



Netzwerk Türkei Discussion Paper

Netzwerk Türkei Discussion Paper No. 4

Charting the contested faiths of Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party

Marc Herzog
mabrukh@gmail.com

Exeter 2008

-- Do not cite without the author's permission--

Introduction

Since spring 2007, Turkish politics has stumbled through a succession of political crises in a short period of time that scarcely seems credible. First the parliamentary elections of the president were boycotted by the opposition and then annulled by the constitutional court. The Turkish military was conspicuous in its rhetorical opposition to the presidential elections. This resulted in the government bringing forward the elections from November to June. These elections were won by the governing Justice and Development party (AKP) by 47%. A second crisis erupted this year when the constitutional court accepted a case to debate on whether to close down the AKP. This case was finally rejected in August 2007. At the core of these crises seems to lie the debate revolving around the actual and imagined nature of the AKP. Ever since its emergence onto the arena of Turkish politics with its election in November 2002, the AKP has aroused the anger and passion of the Turkish public over its Islamist background. The party itself has denied that it is Islamist in orientation and likens itself to 'a conservative party of the masses' (Hermann 2003: 276). Yet it is often overlooked how diverse the party's membership and ideological framework is.

The first section of this paper will focus on the various ideological strands contained within the AKP's main doctrine, 'Conservative Democracy'. This ideological platform is not just an Islamist document but is wide and flexible enough to accommodate the party's four main strands of political thought, Islamism, liberalism, nationalism and conservatism. Some of the main strategic factors involved in the emergence of this doctrine and what uses it has had will be illustrated as well as how it reflects the party's position in Turkish politics. The second part will focus on two case studies to highlight the contradictions in the balance between these four main strands within the overall frame of the 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine's workings and failings. Finally, the conclusion of this paper will reflect on the adequacy of this doctrine as a strategic tool and an ideological framework. Additionally, the paper will briefly discuss the AKP's modelhood for a wider regional frame.

"An important majority of the society is willing to see a modernity not excluding the tradition; universality not excluding the locality, a rationality not refusing the faith, and changes that are not very fundamental." Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Taşkin 2008: 55)

The AKP was founded in 2001 as a split off from within Turkey's historical Islamist party spectrum, the National Outlook movement, an Islamist party movement. All National Outlook parties were eventually closed down. In 1997, the Welfare party was dissolved and the Virtue party, its successor, in 2001. The last closure produced two offspring. The first one was the traditionalist Felicity party, which was squarely in the tradition of the old generation of Islamists. The party has been electorally insignificant both the national elections of 2002 and 2007. The second offshoot was the reformist and modernist Justice and Development party which was founded in August 2001. These two schools of thought had already emerged as rival factions in the Virtue party. The *yenilikçiler* (reformists), headed by Istanbul's former mayor, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Abdullah Gül, represented a new generation of Islamist politicians advocating a more modern and moderate style of political Islam aiming to reform Turkey's system of governance along the liberal democratic lines of the European model. It also portrayed itself as a broad conservative mass party.

Ultimately due to a variety of reasons, the AKP received 34.28% of the total votes in the 2002 elections. Many observers attributed this to an overwhelming desire of the Turkish electorate to punish the coalition government and the mainstream political establishment for its role in the

disastrous economic crises of 2000 and 2001 (Özel 2003: 82). The AKP also seemed untainted by the epidemic of corruption allegations in Turkish politics and made a competent and efficient impression thanks to its charismatic leader, Erdoğan, who enjoyed widespread popularity due to his competent and efficient record as Istanbul's mayor in the 1990s (Çaha 2003: 102). In the 2004 local elections, the AKP increased its share of the vote to 41.6%, an indication perhaps that the party had attracted the loyalty of a large electoral constituency and was bucking the electoral trend in Turkey to evict the incumbent party from office after one voting cycle.

