (49%); June 2015 (40%); and November 2015 (48%)
- Three Local elections: 2004 (46%); 2009 (42%); 2014 (45,5%)
- Three constitutional referendums: 2007 (69%); 2010 (58%); 2017 (51%)
- One Presidential elections: 2014 (51%)

As it is clear, except the elections of June 2015[20], election-by-election, the AKP consolidated its power, not only at the level of votes but also at the level of domination of the entire state apparatus, annihilating step by step the very fragile Aristotelian separation of powers, conceptualized by Montesquieu, between Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. Particularly between the 2008 and 2012 era, where via Ergenekon and Balyoz trials military power has been dominated, but especially since 2010 referendum, the AKP has tackled a tremendous task in order to transform the traditional politics of Turkey. But if the purpose of this mutation was at

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[20] This is the only election where AKP lost 8% compared to the previous elections, especially thanks to the/because of the Kurdish movements that constituted a coalition with liberals, ecologists and Human rights defenders. This lost caused a radical change in the AKP's policies towards Kurds, from open negotiation to pitiless repression.

the beginning within the framework of more democracy to liberate Islamic behaviours, it became after 2010 to obtain general domination of Islam, restraining non-Islamic behaviours. Islam passed from the status of an object of politics to the status of THE subject of politics. It's true that one of the main characteristics of Turkish politics, since its foundation, was and still is, the ideology of "shaping generations". It has been applied excessively by the pioneer Kemalists or by the military junta of 1980. But this objective has never been that openly applied since 1920s as it is by the AKP. Changing political behaviour and public appearance, shifting the educational system from top to bottom to fix the Islamist agenda, unprecedented growth of the political and social role of the *Diyanet*, transforming the judicial reflexes, and finally legitimizing all superficial Islamic discourses, even those against the legal rules of Turkey, are some of the patterns of this "shaping generations" project. Children born in 2001 are today 18 years old and have seen only Recep Tayyip Erdogan as a leader, and are educated under Islamic and nationalist programs. Moreover, the cocktail of Islamism and Nationalism being exasperated during the last decade, is susceptible to reconstruct profoundly Turkish politics.

That being said, if at the level of identity Turkish politics is moving away by giant steps from the western political values, at another level, it is completely within. As a matter of fact, one of the main political masters of the "post truth" era with "alternative facts" becoming realities hiding the real realities!, is Recep Tayyip Erdogan alongside with Vladimir Putin or Donald Trump. Turkish politics is worshiping capitalism but a dirigist one where nepotism, endemic corruption within and outside of the state apparatus, lack of coherence in the internal and external policy are, today, mainstream characteristics. But above all, there is a huge ethic crisis of Islamists who, precisely, dominated the society by mobilizing a discourse on moral and ethics.

Conclusion

Foucault's pendulum is an illusion explaining reality. In its rotation, the pendulum comes always back to its initial position but turning around a circle. In Turkish politics, cycles are present but the pendulum turns around the same central problem: identity. As Turkey is the last nation that resulted from the Ottoman Empire, it repeats over and over debates on its own identity related to the imperial past, to the religion, to the language and to the ethnicity. Thus, if politics changed over time, not only they came back to their initial positions but also they still turn around this identity centre. Turkish politics therefore is in a constant legitimation process of Turks in Turkey. In this country the political positions are mainly related to nationalism and Islamism with a distorted perspective on History. Is Turkey heir of the Ottoman Empire or was it founded against Ottoman Empire? Is Turkey a Muslim country or, on the contrary, its specificity is coercive secularism? Are Turks an ethnic group or citizens of Turkey? These questions, and many others touching the permanent identity crisis, constitutes the heart of Turkish politics. The politics throughout Republic was the management of the identity divisions. In the third period, but especially during the last decade the islamo-nationalists of the AKP understood that the management was ineffective, at least not effective as the instrumentalisation of these divisions. Thus, with the referendum of 2017 changing regime towards a presidential one, without the balance of power but with a "convergence" of power under the incontestable leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkish politics is deepening the very existing interpenetrated identity divides, to defend, each time, the majority's side: AKP is Islamist in the divide between Islamists and seculars, it is Sunni in the divide between Sunnis and Alevis, and it is Turkish, in the divide between Turks and Kurds, and so on and so forth. The new generation of Turkish politics seems to come back to its centre, identity matters, but in an opposite way.

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