

The decline and resurrection of Turkish Islamism: the story of Tayyip Erdogan's AKP

AUTHOR(S)

Ihsan Yilmaz, Greg Barton, James Barry

PUBLICATION DATE

01-01-2017

HANDLE

10536/DRO/DU:30107148

Downloaded from Deakin University's Figshare repository

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code: 00113B



The decline and resurrection of Turkish Islamism: the story of Tayyip Erdoğan's AKP

Citation:
Yilmaz, Ihsan, Barton, Greg and Barry, James 2017, The decline and resurrection of Turkish Islamism: the story of Tayyip Erdoğan's AKP*, Journal of citizenship and globalisation studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 48-62.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/jcgs-2017-0005

© 2017, The Authors

Reproduced by Deakin University under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial No-Derivatives Licence

Downloaded from DRO:
http://hdl.handle.net/10536/DRO/DU:30107148

DRO
Deakin Research Online,
Deakin University's Research Repository

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code: 00113B

Research Article **Open Access**

Ihsan Yilmaz*, Greg Barton, James Barry

The Decline and Resurgence of Turkish Islamism: The Story of Tayyip Erdoğan's AKP

https://doi.org/10.1515/jcgs-2017-0005

Abstract: For decades, Turkish Islamists have failed to attract the votes of large sections of society and remained marginal. As a result of this failure to come to power, and due to domestic and international constraints and windows of opportunities, they have declared that they have jettisoned Islamism. Many Turkish Muslims whose religious disposition was shaped by the pluralistic urban Ottoman experience and small-town Anatolian traditionalism, and by the contesting currents of cosmopolitan pluralism and rural social conservatism, voted in favour of these former Islamists who have become "Muslim Democrats". This paper elaborates on the genealogy of Turkish Islamists and their political trajectories and argues that when the forces and constraints of domestic and external social, political and economic conditions disappeared and the opportunities derived from being Muslim Democrats no longer existed, the former Islamists easily returned to their original ideology, showing that despite assertions to the contrary their respect for democracy and pluralism had not truly been internalised. This paper also aims to demonstrate that similar to other authoritarian populists, Erdoganists perceive the state and its leader as more important than anything else and as being above everything else, which has culminated in a personality cult and sanctification of the state. As long as Turkey's economy continued to boom, almost everyone was happy that Turkey could readily market the "Muslim Democrats" story to the whole world for a long period as a major success story, or as an "exemplary Muslim country" or "model". Yet, Middle Eastern elites and Western forces got carried away and learnt the hard way just how naive their view was in perhaps the first great transformation movement of the twenty-first century – the Arab Spring. Likewise, the Turkish Spring turned all too quickly towards autumn and then winter.

Keywords: Turkey, Islamism, muslim democrats, populism, authoritarianism, erdoganism, personality cult

1 Introduction

Former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*) Islamism, like all forms of Islamism, was shaped to a significant degree by the prototypical Islamism of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin*) but it was never as radical as the Muslim Brotherhood. Whereas the Muslim Turkish aspired to a roots-and-branch (literally "radical") transformation of the Egyptian political system, the National Outlook Islamists wanted the freedom to live in an Islamically "pure" way within the Turkish Republic by establishing what they called a "Just System" (*Adil Düzen*) that was never clearly defined.

***Corresponding author: Ihsan Yilmaz,** Research Chair in Islamic Studies and Intercultural Dialogue, Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalization, Deakin University, E-mail: ihsan.yilmaz@deakin.edu.au

Open Access. © 2017 Ihsan Yilmaz et al., published by De Gruyter Open. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 3.0 License.

This meant that the majority of Turkey's National Outlook Islamists found it relatively easy to accommodate the AKP's post-Islamist or "Muslim Democrat" position from 2001 to 2013. The AKP of 2001–2013 (the 'Muslim Democrat' phase) was, in many ways, a success story in terms of "democratic learning and moderation" (Yilmaz 2009). A relatively small remnant of the hard-core Islamists, including National Outlook leader Necmettin Erbakan, remained staunchly and radically Islamist in their outlook. Nevertheless, most of those who had left Erbakan's Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*) when it was dissolved in 1998 and went on, via the short-lived Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*), to found the AKP in 2001 – by which point Erbakan had founded the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi Partisi*) – rejected Islamism.

For at least a decade after the AKP came to power in 2002 it appeared as if the progressive elements in the party pushing a "Muslim Democrat" orientation would succeed in their national project of democratic consolidation, cementing pluralist Islamic democracy in place of Islamist politics. Nevertheless, with the violent crack-down on the peaceful Gezi Park protestors in mid-2013, it became very apparent that Erdoğan, then Prime Minister, was sufficiently irritated by Turkey's growing openness and democratisation to risk his reputation as a democrat to begin acting in an overtly authoritarian fashion. The backlash that he was met with during the Gezi Park protests strengthened his anti-Western paranoia and his resolve to silence dissent. Consequently, when faced with serious allegations of large-scale systemic corruption in December 2013, Erdoğan responded with the first of a series of authoritarian purges of the judiciary and civil service. Eight months later, when he stepped down from the executive office of the head of the government to the, ostensibly, largely symbolic office of head of state, Erdoğan made it clear that he intended to act as an all-powerful executive president. For the next two and a half years, his extraordinarily far-reaching *de facto* authority was unquestioned. Even so, the April 2017 referendum was always intended to achieve formal confirmation of Erdoğan's supreme presidential powers, unfettered by any effective checks and balances. The mysterious coup attempt of 15 July 2016, and the shift to emergency rule under the outspoken president, afforded Erdoğan the extraordinary powers that the April referendum was intended to make permanent, even if only temporarily. Along the way, many Muslim Democrats within the AKP were pushed aside, including figures as senior as Ahmet Davutoğlu and Abdullah Gül who had served as Foreign Minister, President and Prime Minister, and with their departure went the hope of democratic consolidation. Ideology aside, a large part of this story is Erdoğan's increasingly naked quest for unchallenged power.

This paper, focussing primarily on the institutional realm of political parties, provides a succinct summary of Turkish Islamism's evolution to post-Islamism or Muslim Democracy under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and its subsequent regression to Islamism – or, at least, its Erdoganist variant – after driving change for more than a decade. The paper argues that when the forces and constraints of domestic and external social, political and economic conditions disappeared and the opportunities resulting from being Muslim Democrats were no longer soundly reinforced, some former Islamist leaders returned all too easily to their original ideology, showing that despite assertions to the contrary, the values of the Muslim Democrats, their respect for democracy and pluralism, had not been truly internalised.

The Turkish experience is unique in the Muslim World in the sense that, via the AKP, the Islamists were able to come to power after turning their backs on their former Islamist ideology and remain in power for more than a decade; but when the constraints and opportunities that supported the post-Islamist democrats disappeared, some powerful AKP leaders surrounding Erdoğan quickly reverted to their earlier Islamism. Understanding this case study is of critical importance in analysing other Islamist movements and parties across the Muslim world.

After briefly defining Islamism, the paper gives a short account of the emergence of Islamism in the Ottoman Empire and then proceeds to define post-Islamism. The paper then looks at the re-emergence of Islamism in Turkey after a staunchly secularist Kemalist period that witnessed a softened approach towards public manifestations of Islam in the post-1950 multi-party era. Until the late 1990s, Turkish Islamists under the leadership of Erbakan grew electorally stronger, culminating in Erbakan becoming the first Islamist Prime Minister of Turkey. In the end, however, the Kemalist hegemony harshly pushed back and staged a soft coup against Erbakan, triggering his resignation and the emergence of the Muslim Democrats.

