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The Justice and Development Party's Conception of "Conservative Democracy": Invention or Reinterpretation?

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ABSTRACT *This article investigates the notion of "conservative democracy" in the discourse of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) in relation to the concepts of change and continuity. It argues that "conservative democracy," which is presented as a "genuine contribution" of the AKP to Turkish politics, is actually a continuation of a tradition within Turkish conservative literature rather than a product of the moment. Hence, contrary to the party's claim, "conservative democracy" is not an invented but a reinterpreted concept. It is reformulated pragmatically to illustrate a rupture from the Islamist background of the party leaders.*

Introduction

Turkish politics entered a new phase with the November 2002 general elections. The novel feature of the election results was the landslide victory of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), which is a splinter of the Islamic-oriented Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi, FP) previously attached to the National Outlook (Milli Görüş, MG) movement.¹ Strikingly, in the July 2007 general elections the ruling AKP increased its vote-share from 34.3 percent to 46.6 percent for a second term of single-party AKP government, despite the existence of sharp divisions among the public and increasing secularist opposition.

Since coming to power, discussions on the AKP and its leading cadre have revolved around whether or not the party has changed. The Islamist record of the party's prominent figures has somehow restrained them and confined the discussion to the limits of Islamist reactionism. What is missing at this point is an awareness of the historical contingency and continuity that could contribute to the understanding of the AKP's role in the Turkish political arena.

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The cadres of the AKP are seen as “closet Islamists,” and the party’s loyalty to the founding principles of the Turkish Republic, particularly secularism, is questioned by the secularist portions of society. Hence, the leaders of the party have felt obliged to demonstrate that the party is not a version of Islamist-oriented parties arising from the MG movement. To this end, the leaders of the AKP came up with the concept of “conservative democracy” to define the identity of the party, which is portrayed as a “unique” and “novel” phenomenon in Turkish politics. However, the concepts and arguments used by the AKP in generating “conservative democracy” are the continuation of already existing formulations and discussions within Turkish conservative literature. The objective of this article, thus, is to reveal in what ways the AKP’s “conservative democracy” maintains the terminology and discourse of the synthesis-oriented conservatives of the early Republican era² and differs from the arguments of the Islamic conservatism of the MG movement.

First, the article elaborates on the emergence of the AKP in Turkish politics. The context in which the party leaders formulated the principles of the party will be examined. The second part looks at the relationship between Western conservatism and the AKP and analyzes why the AKP came up with the concept of “conservative democracy.” The third part decomposes the notion of “conservative democracy.” The AKP’s approach to “conservative democracy” is analyzed with references to and comparisons with a number of concerns with which the synthesis-oriented conservative thinkers dealt. Most of the AKP members were once affiliated with MG, and thus what the MG ideologues argued will also be examined.

The Emergence of the AKP

From the 1990s the anti-secular activities of the Islamist groups and, as their political projection, the radical policies of the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi, RP) fuelled the fears of regime change in Turkey. In the 1995 general elections the RP won the most seats in parliament, a development that shocked the secular elites. It was the first time that an Islamic-oriented party had become the largest partner in a coalition government in Turkey. The words, actions, and policies of the RP disturbed the secular elites deeply.³ The antagonistic atmosphere did not end up in a direct military takeover but in the resignation of the then Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and later the removal of the RP from the political scene by decision of the Constitutional Court. The notorious February 28 process⁴ not only brought the collapse of the coalition government but also had a transformative impact on the Islamist groups to make them realize that radical Islam would find no place in the political arena any longer.⁵ Many of the Islamists chose to be modernist rather than clinging to the past.

The FP, which was established following the closure of the RP, split as a consequence of the dissenting voices mounted among the party ranks. After it too was closed down by the Constitutional Court due to its actions against the principles of the secular republic, the “traditionalists” (*gelenekçiler*) joined the Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi, SP), and the “innovationists” (*yenilikçiler*) set up the “Movement of

Virtuous" (Erdemliler Hareketi), which then formed the core cadre of the AKP. The former mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, became the leader of the latter movement. However, having been convicted previously for "openly inciting the public to hatred on the basis of religion" in accordance with Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code, Erdoğan came to grips with cleaning up his somewhat tarnished image. Drawing lessons from such bitter experiences, he chose to take a more moderate line.

After the establishment of the AKP in August 2001, it became clear that Erdoğan's intention was to reach a broader electorate. Some scholars have argued in their research on the AKP that he was indeed successful. Based on the analysis of the voter base of the AKP, Özbudun argues that the AKP is not a successor of any political party and it "appears to have successfully rebuilt the Özal ANAP [Motherland Party] coalition, bringing together former centre-right voters, moderate Islamists, moderate nationalists, and even a certain segment of the former centre-left."⁶ Some other experts of Turkish politics evaluate these developments as a transformation of a religiously oriented party to a moderate, conservative, democratic, and globalist center-right political party.⁷ Similarly, Heper refers to the AKP's display of "pro-system features" compared to the MG parties⁸ while Alpay describes it as a "unifying centrist party" that puts forward "the most liberal political and economic platform in the history of Turkish Republic."⁹

Erdoğan frequently highlights that the AKP is not a successor of the MG parties and that there is no need to feel threatened by its cadre, particularly concerning Atatürk's legacy, the secular republic, and democracy.¹⁰ The party is stated to be ready to transmit various demands and sensitivities to the political sphere and it embraces society as a whole, not just the believers.¹¹ After the AKP's election victory in 2002, Erdoğan introduced the party's new political outlook as "conservative democracy" with which new horizons in the political life of Turkey claim to be opened up. That effort was timely and pragmatic. It enabled the party to give the message to the secularists that the party had severed its relations with Islamist discourse. To strengthen their hands, the founders of the party particularly underline that they are against the exploitation of religion. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Erdoğan's then chief advisor and the mastermind of the AKP's foreign policy, explains the rationale behind it by saying that "Islam should not be reduced to a political group or party because then it will end up with certain parties monopolizing the representation of Islam." Instead of defining themselves as an Islamic party, he noted, the leaders of the AKP consider themselves "as part of the Turkish [conservative] political tradition."¹² Thus, they reject the label "Muslim-democrat" and instead prefer "conservative democrat" as their new identity.

Conservative Democracy: A New Concept?

