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# Uneven Development and Non-Western Modernities: A Historical Sociology Guide to the New Turkey

Oğuzhan Göksel\*

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## Abstract

The term “New Turkey” refers to the ongoing formation of a new socio-political system by the incumbent AKP (Justice and Development Party) administration. A neglected issue within the existing literature is the study of New Turkey in the broad context of social theory beyond Turkish studies. Deterministic narratives of globalization have long presented Turkey as a “beacon of hope” in the Muslim world, a westernizing society that would supposedly combine liberal democracy, Islamic values, secularism and free-market capitalism. In contrast to these expectations, today the New Turkey constitutes an illiberal polity, a neoliberal economy based on clientelism and an increasingly Islamized social environment. How and why the Turkish modernization experience has gradually culminated in an authoritarian non-Western variant of modernity?

This article utilizes a historical sociology approach based on the Uneven and Combined Development Theory (U&CD) to locate the origins of the unexpected rise of New Turkey in our age. It is argued that complex interactions between elements of Western modernity (e.g. secularization and democratization), various social engineering programs launched since the late Ottoman era and Turkey’s own path dependent trajectory have gradually produced a socio-economic and political model that radically diverges from the Western experience.

**Keywords:** New Turkey; Historical Sociology; Modernization; Democratization; Economic Development; Clientelism; Eurocentrism; Uneven and Combined Development

## Introduction

A new term has recently entered the lexicon of Turkish politics – the so-called “New Turkey”. New Turkey<sup>1</sup>, as a political discourse and an actual regime formation process, has started to be commonly used by the AKP (Justice and Development Party) spokespeople after Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected president in 2014 (AK Parti 2015). In short, it refers to the ongoing construction of a new socio-political system<sup>2</sup> by the AKP administration. The process envisages President Erdoğan to be the founding father of a reformed republic that would no longer be based on principles of Kemalism (i.e. the founding ideology of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s “First Republic”). Actually the concept does not indicate a regime whose exact nature is well-known by the public, and represents instead an indeterminate path. The

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process continues as of now after the AKP survived a military coup attempt<sup>3</sup> on 15 July 2016 and most recently won a new victory in the 24 June 2018 presidential and parliamentary elections. Two AKP programs, that are still sources of heated debates within and beyond the country, can be seen as the main pillars of the formation of New Turkey: the first is President Erdoğan's longstanding attempt to establish a super-presidential system which finally proved successful after the constitutional amendments were approved by voters in the 16 April 2017 Referendum. The second is an ambitious cultural change program whose objective has been defined by President Erdoğan as "the fostering of young generations that are fully devoted to Islamic and national values" (Hürriyet 2012). The success of the latter – which appears to be a colossal social engineering project to transform the mind-set of millions of citizens – is doubtful albeit the government appears committed to gradually Islamize the education system (especially via massively increasing the number of religious vocational schools) in recent years.

As discussed in more detail in following sections, Eurocentric<sup>4</sup> narratives of globalization have long presented Turkey as a "beacon of hope" in the Muslim world – a westernizing society that would supposedly combine liberal democracy, Islamic values, secularism and capitalist development (Tuğal 2016; Göl 2013). Moreover, the so-called Turkish model has been expected to inspire predominantly Muslim societies to democratize and develop in the manner of Turkey (Tuğal 2016). In contrast to these expectations, today the New Turkey constitutes an illiberal polity, a neoliberal economy based on clientelism and an increasingly Islamized<sup>5</sup> social environment. It is essentially a non-Western socio-political model that appears to have more in common with authoritarian Russia, Singapore and Iran than with Western liberal democracies (Göl 2013: 10).

Jason Brownlee (2016) recently argued that Turkey is a "theory-busting specimen of a highly developed democracy going authoritarian". As such, the present state of Turkish modernization experience appears to contest the claims of notable approaches such as the post-World War II era "modernization theory" and the post-1991 "liberal globalization theory" (Brownlee 2016). These have long assumed that economically developed societies with sizable middle classes would inevitably democratize and gradually converge towards *Western modernity* – which is commonly understood as a free-market capitalist, predominantly secular and liberal democratic society (Brownlee 2016; Wagner 2010: 9).

Challenging narratives based on the inevitability of global convergence to Western modernity, this article seeks to provide a non-Eurocentric perspective for comprehending the historical origins of the authoritarian New Turkey. A historical sociology approach inspired by Kamran Matin's version of the "uneven and combined development theory" (U&CD) and a methodology based on *path dependency* is utilized (Matin 2013). I will argue that complex interactions between elements of Western modernity (e.g. secularization and democratization), various social engineering programs launched since the late Ottoman era and Turkey's own path dependent trajectory have gradually produced a socio-economic and political model that radically diverges from the Western modernization experience.

Among various research methods used for examination of qualitative data, narrative analysis<sup>6</sup> is suitable for this study because it is specifically designed for examining connections between crucial historical events (e.g. a social uprising or a sudden regime change) and macro-level historical processes such as economic development, democratization

and/or social change (Neuman 2014: 496). The main research tool of narrative analysis method is path dependency which can be defined as “the way a unique beginning can trigger a sequence of events”, the historical starting point continuously shaping the outcome of the following trajectory (Neuman 2014: 497). The impact of initial conditions on subsequent development of events may take different forms such as constraining, limiting or even accelerating a given phenomenon. If the strength of the initial event far outweighs the influence of subsequent events, then this case is a *self-reinforcing path dependency*:

Engineers created QWERTY [pattern of letters] more than a century ago to work with early crude, slow, mechanical typewriters... Later, mechanical typewriters improved... The old keyboard pattern was unnecessary and obsolete, but it continues to this day. The inertia to use an obsolete, inefficient system is strong. It overwhelms efforts to change existing machinery and people to a more rational, faster keyboard. Social institutions are similar. Once social relations and institutions are created in specific form... it is difficult to change them (Neuman 2014: 497).

A different variant of path dependency is termed the *reactive sequence*. In the case of reactive sequence, each new historical juncture builds upon the previous one, but initial starting conditions do not necessarily exert an over-whelming force (Neuman 2014: 497). Hence, each new factor that enters the chain of events has the potential to subvert the entire trajectory, ultimately changing the outcome.