After summarising these developments, the paper proceeds to examine the consolidation of democracy during the AKP's first decade in power and how promising gains were washed away by the raging torrents of self-interest as democracy ultimately gave way to Islamist autocracy under the increasingly nepotistic and authoritarian rule of Erdoğan.

2 Evolution of Islamism and Post-Islamism

Islamism represents the instrumentalisation of Islam by individuals, groups and organisations to pursue political objectives. It provides political responses to today's societal challenges by imagining a future whose foundations rest on reappropriated and reinvented concepts "borrowed" from the Islamic tradition (Denoeux 2002, 61). On the one hand, it represents a radical challenge to the modern nation state; on the other hand, Islamism is characterised by exclusivist claims of a monopoly on religious knowledge and universal responsibility. Conversely, inclusion, political pluralism, democratic compromise, and acceptance of differences in belief, are anathema to Islamism. Islamists of all persuasions, including adherents of Turkey's more moderate National Outlook movement, have a deep conviction that "Islam is the answer" to virtually all of the problems bedevilling the modern world. This has its origins in the original slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood – "*al-islam huwwa al-hal*" – which referred to the central ideological premise put forward by the Brotherhood that all policy issues, from education to healthcare, would benefit from Islamisation" (Ghobadzadeh 2015).

Islamists endeavour to articulate an Islamic ideology that responds to society's current political, economic and cultural deficits. They imagine Islam as a complete and ready-to-use "divine system, with its superior political model, cultural codes, legal structure and economic arrangement – a system that responds to all human problems. More importantly, this Islam was to offer Muslims a sense of self-respect, self-confidence, and a discursive autonomy" (Bayat 2007, 14). Islamists argue that Muslims today must return to the roots of their religion and be united politically. Islamism "entails a political ideology articulating the idea of the necessity of establishing an Islamic government, understood as government which implements the Shari'ah" (Ismail 2004, 616).

The Young Ottomans, a secret society established in 1865 to resist the Tanzimat reforms of the Ottoman Empire, were the first to respond to colonialism and Western hegemony. Using the techniques of modern apologetics they attempted to formulate some "Islamic" responses to demands that Islamic society had of modernism by borrowing from the West. They argued however that many of the most lauded achievements of the West such as parliamentarism were in fact also rooted in original Islamic sources (Türköne 1994, see also Mardin 1962). This was a matter of both conviction and strategy. One of their principal aims was to challenge the authoritarianism of the Sultanic regime. Yet, they knew that they would be unable to mobilise the Sultan's subjects with Western ideas, ideals and concepts so they dressed their reformist ideas in religious garb and instrumentalised Islam for their political objectives.

Thus, the Young Ottomans could be seen, in some respects, as Islamist predecessors of the reformers Jamaluddin Afghani and Muhammad Abduh who, as pioneering intellectual figures of Islamic modernism, were progressives but whose work also made possible the subsequent emergence of reactionary Islamism. Islamism as movement first emerged as a critical response to Western colonialism in the 1920s but continued to evolve and develop even after Muslim-majority states across the Middle East, North Africa and Asia gained independence and experimented with nationalism and socialism.

Islamism's seminal thinkers and activists established their organisations mainly in Egypt and South Asia, whilst fiercely secular/laic Republican Turkey was, from its establishment in 1923, under an authoritarian one-party regime that did not allow room for unfettered public, let alone political, manifestations of Islam. Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and Pakistan's *Jamaat-i-Islami*'s foundations were laid by Hasan al-Banna who established the Brotherhood in 1928, and Sayyid Abul'Ala Maududi (1903–79) who founded *Jamaat-i-Islami* in 1941. Like al-Banna and Maududi, most prominent Sunni Islamists have been strict advocates of Salafism, a broad family of fundamentalist movements whose proponents – regardless of their political

attitudes – vehemently reject Sufism and all forms of mystical practices and theosophical ideas, focus intensely on scriptural positivism, and generally give lesser importance to the inner dimension of religious life. Building on this base of Salafi puritanism the founding fathers of Islamism reinvented religion as a here-and-now materialist contest for power rather than as a spiritual journey – in other words, as a political ideology and not a theological or socio-cultural construct (Ayoob 2005, 952).

As a result of the Islamists' failure to come to power across the Muslim world, some Islamists started questioning and reformulating their ideology. Some European writers (mostly French), view post-Islamism as the Islamists' change in strategy, tactics, and attitudes following the collapse, or 'failure', of Islamism (Roy 2004, Kepel 2004). In Bayat's formulation, post-Islamism is the quest to limit the role of religion in politics and represents a pivot away from the reactionary critique of the modern nation state towards a more progressive acceptance of the modern reality of profound and enduring pluralism. According to this definition, post-Islamist values are the values of democracy, human rights, equal citizenship, and modernity (Bayat 1996, 45).

3 Re-Emergence of Islamism in the Kemalist Republic

Mustafa Kemal was a member of the Young Turks group of reformers that emerged in the early twentieth century to rebel against Sultan Abdul Hamid II, culminating in the 1908 Young Turk Revolution that opened the way for parliamentary democracy. As a republican reformist and revolutionary leader Mustafa Kemal built substantially upon the ideological foundation of the Young Turks, including the core elements of nationalism, a positivist belief in the value of objective scientific truth, a faith in the power of education to spread this truth and elevate the people, and a deep, implicit belief in the role of the state as the primary guide and mover in society (Zürcher 2004, 128).

The Kemalists, as those around Mustafa Kemal became known, defined progress as being intrinsically bound up with the management and control of Islam. Thus, secularism was not only applied as a separation of state and religion, but also as the removal of religion's influence on the state and the establishment of complete state control over the remaining religious institutions. The Kemalists espoused a modified version of French laicism, emphasizing monopolistic state control of religious expression and institutions and criminalising private religious instruction, teaching, institutions, associations and congregations. Kemalism saw Islam and the associated "Ottoman worldview" as some of the most important reasons for Turkey's backwardness (Heper 2000, 71–72).

The Kemalists were not content with merely constructing the Turkish Republic as a passive secular system, but rather took it upon themselves to become missionaries for secularism. They not only completely secularised the legal system but also endeavoured to secularise society by instrumentally using Western-transplanted secular family laws (Yilmaz 2002, 2003). At the same time, the Kemalists were well aware of Islam's historical, cultural and social potential to influence the masses with direct political ramifications. Consequently, the Kemalists decided to use Islam as a political instrument and as a core component of their corporatist ideology (Parla and Davison 2004). Instead of merely separating Islam from the affairs of state they embarked on a campaign to tightly manage all aspects of Islam in the public sphere via the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*), the government department that controls all mosques and employs all imams and preachers in Turkey. Through the *Diyanet* the Kemalist state strictly controlled Islam by monopolistically managing the mosques and religious instruction, ensuring that all imams were government officials answerable to the *Diyanet*, and authoring a wide range of official religious texts from Friday sermons to Qur'anic commentaries. In other words, Islam was not disestablished, it was differently established (Davison 2003, 341). The Turkish state not only tried to control religion but also endeavoured to construct a Kemalism-friendly version of nationalist Turkish Islam by using the *Diyanet* (Yilmaz 2005a, 2005b, 2013 and 2016). Up until the present, the state has continued to retain official monopoly over public expressions of Islam whilst ensuring that it remains a punishable offence to teach Islam privately and to open private mosques not under the tutelage of *Diyanet* imams

The Kemalists came to see pluralism as constituting a clear and imminent threat to the nation state. This was, in part, a product of their desire for a state that exercised strong control and commanded uncontested loyalty but it was also an impulse confirmed against a backdrop of a plethora of ethnic and religious identities breaking off one by one from the Ottoman Empire as it collapsed. The Kemalists viewed ethnic and religious diversity as being inherently dangerous because of its potential to fracture the Republic (Kehl-Bodrogi 2003, 64). They saw minority groups as open to being deceived by 'external forces', which were forever lying in wait to divide the nation by exploiting their weaknesses.