It has been passionately argued by the leading cadre of the AKP that "conservative democracy" is a "new political philosophy and style" that never existed before in politics. The concept is claimed to be formulated on the basis of Western philosophical

views with the addition of the values indigenous to Turkey.¹³ And the fundamentals of Western conservatism are presented as the basic parameters of the AKP's political identity by the party leaders. To contextualize the argument, the historical development of conservatism(s) in the West, the philosophical foundations of it, and the major issues it tackles must be addressed.

Western Conservatism and the AKP

The conceptual and philosophical foundations of conservatism in Europe were thought to have originated in response to peculiar historical moments.¹⁴ Conservatism emerged as a reaction against the ideas of Enlightenment and the French Revolution in continental Europe. It was laid on anti-rationalist foundations. As part of this trajectory the French type of conservatism developed a more radical and reactionary way with a special emphasis on "religion," whereas in the German case, with its strong metaphysical and philosophical foundations, "history" was at the forefront. On the other hand, the Anglo-Saxon experience originated by following a different path. With the rise of industrial capitalism after the Industrial Revolution, sweeping changes in the dynamics of society occurred. This resulted in the development of a new approach, which focused on the necessity of making reforms without weakening loyalty to traditional authorities, to the newly emerging problems. The Anglo-Saxon variant of conservatism had an evolutionary and defensive character. The defining concept for this version was "tradition."

The meaning of conservatism has changed through the centuries from having a negative connotation as being considered an anti-modern move to a more positive flavor as "the dialectical counterpart to political modernization,"¹⁵ as the "idealism of nostalgia" attempting to achieve a "moral and valuational anchorage for contemporary life,"¹⁶ and as "a movement acting within a dynamic society in need of adapting itself to new types of solutions."¹⁷ Hence, it is difficult to define a singular notion of conservatism that transcends time, place, and circumstance; every society develops its own conservative understanding. Nonetheless, there are common themes and ideas which all conservatives embrace.

Conservatives start with the assumption that the human being is irrational and imperfect. The individual is not taken independently but as a communal entity. Society, on the other hand, is regarded as a "living organism" and a natural whole that is independent from all the elements of which it is composed. It shapes the identities of the individuals. Maintaining and preserving order is considered crucial for social life. However, this cannot be achieved with individual liberties but with the existence of an authority. The other base of societal order, for conservatives, is private property, which is also seen as vital for securing freedom and keeping tradition alive. In conservative thinking, authority, freedom, and order are three interconnected concepts. Ensuring the continuity of tradition is the key issue. Therefore, historically accumulated wisdom of community and social institutions as its products are given special emphasis. Family as the basis of the society is seen as both a conveyor of tradition and a protector of traditional morality. Religion is

considered to have important functions for stability and order by creating a bond of unity in society.

Conservatives have a lasting respect for tradition and veneration for the past. That is why the connection between the past and the present is emphasized. Generally but misleadingly, conservatism is associated with preserving the status quo and hence being against change. However, it is radical and drastic change that conservatives oppose. The concepts of "reform" and "restoration" are cherished in conservative thinking, which addresses itself to sensitivity towards the preservation of essence while changing according to the necessities of the day.¹⁸

What is important for the purpose of the present article is that the AKP claims to be in tune with Western conservatism. In defining its identity, many themes mentioned above are cited and used as proof of its being located within the Western conservative tradition. For example, the AKP emphasized social order and prioritized justice for establishing order. It is asserted that politics are seen as an instrument for serving the interests of society. Family and religion are also underlined frequently. Family is described as the essential social institution, referring to its role in building a bridge between past and future and preserving traditional values. Religion is seen as a cohesive and unifying force. The emphasis on continuity is also remarkable in the AKP's discourse. Therefore, like Western conservatism, it highlights tradition, history, and experience. For the AKP, history and culture are the sources of energy and inspiration. Experience is regarded as one of the principal references of the party's understanding of political administration. A radical and abrupt change enforced from above is firmly rejected, and instead gradual and evolutionary change is favored as an essential component of conservative democratic identity.

Indeed, the AKP has drawn parallels with Western conservative thinking in referring to similar themes. However, this is not sufficient to claim that the "conservative democracy" of the AKP is attributed to Western conservatism, which is inaccurately presented as a "universal conservative political line."¹⁹ What is paradoxical here is that although Akdoğan is of the opinion that "conservatism emerged in diverse cultural forms throughout the world, its articulation and implementation have been different in different contexts,"²⁰ he persists using the term "universal." Certainly, Turkey has its own unique conception(s) of conservatism. If the "conservative democracy" of the party ideologues was embedded into the conservative literature in Turkey rather than the Western tradition, this would actually serve to strengthen the party's hands by showing that "conservative democracy" is not an imported concept but a native one. Therefore, this article aims to reveal the historical roots of "conservative democracy" within the Turkish context. Before doing so, it is useful to look at why the AKP introduced this so-called "novel" concept.

Why "Conservative Democracy?"

From its inception, the AKP has been given different labels depending on how it is being perceived. Some scholars compare the AKP with the Christian democrat

parties of Western Europe.²¹ “Muslim democrat,”²² “pro-Islamist,”²³ and “neo-Islamist”²⁴ are other tags attached to the party. There are even some political analysts, especially American neoconservatives, who question the AKP’s self-denial of its Islamist inclination and consider its policies as “Islamofascist.”²⁵

In that context, the AKP’s best endeavor to remove all those labels and to formulate a self-defining concept instead seems entirely understandable. Since conservatism is a loaded political term generally associated with religious reactionism in Turkey, the founders of the AKP have preferred not to define the party solely as conservative. In that sense, their efforts are remarkably similar to the early republican synthesis-oriented conservatives’ struggle to differentiate conservatism from other political tendencies. Early republican conservatives were worried about the fuzziness of conservatism as a concept and its potential misinterpretation by the founders of the republican regime. Hence they used the term conservative with the addition of an adjective.²⁶ Conservatism that is preceded by an adjective provided them with a shield to make a veiled opposition and prevented them from being perceived as the foes of the republic. Due to the similar concerns and motivations, the AKP rediscovered the way to use conservatism with an addition, which, for this time, is a *sine qua non* concept of contemporary politics, and thus “conservative democracy” as the new identity of the party was born.