I heavily utilize both types of path dependency-based analytical methods in this article, and three flowcharts are presented to highlight the factors that have produced the New Turkey. To delimit the research, I mainly focus on the Republican period and the historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire is not studied in detail – though it is acknowledged. The following first section of the article briefly reviews the debates over New Turkey and identifies several neglected issues within the existing literature. Then, the article discusses the shortcomings of the broader literature on modernization in non-Western societies and evaluates the Turkish model discourse as an example of Eurocentrism. The U&CD is introduced and put forward as an effective non-Eurocentric framework to study cases such as Turkey. Finally, a U&CD-oriented historical sociology approach is used to uncover the socio-economic origins of New Turkey, explaining in particular the reasons why a westernizing non-Western country such as Turkey has not been able to build a liberal democratic regime.

### **The New Turkey: An Increasingly Authoritarian Polity**

Despite the claim of pro-government commentators that the emergent New Turkey regime represents the maturity of democratic consolidation in the country, critics point to numerous violations of *liberal democratic*<sup>7</sup> principles (Özbudun 2014; Esen and Gumuscu 2016; Müftüler-Baç 2016). For instance, a noteworthy case that revealed the weakness of the claim to democratization was the reaction of the government to the Gezi Protests in 2013. The heavy-handed treatment by security forces resulted in the deaths of 22 protestors while thousands were injured, the experience highlighting violations of freedom of expression (Göksel and Tekdemir 2018). Particularly since Gezi, New Turkey has been identified by many scholars as a type of *illiberal* or *hybrid regime*<sup>8</sup> concealed behind a rhetorical façade of democracy. Apart from the Gezi experience, many other violations of human rights and

liberal democracy have emerged over the years: the notable case of the “Academics for Peace” and intensifying censure mechanisms over universities, violent crackdowns on worker strikes (e.g. the August-September 2018 strikes at the construction site of the third airport of Istanbul), intense government pressure on the freedom of expression in media outlets and social media platforms (e.g. bans on opposition newspapers as well as Wikipedia and occasionally – Twitter), the imprisonment of members and leaders of opposition parties (e.g. Selahattin Demirtaş) and that of numerous critical journalists (Çalışkan 2018; Tekdemir et al. 2018).

The field of comparative politics possesses an extensive literature and its various regime typologies have recently been applied to the case of Turkey. According to Ersin Kalaycıoğlu (2015) and Ziya Öniş (2014), New Turkey is a project that is gradually shifting the political system of Turkey towards *presidential authoritarianism* which is similar to the institutional structure of many historical and contemporary non-democratic countries in South America. For others (e.g. Örmeci 2014; Tombuş 2014; Stelgias 2015; Esen and Gumuscu 2016), New Turkey represents a *competitive authoritarian* regime which can be defined as “an amalgam of liberal principles mixed with authoritarian characteristics” (Stelgias 2015: 204). There are also those who apply alternative hybrid regime models such as *electoral authoritarianism* (Arbatlı 2014), *new authoritarianism* (Somer 2016) and *delegative democracy* (Taş 2015).

The typology most widely used by scholars<sup>9</sup> appears to be *majoritarianism* – “the credo of an expanding group of elected but autocratic rulers around the world, which holds that electoral might always makes you right” (The Economist 2013). Indeed, New Turkey displays many of the typical characteristics associated with majoritarianism. Particularly since the AKP’s third electoral victory in 2011, the party has adopted a majoritarian stance that constantly cites the 49-50 percent votes gained in elections as justification for a repressive attitude towards organized opposition (e.g. 2013 Gezi protests and 2014 Kurdish protests<sup>10</sup>) and violations of freedom of the press.<sup>11</sup> The rule of law has been continuously violated via the concentration of all executive, legislative and judicial powers in the hands of the party which itself is dominated by a cult of personality<sup>12</sup> built around President Erdoğan (Lancaster 2014; Selçuk 2016).

As of the writing of this work, dramatic consequences of the failed military coup on 15 July 2016 continue to profoundly shape Turkish politics. The failure of the coup was ensured largely because thousands of civilian protestors defended the elected government by resisting heavily-armed military units – potentially a sign of democratic consciousness as many seemingly adopted the maxim of “the worst democracy is better than any coup” (Hubbard 2016). However; popular discussions over re-implementing capital punishment, the indefinite suspension of the European Convention on Human Rights, the imprisonment of many HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) members of parliament (including the party co-chairpersons Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ) and government-led purges of more than a hundred thousand people within bureaucracy, judiciary, media and academia (on accounts of backing the coup and/or terrorism) have been interpreted by some observers as the emergence of “a new form of authoritarianism with a populist streak” (Kadioğlu 2016; Temelkuran 2016; Tuğal 2016; Srivastava 2017). The AKP administration declared and continuously extended a state of emergency in the wake of the coup attempt. Though the state of

emergency was finally lifted on 18 July 2018, the new super-presidential system allows President Erdoğan to rule by decree amid concerns over the abuse of executive power for the purpose of suppressing all political opposition.

Regardless of whichever aforementioned typology is preferred, there is a consensus among scholars working on New Turkey that it represents an illiberal and increasingly authoritarian regime that radically diverges from liberal democracy. The discussion over the nature of the New Turkey regime has undoubtedly contributed to Turkish studies. Yet, Turkey's historical trajectory of modernization<sup>13</sup> – which has actually produced the New Turkey – has received little attention in the existing literature. Another neglected issue has been the study of New Turkey in the broader context of social theory beyond Turkish studies. This article aims to contribute by filling such a lacuna.

### **A Remedy to Eurocentrism: Uneven and Combined Development**

First, as a modern nation-state with democratic governance and a secular constitutional structure, Turkey is a model country... in the Middle East and Islamic world in general... Secondly, Turkey's modern history constitutes both an alternative to the clash of civilizations thesis... and a significant historical experience from which the Islamic world – in particular countries such as Malaysia, Morocco, and Indonesia – can learn in their attempts to democratize themselves (Keyman 2010: 322).

The Turkish model discourse, an example of which is seen above, gained popularity in the wake of the 2011 Arab Uprisings as a potential guide for the modernization of the Middle East and North Africa. In the context of this discourse, modernization<sup>14</sup> has been defined as *the inevitable path to a liberal democratic, free-market capitalist, secular society* within non-Western settings such as the Muslim world (Göksel 2016). This conceptualization is problematic as the contents of modernization are limited to the contemporary characteristics of social, economic and political life in Western Europe and Northern America (Zapf 2004: 2; Güllalp 1998). Moreover, the possibility that socio-economic and political transformations in non-Western societies may not produce the same outcomes as in the Western experience is completely overlooked.