It is relatively difficult to pinpoint the precise format and composition of the AKP's ideological, programmatic and organisational character. The party's exact position on so many issues relevant to the infamous secular-religious cleavage has been broad and ambiguous enough to satisfy a diversity of different domestic and international publics. The charge has been made that the party has tried to be 'everything to everyone' by reframing itself as a national catch-all party (Mandaville 2007: 128). As a result, 7 years after its establishment there is still an energetic academic and analytical debate on the exact definition nature of the AKP.

Conservative Democracy: its theoretical components

The AKP incorporates within itself 4 broad strands of political thought and tradition, Islamism, liberalism, conservatism and nationalism. (Hermann 2003: 273). Öniş and Keyman (2003: 101) has termed this combination the 'communitarian-liberal synthesis' as it is a project to frame a mix conservative, Islamist and nationalist discourses in tone within a rights-based democratic conception of liberal rights and freedoms. Despite the frequency with which the AKP describe themselves as conservative democrats, this conceptual straitjacket has never been fully defined nor outlined. The contradictions and inconsistencies that the use and involvement of these diverse and sometimes conflictual outlooks has generated in the way they are employed in the AKP's 'conservative democracy' doctrine, the way it interprets the party's democratic mandate and its track record highlights that this is a work in progress. However, as shall be explored, the ambivalence and opacity that the focus on these different normative perspectives has produced in the AKP's rhetoric and its main doctrine may be of strategic use to it both internally and externally as a party organization.

Liberalism

The pluralist variant of liberalism can be clearly detected in the AKP's mode of thinking as regards its promotion of a universal discourse in which notions and concepts of human rights, political rights and civil liberties figure greatly (Larrabee and Rabasa 2008: 47). The second area where liberalism has shaped if not dominated the AKP's policy-making has been in the economic sphere. The influence of free-market liberalism has been highly visible in the government's overwhelmingly successful track record in continuing to integrate Turkey into the global economy, attracting foreign direct investment and conducting an economic strategy of liberalization. The influence of liberalism was already evident in the normative transformations that the reformist bloc in the Virtue party underwent before leaving the party to form the AKP. They favoured a paradigm shift in political thinking and state structures towards the European liberal democratic model of governance as its pluralistic nature would be more sympathetic to their identity and ensure their political survival (Findley 2005: 218). The early, more optimistic stage of the EU accession talks provided a strong anchoring point for this liberal thinking in the party. Their 2002 election manifesto was titled 'Development and Democratization' and former US ambassador Mark Parris (2008) classified the AKP as 'the closest thing to a liberal democratic party in Turkey today'.

Conservatism

Whilst liberalism has become quite predominant in the political and economic outlook of the AKP, as a Muslim Democrat party, conservatism and Islamism have played equally strong roles, especially in their availability as strong normative traditions in the party's thinking. In that sense, the AKP has placed heavy emphasis on the importance of the continuity and preservation of traditional social mores, norms and values and traditions from one generation to the next. There is a fair resemblance to the social conservatism of the US Republicans in the way that Turkish populist centre-right politics has sometimes framed certain issues such as the notion of a silent and unrepresented socially-conservative majority that constitutes the backbone of the nation's moral integrity (Taşkin 2008: 55).

In this sense, the AKP has attempted to fashion a link with strong tradition of Turkish centre-right, conservative politics and their rhetoric has approximated this ideal type closely while trying to remain distant from Islamist discourses. Erdoğan himself has often been portrayed as a new Menderes or Özal, famous prime ministers from centre-right parties from the 1950s and 1980s rather than fashioning himself as an Islamist politician (Ayata 2004: 255). This conservative way of thinking, particularly in the communitarian framing of society, has much influenced the majoritarian frame in which the party has at times interpreted its democratic mandate as well as their framing of contemporary Turkish society as a national community characterised by an overall identity that is Sunni, religiously observant and social conservative.

Islamism

Prominent Islamic scholar and AKP parliamentarian Mehmet Aydın: "We are religious people, but our actions in the public sphere ... do not have a religious side or theological meaning (White 2005: 87)."