Decomposing the Concept of Conservative Democracy

Westernization–Modernization

“Conservative democracy” is defined as a change-centered concept by AKP leaders. Since “change” has generally been understood in relation to the dynamics of Westernization and modernization in Turkey, “conservative democracy” is thus pertinent to these concepts. Therefore, to better analyze the AKP’s understanding of “conservative democracy,” the continuities and changes regarding issues of the West, Westernization, and modernization, especially in conservative and Islamist lines of thinking, should be examined.

The issue of Westernization, starting from the Tanzimat (Reordering) period (1839–1876), has been controversial for Turkish intellectuals. The mentality of Tanzimat can be summarized as “being devoted to the East in relation to faith but adopting the instruments of technique and life from the West.”²⁷ In the aftermath of World War I, it started to be widely criticized by a group of young intellectuals who gathered around a periodical called *Dergâh*. They opposed positivism and mechanical evolutionism²⁸ and were very much influenced by the victory over the Allied Forces in the Turkish War for Independence (1918–1923). The thesis of the group was that though the Turks had nothing material, they were victorious with only the power of their spirit over the West, which was empowered by technology and science. It was merely an uphill struggle to free the Turkish people from the feeling of inferiority that had been perpetuated since the Tanzimat era. At that point, those conservative intellectuals came closer to the discourse of the republican leaders

whose fundamental aim was to ensure that the Turkish nation belonged to the family of contemporary civilizations.²⁹

In the first decades of the republic, the distinction between culture and civilization, embodied in Ziya Gökalp's formulation,³⁰ was influential. The Islamists of that era believed that technological and scientific achievements could and in fact should be adopted without leading to any significant changes in other spheres. However, the early republican synthesis-oriented conservatives argued that it was impossible to take only technology from the West. As familiarity with the sources of Western civilization increased, lifestyles were also modified. For these Islamists, Westernization was not a degenerating development but rather a renovation and refreshing process. As such, these conservatives had no direct problems with the new regime's modernization project or with Westernization. That said, they resisted the total eradication of relations with the past that would alienate the masses from the modernization project of the new regime. Without harming the friendly nature of relations³¹ the synthesis-oriented conservatives did warn the republican elites, albeit courteously, not to become extremists in making abrupt changes.

Beside this conservative stream that continued to flow without becoming a political ideology, Islamism was revived in the 1970s. The MG leaders, who synchronized themselves with Islamist discourse on the West and Westernization, argued that it was possible to adopt only science and technology from the West, and thus Westernization should not be considered as a total project to transform society and culture.³² Similar arguments have from time to time reappeared in Erdoğan's discourse. His speech in a meeting organized by the Ministry of Education in January 2008 about a project to send students abroad for post-graduate education illustrates this. Reciting the verses of Islamist poet Mehmet Akif Ersoy,³³ Erdoğan stated that "we [as Turks] have not adopted scientific and artistic advancements of Europe but unfortunately its immorality, which clashes with our [Turkish people's] own moral values."³⁴ Even though Erdoğan and his close associates frequently highlight that they no longer have any organic links with the MG movement and its ideals, it is possible to draw a parallel between Erdoğan's arguments and Erbakan's ideas on Westernization. Nevertheless, the differences are still substantial.

First of all, Erbakan built his discourse on a harsh criticism of the West. In his line of thinking, the West is a monolithic entity which is anti-Islam, pro-Zionist, and imperialist. Erbakan saw the West in the midst of a serious civilization crisis.³⁵ Thus, he rejected the image of a superior West. He equated the West with "falsehood" (*batıl*), which should be differentiated from the "truth" (*Hak*) embodied in Islamic civilization.³⁶

Under the influence of Erbakanism the current leading political figures of the AKP—then of the RP—criticized the West for being "misguided," "degenerated," and having an "ugly face"³⁷ due to its moral deprivation. This anti-Western rhetoric started to wane gradually after the establishment of the FP. However, the culminating point of change has become the establishment of the AKP. Europe is now defined by the leaders of the AKP as "the vanguard of the most outstanding human values and peace in the world."³⁸ The Republican ideal of Westernization based on

the superiority of European (Western) countries in terms of democracy, secular institutions, technological advancement, and living standards is taken for granted. Similar to the early Republican conservatives, the notables of the AKP are opponents neither of the West nor of Westernization.

Westernization is the exigency of Turkish geography and history in the synthesis-oriented conservatism.³⁹ Although those conservative intellectuals were longing for the past, they frankly confessed that Turkish civilization had fallen into decay.⁴⁰ Their paths in that sense diverge from Islamist thinking. Beyatlı stated the necessity of a “mentality shift” joining Western civilization. For him, being part of it without losing one’s own identity could only be realized by “coming back to the homeland from the school” (*mektepten memlekete dönmek*), which means benefiting from the knowledge gained from the school of the West and transforming it for the sake of Turkey.⁴¹ What Erdoğan said in his January 2008 address mentioned above draws parallels with Beyatlı’s argument.⁴² Erdoğan attaches importance to good education for progress toward modernization and development. Besides, he strenuously advises students to return to Turkey after completing studies abroad.

The leaders of the AKP are also inspired by the synthesis-oriented conservatives’ idea of the presence of “two Europes.” The “defunct West,” which valued the hegemony of science and positivism, was criticized as being opposed to the “idealized West” that had an idealistic and mystic orientation.⁴³ Similarly, for the leaders of the AKP, Europe is not homogeneous and monolithic. As the former minister of foreign affairs, Abdullah Gül, stated, different circles in Europe act with different reflexes. Among those, some actions justify labeling the EU as a “Christian club” while there are also loyal supporters of Turkey.⁴⁴ Here, Gül pointed at the existence of “two Europes” and confusion in Europe about its role and identity. Just as the idea of “two Europes” was instrumental for the early Republican conservatives so that they could release themselves, on the one hand, from the phobia of Westernization and, on the other, being labeled as the opponents of the newly established Republican regime, the idea of a heterogeneous Europe releases the AKP from being entrapped in an anti-EU stance and eliminates the risk of deviating from the reform process.