The Turkish model is a recent example of the significant role attributed to Turkey by many sociologists and political scientists. In fact, Turkey has long been at the centre of scholarly and public debates on modernization, democratization and economic development. From the 1950s to 1980s, classical modernization theorists (e.g. Lerner 1958; Lewis 1961; Berkes 1964; Apter 1965; Kongar 1985) praised Kemalism and evaluated attempts of the Republican elite to secularize and industrialize from above as evidence that all societies across the world – regardless of regional, cultural, religious, national and developmental differences at a given time – would ultimately adopt Western modes of socio-economic and political life.<sup>15</sup> State-led secularization and planned economic development were expected to gradually produce the social and economic prerequisites (i.e. “moderate Islam” and middle class) for a liberal democratic political regime. However, neither in Turkey nor in other societies that followed similar transformation programs throughout the 20th century (e.g. Pahlavi Iran, Egypt, Bourguiba's Tunisia); liberal democratic open societies had been established by the end of the 1980s.<sup>16</sup>

Unsurprisingly, many arguments of the modernization theory have come under sustained criticism by rival approaches such as the “imperialist industrialization thesis”, “dependency theory” and “world-system theory”.<sup>17</sup> The theory appeared to lose its erstwhile influence over public imagination by the late Cold War years. Yet, the post-1991 period has witnessed a resurgence of the “convergence to the West” idea as it has been adopted by scholars who believe in the homogenizing/liberalizing power of globalization. Since then, many influential works (e.g. Fukuyama 1992; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Bauman 1998) have presented the victory of liberal democracy in our age as inevitable.<sup>18</sup>

Regardless of the intricate paths Western and non-Western societies alike follow throughout their socio-economic and political histories, they have all been expected to ultimately become democratic. For instance, historical modernization experiences of Germany and Japan – which were first authoritarian and then fascist totalitarian regimes in the first half of the 20th century – have been utilized to support the global convergence thesis as both countries have built democratic regimes in the post-war period. In the post-Cold War years, Turkey has also come to the foreground of debates in this regard. After all, Turkey is a predominantly Muslim society with a background of secularization and fluctuating attempts to democratize since 1950, standing as one of the most appropriate candidates within the Muslim world in terms of joining the “Western club of democracies”. The recent Turkish model discourse has been a continuation of an established tradition of interpreting Turkey’s modernization trajectory through the lens of deterministic and Eurocentric approaches.<sup>19</sup> As such, contemporary Turkey has either been presented as a successful model due to the alleged ability of Kemalists to secularize the society and/or a case where Islamic values, free-market capitalism and democratization supposedly function in tandem.

Today, the ongoing consolidation of an authoritarian New Turkey means that the above narratives of modernity face an existential crisis, as noted by Brownlee (2016). Turkey has followed the Western model step-by-step; secularizing, industrializing, urbanizing and making the transition to multi-party politics in 1950. Yet, it has not managed to fulfil even the most basic criteria of liberal democracy such as fair elections, freedom of expression and minority rights. So why this country that has been westernizing since the 18th century has not built a liberal democratic system so far? To answer this question, we need a non-Eurocentric historical sociology perspective that can account for nuances of modernization in societies such as Turkey where processes of socio-economic and political change diverge from deterministic expectations of the modernization theory and the globalization theory.

As Dani Rodrik (2012) argues, acknowledging the key role played by globalization in terms of inter-connecting cultures, economies and politics in our time does not necessarily mean that this process has a pre-determined route that ultimately converge towards liberal democracy. Instead, modernization is a highly customizable path whose nature is determined mainly by contingent characteristics of each country. Therefore, in order to develop a generalizable understanding of modernization, the determinism of mainstream theories of modernity need to be replaced with a more flexible framework. For this purpose, this article puts forward Matin’s version of the uneven and combined development theory<sup>20</sup> (U&CD) as a suitable approach because it directly challenges<sup>21</sup> the convergence thesis (Tansel 2015: 85).

U&CD stands today as one of the most ambitious projects of social theory and International Relations in terms of attempting to create a theory that would be applicable for

all societies at all times (Rosenberg 2010). U&CD is particularly concerned with comprehending the experiences of societies that are often labelled as “developing”, in other words, believed to lag behind their counterparts in terms of socio-economic and political organization (Allinson and Anievas 2010: 470). The founding father of U&CD, Leon Trotsky (1932), originally referred to this issue as the “question of historical backwardness”.

According to U&CD; social, economic and political change (collectively understood as modernization) occurs in dissimilar ways between and within different societies. This idea is referred to as “uneven development” and it is the most basic pattern shaping the dynamics of modernization. Rather than culture and/or religion, the source of uneven development is variations in economic conditions. Societies across the world and time have major differences in their economic conditions (e.g. social class relations; production methods; population growth; main source of wealth); therefore there can always be multiple societies that exhibit alterations in their socio-economic and political organization (Anievas and Nişancioğlu 2015: 45). Within modernization studies, there is a tendency to perceive West and non-West as if they are monolithic and homogenous blocs within themselves. Instead, U&CD acknowledges the possibility of radical differences within the various regions or communities of a single country. As such, not all countries/regions of the so-called West would necessarily be liberal democratic or secular or free-market capitalist.

Unlike mainstream theories of modernity (i.e. modernization theory and globalization theory), U&CD does not place any value judgment on being “backward” or “advanced” *per se* and instead evaluates these various states of existence as morally relative notions (Anievas and Nişancioğlu 2015: 49). Therefore, lagging behind another society in the structural complexity of socio-economic life or political institutionalization does not necessarily indicate an inferior existence that can be objectively measured by an observer. In addition, U&CD rejects deterministic studies of modernization altogether and refrains from making *a priori* assumptions about the potential directions socio-economic and political transformation may carry a country. This allows U&CD to avoid Eurocentrism as the possibility that non-Western countries may not simply re-live the historical modernization experience of Europe via gradually building liberal democratic, capitalist societies is taken into account. The trajectory of modernization in each society would be determined by its own unpredictable, contingent and path dependent conditions.

### **The Workings of Non-Western Modernization**

According to U&CD, the phenomenon of modernization does not manifest in non-Western societies as an “organic process” – that is the product of their own domestic conditions (e.g. social class struggles or new technological inventions) – as it did historically in Western societies such as Britain or France. Instead, modernization is launched in the form of state-led programs only after these societies attempt to model themselves on the West. Hence, the modernization trajectory of non-Western societies cannot be fully comprehended unless the formative role played by international context in the form of intense interaction with Western modernity is truly acknowledged. To explain the emergence of alternative non-Western trajectories that diverge from features of Western model such as liberal democracy, U&CD



introduces three generalizable principles (Anievas and Nişancıoğlu 2015; Matin 2013; Allinson and Anievas 2010: 470-473):

1. The Whip of External Necessity,
2. Substitution,
3. Historical Reshuffling.

*The whip of external necessity* suggests that modernization programs in less-developed countries are initiated as the result of a survival instinct (Matin 2013: 18). Historically, as relatively less-developed non-Western societies such as Japan, Iran and the Ottoman Empire engaged technologically advanced expansionist Western powers such as Britain, France and the USA in the 19th century, they developed modernization programs for preventing themselves from becoming dependent colonies and preserving their independence. Hence, the phenomenon of socio-political and economic transformation did not emerge in less-developed countries as a natural result of their own domestic conditions, but because of the impact of external actors.