This deeply internalised fear is often referred to as the "Sèvres Complex", a term originating from the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres, which threatened to reduce post-Ottoman Turkey to a minor rump state in Central Anatolia. The Treaty of Sèvres was overturned three years later by the Treaty of Lausanne after the nationalist forces led by Mustafa Kemal prevailed in the War of Independence. Whilst Mustafa Kemal viewed European civilisation as the zenith of progress and the epitome of modernity, he was at the same time suspicious of Europe's power and designs on the Ottoman Empire. He confessed to an interviewer in 1923 that the West was "an entity that, seeing us as an inferior society, has exerted its best efforts to encompass our destruction" (Hanioğlu 2011, 57).

Thus, on the one hand, the Kemalists enthusiastically espoused many aspects of Western civilisation, but on the other, they lived in constant fear that the Western powers wanted to divide and rule Turkey. They firmly believed that behind the Islamic dissidents, leftists, socialists, communists, Kurds and Alevis, there was always at least one Western state, if not several, working to destroy the Republic. Thus, a unique mixture of Turkish nationalist, secularist, Sunni Islamic, and modified European laicist traditions contributed to the defining political philosophy of the Turkish Republic that came to be known as Kemalism (Hurd 2008, 66).

As a result of their dark fears, made concrete in the Sèvres Complex, the Kemalists, followed in the path of their predecessors, the Young Turks who ruled the Ottoman Empire between 1908 and 1918, in striving to create a homogenous secular Sunni Turkish nation state. In this formulation, Sunni Muslim-ness played an important role as a marker of sociological identity set in opposition to the non-Muslim, Alevi and other minorities. This phenomenon of religion being used a social identity marker as opposed to being regarded as a matter of personal faith has been dubbed "belonging without believing" (Hervieu-Léger 2003).

To this end, the Kemalists used the state's hard and soft power to the maximum extent, often with great intensity. The instruments of the state's hard power, such as forced migration, population transfer, legal sanctions and penalties (Yilmaz 2002, 2003, 2005a) were used to impose uniformity on Turkish society. In addition, the resources of educational and religious institutions, the media, the arts and such, which Althusser (1971) called "ideological state apparatuses" in addition to organic intellectuals (Gramsci 1971) were used to socially engineer the "acceptable citizen" (Yilmaz 2013, 2014, 2015) and reify a homogeneous nation-building process. The state tried to create a homogenous nation in line with the Kemalist / Atatürkist ideology by socially engineering ideal acceptable citizens that Yilmaz (2013) called "Homo LASTus", i.e., ***L***aicist, ***A***tatürkist, ***S***unni and ***T***urkish human beings. Others of this acceptable citizen identity such as the Kurds, Alevis, non-Muslims, leftists, and dissident practicing Muslims were discriminated against and occasionally vilified.

With few exceptions, the Kemalists held no brief for pluralism or democracy until 1950. Up until the middle of the century, a positivist and secularist elite ruled the country in an uncontested fashion. After 1950, in order to qualify to join the new North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) military alliance established in April 1949, the Kemalists allowed a limited democratic plurality and multi-party politics whilst maintaining Kemalist hegemony. In the decades that followed, the Kemalists focussed on maintaining a lock on the military and judiciary. In other organs of the state and political domains, the Kemalists were forced to accept power sharing with leftists, liberal democrats, Islamists, Alevis and Kurds. Through all this they succeeded in ensuring that non-Kemalists were unable to rise to prominent positions in the military and judiciary. Thus, whenever leftist, pro-Kurdish, Alevi or Islamist movements of political parties threatened the hegemonic *status quo*, either a military coup took place or the Constitutional Court closed down the anti-hegemonic political parties.

The Islamic identity and cultural discourse of observant Muslims who found inspiration in the Ottoman period had, to a large extent, been delegitimised and excluded by Republican Kemalist elites up

until the middle of the century. The role of Islam in the public sphere had been radically marginalised as the Kemalists pursued a policy of extreme intolerance, leaving no room for the public expression of private interpretations of Islam. The resulting bitterness on the part of observant Muslims being steadily pushed away from power by the Kemalists produced a psychological trauma that was inherited by subsequent generations. This psychology gave rise to the sense of being, "A pariah in one's own homeland" (Kısakürek 1988, 399).

Alongside their exclusion from the political domain, the banning of Sufi brotherhoods and lodges, together with the *Diyanet*'s control of mosques and religious institutions, meant that observant Muslims were left without a voice in public life. They dared not directly challenge the state's monopoly over Islam. Nevertheless, many of the Sufi brotherhoods and other Ottoman era religious communities quietly continued their existence without making too much noise and by being careful not to be seen to claim any public or official role. In return, the Republican officials generally turned a blind eye to their existence.

Some religious leaders and teachers even became official imams and preachers in the employment of the *Diyanet*. As a result, some of them were able to exercise a degree of quiet leadership and eventually, when circumstances finally permitted, play a role in national public life. For example, the *Naqshbandi* sheikh, Mehmed Zahid Kotku (1897–1980) was influential amongst the university youth in Istanbul. Kotku preached that it was the duty of observant Muslims to take an active interest in national affairs. When the political arena opened up following Turkey's second military coup in 1971, Kotku played an important role in establishing the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi*) (1972–80), having earlier been active in setting up its precursor, the Republic's first Islamist party, the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*) (1970–71). Necmettin Erbakan, leader of both these parties, acknowledged that most of his fellow party leaders were disciples of Kotku (Mardin 2005, 157, Smith 2005, 316).

Since 1970 Erbakan's National Outlook Islamists have established six significant political parties: (1) the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi* – MNP) (1970–1971); (2) the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi* – MSP) (1972–1980); (3) the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi* – RP) (1983–1998); (4) the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* – FP) (1997–2001); (5) the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi* – SP) (2001–present); and (6) the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – AKP) (2001–present). There have been several other Islamist parties not aligned with the National Outlook movement but these have been small and marginal.

From the time of its launch, Erbakan's Islamist National Outlook movement embraced a set of inspiring yet ambiguous references to the Ottoman past and directed criticism against "cosmopolitanism" as opposed to the "national" (Dağı 2008, 25). Erbakan considered his Islamist parties as being "the political expression of the Turkish part of the *umma* or global Muslim community" (Yıldız 2003, 187). In Erbakan's view, Turkey's identity and future was unambiguously bound up with the Muslim world, rather than with the West.