It is undeniable that as members of the RP many prominent figures of the AKP previously had a different orientation toward EU membership. They accused Turkish politicians who applied for European Community (EC) membership of betraying Turkish history, culture, and—most significantly—national independence.⁴⁵ Erbakan, as their mentor, interpreted that attempt as a denial of the Muslim identity to become European.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, such examples of oscillations between past arguments and current opinions of AKP leaders are not sufficient to claim that the anti-European rhetoric of the MG tradition still lingers in the discourse of the AKP. Indeed, the leaders of the AKP have tried hard to build the party on a different orientation. The founders of the party have given importance to being identified with the Turkish center-right party tradition on supporting Turkey’s European vocation. Importantly, it was the AKP government that managed to begin accession negotiations with the EU in October 2005.

Cultural differences, especially religious issues, were mostly highlighted in the discourse of the MG parties on EU membership.⁴⁷ The AKP has also placed emphasis on cultural differences basically derived from Islamic identity, but now it presents this difference as an advantage for Turkey's bid for EU membership, as it would contribute to the cultural enrichment of the EU.⁴⁸ The leaders of the party prefer to highlight the advancement of the West in absorbing and implementing values such as democracy, human rights, and pluralism. In that way, they have instrumentally transformed the concepts previously framed by the MG tradition to oppose Turkey's integration with the EU to advance Turkey's progress in meeting the accession criteria. Moreover, building a similar terminology with the synthesis-oriented conservatism, the AKP's "mission" is defined as "to prove that a Muslim society is capable of changing and renovating itself, attaining contemporary standards, while preserving its values, traditions, and identity."⁴⁹ This self-identification serves the party, on one hand, in legitimizing itself inside the country and, on the other, in receiving support and escaping from skepticism in the international arena. Indeed, as Dağı argues, "the search for systemic legitimacy and security" influenced the AKP's political discourse on human rights, the rule of law, and democracy, and this has offered the AKP "a discursive supremacy and legitimacy" in the Turkish political arena.⁵⁰

Apart from all these similarities, conservatives' discussion on the culture–civilization dichotomy, especially the impact of a shift in civilization on culture, has not been observed in the AKP's discourse. Despite focusing on the institutional and policy changes that would accompany EU membership, no attempt has been made to develop ideas on how to cope with the problems that will occur with the transformation that will take place at societal and cultural levels. In fact, this would normally matter to a conservative party.

Democracy, Religion, and Secularism

From the very beginning there has been strong suspicion regarding the AKP's real agenda, especially on the secular and democratic character of the state. Although Erdoğan has adopted a cautious discourse that avoids terms open to misinterpretations, the secular elite has never forgotten his previous words and deeds.⁵¹ To dispel those fears Erdoğan admits his faults and explains his past mentality with reference to the particular circumstances of those days. Nonetheless, most secularists remain unimpressed by such explanations. The fear of regime change, in due course, yielded to a fear of gradual Islamization of social life that has haunted the secularist bloc. Some relatively new policies of the AKP are interpreted as the signs of a reversion to Islamism, such as imposing restrictions on the sale of alcohol and tripling its consumption tax, attempting to criminalize adultery, and formulating a proposal to allow girls wearing headscarves in universities.

Erdoğan frequently underlines that he has departed decisively from his earlier aggressive discourse. Previously, democracy was defined by Erdoğan as "a means to achieve the happiness of mankind," like religion.⁵² As the leader of the AKP he

does not define democracy as a “means” any longer but as “the perfect arrangement invented by humankind.”⁵³ The AKP’s conceptualization of democracy, in fact, consists of collective reasoning and consultation, that is, the large-scale exchange of ideas. Different opinions are considered worthy of respect. The AKP, similar to the synthesis-oriented conservatives, puts emphasis on the importance of tolerating opposing views. For the AKP, this tolerance is essential for democracy to flourish, whereas the conservatives consider it important to become civilized. The basic principle of a civilization, according to the latter, is showing respect to all kinds of beliefs, without which democracy would deteriorate.⁵⁴

Parallel to the understanding of democracy in liberal democracies, the AKP praises the notion of freedom. “The assurance of democratization by placing the individual at the center of all its policies and protecting fundamental rights and liberties” are said to be the most important tasks of the party.⁵⁵ Among basic rights and freedoms, freedom of religion and freedom of conscience is given particular emphasis.⁵⁶

There are obvious continuities between the views of the AKP and of synthesis-oriented conservatives on the role of religion in public and political life. Religion as the source of morality has a place both in the discourse of the AKP leaders and of the conservatives. As Heper and Toktaş argue, moral development is found behind Erdoğan’s statements, which were considered by the majority of secularists as signs of hankering for political Islam.⁵⁷ The conservatives highlighted the close relationship between religion and morality as well. Religion was considered to be one of the vital factors that enrich and deepen moral life,⁵⁸ and morality was defined as the prerequisite of social existence.⁵⁹ Likewise, in the AKP party program it says that religion is considered “as one of the most important institutions of humanity.”⁶⁰ The notables of the AKP feel the necessity to underline that there is a big difference between a party that attributes importance to religion and a party that transforms religion into an ideology. They emphasize that the AKP is neither a party based on religion nor a party using religion for political purposes.⁶¹ As Erdoğan noted, “the AKP attributed importance to religion as a social value.” This had been verbalized earlier in the works of synthesis-oriented conservatives. Religion was either described as a “social reality,”⁶² which was “both the creator of the pure spirit of our [Turkish] nation and the real mirror of it”⁶³ or as the “seed of culture.”⁶⁴

Another important evolution concerns the AKP’s conceptualization of secularism. The innovation here is not seeing secularism only as the “assurance of democracy” or as a “guarantor of the freedom of religion and conscience of members of varied religions” but also as an assurance for the freedom of those without religious beliefs to organize their lives in the way they want.⁶⁵ Secularism restricts the state, not the individual, and, as such, is seen as a prerequisite for democracy. Secularism in the party program is defined as the impartiality of the state toward any kind of religious and philosophical belief. The preservation of the rights and freedoms of believers and nonbelievers is seen as an important tenet of secularism—a principle which in turn would bring societal peace.