Both of the other two principles – *substitution* and *historical reshuffling* – can be said to be the consequences of the whip of external necessity as they only manifest after a modernization process is launched, following interaction with more advanced countries. The concept of *substitution* refers to the unpredictable impact of foreign ideas and products on a modernizing society. Once modernization process begins, the more advanced external force becomes a guide or “model” for the less-advanced country. Through imitating, the less-advanced country introduces foreign institutions, technology and lifestyle that were not organically produced from within. As a result of the mix of domestic and foreign elements, the initial modernization trajectory is subverted; producing an unforeseen experience whose direction and outcome cannot be predicted. Simply, this country could no longer possibly replicate the path of original modernity, i.e. the experiences of Britain, France and the USA:

A key aspect of uneven and combined development is... the fact that a society can, and almost always does, adopt and adapt other societies' products without undergoing the developmental processes from which these products had originated in their host societies. Uneven and combined development therefore not only pre-empts historical and developmental repetition but also enables a variety of apparently paradoxical patterns of development and political strategies (Matin 2013: 17).

Stimulated by the entry of foreign elements to its domestic social, political and economic life, the society reacts and historical reshuffling manifests as a result. *Historical reshuffling* refers to situations, particularly seen in the case of non-Western countries, where the sequence of development in the less-developed country – which adopted the more-developed country as its model – occurs in radically different ways that diverge from the historical experience of the model country (Matin 2013: 19). Hence, the experience of the model country would not necessarily be replicated by the less-developed country as the interaction between foreign elements and domestic elements could produce a *divergent* socio-economic and political organization.

Precisely because the deterministic modernization theory and globalization theory do not consider the contingency of international context for modernization, both theories

presuppose that all of humanity would eventually converge towards liberal democratic, free-market capitalist and/or secular societies. In contrast, a historical sociology framework based on U&CD can more effectively comprehend the transformation experience of a non-Western case such as Turkey, whose contemporary socio-economic and political organization has been determined by the interaction between its path dependent domestic conditions and Western models it had followed.

### **The Origins of New Turkey: An Experience of Uneven Development**

There is a repeating pattern in all three dimensions – economic, political and social – of Turkey’s historical modernization process. The starting point of all was *the whip of external necessity* in the form of an encounter between the Ottoman Empire and its technologically more advanced Western counterparts (see **Table 1**; **Table 2**; **Table 3**). As demonstrated in numerous Ottoman military defeats throughout the 19th century, the balance of power was heavily tilted in favour of Western states. As a result, the interaction with the West triggered an increasingly desperate search to reduce the wide gap in military and economic capabilities. Ottoman policy-makers introduced elements of “modern life” imported from the Western model such as technological weaponry, secular education institutions, structural centralization, constitution, parliament and industrial production facilities. After the transition from the Empire to the Republic, the process of change in economic, political and social life further intensified. The Kemalist elite largely consisted of military officers, bureaucrats and intellectuals that were traumatized by the collapse of the Empire; and the salvation of the new Republic were sought in an even more extensive application of the Western model, particularly in social life via state-imposed secularization (Hanioglu 2011).

The key to understanding the course of socio-economic and political transformation in Turkey is to note that all the reforms that were implemented from above by Ottoman and Kemalist elites were products of the organic trajectory of Western societies. Hence, the transformation processes did not originate in the domestic conditions of the country, instead showing the character of centrally directed programs containing elements foreign to Turkey’s own social, economic and political life. Over time, the reaction of the society to these external stimuli became the driving engine of a divergence from Western models of socio-economic and political organization as many elements of Western modernity have been reshaped in a different environment.

### ***Economic Development and Clientelism in Turkey***

In the case of economic life, Turkey attempted to conform to the Western model of a predominantly industrial, urban, capitalist society through state-led development (see **Table 1**). An influential indigenous capitalist class did not exist when the Republic was founded and the state elite created this class from the 1940s onwards – through privatization of state-owned enterprises, provision of subsidies and state contracts and the protection of indigenous entrepreneurs (e.g. Koç and Sabancı conglomerates) via high tariffs on foreign goods.<sup>22</sup> The artificial creation of a capitalist class in a society that did not organically possess it was a classic example of *historical reshuffling*, namely the historical sequence of Western

modernization experience was entirely altered in Turkey. In contrast to the Turkish case, the capitalist class had emerged organically over time in Western societies such as Britain, France, Germany and the USA; becoming an independent socio-economic force that could check the executive powers of the state (Moore 1966; Skocpol 1979). In Turkey, however, the capitalist class has hardly been able to act independently from government control as they have had to depend on their political connections to generate profits – rather than seeking their own fortunes via developing high profit-margin products. As the capitalists have established and owned almost all of the mainstream newspapers and television channels (e.g. Sabah, Hürriyet, Posta, Milliyet, Kanal D, ATV, Show TV, Star) in Turkey, their acute dependency on governments has created a major deficiency for democratization due to the inability of these media outlets to directly question government policies in most periods (with the partial exception of the late 1990s and early 2000s). As will be discussed in more detail in the following section, this state-led nature of economic life has negatively affected Turkey's democratization experience.

The leading role of the state in initiating economic modernization was arguably a historical necessity born out of the weak material conditions of the late Ottoman and early Republican period (Göksel 2016: 256). The private sector simply did not possess the capital required to invest in industrialization, mechanization and infrastructure development. However, the overwhelming power of the state over society in Turkish political economy transcended the limiting characteristics of subsequent periods as well, constituting a type of “self-reinforcing path dependency” (see **Table 1**).

**Table 1. Economic Transformation Trajectory of Turkey**

<u>Trigger</u>	The <i>whip of external necessity</i> in the form of encounter with the West
<u>Conforming Method</u>	The creation of a capitalist class by the state [ <i>historical reshuffling</i> ]
<u>Self-Reinforcing Path Dependency</u>	The initially over-whelming power of the state in political economy remains a continuous character
<u>Contingent Peculiarities</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hybrid social security model</li> <li>▪ State-dependent capitalists</li> </ul> [ <i>substitution</i> ]
<u>Subverting Factor</u>	A state-society relationship dominated by the former

Source: Author.