Compared with the Islamist politics of the National Outlook parties the AKP seems scarcely to qualify as an Islamist party. Indeed, Dağı (2008: 26) argues that it is actually wrong to apply define the term Islamist to the AKP in any manner as they are not striving for the establishment of an Islamic state or the introduction of the sharia as the main instrument of civil jurisprudence. However, while the AKP has toned down the prominence of Islamism in its rhetoric and political policies, it is arguable that this has partially been done for strategic purposes and that Islamism continues to greatly influence the party's identity and self-conception. The AKP's attempts to legislate the criminalization of adultery, legitimate the religious Imam-Hatip schools as educational establishment and abolish the headscarf ban highlights that Islamism, even in its mildest form, continues to be present within the party's ideological framework. Tepe (2006: 122) notes that while the party's central doctrine refrains from explicitly mentioning Islamic or religious values, it does refer to them obliquely as constituting an essential socio-cultural tradition and identity that cannot not be sacrificed to the processes of modernization. Thus, rather than appealing directly to religious sentiments, the AKP has engaged in a 'pietistic politics' well linked to rural ideals of religious observancy and moral propriety (Mandaville 2007: 120). The AKP means to empower individuals to feel at ease and equal in their private, individual lives by framing their struggle in rights-based discourses rather than pursuing a top-down project of Islamicisation. Thus, it should not be seen as conventionally Islamist but rather as a party of 'Muslim Democrats' as Nasr has termed them (2005: 18).

Nationalism

Nationalist populism is a natural theme in Turkish party politics across the spectrum. One of the AKP's enduring party slogans is 'Everything for Turkey'. However, the AKP has never been a party with a strong ideology nationalist content despite attracting several members from the MHP, a far-right party, at its inception. Turkey's extraordinarily open foreign policy under the AKP government and its attempt to improve relations with all its neighbours has shown it to have undertaken bold steps to promote an opening of society towards the world. Rather, nationalism has been a low-cost populist tactic within the party to respond publicly to international developments that affect the Turkish public and to adapt to the resurgence of nationalist sentiment within society. In that sense one can classify it as a reactive development within the party. The failure of the Annan Plan in Cyprus, the stagnation of the EU accession negotiations and, most importantly, the 2003 US invasion of Iraq were significant in stimulating this public resurgence. Grigoriadis (2006: 19) notes a distinct increase in the potency of the party's populist nationalism after December 2004.

The strategic uses of the 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine

The AKP's 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine sought to incorporate these different strands and arrive at some synthesis between them. However, as will be detailed, as a text and ideological platform, it also served a variety of strategic functions for the AKP as a party organisation. Despite the democratizing duty that the party has sometimes been saddled with, it must be remembered that as an electoral 'fighting organisation', as the classic political theorist Michels termed political parties (cited in Kalaycıoğlu 2002: 45), its main role is to win elections. Thus the main strategic uses the 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine has had for the party are listed below.

It maintains internal cohesion and control within the party and amongst its members by attempting to crystallise the different position within the party into one representative ideological outlook

It constitutes a common representative image to the AKP's various constituencies and publics, both at domestic and international level.

The document has also helped the party come to terms with its political Islamist background and identity and reframe it in a manner that defanged it for the secular state establishment and external audiences, both on a domestic and international level. In that sense it has encapsulated the learning experience that the AKP underwent in shifting its position.