Similarly, secularism was emphasized by the early republican conservatives as much as religion and morality. By stating that "[s]cience relies on reason; religion on faith, and hence their realms are separate and compatible," the sphere of religion was separated from others.⁶⁶ That the other condition of secularism is freeing religion from intervention in its own sphere was also underlined. The AKP's understanding of secularism, which underlines the impartiality of the state towards any religious belief, is identical with the views of early Republican conservatives. The state should not exercise influence over religion⁶⁷ and has no right to forbid religious practices or to show hostility toward religious people according to the synthesis-oriented conservatives.⁶⁸

The conservative intellectuals became influential to a certain extent in freeing people from the idea that Islam is inherently reactionary. They stressed the power of Islam as "a collection of moral principles" in unifying people and thus strengthening national unity. Similar views are highlighted by the AKP to distance itself from being portrayed as reactionary and a threat to the secular character of the state domestically. The AKP prevented radicalization of some sections of society that hold themselves at a distance from the regime. It played a moderating role and contributed to their integration into—as opposed to alienation from—the system.

Change and Continuity

As mentioned above, the AKP has adopted a political language that is inspired from a moderate and change-oriented conservative tradition. Without explicitly referring to the synthesis-oriented conservative literature, the AKP's objective is defined as to continue the "old" (everlasting and perpetual), established, traditional, and sacred under modern circumstances.⁶⁹ In the party discourse, oppressive projects of change and social engineering are disapproved of because "change," for them, should be gradual, natural, and based on the natural transformation of society.⁷⁰

The inevitability of change was prominent in the thinking of the early republican conservatives too. However, what made their approach original was their endeavor to bring together change and continuity. It was molded in the mottos of "change within continuity," (*imtidad içinde değişme*)⁷¹ and "continuing by changing, changing by continuing" (*devam ederek değişmek, değişerek devam etmek*).⁷² The former denoted the persistence of the past while changing and renewing itself, and the latter highlighted preserving the essence while evolving. It was asserted that change should freely find its own route without being manipulated from above.⁷³

Following a similar line of thinking as conservative intellectuals' regarding "change" and "continuity," the AKP ideologues have included these two concepts in the discourse of the party. It is emphasized that the AKP's insistence on preservation should be differentiated from opposing change and progress. According to party notables, it refers to adapting to change without losing one's own essence.⁷⁴ Clearly, the AKP ideologues resemble the conservative intellectuals in characterizing "change" as an evolutionary rather than revolutionary concept with a commitment to

preserving the essence of culture but with an emphasis on Islam as the foremost element of it.

The Search for a Synthesis

“Conservative democracy” is depicted by AKP ideologues as a formulation of synthesis that aims at creating a harmonious fusion between “conservatism” and “democracy.” The ingredients of the synthesis are seemingly contradictory concepts such as regional and universal, traditional and modern, change and continuity. The AKP expects that this synthesis will help to reformulate the relations between religion and democracy, tradition and modernity, and state and society.⁷⁵ Additionally, their “conservative democracy” synthesis will prove that adapting to change without renouncing its own essence is not an anomaly. In the words of Gül, the challenge is to prove that tradition and moral values can be in perfect harmony with modern standards of life, and in turn this will contribute to the modern world.⁷⁶

The search for synthesis is not a novel phenomenon in Turkish political thought. The specific genre of early republican conservatism examined in this article particularly put emphasis on it. Accordingly, history and geography give Turkey a “mission to create the synthesis” because the Turkish nation is “charged with finding the equilibrium of combination” (*terkibin muvazenesini bulmağa memur edilmiş*).⁷⁷ One of the well-known formulations was the “East–West synthesis.” This can be defined roughly as “attaching one’s heart to the East and mind to the West; believing like an Easterner while thinking like a Westerner.”⁷⁸ Nonetheless, the synthesis is neither about transferring the past *en masse* to the present time nor about a total amalgamation of the Eastern mentality into the Western. There was a consensus on the idea that the notion of synthesis implied more than providing a peaceful coexistence between two different things, and the byproduct should be unique and authentic.⁷⁹

In a similar vein, the AKP strongly emphasized that Turkey is a bridge between East and West, Europe and Asia, Islam and Christianity. By channeling the two civilizations, Turkey’s “mission” is described by the AKP leaders as contributing to dialogue, cooperation, and peace in the world.⁸⁰ For the party notables, Turkey’s “multi-faceted geography” and its experience of combining a secular democratic structure with traditions deriving from an Islamic culture are “vital assets.”⁸¹ Evidently, the AKP reaches a common ground with the synthesis-oriented conservatives by assigning such a mission to Turkey through leaning on historical and geographical features.

It should be noted that seeking an original synthesis for the early republican conservatives was an antidote to averting the social crisis of the Turkish people in the face of civilization change. The instrumentality of their synthesis formulations is a fact. Those attempts provided an appropriate and safe environment to the conservative intellectuals for presenting their suggestions and criticisms without becoming opponents of the regime. Very similarly, “conservative democracy,” as a synthesis

formulation of the AKP, becomes instrumental in escaping from being labeled as reactionary or as a staunch defender of the status quo.

Conclusion

The rapid transformation and rise of the AKP has sparked an intense debate in Turkey concerning the nature of change in its identity. Secular elites, who think that its transformation is cosmetic and part of a tactic, accuse the leaders of the AKP of hiding their real intentions. Against the constant criticisms of the secularists, the ideologues of the AKP put forward the concept of "conservative democracy" out of a necessity to differentiate the unifying, harmonizing, and balancing line of the party from the religiously oriented political parties.⁸²

That the very concept of "conservative democracy" did not exist before is true. However, the themes used in the conceptualization of the term have long been part of Turkish conservative thought. As part of this archaeological attempt, the ideologues of the party borrowed some of the ideas of the early republican synthesis-oriented conservatives, such as the inevitability of change, searching for a synthesis, the unifying potential of religion, and the necessity to modernize the nation in accordance with the norms and values of the West. In order to moderate the influences of excessive Westernization in their struggle of survival, the intellectuals of the early republican period used "conservatism" as a means to avoid being labeled as reactionaries in the eyes of the Republican elites. The AKP has followed the same strategy to avoid being perceived as anti-regime.