Despite the transition from an import-substitution industrialization policy (followed during the 1930-1950 and 1960-1980 periods) towards a neoliberal economic policy and waves of privatization in the post-1980 years, the pre-1980 statist institutional framework has endured. State power in economic life has continued to constrain the autonomy of capitalists, middle class and the rest of the citizenry via patronage politics.<sup>23</sup> Today, the capitalist class has been organized around business associations (e.g. TÜSİAD and MÜSİAD) yet ties with central and local governments – which provide advantageous incentives and large-scale contracts – still determine a large portion of the profits of big businesses. As a result, the capitalist class has not been able to exert its influence on political life as an actor that is free from government control – unlike their counterparts in liberal democratic countries of Europe and elsewhere.

Not unlike the governments that preceded it, the AKP has utilized state resources and the vast prerogatives of the executive to build and sustain patronage ties with enterprises (Özel 2014: 173; Balkan et al. 2014; Buğra and Savaşkan 2014; Çeviker Gürakar 2018). Clientelism functions through public-private partnerships, most notably in the construction sector which has experienced a rapid expansion since the party came to power in 2002 (Karatepe 2013; İlhan 2013; Çeviker Gürakar 2018). For instance, the AKP administration has utilized a state agency, the Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKİ), to construct “more than 500.000 residential units, costing more than \$35 billion” (Karatepe 2013: 3). It has been noted that enterprises owned by political allies of the government such as the İhlas, Çalık and Kombasan groups have disproportionately benefited from the construction boom as they have received most of the contracts by TOKİ (Karatepe 2013: 7-8). Contracts provided by AKP-controlled municipalities across the country – particularly in populous metropolitan areas such as Istanbul, Kocaeli, Ankara and Kayseri – has been another major source to establish a patronage relationship with the capitalist class (İlhan 2013: 194).

In order to comprehend the scale and mechanisms of patronage politics in the New Turkey, a caveat on poverty alleviation is necessary. The state-defined minimum wage is considerably low, being approximately 1,600 Turkish liras (net) as of 2018 while the officially recognized poverty line for a family of four persons is around 5,500 liras (CNN Türk 2018). Turkey’s institutional social security system does not cover a large portion of its citizenry as the records show that approximately 40 percent of the population does not have any healthcare, because about half of the workforce is employed in the informal sector (Eder 2010: 156; Balkan et al. 2014; Çeviker Gürakar 2018). Nevertheless, the percentage of population living below the poverty line has actually decreased during the AKP rule, a phenomenon that clearly illustrates the peculiarity of the Turkish case: *how the AKP has managed to reduce the number of people living below poverty line without dramatically raising the minimum wage and/or building a structured welfare state?*

After the AKP came to power following the 2001 economic crisis, the Turkish state has begun to privatize the provision of welfare as Islamic charities and municipalities have filled a vacuum left by the absence of an institutionalized welfare state (Eder 2010). At first sight, Turkey’s social system might have looked as if it was converging towards the global neoliberal paradigm which envisages the civil society to play a leading role in social welfare provision (Kaya 2015: 49). However, the same period has also witnessed to a surge of state

power in economic activities, municipalities becoming the main conduit for providing social welfare through cooperation with private actors. As the central state organization partially withdrew from the field of social policy, local party-controlled municipalities have more than made up for its role (Eder 2010: 156; Çeviker Gürakar 2018).

The AKP's hybrid welfare governance has proved to be much more successful than past policies in terms of poverty alleviation, while also consolidating patronage politics through the utilization of municipal and private funds (Kaya 2015: 59). The discretionary nature of funds used in social welfare has caused the system to be politicized, all political parties utilizing welfare provision as part of their election strategies. By creating "social dependencies" out of those citizens in desperate need of aid, political parties have aimed to consolidate their electorates in municipal districts under their control. As the AKP has been able to consistently win more municipalities than its rivals as well as controlling the central government budget since 2002, it has massively benefited from such an economic system. As shown in several studies, the amount of funds transferred to citizens via the social programs of municipalities increase before parliamentary and municipal elections while it decreases considerably after elections (Eder 2010: 175; Kaya 2015). As the structured welfare system is very weak, unstructured provision of welfare through patronage politics has been deepened over the years. The weakness of the centrally controlled systemic welfare system causes problematic elements of Turkey's hybrid social policy model, such as limited transparency and politicization, to be not questioned by a considerable portion of the public and by mainstream media.

In sum, *historical reshuffling* and a *self-reinforcing path dependency* in the Turkish economic trajectory has led to the emergence of *substitution*, namely the attempts to conform to Western model produced peculiarities that did not exist in the original Western model of capitalist society (see **Table 1**). The hybrid social security model of Turkey has subjugated most of the citizenry to the will of the government, whereas the state-dependency of capitalists has been ensured through patronage politics. Today, the economic organization of New Turkey does not conform to that of free-market driven open societies where independent capitalist and middle classes balance the executive powers of governments. The factor that has caused this in Turkey is a state-society relationship dominated by the former (see **Table 1**). The intense clientelism that characterizes Turkish economy has had dramatic consequences on political transformation which is discussed in the following section.

### ***Top-Down Political Change Tradition and Democratization (or lack thereof) in Turkey***

The weakening of the Empire vis-à-vis Western powers such as France, Britain and Austria-Hungary in the 19th century was attributed by Ottoman bureaucracy and intellectuals to the alleged weaknesses of its institutional framework (Kansu 1995). Starting from the late Ottoman period; pro-reform sultans modelled the institutional and legal system of the Empire based on Western modernity, an attitude inherited by the Kemalist Republic (see **Table 2**). The heavy influence of Western ideas caused a *historical reshuffling* as political change (e.g. centralization, constitutionalism, republic and the establishment of parliament) actually preceded economic modernization.<sup>24</sup> Conversely, during the historical experiences of Western societies such as Britain and France, political change in the form of shifts towards

democratization manifested only after urban middle classes – the products of economic modernization – launched social uprisings from below (Moore 1966; Skocpol 1979).

Much like the role of the state in the economic realm, the initial leading role of elites over political modernization in Turkey can be seen as a historical necessity that was born out of specific conditions, namely the urgent need to save the country from Allied invasion in the early 1920s. However, the 1920s was followed by the consolidation of an elite-led authoritarian Republic and even after transition to multi-party life occurred in 1950; the influence of the elite (i.e. the Kemalist military) over political life did not diminish. In fact, military tutelage became a *self-reinforcing path dependency* after the 1960 coup, the officers regularly intervening in political decision-making. Despite being influenced from the French republican tradition, it should be noted that the Turkish Republic was founded by the bureaucracy and the military – unlike the urban middle classes of the First French Republic (Moore 1966). This crucial difference between the historical trajectories of the two countries has shaped the subsequent evolution of their political regimes, resulting in Turkey to diverge from the liberal democratic model of France.