Their political ambitions might never have been as ambitiously radical as those of their Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood colleagues, but the rhetoric of National Outlook politicians, from Erbakan down, has always been tinged with an intolerant and exclusivist tone. They justified their rhetoric by alleging that they were obliged to champion the interests of an *umma* constantly facing pernicious opposition from a monolithic "other". For half a century, they have consistently blamed all others as blind imitators of the West. The National Outlook leaders have habitually resorted to Manichean binary oppositions, implying that they alone stood for the truth and that all other political parties were on a diametrically opposite side. They asserted that "they are the ones who convey the truth, and this truth, which happens to be God's message, would be accepted by all when it is freely expressed by the party". The extraordinary hubris of this position was captured by Erbakan, who proclaimed in a speech, addressing his party at a meeting in Sivas in January 1991: "If you do not serve the Welfare Party your prayers would not be accepted [by God] because there is no other way to be a Muslim... This party is an army of Jihad. Are you a Muslim? Then you should be a soldier in this army" (Gümüşçü and Sert 2009, 956). In Erbakan's view, "elections are the counting of Muslims in Turkey" (Yıldız 2003, 193). His party's semi-official daily *Milli Gazete* regularly ran headlines like this one from 4 October 1973 onward: "The clash of beliefs, not parties in the election" (Yıldız 2003, fn. 19).

The National Outlook Party (NOP) was shut down after the 1971 military coup on the grounds that it was against secularism. In the wake of the coup, in October 1972, the NSP was founded as replacement to the NOP, with an ideology that was effectively identical. By this point the Turkish economy was beginning to take off and Erbakan envisaged that a stronger Turkey, boosted by the rapid expansion of Anatolian industry, would start to loosen the ties with the West and would become the leader of the Muslim world under the umbrella of a Muslim Common Market, with the Islamic *dinar* as its common currency. He also dreamt of a Muslim Defence Alliance being developed that would ensure that the Muslim world, led by Turkey, would no longer be beholden to Western interests. After Turkey's third military coup in 1980, the NSP was also closed down together with all other political parties. When the army finally "returned to the barracks" three years later, Erbakan seized the opportunity to found a National Outlook party under a new name – the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*). The Welfare's ideology did not differ substantially from that of the NSP and the NOP before it. Styling itself as a protest movement, "it successfully mobilised the reactions of those voters who saw themselves deprived by the privileged class of so-called 'White Turks'" (Yıldız 2003, 188). The target audience for Welfare Party discourse was the neglected, marginalised, economically deprived, socially conservative urban-fringe and small-town masses of Anatolia (Yıldız 2003, 188). With its anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian rhetoric, the Welfare Party became the most attractive counter-hegemonic choice for subaltern populations and urban poor areas in metropolitan centres, most of who had only recently migrated from the Anatolian interior. In addition many Kurds and conservative rural communities started supporting the party (Tuğal 2002, 93). At the same time, the Welfare Party also proved itself relatively successful in mobilising socially conservative elites, women, and educated populations. As White (2003) has documented, everyday concerns, face-to-face relationships, and meaningful interactions with the voters through trusted neighbours paved the way for the Welfare Party's access to community networks.

Since its foundation in 1983 the Welfare Party steadily increased its share of the votes and in the 1994 general local elections, it won the municipalities of Istanbul (Tayyip Erdoğan became the mayor) and Ankara. And then in 1996, as the larger partner of a coalition government with the True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi*), Necmettin Erbakan became Turkey's first Islamist Prime Minister. The Kemalist establishment via the military and judiciary eventually succeeded in forcing Erbakan to resign in June 1997 in what has been called a "post-modern" coup. In January 1998, the Constitutional Court closed down the Welfare Party and banned Erbakan from politics for five years. Erbakan's new party was already organized before the closure decision. The Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* – FP) continued to operate under Recai Kutan's (Erbakan's close friend) leadership until it was also shut down by the Constitutional Court in June 2001.

4 The "Muslim Democrats" Decade (2001–2013)

Younger generation Islamists such as Abdullah Gül and Tayyip Erdoğan understood that the enduring existence of *de jure* and *de facto* constraints imposed upon the Islamist political parties by the Kemalist establishment meant that they would never be allowed to rule Turkey as Islamists (Çavdar 2006, 480). These younger generation Islamists also recognised that whilst Erbakan used Islamist rhetoric to present the National Outlook as defending the interests of all observant Muslims, he had failed to gain the support of many religious communities (*cemaat*s) and Sufi orders (*tarikat*s). Many influential religious communities such as the *Süleymancı*s (the followers of Sufi leader Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan), the Gülen Movement (Barton 2006 and 2013), the *Nurcu*s (followers of Said Nursi who was a representative of Civil Islam in Turkey, which includes Fethullah Gülen), and most of those with origins in Sufi orders consistently voted for centre-right parties rather than the Islamist National Outlook parties.

At the same time, several of the observant Muslim groups that had been supporting Erbakan had also started questioning the feasibility of Islamism as a political ideology after the "soft coup" of February 28, 1997 that ousted Erbakan as prime minister. Moreover, practicing Muslim businessmen and the middle classes became aware that the social and economic networks of Islam had suffered the greatest harm

when Islamism was at its peak in the late 1990s. As a consequence, many began to withdraw their support for National Outlook Islamism. At this point, the idea of a "social" or "civil" rather than "political" Islam began to gain ground (Dağı 2008, 27).

Many members of the younger generation of Islamists realised that in light of domestic and international developments in the years following the 1997 post-modern coup and in the aftermath of the September 11 al-Qaeda attacks of 2001, "the old discourse and actions of the previous [Islamist] parties had become 'useless' and they called for an accommodationist rather than a confrontational approach" (Çavdar 2006, 482). Many began to state that they had jettisoned Islamism and they started asserting support for universal values along with a values-based discourse that includeding human rights, democracy, and free market principles. They turned their backs on Erbakan's confrontational, divisive, anti-Western and anti-EU Islamist rhetoric. Whilst acknowledging the importance of Islam as a personal belief and value system, they argued that they were ready to accommodate themselves within the secular constitutional framework (Mecham 2004, 350, Yilmaz 2009, 2011).

As a result, the new Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* – FP) exhibited some significant deviations from conventional Islamist ideology, particularly on the issues of human rights and democracy, leading some observers to begin to label it a post-Islamist party. These differences were linked to a schism within the National Outlook movement. These developments saw a new group emerge within the party known as the "Renewalists" (*Yenilikçiler*) or "Muslim Democrats". Because of concerns that the Constitutional Court could close down their parties on the basis of opposing laicism, instead of calling themselves "Muslim Democrats", these younger-generation, former Islamists preferred to style themselves as "Conservative Democrats". Nevertheless, it was clear that by "conservative", they meant observant Muslim. In stark opposition to the pro-Erbakan traditionalists (*Gelenekçiler*), the Muslim Democrats unambiguously defended democracy, respect for human rights, pluralism, the EU accession process, and an Anglo-Saxon type secularism that was not hostile to public manifestations of religion.