Internal representation, cohesion and control

'Conservative Democracy' has been an ideal doctrine for the AKP to maintain cohesion amongst the various disparate groupings and factions that comprise the party, particularly during its initial formative stage until it was elected into power. In that sense, the AKP should not be seen as containing one homogenous, unified structure of ideological beliefs and values universally held by its members. Initially, the party consisted of a coalition of diverse interests and factions. The central bloc, including the founding quartet of Erdoğan, Gül, Arınc and Topal, all originated from the reformist faction of the Islamist political spectrum of the National Outlook parties. Nevertheless, the party also attracted members from mainstream centre-right, conservative parties like ANAP, right-wingers from MHP, as well as several independent liberals and disgruntled left-wingers (Jenkins 2008: 167). Thus, the vagueness and broadness of the

'Conservative Democracy' allowed it to encapsulate most political strands of thought within the party's membership and create a loose, normative consensus amongst these various interest groups holding it together based on a 'democratic Islamic identity' (Hakan Yavuz 2006: 245). Seymour Martin Lipset (1970: 221) noted that the internal pressures of religious mass parties were essentially centripetal due to the need to reconcile the different ideological positions within the party organisations, thus pushing the party into adopting centrist positions as a necessary compromise.

The AKP initially pledged within its own party constitution to institute authentic measures of intra-party democracy and horizontal accountability regarding internal the decision-making processes. This development, unique amidst the tradition top-down world of Turkish electoral politics, would have put the internal viability of the 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine to the test and demonstrated the effects of internal membership pressures upon the party's identity. Unfortunately, however, the promises of intra-party democracy were quickly abandoned. Some argued that it was not feasible as the more pious rank and file membership would have pushed the party too far into adopting an openly Islamist identity thus exposing it to constitutional persecution (Cinar 2006: 479). Decision-making powers within the party have become increasingly concentrated within the leadership elite, and as of late, Erdoğan himself (Turkish Analyst 2008). This dispiriting development hinders any possibility within the AKP for a real debate on how to define the party's evolving identity and whether the 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine can accommodate it. Therefore, the party decision to field a new rank of more mainstream candidate for the 2007 elections was not the outcome of a deliberative discussion amongst the party's membership but rather a strategic calculation of the AKP's leadership to moderate the party's image.

External representation

In terms of its electability, the concept of conservative democracy has enabled the AKP to cast its nets as wide as possible to attract the median vote. The party has increasingly taken on the organisational mantle of a catch-all party in the way it markets itself to the nation-wide electorate as a service and governance-orientated centre-right party, shedding more of its Islamist exterior. This is a predictable development as the party's voter share of 47% in 2007 highlights that its electoral constituencies have by far surpassed the parameters of the Islamist voter base in Turkey, which is estimated at 8-15% of the electorate (Doğan 2005: 433). As Sayarı (2002: 23) notes, the centre-right and far-right have traditionally attracted approximately two thirds of the total vote in Turkey since the 1960s. According to Celik (2003: 83), the 'Sunni-conservative electorate varies between 45 and 55%'. As a result of the 2007 elections, the AKP has also swallowed the ideological space previously occupied by mainstream centre-right parties like ANAP or DYP who have almost been pushed into political extinction as they have not gained parliamentary admissions in the last two national elections. However this reframing has not only been aimed at domestic publics but at a wider international audience. By reframing their doctrinal framework to one of conservative democracy, the AKP has been able to explore links with similar parties on an international level, including in the USA and the EU. In fact, this has been a key rhetorical pattern in marketing the AKP to the EU.

Reframing itself both internally and externally as a learning experience

The AKP's 'Conservative Democracy' can be seen as a strategic text rather than simply an ideological expression of the party's standpoints because it actively draws away attention from the AKP's Islamist background, character and identity without entirely omitting these. It only emerged as the party's leading philosophical guide following its 2002 election (Tepe 2006: 118). Rather it is a document that evokes the centre-right politics of the 1950s Democrat Party and the

Motherland party of the 1980s rather than the marginal and anti-systemic Islamist politics of the National Outlook Movement. Thus, it deemphasised the importance of Islamist thinking and tradition within the party, 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine can also be seen as a practice of *takiyye*, a strategic subterfuge used to conceal one's primary identity for survival. This is quite understandable given that every Islamist party in Turkey was dissolved due to its involvement of religion in politics and its perceived threat to the secularist state. As with most mass parties, especially those with a religious component, there is also a discernable difference in religiosity between the AKP's rank-and-file membership and its more moderate parliamentarian and party leadership.