After every intervention (in 1960, 1971, 1980 and 1997), military tutelage was further institutionalized and re-produced, gaining a *de jure* legitimacy via mechanisms such as the National Security Council (MGK). The AKP's political reforms throughout the 2000s largely focused on empowering the elected government and weakening the influence of the Kemalist elite within the military and bureaucracy – albeit the practice of basic rights and liberties of the citizens lagged behind. Military tutelage finally seemed as if limited in the early 2010s, yet another military coup attempt occurred on 15 July 2016. Though the coup failed this time due to the resistance of civilian protestors, the event demonstrates that belief in the potential usage of armed forces to conquer and manage Turkish political life by force has still not vanished. It is yet to be seen if this was the last military coup attempt and if the “ordinary people” has finally proved its unwillingness to be ruled from above by elites.

Since the foundation of the Republic, Turkey has consistently tried to conform to the model of Western liberal democracies via profound political changes. Yet, all key events of Turkey's political transformation trajectory (e.g. the establishment of the Republic in 1923, transition to multi-party life in 1950, pro-democratic reforms as part of the European Union accession process in the 2000s) have been determined by the ruling elites in Ankara and imposed from above – rather than being the products of pressures from the society (Aydin 2005: 96; Göksel 2016).

The elite-led nature of political modernization process has produced its own contingent peculiarities over time (see **Table 2**). Because all the regime changes (e.g. 1923, 1950) were implemented from above instead of being triggered by social forces, prerequisites of liberal democracy such as a pro-active civil society could not mature and even when it did in periods such as the 1960s and 1970s, the military repressed them (Göksel 2016). Instead of social forces, the driving engine of political changes – as witnessed in 1950 and in the early 2000s during the EU accession process – have been external factors as the desire to join NATO and the EU were influential in the implementation of democratic reforms (Göksel 2016: 259-264). Yet, external factors cannot sustain a democratization drive in the absence of strong domestic incentives, and Turkey has shifted towards a majoritarian – and then authoritarian – political system from 2007 onwards. Today, the New Turkey regime does not conform to

liberal democracy and the primary subverting factor that has caused this is a state-society relationship dominated by the former which is unfavourable for a liberal democracy to be consolidated (see **Table 2**).

The ongoing formation process of the New Turkey regime by the AKP represents another top-down political engineering project that continues as of now with minimal input from the society at large. Even though the party receives approximately 50 percent of votes in parliamentary elections, its electorate have not been incorporated into the decision-making process by any means and political power is wielded single-handedly by President Erdoğan and a small clique of advisors within the party organization (Stelgias 2015). Moreover, the demands and concerns of political opposition within and beyond the parliament are completely overlooked as seen in the government reaction to Gezi Protests as well as the ongoing exclusion of the Kurdish-led<sup>25</sup> HDP from political life on accounts that this party supports terrorism.<sup>26</sup> The authoritarian political system currently being constructed by the AKP shows that an elected government could be as successful as the military in terms of containing the rise of social forces and severely limiting their influence on politics, which was demonstrated in the aftermath of both the 2013 Gezi Protests and the Kurdish protests since the collapse of the Peace Process in June 2015 – not to mention numerous worker strikes and smaller-scale political protests across the country.

**Table 2. Political Transformation Trajectory of Turkey**

<u>Trigger</u>	The <i>whip of external necessity</i> in the form of encounter with the West
<u>Conforming Method</u>	An elite-led political modernization process (e.g. constitution, parliamentary life, republic, democratization) [ <i>historical reshuffling</i> ]
<u>Self-Reinforcing Path Dependency</u>	The leading role of state forces such as the military elite has remained a continuous character
<u>Contingent Peculiarities</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Military tutelage</li> <li>▪ Weak or repressed civil society</li> <li>▪ Democratization driven by external forces instead of social forces</li> </ul> [ <i>substitution</i> ]
<u>Subverting Factor</u>	A state-society relationship dominated by the former

Source: Author.

One of the most noteworthy factors that produce authoritarianism in contemporary Turkey is the absence of checks and balances, a crucial prerequisite for liberal democracy. In liberal democracies, various forces (e.g. opposition parties, independent media, non-governmental organizations, autonomous supreme courts, and parliament) have the ability to check and balance the power of the executive branch. In the 2000s – which were relatively democratic – and before the AKP established itself as the hegemon of all spheres of life, there were several forces capable of restricting then Prime Minister Erdoğan's will: opposition parties, the Kemalist military, the Constitutional Court and to some extent – various semi-independent media outlets. Over time, the AKP has suppressed all these forces via benefiting from Turkey's clientelist political economic system as well as implementing constitutional amendments approved by voters in referendums. For instance, the 12 September 2010 Referendum effectively ended the autonomy of the judiciary by granting full control over the selection of judges to the parliament, government and president – all controlled by the AKP leadership.

The AKP has regularly used tax investigators of the Ministry of Finance to punish opposition media corporations such as the Doğan group that used to own a number of influential opposition newspapers such as *Hürriyet* and *Radikal*. Since the party came to power, a dramatic change in the ownership of media assets was witnessed as numerous popular newspapers and television channels of conglomerates such as Doğan, Ciner and Uzan groups were taken over by the AKP administration based on allegations of tax fraud and transferred to “more government friendly owners” (Akser and Baybars-Hawks 2012: 307). By 2018, a significant section of media outlets have come under the control of the AKP and its supporters within the business world, resulting in an excessively positive portrayal of the policies and leadership of the party (Akser and Baybars-Hawks 2012; Çalışkan 2018). Today, only a handful of critical media outlets (e.g. *Sözcü*, *Cumhuriyet*, T24, *Gazete Duvar*, Fox TV and Halk TV) remain though the fate of these last remnants of opposition are uncertain.

The legal system of the country is based on the 1982 Constitution and a number of its authoritarian products such as the Political Parties Law and the Anti-Terror Law have consistently been used by AKP-appointed judges and prosecutors to restrict civil liberties in recent years. Thus, the entire judicial process has been transformed into a political tool to: threaten opposition political parties such as the HDP and the CHP (Republican People's Party) and imprison their elected mayors and members of parliament; closely monitor the columns of journalists and social media posts of ordinary citizens for any signs of disobedience to the president; and banning all organized social movements suspected of resistance. The present state of New Turkey closely resembles the workings of undemocratic regimes such as Vladimir Putin's Russia, Nicolás Maduro's Venezuela, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the People's Republic of China.