The Virtue Party was composed of both Islamists and Muslim Democrats and participated in one general election and one local election, both in 1999. At the general elections, it received 15.4% of the votes and at the local elections 18.4%. Even though the party had an ostensibly post-Islamist ideology and distanced itself from the anti-Western rhetoric, in the eyes of the hegemonic Kemalist establishment it had not done enough to make a break with the National Outlook Islamism of Erbakan's banned Welfare Party. As a result the party was forced to close when, on 22 June 2001, the Constitutional Court found the Virtue Party guilty of both being a continuation of a previously banned party and not being fully compliant with Turkish laicism.

The Constitutional Court banning, together with the National Outlook–Muslim Democrat schism within the Virtue Party, paved the way for the formation of two new political parties. Erbakan's old friends (*Gelenekçiler*) responded to the banning by establishing the Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi Partisi – SP), which continued to advocate Erbakan's National Outlook ideology, whilst the Muslim Democrats officially broke with National Outlook ideology and announced that their new party was a centre-right conservative democratic party. They called their party the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP).

In the first general election after the break-up of the Turkish Islamists in November 2002, the new Muslim Democrat AKP had a truly impressive victory with 34.4% votes whilst the Islamist Felicity Party (SP) could only muster 2.5%. In 2007, the gap between these parties grew even bigger as the AKP increased its share to 46.4%, and the SP continued to languish with a mere 2.3%. By the time of the November 2015 general election, the SP's share of the votes had shrunk down to 0.7% whilst the AKP increased its share of the votes to 48.9%. The SP has not been able to gain any seats in the parliament and is now considered an insignificant and marginal political force. The AKP has dominated Turkish politics since the November 2002 elections in a manner unprecedented by any party in a nation accustomed to multi-party politics and complex coalition governments.

After the AKP won the 2002 elections and formed a single party government, it commenced work on the reforms that were required to facilitate EU accession. The AKP was fully aware that the European Union could be of critical help in its effort to gain political legitimacy in the eyes of the establishment and the

masses that did not vote for it. With this in mind, the AKP vowed to take all necessary steps for reform for Turkey to qualify for the start of EU accession negotiations. By positioning itself as an ardent supporter and promoter of Turkey's EU membership bid, the AKP leadership challenged the Kemalist hegemony in its advocacy of Westernisation (Grigoriadis 2009, 1199). The AKP was able to push through the constitutional changes required for the accession bid with the help of the leftist and Kemalist Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* – CHP), the main opposition party.

The steps taken by the AKP towards EU accession were collectively referred to as representing a "Democratic Opening". They related to reforms to solve ethnic and religious minority issues, to open doors to economic liberalism, for national re-orientation as West facing rather than East facing, to replace military hard power with soft power, and to assuming the role of regional mediator. The AKP tried to break the Kemalist bureaucratic hegemony and its militarist tutelage by strengthening the separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary, the freedom of the press and the rule of law. With this pro-EU and pro-democratisation agenda, the AKP was able to establish political alliances with liberal, democratic, practicing Muslim, Kurdish and Islamist groups as well as with the EU, in consolidating its power. It also effectively used various approaches in its political discourse such as neo-conservatism, neoliberalism, Islamism, and victimisation in consolidating its remarkable hold on the electorate (Kaya 2015, 62).

When Turkey under the leadership of the AKP attained the status of candidate country for accession to the European Union, it meant that the West had confirmed its having reached a certain level of democratic maturity. This was of tremendous help in the face of the hostility from the Kemalist hegemony, especially within the military and judiciary. Despite the religious and conservative character of the party and its supporters, they successfully avoided any sense of anti-Westernism, making a clean break with the legacy of Erbakan's combative Islamism. Between the years 2001–2013, AKP leaders frequently advocated for European Union standards and the Copenhagen criteria. They defined their party as unambiguously supporting universal values along with a values-based discourse that included human rights, equal citizenship, religious freedom, democracy and free market principles. In a striking break from the rhetoric of National Outlook Islamism, they advocated a completely Anglo-Saxon style secular ideology without either direct or indirect references to Islam. This strategy also allowed the AKP to pursue a warming of relations with Islamist countries, such as Iran, through a foreign policy designed to create "zero problems with neighbours" rather than being restricted by ideology (Akbarzadeh and Barry 2017, 983). Whilst they acknowledged the importance of Islam as a matter of personal belief, they limited themselves to a secular constitutional framework (Mecham 2004, 350).

Fuat Keyman (2010, 150) summarises the main reasons for the electoral success of the AKP as follows: firstly, the AKP presented itself to society not as an ideology-based Islamic party but as a conservative democratic party of the centre, concerned with the problems of the society at large such as economic growth, development, welfare, transportation, education and health. Secondly, the AKP was perceived to be much more serious in its concern compared with its main rival, the CHP, in dealing with the pervasive corruption that had been an endemic feature of the Turkish economy for decades. This was especially significant in the wake of the major Marmara/Izmit earthquake of 1999 and subsequent economic crisis, which saw pro-secular centre-right and centre-left parties being bitterly denounced by the voters as corrupt and ineffective. Soon after coming to power the AKP mayors in several key towns, and in the megacities of Istanbul and Ankara, showed themselves to be very effective in delivering services and clean government. In this context, the AKP convinced the masses that real economic progress could be achieved by eliminating the cronyism and corruption that had long blighted Turkey's banking and financial system. Thirdly, the AKP put much weight into its programme on the issue of social justice, and widened the social state benefits so that several millions of households could get welfare benefits in kind and in cash. The AKP was seen as a party that placed the deep problem of "social and distributive justice" at the heart of its agenda. As a result, the AKP easily won the 2007 general elections, the 2007 presidential elections, the 2009 local elections, the 2010 constitutional referendum and the 2011 general elections.

5 Emergence of the Islamist Autocracy (2013–)

Prior to the referendum of 12 September 2010 a *de facto* balance of powers existed in the Republican system. This balance, whilst relatively stable, was skewed and anti-democratic. It echoed the earlier system of balance of powers experienced in the later Ottoman period in which there was an effective, but very imperfect, balance of power between the Janissaries, their commander and the *ulama*, that served to limit the sultan's authority. The 12 September 2010 referendum and the 2011 elections delivered a fatal blow to the skewed balance in the power structure that was a residue of the period of Kemalist dominance. The highly controversial Ergenekon and Sledgehammer cases that preceded the referendum paved the way for imprisonment of a number of high-ranking retired and serving military officers on coup-plotting charges. These cases served to tarnish the prestige of the military and limited its *de facto* power on elected politicians. The Constitutional referendum of 2010 terminated the *de jure* Kemalist military and judicial hegemony over the executive that was enshrined in the constitution since the 27 May 1960 military coup. Given the weaknesses of the opposition parties and of the independent media, the referendum also served to effectively weaken the checks on Erdoğan's power.

A new, more democratic, balance of power could perhaps have been put on the agenda with the help of the EU process, but this was undermined by the post-2008 economic crisis in which the EU found itself, coupled with the half-hearted attitude shown by the EU towards accession negotiations with Turkey. By the time of the 2010 referendum, joining the EU no longer appeared as appealing as it had in earlier years, and confidence in the accession bid succeeding had sharply slumped. After the 2010 referendum and third general election victory of the AKP in 2011, the EU accession process largely ceased to be an anchor for Turkey's democratisation.

Despite the continued commitment of some members (most of whom were sidelined after the November 2015 elections) to Muslim Democracy and the European Union accession process – along with democratic values, pluralism, human rights and freedom, equal citizenship, opposition to all forms of discrimination, tolerance, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence in line with their own conservative-democrat ideology – it became clear that the power block within the party headed by Erdoğan had lurched sharply away from these values and towards the direction of an authoritarian Islamism.