However, the promotion of 'Conservative Democracy' as an ideological platform should not only be seen as an entirely strategic instrument to deflect the focus of the secularist establishment. It fits well with the general direction in which the post-Erbakan generation of the AKP's politicians have tried to evolve in pushing for a more modern and moderate understanding of Islam that ties itself to a centre-right political position and is normatively and strategically linked to a pluralist model of liberal governance which protects notions of individual freedom of expression and freedom of religion. This ideational shift in the younger Islamists and its culmination in the AKP's founding was as much an outcome of 'an intergenerational struggle for power' as a strategic realization that this would ensure its electoral and political survival (Taşkin 2008: 59). In many cases, the experiences of Islamist politicians elected into municipal government in the 1990s served as a learning process that moderated their outlook and contributed to them adopting a more pragmatic approach that eschewed doctrinaire politics on governance issues (Cavdar 2006: 487).

As Yeşilada (2002: 158) states political parties need to be able to adapt to changing contexts in order to survive and the emergence of the AKP during a period when negotiations with the EU to start accession negotiation was in full flow and privileged the emergence of a political for liberal Islam and further democratization (Cook 2008: 24). Therefore, while there is a strategic motive in promoting the 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine as a strategic tool to dilute and repackage the party's Islamist background and identity in a manner that will make it seem harmless and trivial to their different publics, there has also been an ideational shift in values within the party's founding group that informed their selection of this doctrine as something akin or similar to their values and beliefs.

The 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine's impact on the AKP's view of democracy

Turkey under the AKP has undoubtedly achieved much progress in its democratization. The party has contributed hugely to expanding the socio-political sphere for civil liberties and political freedoms. Nevertheless, some have noted an increasing streak of magisterial authoritarianism in the party's conduct after the 2007 elections. The AKP's 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine has contributed to this trend as it claims to encompass the needs of the entire electorate rather than a specific segment. Consequently, the AKP has often acted as if it presumed that its democratic mandate to rule from both national elections gave it complete liberty to act in the people's authority. In that vein, the party has become increasingly intransigent, dismissing any political position in disagreement with its own as ridiculous or hostile to the government and therefore, by implication, to the wider public interest.

This outlook simplifies society as an abstract harmonious whole and downplays the significant differences and cleavages in Turkish society. This ironically mirrors the way the Kemalist state ideology subsumes all social classes and groups under a single conception of the national interest. This intransigence and refusal to forge a genuine consensus with political opposition has contributed to the growing political polarization in Turkish politics and society. Erdoğan's

naming of the AKP's rule as the 'second Menderes era' is telling as Menderes' rule became increasingly extremely authoritarian provoking a coup (Taşkin 2008: 68). This attitude has fuelled the arguments advanced by the party's secular critics and opponents that the party has a clandestine Islamicisation agenda and has only promoted issues related to democratization and the expansion of civil rights in the socio-political sphere, such as the headscarf ban, where this has coincided with the interests of its core electoral constituency, the religious social-conservative classes (Düzgit 2008: 1).

The next section will examine the AKP's handling and framing of two inter-related issues, the headscarf debate and the ongoing EU-accession negotiations. In doing so, this paper hopes to arrive at a clearer understanding of how the various strands of thought within the party and its 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine have influenced the AKP's governance.

The Headscarf debate

The AKP's attempt to abolish the headscarf debate at universities in February 2008 through a constitutional amendment developed into a major flashpoint between it and its secular political and social opposition. The AKP repeatedly expressed its commitment to eliminate the ban prior to the 2002 elections as it was a key identity issue to a core group of its members as well as its electoral base (Doğan 2005: 434). Many of the party's members including the current prime ministers and president have a personal stake in the matter as they or their spouses regularly wear the headscarf (Larabee and Rabasa 2008: 62). At the same time however, the AKP also has many unveiled members. While the government conducted a 'politics of avoidance' regarding the headscarf during its first term (Tepe 2006: 132) and seemed content to outsource the issue to the European Court of Human Rights which was deliberating the issue. Ultimately though, ECHR ruled in favour of the ban which prompted Erdoğan to state that the matter could only be considered by the ulema, a body of Muslim religious scholars (Jenkins 2008: 178). The party's success in the 2007 elections seemed to embolden it to tackle the issue directly. The speed and haste with which the government placed the issue of the headscarf ban on its legislative agenda after the elections was criticised both by the party's critics as well as by many of its own members.