"Conservative democracy" as the *leitmotiv* of the party reflects the familiar vocabulary of the synthesis-oriented conservatives. Nevertheless, it is never overtly pronounced by the party leaders. Rather, it is misrepresented as being built on a Western practice of conservatism. Only in Akdoğan's book, which can be regarded as the AKP's manifesto on "conservative democracy," early Republican conservatives like Baltacıoğlu, Beyath, Tanpınar, Tunç, and Safa are cited by name. This can be interpreted as a proof of influence. However, citing the names without giving an in-depth analysis of their opinions and arguments regarding issues similar to those that the AKP recently vocalized is quite interesting. Therefore, this article argues that "conservative democracy" is not an invented but a reinterpreted concept in Turkish politics. Interestingly, in one of his speeches, Erdoğan admitted that the aim of the party is to "reformulate" the Turkish value system according to a conservative political approach with universal characteristics.⁸³ However, he does not clarify the input of the reformulation.

"Conservative democracy" as a term has an immense inner strength. It shows considerable potential for opening new horizons in Turkish politics. It could make the idea of synthesis, which has long been an issue of cultural conservatism, visible and influential in the political arena. In fact "conservative democracy" is deeply rooted in the history of Turkish conservative thought and thus the true heir of the large accumulation of philosophic discussion and extensive literature. If the AKP anchored "conservative democracy" in the synthesis-oriented conservative tradition

in Turkey, its becoming a nebulous concept would be eliminated. Otherwise, the potential of the term cannot be fulfilled. The concept of “conservative democracy” has been (re)produced out of pragmatic concerns, and the continuity with the synthesis-oriented conservatism suffers neglect. Consequently, up until now the ideologues of the AKP have fallen short in concretizing “conservative democracy,” and hence its potential is exploited. The strength of the term, ironically, turns out to be a serious weakness.

Although this is the case, the AKP manages to benefit. The term is instrumental, on one hand, in indicating a break with the Islamist background of the party leaders, and on the other, by providing continuity with the synthesis-oriented Turkish conservatism in portraying the AKP as a party of the center. With the conservative component, the leaders of the party send the message to supporters of the AKP that they are still fond of preserving moral and cultural values. The other component, democracy, helps to renovate their image outside Turkey, especially in the West.

An appropriate synthesis between democracy and conservatism might ease the adaptation process of democratic reforms and transformations without losing sensitivity towards essential cultural and societal elements as long as the party leaders continue to be sincere about considering democracy as the foremost component of the term “conservative democracy.” However, this is the issue where “conservative democracy” falls short. Regarding which of the two, conservatism or democracy, is given primary concern by the AKP is not clear. The deviation of the party from the discourse as in the attempts to criminalize adultery and the policies to ban alcohol in AKP-run municipality restaurants arouses suspicions that the party favors the state’s interference in the private sphere as a moral obligation to society. This leads to the interpretation that democracy is not considered as the main pillar of its “conservative democratic” identity. Whether the “conservative democracy” of the AKP is aiming at a “conservative transformation centered around democracy” or at a “reconstruction of conservatism in a democratic format” is an open question now. Without clarifying which component of the term is considered to be the main pillar of the political discourse of the party, the advantages of “conservative democracy” as a term might in the future become liabilities for the party.

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Notes

1. The story of religious politics in Turkey is identical to the story of that movement led by Necmettin Erbakan, the former prime minister, for more than three decades. So far, five MG parties—the National Order Party (1970–1971), the National Salvation Party (1972–1980), the Welfare Party (1983–1997), the Virtue Party (1997–2001), and the Felicity Party (2001)—have been established, and the first four shared the same fate of closure.

2. Within this group of conservative thinkers, Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, İsmayıl Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, Mustafa Şekip Tunç, Peyami Safa, and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar are examined.
3. Some controversial events leading to discontentment and that deepened the rift are as follows: Erbakan's silence against the derogatory remarks of Muammar Qaddafi during his Libya visit (October 4–6, 1996), which was regarded by the state elites as a real humiliation for Turkey; the dinner Erbakan gave to the leaders of the religious orders (*tarikat*) at the prime minister's residence during Ramadan (January 11, 1997); the attempts of the RP notables to build mosques, one in Istanbul in Taksim Square and other in Ankara in Çankaya, which have symbolic importance for Kemalists; the pro-Islamic demonstrations against Zionism that took place as part of a program organized by the RP-led municipality of Sincan, a district of Ankara (January 31, 1997). For more on the secularist versus Islamist struggle in the second half of the 1990s in Turkey, among others see Nilüfer Göle, "Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: The Making of Elites and Counter-Elites," *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (1997), pp. 46–58; Reşat Kasaba, "Cohabitation? Islamists and Secular Groups in Modern Turkey," in Robert W. Hefner (ed.), *Democratic Civility: The History and Cross-Cultural Possibility of a Modern Ideal* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1998), pp. 265–84; and Michael M. Gunter, "The Silent Coup: The Secularist-Islamist Struggle in Turkey," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (1998), pp. 1–12.
4. For a detailed analysis of the legacy of the February 28 process, see Ümit Cizre and Menderes Çınar, "Turkey 2002: Kemalism, Islamism, and Politics in the Light of the February 28 Process," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* Vol. 102, No. 2–3 (Spring/Summer 2003), pp. 309–32.
5. Burhanettin Duran, "Islamist Redefinition(s) of European and Islamic Identities in Turkey," in Mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe (eds.), *Turkey and European Integration: Prospects and Issues in the Post-Helsinki Era* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 127.
6. Ergun Özbudun, "From Political Islam to Conservative Democracy: The Case of the Justice and Development Party in Turkey," *South European Society and Politics*, Vol. 11, No. 3–4 (September–December 2006), p. 546.
7. See Simten Coşar and Aylin Özman, "Centre-Right Politics in Turkey After the November 2002 General Election: Neo-Liberalism with a Muslim Face," *Contemporary Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2004), pp. 57–74; İhsan D. Dağı, "Transformation of Political Identity in Turkey: Rethinking the West and Westernization," *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2005), pp. 21–37; Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, "Globalisation and Social Democracy in the European Periphery: Paradoxes of the Turkish Experience," *Globalisations*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2007), pp. 211–28; Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, "Politics of Conservatism in Turkey," *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2007), pp. 233–52.
8. Metin Heper, "The Victory of the Justice and Development Party," *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 8, No.1 (2003), p. 131.
9. Şahin Alpay, "AKP is not Even 'Mildly' Islamist," *Today's Zaman*, April 7, 2008.
10. Yavuz Donat, "Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'in Seyir Defteri," [The Journal of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan] *Sabah*, November 6, 2001.
11. "Gül: Both Headscarves and Kurdish are Problems in this Country," *Turkish Daily News*, July 23, 2001.
12. See *Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line*, "Harmonising Immutable Values and Ever-Changing Mechanisms," November 11–17, 2004. Available at: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/716/focus.htm> [accessed May 6, 2008].
13. Speech of then vice-chairman of the AKP, Dengir Mir Mehmet Fırat, in *International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy* (Ankara: AK Parti Yayınları, 2004), p. 14.
14. For more on the genesis of European conservatism and different conservative experiences in Europe, among others see John Weiss, *Conservatism in Europe 1770–1945: Traditionalism, Reaction and Counter-Revolution* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977); Roger Eatwell and Noel O'Sullivan (eds.), *The Nature of the Right: European and American Politics and Political Thought Since 1789* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989); Frederick C. Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution and Romanticism: The Genesis of Modern German Political Thought, 1790–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Arthur Aughey, Greta Jones, and W.T.M. Riches, *The Conservative Political Tradition in Britain and the United States* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1992);