Eliminating, step by step in this process, its centre-right, centre-left and liberal stakeholders, the AKP insidiously evolved from a broad coalition into one-man rule, ensuring that no one except Tayyip Erdoğan could exercise any real power in the party. Working with key figures in the media, in politics and trade, he consolidated a personal power base of technocrats whose loyalties were not to the party, but to Erdoğan directly and personally. Well aware that they too could be demonised at any time, and their pasts used against them, their allegiances shifted from the AKP to Erdoğan himself.

When the AKP won the 2011 elections, religion–state relations were already far from what they ought to be in a democracy. Members of the large non-Sunni Alevi minority community that constitutes between 10 and 15 per cent of Turkish society were still subjected to systematic discrimination. The "Kurdish problem", relating to a further 15 to 20 per cent of the population, had still not been solved. Religious groups, Sufi orders and religious communities continued to be banned by law, with their liminal unofficial existence leaving them highly vulnerable. The Halki (or Heybeliada) seminary of the Orthodox Christians, who are Turkish citizens, was still not reopened despite the withdrawal of the military and bureaucratic tutelage that shut it down after the 1971 coup. The Turkish government continued to hold the right of its own citizens (Turkish citizens of Greek background) hostage, in its demands for reciprocity from the Greek government, asking that a mosque be built in Athens. The Arab Spring and the Syrian Civil War, which broke out in 2011, also affected Erdoğan's thinking towards radical Islamism and the threat of Kurdish nationalism (Akbarzadeh and Barry, 2017). From the outset of the Arab Spring protests, Erdoğan openly supported the Muslim Brothers, especially in Egypt, where he welcomed the election of President Morsi, but also in Syria. As insurgencies ravaged Iraq and Syria, led by ISIS and the al-Qaeda Syrian affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra, Erdoğan supported anti-Assad forces in Syria and turned a blind eye to tens of thousands of Jihadi foreign fighters streaming through Turkey to join the fighting in Syria and Iraq (Barton 2015). Following the 2011 electoral victory, the AKP gradually broke with it previous commitments to reform and

brought to a screeching halt the pro-democratisation and pro-EU actions that had slowed after the 2010 referendum.

In hindsight, the unwillingness exhibited by the AKP to continue reforming Turkey in line with European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and European Union (EU) norms, and to take the legal and legislative steps necessary concerning the state's transparency and accountability represented a leading early indicator of Erdoğan's authoritarian tendencies. This reluctance, which could perhaps have previously been excused through various reasons, was now tenaciously maintained despite the clear support of half of the people and despite the fact that the Kemalist hegemony was no longer a barrier. As matter of fact, the Kemalists had lost their hegemonic status with the election of former Islamist Abdullah Gül as president in 2007, who could now appoint non-Kemalist judges to the Constitutional Court.

Instead, the AKP government reversed many of its earlier reforms and relaxed key bid-rigging and anti-corruption laws. It also overnight gave immense powers to the National Intelligence Organization (MİT), ignoring public debate and reaction. MİT became the prime instrument by which the authoritarianism of the elite was enforced and its interests protected (a role similar to that of the military in the Kemalist period). At the same time, the AKP failed to resolve issues in the anti-terrorism bill and the criminal code despite constant criticism from the European Union and the Council of Europe. The changes did great injury to judicial independence.

Whilst this was happening, a process of steady erosion of media independence commenced, reversing the gains of the previous decade of democratic consolidation. The legal arrangements necessary to ensure that the media performed its job freely and independently of external pressure in line with EU requirements were not made. Additionally, in ramping up commercial pressure, steps were also taken to ensure that the holdings that had become richer because of their share in public tenders, and those who were close to government circles beholden to Erdoğan, would now hold a much greater share of the media outlets. This brought the erosion of plurality in the media to the forefront more than ever before.

The result was a media landscape in which Twitter access could be blocked, the homes of journalists raided by police for posting a tweet, and the freedom of the editor-in-chief of the country's bestselling daily could be restricted for days on end because of a single column, and the CEO of a television station could be arrested due to the script of a fictional TV series. The net effect of these changes has seen Turkey rapidly spiral downwards to become a country where the principle of accountability has very little meaning, at least for those associated with Erdoğan. Instead, the state-supported building contractor system has focussed on multiplying their profits by means of "zoning tricks", and large-scale corruption once again became endemic.

A newly aggressive nationalist discourse began to assert itself following the Gezi Park Protests in mid-2013 and reached fever pitch after the mysterious failed coup attempt of 15 July 2016. Tayyip Erdoğan has used this nationalist discourse to explicitly demonise and criminalise his critics. In hindsight, a radical shift away from democracy towards competitive authoritarianism can be observed after the overthrow of military tutelage and the restructuring of bureaucratic organs for the sake of the AKP government in 2010. This came into full bloom with the rollback of the regime system from democratic to authoritarian and later semi-totalitarian following the July 15 failed coup attempt of 2016.

The first real evidence of the changing trajectory of the AKP government towards semi-totalitarianism manifested during the Gezi Park Protests when the opponents of the AKP government who were fed up with an aggressive and dominant political style poured into the streets and were faced with the hard arm of governmental oppression or with undemocratic means (Günay and Dzihic 2016, 14). Erdoğan immediately branded the protesters as "looters, bums and rodents" and declared that they be given no consideration (Lancaster 2014, 184). Even though President Abdullah Gül, Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç and several other prominent AKP figures tried to be conciliatory and told the crowds that they were listening to their message, Erdoğan preferred to be provocative and inflammatory. Like the Kemalists, he resorted to conspiracy theories and played to the social psyche of the Turks who have suffered from the Sevres Complex by claiming that the European Union, the USA, the West, and the special interest lobby (a proxy for world Jewry) were the puppeteers of the Gezi protestors. He claimed that these foreign powers were jealous of Turkey and they were attempting to destroy it (Lancaster 2014, 184).

In December 2013, revelations arising from serial wiretappings revealing massive systemic corruption with the involvement of the governmental elite were countered with wild allegations of a plot to destroy the Erdoğan regime by a mysterious parallel structure, deep state, under the control of the Gülen movement which was claimed to be controlled by "a superior mind" and "foreign hubs" (apparently Islamist euphemisms for the USA and world Jewry). When the corruption allegations first surfaced police officers and members of the judiciary seen to be open to investigating them were accused of being members of a "parallel structure", and the police officers who were in charge of the "17-25 December" operations were arrested. At the same time a process commenced in which the Gülen movement institutions, such as media outlets, that were implicated in the airing of corruption allegations were subjected first to harsh intimidation and, eventually, to total seizure of their assets.

These autocratic tendencies were further seen in 2015 when the People's Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi – HDP), the party representing Kurdish interests (which had only crossed the required ten per cent of votes threshold to enter parliament in the June 2015 elections), spoke critically of "*alla Turca* presidentialism" (powerful presidentialism without hindrances of checks and balances). Erdoğan's response was to order the arrests of hundreds of HDP members, ostensibly due to alleged links with terroristic groups, and towns and cities in largely Kurdish provinces were destroyed as a consequence of conflicts with the state and the PKK organisation (Öktem and Akkoyunlu 2016).