Yet the AKP's political commitment to abolishing the ban has not been solely informed by its Islamist colouring but also by the other political strands within the party, especially political liberalism. The shift towards a more liberal, moderate and pluralistic approach towards religion, society and governance in the AKP could be seen in the manner in which the campaign to abolish the headscarf has been presented. Rather than couching it in Islamist terminology, the government framed the debate in the discourse of universal rights like personal choice and freedom of expression (Dağı 2008: 28). Some supportive newspapers even saw it as a civil rights matter comparable to the race segregation issue in American schools of the 1960s.

AKP members have also stated that they see the abolition of the headscarf ban as an integral element of furthering democratization of Turkey's socio-political spaces (Arınc 2008). Thus the changes to abolish the headscarf ban at university were introduced as an amendment to an article 10 of the constitution guaranteeing equality to all citizens (Azrak 2008). This article would have been expanded to include equal access to all citizens to public institutions such as universities. Although parliament the amendment was passed, the constitutional court later repealed it. Naturally, the AKP's use of this liberal discourse based on universal rights and human entitlement reflects a strategic realization that this will facilitate the appeal of its plan to abolish the ban at both domestic and international level. Nevertheless, one sees clearly a combination of liberal, conservative and Islamist political ethics at work here in which the AKP attempts to empower its electoral base at an individual base by placing them within a democratic legal

framework that allows them to practice their religion and respects them as pious members of society.

EU accession

It is somewhat more difficult to interpret the AKP's relations to the EU in regards to the party's different sets of faith and normative belief as there are so many other factors and variables that influence it as a governing party in this case. However, a focus on this issue is still useful as the EU is in many ways one of the AKP's main referents in terms of the state model on which it would like to model Turkey. As Kardas (2008: 181) states, it is possible to distinguish between two periods in the EU negotiations with Turkey since the AKP came into power in 2002. The first period lasted from its election in 2002 until the formal opening of EU accession negotiations in October 2005. During that time, the AKP was credited with bringing about a veritable 'revolution' in terms of the progress made towards EU accession (Kirisci 2006: 24). A quick succession of reform packages, designed to begin preparing Turkey for the beginning of EU accession negotiations, passed through parliament. The government, keen to claim national ownership over the political reforms it was instituting, transformed the Copenhagen criteria into the Ankara criteria.

As stated, the party committed itself to this path not just due to its normative shift favouring a liberal system of democratic governance but also because such a polity would ensure their long-term survival. Its self-proclaimed kinship with Christian Democratic Parties has been tantamount to a direct emulation of European political traditions. According to Hale (2006: 77), the AKP is broadly similar to the European Christian parties in its promotion of individual freedoms against the power of the state whilst also retaining a communitarian outlook in its framing of Turkish society as a single community of common values and beliefs. Consequently, this was the more liberal period of the AKP's incumbency and seems to have been characterised by a genuine desire to pursue a liberal politics rooted in its desire to be a Muslim Democrat comparable to the European variant. Yet, at every step the AKP was quick to demonstrate its nationalist credentials by repeating its commitment to protect Turkish national sovereignty against any unnecessary or excessive EU interference. This made observers question to what extent the AKP, and the Turkish political establishment in general, was aware that the EU relied on member states ceding and pooling part of their sovereignty in order to function (Jenkins 2008: 174).