### *Secularization versus Islamization in Turkey*

In the case of social life, attempts to conform to Western modernity in Turkey began in the 19th century with the foundation of secular education institutions and the gradual elimination of the influence of Islamic clergy by the secularized bureaucracy and military. In the European experience of Protestant Reformation and subsequent waves of secularization



triggered by Enlightenment ideals, social change manifested organically within the society. However, the Turkish case of social change was instead characterized by *historical reshuffling* (see **Table 3**). As such, societal transformation did not arise from domestic social forces but from a state-imposed social engineering program, particularly after the Kemalists implemented an extensive secularization campaign by force from the 1920s onwards (Gencer 2008).

**Table 3. Social Transformation Trajectory of Turkey**

<u>Trigger</u>	The <i>whip of external necessity</i> in the form of encounter with the West
<u>Conforming Method</u>	State-imposed secularization program and the elimination of the influence of clergy on socio-political life [ <i>historical reshuffling</i> ]
<u>Reactive Sequence</u> <u>Path Dependency</u>	The state could not sustain its initial social transformation program, engaging instead into a negotiation process with Islamic actors
<u>Contingent Peculiarities</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The Diyanet</i></li> <li>▪ Lingering religiosity of society</li> <li>▪ Survival of banned Islamic groups in the periphery</li> <li>▪ Rise of <i>National Outlook</i>, later the AKP</li> </ul> [ <i>substitution</i> ]
<u>Subverting Factor</u>	A “weak state”: the state-society relationship dominated by the latter

Source: Author.

Faced with repression by the Kemalist state, Islamic groups shifted their activities towards the private sphere and the periphery of the society. Nevertheless, Islamic values were strongly established as organic features of social life in Turkey and Islamic groups such as religious fraternities sustained their claim to represent indigenous characteristics of the society (Özyürek 2006). The lingering influence of religiosity within the society necessitated a paradoxical move by the Kemalist regime; repressing public manifestations of Islam on one hand while building the state-controlled “Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı” (Directorate of Religious

Affairs) to keep Islamic interpretation and clergy under its monopoly on the other hand.<sup>27</sup> From the 1960s onwards, other contingent peculiarities that were not planned by the proponents of secularization have emerged – such as the rise of the popularity of Islamic political parties affiliated with the National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*) movement led by Necmettin Erbakan (see **Table 3**).

From the beginning, the Kemalist social change program has been subverted from the Western model of secularization by an elite that attempted to design a fully secularized society by fiat, yet actually lacked the social power required to accomplish this. The Kemalist state is often described as a “strong state”, yet it was clearly not in full control of the social life of Turkey, resorting to repressive measures to prevent “undesirable” social agents from threatening the regime (Hann 1995). In fact, the subsequent fate of the state-imposed secularization program offers clues regarding the nature of the Turkish state. Behind a façade of strength existed a “weak state” that was largely unable to control the social periphery and spread its ideological influence for legitimizing the regime in the eyes of the citizenry (Hann 1995: 135).

The weakness of the Kemalist state has caused its radical secularization program to be not sustainable and a *reactive sequence form of path dependency* manifested, namely the state had to change its initial stance towards Islamism over the years and eventually negotiate with Islamic groups such as the National Outlook (see **Table 3**). Both the state and the Islamic groups have modified their ideologies and methods of struggle at every step, state-religion relations having been transformed via a process of reciprocal compromises since the 1950s (Göksel 2016; Özyürek 2006; Gencer 2008). The *reactive sequence path dependency* seen in the Islam-state relations in Turkey stands in contrast to the *self-reinforcing path dependency* discussed in the previous sections on economic and political modernization.

The key junctures of the reactive sequence path dependency was the provision of political opportunity space after the transition to multi-party system in 1950 and the manifestation of economic opportunity space after the rise of conservative enterprises in the post-1980 period. Particularly since the initial electoral victory of the AKP in 2002, Islamic groups have been increasingly integrated into the political and economic system of Turkey. The process of social change in Turkey has been an entirely *sui generis* trajectory that has not culminated into the emergence of a predominantly secularized society as envisaged by Kemalists, but a situation where hitherto marginalized Islamic groups have gradually taken control of socio-political life instead (Öncü and Balkan 2016). Today, the cultural dimension of the ongoing New Turkey project – i.e. the state-led Islamization policy of the AKP administration via using national education and media – represents the anti-thesis of the Kemalist state-led secularization program of the 1930s (Özbudun 2014; Kaya 2015). Such an outcome was neither expected by the Kemalists themselves nor by the Eurocentric modernization theory that has assumed that secularization was an inevitable product of social change.

## Conclusion

“[By] taking a religious form and producing a theocentric state, yet occurring in a socio-economically modern country” (Matin 2013: 1), the Iranian Revolution of 1979 took the

social and political theory of its time by surprise. The illiberal socio-political order that emerged out of the revolution has clearly defied the deterministic scholarship within modernization studies – one that had expected a westernizing country such as Iran to build a secular and liberal democratic society. Not unlike the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran, today the emergent New Turkey regime stands to challenge the expectations of the modernization theory and the liberal globalization theory. Neither this mainstream literature nor its reflection on Turkish studies (i.e. the Turkish model discourse) can possibly explain why the economic, political and social organization of Turkey has diverged from the characteristics of the Western model it has followed since the late Ottoman era. These influential approaches are overly dependent on the historical modernization experiences of Western European and Northern American societies in which political revolutions led by middle classes proved successful in establishing liberal democratic regimes (e.g. Britain, France and the USA). By contrast, modernization process often triggers discrepancies and uneven development in non-Western societies. The encounter with products of Western modernity creates *sui generis* non-Western trajectories that cannot possibly be pre-determined and that would probably diverge from what could have been their organic paths. During the phase of adopting the Western model (i.e. secularization, industrialization and democratization by fiat); these societies introduce many inorganic elements that are the products of a West-specific historical experience.