- Larry E. Jones and James N. Retallack (eds.), *Between Reform, Reaction and Resistance: Studies in History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945* (Providence and Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993); Rodney Barker, *Politics, Peoples and Government: Themes in British Political Thought Since the Nineteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994). The information given in this paragraph on different types of conservatism in Europe draws on these studies.
15. Michael Minkenberg, *The New Right in Comparative Perspective: The USA and Germany* (Ithaca: Western Societies Paper, 1993), p. 6.
 16. Robet Berki, *Conservatism in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), p. 69.
 17. Pekka Suvanto, *Conservatism from the French Revolution to the 1990s*, Roderick Fletcher, trans. (Ipswich: The Ipswich Book Company Ltd., 1997), p. 3.
 18. Edmund Burke's remark that "a state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation" is meaningful to show that inclination. See Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1955), p. 24.
 19. See Yalçın Akdoğan, *Muhafazakâr Demokrasi* [Conservative Democracy] (Ankara: AK Parti Yayınları, 2003).
 20. Yalçın Akdoğan, "The Meaning of Conservative Democratic Political Identity," in M. Hakan Yavuz (ed.), *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2006), p. 54.
 21. William Hale, "Christian Democracy and the AKP: Parallels and Contrasts," *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (June 2005), pp. 294–310.
 22. Sultan Tepe, "Turkey's AKP: A Model 'Muslim-Democratic' Party?" *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (July 2005), pp. 69–82; Gareth Jenkins, "Muslim Democrats in Turkey," *Survival*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 45–66.
 23. Meltem Müftüler-Baç, "The New Face of Turkey: The Domestic and Foreign Policy Implications of November 2002 Elections," *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (winter 2003), pp. 421–38.
 24. Soner Çağaptay, "Is Turkey Still a Western Ally?" *Wall Street Journal Europe*, January 22, 2009. Available at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123266156689407459.html>.
 25. Frank J. Gaffney Jr., "No to Islamist Turkey," *The Washington Times*, September 27, 2005.
 26. As an example, Tunç argued that in Republican politics, *conscious* conservatism is given a double role to provide order within progress and at the same time highlight the necessity of preservation within a steady change. Mustafa Şekip Tunç, "Muhafazakârlık ve Liberallik," [Conservatism and Liberalism] *Türk Düşüncesi*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (January 1954), p. 90.
 27. Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Tanzimat (Yüzüncü Yıldönümü Münasebetiyle)* [Tanzimat (On the Occasion of Its Hundredth Anniversary)] (Istanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940), p. 7.
 28. Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* [History of Contemporary Thought in Turkey] (Konya: Selçuk Yayınları, 1966), p. 616.
 29. In the literature, it is the dominant view that early republican conservatives were born *of* and reproduced Kemalism. Among others, see C. Nazım İrem, "Kemalist Modernizm ve Türk Gelenekçi-Muhafazakarlığının Kökenleri," [Kemalist Modernism and the Roots of Turkish Traditionalist Conservatism] *Toplum ve Bilim*, Vol. 74 (1997); Ahmet Çiğdem, *Taşra Epiği* [The Epic of Periphery] (Istanbul: Birikim Yayınları, 2001). On the contrary, the author is of the opinion that they were born *into* the "Kemalist-modernist wave" and saw the republican regime as an answer to their main problem of how to realize the civilizational change without undue tribulation.
 30. Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924) is known as the father of sociology in Turkey. He was profoundly influenced by Durkheim. Living in a society tormented by cultural loss, Gökalp tried to find pragmatic solutions to overcome such problems related to the civilizational shift.
 31. Beyatlı, Tanpınar, and Baltacıoğlu, during the single-party period, served as the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) MPs. Beyatlı was also sent to Europe with several diplomatic missions and was appointed as the ambassador to Pakistan in 1949. Safa ran for parliament for the CHP but failed to be elected.
 32. For a detailed analysis on MG's Islamism and its conception of the West, see Tanıl Bora, "Milliyetçi-Muhafazakâr ve İslamcı Düşünüşte Negatif Batı İmgesi," [The Image of Negative West