In the second period, starting after October 2005, Kardas (2008: 181) characterised the AKP's stance towards EU accession negotiations as 'reform fatigue'. Relations stagnated quickly as this fatigue set in and popular and political opposition to Turkey's entry into the EU began to increase across Europe, especially in France and Germany. The AKP began adopting a more nationalist discourse, partly in reaction to this external development and others like Cyprus, the US invasion of Iraq, and partly also to adjust to the nationalist surge that these events stimulated amidst the Turkish public. Openly committed to EU membership, the AKP struggled to reconcile this with its rhetorical shift towards more a more closed, nationalistic self-conception. These contradictions were evident in the government's lacklustre attempts to reform article 301 of the constitution upon which the EU made further accession progress conditional.

The story of Turkey is simple: its case is always different. (Hermann 2003: 265)

The notion of the AKP as a regional model for other moderate Islamist parties as an example of democratic governance in a Muslim cultural setting has been much touted and debated in the last 6 years. This notion was heavily supported by the US in its strategic need to find an allied political regime that could be promoted as proving the compatibility of western-based democratic political systems and Islam as a socio-cultural context. While it seemed at first that the AKP could attain

long-term institutional survival as a successful moderate Islamist or Muslim Democrat party, this is an open question as the party's recent narrow escape from constitutional closure showed. Therefore, it is questionable whether a party forced to conceal its own Islamist identity and background can be seen as an authentic model of success for other Islamist parties to follow. Many scholars have also suggested that the evolution of Turkey's Islamist party spectrum in a staunchly secularist and authoritarian state culture is quite context-specific and cannot be transposed to other settings. Therefore the prospect of the 'model' thesis, conceived in the early stage of the AKP's rule, needs more sober and realistic evaluation.

Despite its best efforts and genuine intentions, the AKP has struggled heavily to combine its Muslim identity and Islamist background with a liberal democratic outlook as a Europeanized conservative party. Moreover, this process has required it to play a constant juggling game between meeting the expectations of its core voter base and avoiding constitutional prosecution by the secularist state regime while simultaneously trying to adapt the country towards the European model of liberal governance and forging ahead with its democratization. This is the context in which the contradictions and relative failings of the 'Conservative Democracy' doctrine to constitute a cohesive ideological document to guide the party's politics must be judged. As has been seen the party is still uneasy about the direction in which to evolve and is still looking for a cohesive ideological platform that can achieve a viable synthesis of the different strands of political thinking within it. Its doctrine has served it well as a strategic tool for the purpose of external representation, internal cohesion and control, and to map its learning experience of adapting its Islamist identity to a rights-based liberal conception of governance. Its ideological flexibility and ambivalence has allowed it to cater to the party's diverse publics and constituencies without adopting a specific position.

Bibliography

Ayata, S. (2004) Changes in Domestic Politics and the Foreign Policy Orientation of the AK Party, in Keridis, D., Martin, L. (eds.), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, pp.243-275, MIT Press

Azrak, Ü. (2008) 'Attack on the Turkish constitution', *Qantara* http://www.quantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/c-476/nr-995/i.html?PHPSESSID=133099

Çavdar, G. (2006) 'Islamist New Thinking in Turkey: A Model for Political Learning?', *Political Science Quarterly*, 121(3), pp.477-497

Çaha, Ö (2003) Turkish Election of November 2002 and the Rise of "Moderate" Political Islam, *Alternatives - Turkish Journal of International Relations*, 2(1), pp. 95-116

Celik, O. (2003) 'Turkey and the Fate of Political Islam', in Abramowitz, M. (ed.), *The United States and Turkey: Allies in Need*, pp.61-84, Century

Cinar, M. (2006) 'Turkey's Transformation under the AKP Rule', *Muslim World*, 96 (4), pp.469-486

Cook, S. (2008) 'Islamists political power in Turkey: Challenges for Brussels and Washington', in Brumberg, D., Asseburg, M. (eds.), *The Challenge of Islamists for EU and US policies: Conflict, Stability and Reform*, pp.23-28, Stiftung fuer Wissenschaft und Politik