Today, the result of the mixing of domestic (Turkey-specific) and foreign (Western-specific) elements in Turkey is: firstly; a pseudo free-market society where the state is considerably more dominant than in the Western model via patronage politics which largely subjugates the middle and capitalist classes to the hegemony of the executive power (i.e. the AKP administration that is fully controlled by President Erdoğan); secondly, a secular institutional framework with a largely conservative citizenry and an Islamic movement in control of socio-political life; and thirdly, an increasingly authoritarian political system that holds regular elections while not possessing many other essential components of a liberal democratic regime such as minority rights (e.g. of Kurds and Alevis), freedom of expression, freedom of the press and rule of law. Moreover, elections – regular as they are – are hardly fair as the media is almost fully controlled by the AKP while the counting of ballots are supervised by semi-transparent public institutions whose members are appointed by President Erdoğan. As such, the New Turkey constitutes a typical “amalgam” of uneven and combined development today – a society where three conditions (the whip of external necessity, historical reshuffling and substitution) has gradually produced a path dependent non-Western modernity model.

The case of New Turkey shows that once again, theories are lagging behind realities in the field which seems to have become an inescapable pitfall in social sciences – highlighting the need to develop flexible approaches that can overcome determinism such as U&CD. The application of the conceptual framework of U&CD on studies of various non-Western countries may help us comprehend the specific workings of modernization in these contexts rather than re-producing analyses derived from a singular Western experience such as the Turkish model discourse that had dominated a considerable portion of the literature on Turkey and the Middle East in the last decade.

## Notes

1. For the intellectual origins and historical context of New Turkey, see Gürpınar (2014); Taş (2014).
2. For more information on the nature and formation process of New Turkey, see Somer (2016); Alpan (2016); Simsek (2013).
3. On the evening of 15th July 2016, a faction led by several high-ranking generals styled itself the “Peace in the Country Council” and launched a coup. Lacking support from the public, media, opposition parties and key military units such as the bulk of the First Army in Istanbul, the plotters clashed with civilians and security forces loyal to the government. The faction failed to overthrow the government and thousands of officers allegedly affiliated with the Gülen movement (now referred to as FETÖ – Fetullah Gülenist Terrorist Organisation) have been arrested.
4. This article adheres to the following definition of Eurocentrism: “a paternalistic theory of history defending the universal validity of the European trajectory and the ultimate necessity for others to imitate the same experience” (Tansel 2015: 78). Similarly, Kamran Matin (2013: 2) defines Eurocentrism as “the construction of general categories by reference to a particular European experience of modernity”.
5. For Islamization of social life, see Öncü and Balkan (2016); Kaya (2015).
6. U&CD is compatible with a research methodology based on path dependency and historical contingency; see Cooper (2013).
7. For a comprehensive analysis of liberal democracy, see Held (2006).
8. An illiberal or hybrid regime is a governing system where political legitimacy is derived from regular elections, yet these elections are often neither fair nor free and that most of the key principles of a liberal democratic open society (e.g. civil liberties) are absent. For more information, see Zakaria (2007); Levitsky and Way (2010). The original term used by Zakaria was “illiberal democracy”, but this article avoids this term and instead uses “illiberal polity”. As suggested by Levitsky and Way (2010), it is self-contradictory to refer to a regime that does not possess civil liberties as a democracy.
9. See, for example, Lord (2012); Bakiner (2013); Müftüler-Baç and Keyman (2015); Göksel (2016); Yılmaz (2016).
10. The 2014 Kurdish Protests refer to the large-scale protests by Kurdish citizens across Turkey throughout October 2014, launched as a reaction to the besiegement of Kobanî by the ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant).
11. For the elimination of freedom of the press and violations of rule of law since 2011, see Müftüler-Baç (2016); Yılmaz (2016); Çalışkan (2018).
12. For the origins of the concept, see Max Weber’s classical work (1922).
13. *Modernity* and *modernization* are often used interchangeably, yet their verbal contexts are different, see Cambridge (2014). According to Cambridge, modernity “is the condition of being modern”. The term refers to a state of existence that is different from past forms of human experience in fields such as economic conditions, political organization and social life. By contrast, modernization “is the transitional transformation period by which the state of modernity manifests”.

14. Equating modernization with westernization is a common Eurocentric trope, see Rip (1977).
15. For a detailed review of classical modernization theory, see Rip (1977); Mouzelis (1980). For its critiques, see Gülaip (1998); Göksel (2016); Kaliber (2014).
16. Samuel Huntington launched an early criticism of modernization theory and argued that many westernizing societies of the non-West were experiencing what he termed “decay” and “reversal” in their modernization programs, see Huntington (1968).
17. For a review of these approaches, see So (1990); Gülaip (1998); Mouzelis (1980).
18. The globalization theory is also known as neo-modernisation theory, see Zapf (2004); Wagner (2010).
19. For examples of the Turkish model literature written from the perspectives of the modernization theory or the globalization theory; see Altunışık (2005); Çavdar (2006); Taşpınar (2011); Atasoy (2011); Dede (2011); Roy (2012).
20. Uneven and combined development as an idea to describe the dynamics of human history was coined by the Marxist revolutionary and theorist, Leon Trotsky (1932). From the 1990s onwards, Justin Rosenberg’s works have been the main contemporary sources that developed the concept into a full-fledged theory of International Relations; see Rosenberg (2006, 2010). As with all schools of thought in social sciences, it is not possible to argue that the understanding of U&CD by all its proponents are identical. For a review of different usages of U&CD, Glenn (2012). This article’s understanding is largely derived from Matin (2013) and, to some extent, Anievas and Nişancıoğlu (2015).
21. It is important to note that U&CD appears to be in competition with Post-Colonialism and the “multiple modernities paradigm” nowadays as all of these approaches claim to have remedied the problem of Eurocentrism within modernization studies. For more details, see Matin (2013); Tansel (2015). This article generally agrees with the critique launched by Matin (2013: 2-19) against Post-Colonialism and multiple modernities paradigm as these two frameworks have their own problems in terms of overcoming Eurocentrism despite their stated claims.
22. For more information on the evolution of state-capitalist class relations in Turkey, see Buğra (1994); Buğra and Savaşkan (2014); Çeviker Gürakar (2018).
23. For details of patronage politics in Turkey, see Eder (2010); Özel (2014); Karatepe (2013); İlhan (2013); Kaya (2015); Çeviker Gürakar (2018).
24. For more details on the political transformation experience of Turkey and its paradoxical elements, see Kansu (1995); Göksel (2016).
25. This article prefers the term “Kurdish-led” rather than the more widely used “pro-Kurdish”. This is to highlight the difference of the HDP’s left-leaning populist platform from its pro-Kurdish predecessors which focused almost exclusively on Kurdish rights, see Tekdemir (2016)
26. For more details, see Tuğal (2016).
27. For more details on the paradoxes of Turkey’s state-led secularization and the role of Diyanet, see Özyürek (2006); Gencer (2008).

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