The increasingly autocratic tendencies of the AKP government served to mortally wound freedom of expression in Turkey. In a semi-totalitarian regime, as Turkey has now become, the deified leader cannot be criticised because there is no one left to criticise, as they are either bought off or suppressed. In a state in which all of the institutions of authority and influence are in the hands of a charismatic leader, it is impossible to have diverse or critical perspectives. Those who dared to express dissenting opinions, such as those academics who signed a petition protesting excessive violence by the state in repressing Kurdish groups in the Southeast of Turkey paid for their impertinence by being dismissed from their employment. Öktem and Akkoyunlu (2016, 5) explain the sackings in reprisal as a statement of intent and an overt threat: "the government message is clear: universities shall not be places of critical reflection on society anymore". The EU criticised the AKP pressure on the media leading to Turkey becoming the "World's Biggest Prison for Journalists" with around two hundred journalists being detained over the nine months following the failed coup attempt (Karaveli 2016).

Not only are journalists detained and academics sacked, but access to social media such as YouTube, Twitter and Facebook is subject to extraordinary manipulation and surveillance. Critical newspapers such *Zaman*, *Today's Zaman, Meydan, Bugün* and *Millet* of the Gülen Movement and some pro-Kurdish newspapers were confiscated and turned into government mouthpieces. This resulted in 2014 in Freedom House downgrading Turkey's freedom status from "partly free to not free" whilst in 2016 Turkey "was ranked 151st out of 180 countries" (Günay and Dzihic 2016, 4; Somer 2016, 12). It was argued that these violations led to the "destruction of the country's capacity for critical knowledge" (Öktem and Akkoyunlu 2016, 5).

Populist authoritarianism has been represented in the past by Juan Peron of Argentina or Alberto Fujimori in Peru, and more recently via such figures as Hugo Chavez (1999–2013), Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005–2013), and Vladimir Putin (2000–). In addition, the neo-populist extreme has been on the rise in several European countries forcing the conservative, centre-right parties to make populist moves. Tayyip Erdoğan, too, openly availed himself of this option beginning with the crack-down on the Gezi Park protesters in 2013, and increasingly so when there were no longer any checks and balances remaining that could curb his power.

Eliminating, step by step in this process, its centre-right, centre-left and liberal stakeholders, the AKP gradually evolved from a party of consensus into one of one-man rule, leaving no one except Tayyip Erdoğan to have any real power within the party. Government became deeply personalised and power was centralised. As an extension of the unreserved personalisation of power around a single man, a charismatic authority has been established, which is surrounded by such forms of address as "master", "leader", "strong will", "tall man", "chief", and "the president of the people", "commander in chief", "leader of the Muslim World" and "the hope of the *ummah*" (Gürsel 2014). AKP has become a vehicle for the cult

of Erdoğan's persona and Erdoğan has become key to the existence of a neo-patrimonial AKP (Lancaster 2014, 1680). One reason why Erdoğan appears to be immune to accusations of fraud and corruption is that his cult of personality remains so pervasive and uncontested amongst his supporters (Lancaster 2014, 1684).

Ironically, given his anti-Kemalist origins, the cult of personality attached to Erdoğan closely resembles the cult of personality long established with respect to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Erdoğan now has unchecked control over the interpretation and application of ideology within the AKP. Even though many of the founders of the AKP such as Abdullah Gül and Bülent Arınç and younger generation Islamists such as former Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu remain "Muslim Democrats", they have been effectively marginalised by Erdoğan and his new fellow travellers who owe their political existence solely to Erdoğan. Turkish Muslim Democracy along the lines of post-Islamism has now been sidelined altogether.

Any criticism of Erdoğan has become taboo. This has left Erdoğan free to reconstruct Islamism as Erdoganism – a hegemonic ideology of Islamist populism, neo-patrionalism, authoritarianism, Sunni-ist and Turkist nationalism, and neo-Ottomanist irredentism. Erdoganism, just like Kemalism, is driven by the authoritarian logic of a top-down imposition of power, using the Althusserian ideological apparatuses of the state to manufacture consent and socially engineer compliant citizens (see in detail in Yilmaz 2015).

6 Conclusion

During its first decade in power, between 2002 and 2013, AKP leaders promoted European Union standards, the Copenhagen criteria, and universal values along with a values-based discourse that included human rights, equal citizenship, religious freedom, democracy and free market principles. They advocated for a completely secular ideology along the lines of its Anglo-Saxon version without any direct or indirect reference to Islam. By using the general public support for the European Union entry process for Turkey, the AKP has focussed on eliminating the tutelage of the Kemalist hegemony's two powerful institutions: the military and the judiciary. Through pro-EU constitutional and legal changes and some controversial court cases (Ergenekon and Sledgehammer) against the military, by 2013, the AKP, to a great extent, succeeded in marginalising the political power of the military and judiciary. Yet, it has largely failed to reform other aspects of the authoritarian state. For instance, the state's heavy control over universities through YÖK (Supreme Council of Universities) and over Islam through the *Diyanet* has not been liberalised. As the unfolding events would show in subsequent years, after having elected one of their members (Abdullah Gül) as president in 2007 and marginalising the Kemalist tutelage after the 2010 referendum and court cases, the AKP, or at least Erdoğan, decided to use these hegemonic institutions for political purposes.
In its first decade, the AKP government pursued piecemeal democratic reforms to change the balance of power through a civiliisation process that effected a democratic shift from military tutelage to civilian rule. By restructuring the state institutions, the ruling party weakened the military and its bureaucratic organs. After the 2010 Constitutional Referendum and the 2011 electoral victory, however, the characteristics and mood of the AKP government shifted from democratising to authoritarian.

Kemalism and Islamism (and especially its Erdoğanist version) alike are not truly democratic and leave little room for dissenting opinions or the assertion of ethnic, religious or even political minority identity. Both pursue the same path to power and hegemony despite their different visions and missions. These two diverse ideologies compete for the domination of Turkish society using similar hegemonic methodologies and tools. In recent years Tayyip Erdoğan has succeeded in eliminating all opponents that could pose a threat to his ideology and existence through instrumentalising religious and state institutions, and employing the familiar Kemalist methodology of removing all opposition through the coercive hand of the state apparatus. This became clearly evident following the failed coup attempt of 15 July 2016, in the way that all institutions were purged of opposition elements, in the closing of critical media outlets, and in the imprisonment of opposition journalists and politicians.

References

Akbarzadeh, Shahram and James Barry. 2017. "Iran and Turkey: Not Quite Enemies but Less than Friends", *Third World Quarterly*, 38(4): 980–995.

Althusser, Louis. 1971. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." In Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Translated by Ben Brewster. London and New York: Monthly Review Press. 127–186.

Ayoob, M. 2005. "The Future of Political Islam: The Importance of External Variables", *International Affairs,* 81(5): 951–961.

Barton, Greg. 2015. "Australia, Turkey, and Understandings of Islam in A Secular Age: The Islamic State Movement and the Challenge of Rising Extremism", Michalis Michael (ed.) *Reconciling Cultural and Political Identities in a Globalized World: Perspectives on Australia-Turkey Relations*. Melbourne: Palgave Macmillan.