Dağı, I. (2008) 'Turkey's AKP in Power', *Journal of Democracy*, 19(3), pp.24-30

Doğan, E. (2005) 'The Historical and Discursive Roots of the Justice and Development Party's EU Stance', *Turkish Studies*, 6(3), pp.421-437

Düzgüt, S.A. (2008) *What is happening in Turkey? Party Closure and Beyond*, CEPS

Findley, C.V. (2005) *The Turks In World History*, Oxford University Press

Fuller, G. (2004) 'Turkey's Strategic Model: Myths and Realities', *Washington Quarterly*, 27(3), pp.51-64

Grigoriadis, I.N. (2006) *Upsurge amidst political uncertainty*, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik

Hakan Yavuz, M. (2006) 'Islam and Europeanization in Turkish-Muslim socio-political movements', in Byrnes, T.A., Katzenstein, P.J. (eds.), *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, pp.225-255, Cambridge University Press

Hermann, R. (2003) 'Political Islam in Secular Turkey', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 14(3), pp.265-276

Jenkins, G. (2008) *Political Islam in Turkey: Running West, Heading East*, Palgrave MacMillan

- Kalaycıoğlu, E. (2002) 'The Motherland Party: The Challenge of Institutionalization in a Charismatic Leader Party', in Rubin, B., Heper, M. (eds.), *Political Parties in Turkey*, pp.41-61, Frank Cass
- Kardas, Ş. (2008) 'Turkey under the Justice and Development Party: Between Transformation of 'Islamism' and Democratic Consolidation?', *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, 17(2), pp.175-187
- Kirisçi, K. (2006) *Turkey's foreign policy in turbulent times: Chaillot paper N.92*, Institute for Security Studies
- Larabee, S., Rabasa, A. (2008) *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, Rand
- Lipset, S. M. (1970) *Revolution and Counter-revolution: Change and Persistence in Social Structures*, Anchor Books
- Mandaville, P. (2007) *Global Political Islam*, Routledge
- Nasr, V. (2005) 'The Rise of 'Muslim Democracy'', *Journal of Democracy*, 16(2), pp.13-27
- Önis, Z., Fuat Keyman, E. (2003) 'A New Path emerges', *Journal of Democracy*, 14(2), pp.95-107
- Özel, S. (2003) 'After the Tsunami', *Journal of Democracy*, 14(2), pp.80-94
- Parris, M. (2008) 'Turkey's Courts Should Respect the Will of the People', *Brookings Institutions* http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0517_turkey_parris.aspx?p=1
- Sayarı, S. (2002) 'The Changing Party System', in Sayarı, S., Esmer, Y. (eds.), *Politics, Parties & Elections in Turkey*, pp.9-32, Lynne Rienner
- Taşkın, Y. (2008) 'AKP's Move to "Conquer" the Center-Right: Its Prospects and Possible Impacts on the Democratization Process', *Turkish Studies*, 9(1), pp.53-72
- Tepe, S. (2006) 'A Pro-Islamic Party? Promises and limits of Turkey's Justice and Development Party', in Hakan Yavuz, M. (ed.), *The Emergence of New Turkey*, pp.107-135, University of Utah Press
- Turkish Analyst (2008) 'Erdogan's towering role in the AKP', *Turkish Analyst*, March 12, <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/inside/turkey/080312-Erdogan.html>
- Yeşilada, B.A. (2002) 'Realignment and Party Adaptation: The Case of the Refah and Fazilet Parties', in Sayarı, S., Esmer, Y. (eds.), *Politics, Parties & Elections in Turkey*, pp.157-178, Lynne Rienner
- White, J.B. (2005) 'The End of Islamism? Turkey's muslimhood model', in Hefner, R.W. (ed.), *Remaking Muslim Politics: Pluralism, Contestation, Democratization*, pp.87-111, Princeton University Press