- in Nationalist–Conservative and Islamist Thought] in Uygur Kocabaşoğlu (ed.), *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 3: Modernleşme ve Batıcılık*, [Political Thought in Modern Turkey Vol. 3: Modernization and Westernization] 3rd ed. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), pp. 260–4.
33. Mehmet Akif Ersoy (1873–1936) is the poet of the Turkish national anthem. His mentioned verses can be translated accordingly: Adopt the science of the West, adopt its art/ Hasten your work besides.
34. "Erdoğan: Batı'nın Ahlâksızlığını Aldık," [Erdoğan: We Adopted the Immorality of the West] *Radikal*, January 25, 2008.
35. Hasan Hüseyin Ceylan (ed.), *Erbakan ve Türkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri* [Erbakan and the Fundamental Issues in Turkey] (Ankara: Rehber Yayıncılık, 1991), pp. 32–3.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 90–1.
37. "RP Batı'nın Yakın Takibinde," [RP Is Under Close Scrutiny of the West] *Aksiyon* (İstanbul weekly), January 14–20, 1995, p. 7.
38. Abdullah Gül, *Yeni Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikasının Ufukları* [Horizons of Turkish Foreign Policy in the New Century] (Ankara: Dışişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2007), p. 310.
39. For specific references to this idea, see Peyami Safa, *Doğu-Batı Sentezi* [The East-West Synthesis] (İstanbul: Yağmur Yayınları, 1963), p. 101 and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Mücevherlerin Sırrı: Derlenmemiş Yazılar, Anketler ve Röportajlar* [The Mystery of Jewels: Uncollected Essays, Surveys and Interviews] (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003).
40. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Beş Şehir* [Five Cities] (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 1979).
41. Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, *Edebiyata Dair* [On Literature] (İstanbul: Yahya Kemal Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1971), p. 139.
42. "Erdoğan Batı'nın Ahlâksızlığını Aldık," *Radikal*.
43. Safa, *Doğu-Batı Sentezi*, p. 19.
44. Gül, *Yeni Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikasının Ufukları*, pp. 174–5.
45. For more on the MG parties' views on EC membership, see Esra Çayhan, *Diünden Bugüne Türkiye Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri ve Siyasal Partilerin Konuya Bakışı* [The History of Turkey–EU Relations and Political Parties' Approaches] (İstanbul: Boyut, 1997).
46. Ceylan, *Erbakan ve Türkiye'nin Temel Meseleleri*, pp. 27–8.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
48. Message issued by Abdullah Gül, the then deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, on the Occasion of Europe Day, on May 8, 2005. Available at http://www.mfa.gov.tr/mfa_tr [accessed December 26, 2005].
49. Gül, *Yeni Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikasının Ufukları*, p. 37.
50. İhsan D. Dağı, "The Justice and Development Party: Identity, Politics, and Human Rights Discourse in the Search for Security and Legitimacy," in M. Hakan Yavuz (ed.), *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2006), pp. 89, 97.
51. The lines of the poem that he quoted from Gökâlp ("The mosques are our barracks, the minarets our bayonets, the domes our helmets and the believers our soldiers") at a 1997 rally and brought him a ten-month prison sentence, the project of building a mosque in Taksim square, opening the first meeting of the Municipality Council with *Fatiha* (the first verse of the Qur'an), and banning alcoholic drinks in municipality-run restaurants further fuelled suspicions.
52. İbrahim Ethem Deveci (ed.), *Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Bu Şarkı Burda Bitmez*, [This Song Never Ends] 7th ed. (İstanbul: Nesil, 1999), p. 65.
53. See Erdoğan's speech in the foundation ceremony of the AKP on August 14, 2001. Available at <http://www.akparti.org/konusma/index.php?tur=1&dil=ingilizce> [accessed November 5, 2001].
54. Safa, *Doğu-Batı Sentezi*, p. 71.
55. See the Introduction of the Party Program. Available at <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/partyprogramme.html#1> [accessed January 30, 2009].
56. See the political identity of the party, available at <http://www.akparti.org.tr/akparti%20kurumsal.pdf> [accessed February 6, 2009].
57. Metin Heper and Şule Toktaş, "İslam, Modernity and Democracy in Contemporary Turkey: The Case of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan," *The Muslim World*, Vol. 93, No. 2 (2003), p. 177.

58. Mustafa Şekip Tunç, *Bir Din Felsefesine Doğru* [Towards a Philosophy of Religion] (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1959).
59. İsmayıl Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, *Batıya Doğru* [Towards the West] (İstanbul: Sedat Basımevi, 1945), pp. 140–1.
60. <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/partyprogramme.html#1>.
61. Erdoğan's opening speech in *International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy* (Ankara: AK Parti Yayınları, 2004), p. 11.
62. Beyatlı's article was published in *Tevhid-i Efkâr* on April 23, 1922. For the full text of this article, see Beşir Ayvazoğlu, *Yahya Kemal-Eve Dönen Adam* [Yahya Kemal-The Man Who Returns Home] (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 1999), pp. 47–8.
63. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Yahya Kemal* (İstanbul: Yahya Kemal'in Sevenleri Cemiyeti Neşriyatı, 1963), p. 44.
64. For more on Tanpınar's views on the Islamization of Turks, see Zeynep Kerman, "Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ın Edebiyat Tarihi Hakkında Bazı Görüşleri," [Some Views of Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar on the History of Literature] in Sema Uğurcan (ed.), *Doğumunun Yüzüncü Yılında Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar* [Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar on the Hundredth Anniversary of his Birth] (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2003), p. 73.
65. See Kalyon Hotel Press Conference, August 23, 2001. Available at <http://www.akparti.org/konusma/index.php?tur=4&dil=ingilizce> [accessed November 5, 2001].
66. Peyami Safa, *Din, İnkılâp, İrtica* [Religion, Revolution, Reactionism] (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 1999), p. 39.
67. İsmayıl Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, *Türke Doğru* [Towards the Turks], 3rd ed. (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, 1994), p. 179.
68. Safa, *Din, İnkılâp, İrtica*, p. 144.
69. Yalçın Akdoğan, "AK Party-Conservatism and Democracy," in *International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy* (Ankara: AK Parti Yayınları, 2004), p. 217.
70. Erdoğan's opening speech in *International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy*, p. 7.
71. Quoted from Beyatlı in Süheyl Ünver, *Yahya Kemal'in Dünyası* (İstanbul: Şehir Yayınları, 2000), p. 59.
72. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Yahya Kemal* (İstanbul: Yahya Kemal'in Sevenleri Cemiyeti Neşriyatı, 1963), p. 14.
73. Tanpınar, *Beş Şehir*, p. 112.
74. Erdoğan's opening speech in *International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy*, p. 8.
75. Ibid., p. 10.
76. Gül, *Yeni Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikasının Ufukları*, pp. 528, 539.
77. Safa, *Doğu-Batı Sentezi*, p. 101.
78. Safa, *Din, İnkılâp, İrtica*, p. 87.
79. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, "Asıl Kaynak," [The Principal Source] *Ülkü*, No.38, April 16, 1943; Baltacıoğlu, *Batıya Doğru*, p. 69.
80. Erdoğan's opening speech in *International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy*, p. 3.
81. Gül, *Yeni Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikasının Ufukları*, pp. 30, 368.
82. Yalçın Akdoğan, *AK Parti ve Muhafazakâr Demokrasi* [AK Party and Conservative Democracy] (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2004), p. vii.
83. Erdoğan's opening speech in *International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy*, p. 7.