Barton, Greg. 2013. "Preaching by Example and Learning for Life: Understanding the Gülen Hizmet in the Context of Religious Philanthropy and Civil Religion", in Greg Barton, Paul Weller, Ihsan Yilmaz (eds.), *The Muslim World and Politics in Transition, Creative Contributions of the Gülen Movement*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Barton, Greg. 2006. "Turkey's Gülen Hizmet and Indonesia's Neo-Modernist NGOs; Remarkable Examples of Progressive Islamic Thought and Civil Society Activism in the Muslim World", Fethi Mansouri and Shahram Akbarzadeh (eds.), *Political Islam and Human Security*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press. 140–160.

Bayat, Asef. 1996. "The Coming of a Post-Islamist Society", *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, 5(9): 43–52.

Bayat, Asef. 2007. *Islam and Democracy: What Is the Real Question?* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Çavdar, Gamze. 2006. "Islamist *New Thinking* in Turkey: A Model for Political Learning?" *Political Science Quarterly,* 121(3): 477–497.

Dağı, Ihsan. 2008. "Turkey's AKP in Power", *Journal of Democracy*, 19(3): 25–30.

Demiralp, Seda. 2010. "Can Money Make Us Friends? Islamic Financial Networks and the Chances for Democratization in the Muslim World", *Journal of Middle East and Africa*, 1(1): 120–138.

Denoeux, G. 2002. "The Forgotten Swamp: Navigating Political Islam", *Middle East Policy,* 9(2): 56–81.

Ghobadzadeh, Naser. 2015. *Religious Secularity: A Theological Challenge to the Islamic State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.

Gümüşçü, Şebnem and Sert, Deniz. 2009. "The Power of the Devout Bourgeoisie: The Case of the Justice and Development Party in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 45(6): 953–968.

Günay, Cengiz and Vedran Dzihic. 2016. "Decoding the Authoritarian Code: Exercising 'Legitimate' Power Politics through the Ruling Parties in Turkey, Macedonia and Serbia", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies,* 16(4): 529–549.

Gürsel, Kadri. 2014. "The Cult of Erdoğan", *Al Monitor*, 6 August 2014, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/08/gursel-turkey-social-peace-Erdoğan-cult-polarization-akp.html last visited on 2 July 2017.

Hanioğlu, M. Şükrü.2011. *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Heper, Metin. 2000. "The Ottoman Legacy and Turkish Politics", *Journal of International Affairs, 54*(1): 63–82.

Hervieu-Léger, Danièle. 2003. "The Case for Sociology of 'Multiple Religious Modernities': A Different Approach to the "Invisible Religion" of European Societies", *Social Compass, 50*(3): 287–295.

Hurd, Elisabeth Shakman. 2008. *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ismail, S. 2004. "Being Muslim: Islam, Islamism and Identity Politics", *Government and Opposition*, 39(4): 614–631.

Karaveli, Halil. 2016. "Erdoğan's Journey: Conservatism and Authoritarianism in Turkey", *Foreign Affairs,* 95 (November/December), https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/turkey/2016-10-17/erdogan-s-journey last visited on 2 July 2017.

Kehl-Bodrogi, K. 2003. "Atatürk and the Alevis: A Holy Alliance?", P. J. White, J. Jongerden (eds.), *Turkey's Alevi Enigma: A Comprehensive Overview*. Leiden and Boston: Brill., 63–71.

Kepel, Gilles. 2004. *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Kısakürek, N. F. 1988. *Çile*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu.

Lancaster, Caroline. 2014. "The Iron Law of Erdoğan: The Decay from Intra-Party Democracy to Personalistic Rule", *Third World Quarterly*, 35(9): 1672–1690.

Mardin, Şerif. 1962. *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mardin, Şerif. 2005. "Turkish Islamic Exceptionalism Yesterday and Today: Continuity, Rupture and Reconstruction in Operational Codes", *Turkish Studies, 6*(2): 145–165.

Mecham, R. Quinn. 2004. "From the Ashes of Virtue, A Promise of Light: The Transformation of Political Islam in Turkey", *Third World Quarterly, 25*(2): 339–358.

Öktem, Kerem and Karabekir Akkoyunlu. 2016. "Exit From Democracy: Illiberal Governance in Turkey and Beyond", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 16(4): 469–480.

Parla, Taha and Andrew Davison. 2004. *Corporatist Ideology in Kemalist Turkey*, New York: Syracuse University Press.

Roy, Olivier. 2004. *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. London: Hurst and Company.

Smith, Thomas W. 2005. "Between Allah and Atatürk: Liberal Islam in Turkey", *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 9(3): 307–325.

Somer, Murat. 2016. "Conquering versus Democratizing the State: Political Islamists and Fourth Wave Democratization in Turkey and Tunisia", *Democratization*, 1–19. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13510347.2016.1259216 last visited on 2 July 2017.

Tuğal, Cihan. 2002. "Islamism in Turkey: Beyond Instrument and Meaning", *Economy and Society*, 31(1): 85–111.

Türköne, Mümtaz'er. 1994. *Siyasî İdeoloji Olarak İslâmcılığın Doğuşu*. Istanbul: İletişim.

White, Jenny B. 2003. *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics*. Washington: University of Washington Press.

Yıldız, Ahmet. 2003. "Politico-Religious Discourse of Political Islam in Turkey: The Parties of National Outlook ", *Muslim World, 9*2(3): 187–210.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2002. "Secular Law and the Emergence of Unofficial Turkish Islamic Law", *The Middle East Journal*, 56(1): 113–131. Reprinted in Mashood A. Baderin. 2014. *Islamic Law in Practice*. Vol. III. London: Routledge: Chapter 9: Secular Law and the Emergence of Unofficial Turkish Islamic Law.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2003. "Non-Recognition of Post-Modern Turkish Socio-Legal Reality and Predicament of Women", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 30(1): 25–41.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2005a. *Muslim Laws, Politics and Society in Modern Nation States: Dynamic Legal Pluralisms in England, Turkey and Pakistan*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2005b. "State, Law, Civil Society and Islam in Contemporary Turkey", *The Muslim World, 95*(3): 386–390.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2009. "The Role of Liberalized Autocracy and Democratic Learning in Islamists' Transformation to Muslim Democrats in Turkey and Egypt", *Insight Turkey*, 11(2): 93–112.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2011. "Beyond Post-Islamism: Transformation of Turkish Islamism Toward "Civil Islam" and Its Potential Influence in the Muslim World", *European Journal of Economic and Political Studies, 4*(1): 245–280.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2013. "Homo LASTus and Lausannian Muslim: Two Paradoxical Social-Engineering Projects to Construct the Best and the Good Citizens in the Kemalist Panopticon", *Turkish Journal of Politics*, 4(2): 107–126.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2014. "Religious Freedom, the Muslim Identity and the Secularist Social-Engineering Project in Turkey", *Qaderni di Diritto e Politica Ecclesiastica*, 22(1): 197–204.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2015. *Kemalizm'den Erdoğanizm'e: Türkiye'de Din, Devlet and Makbul Vatandaş* (From Kemalism to Erdoğanism: Religion, State and Palatable Citizen in Turkey). Istanbul: Ufuk Publishing.

Yilmaz, Ihsan. 2016. *Muslim Laws, Politics and Society in Modern Nation States: Dynamic Legal Pluralisms in England, Turkey and Pakistan*. London: Routledge.

Zürcher, E. J. 2004. *Turkey: A Modern History*. IB Tauris.