

TURKEY'S PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM: REACTIONS FROM THE
OPPOSITION PARTIES

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

DİDEM İŞÇİ

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

SEPTEMBER 2021

Approval of the thesis:

**TURKEY'S PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM: REACTIONS FROM
THE OPPOSITION PARTIES**

submitted by **DİDEM İŞÇİ** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
**Master of Science in Political Science and Public Administration, the Graduate
School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Ayşe AYATA
Head of Department
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Prof. Dr. Pınar KÖKSAL
Supervisor
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Examining Committee Members:

Prof. Dr. Ayşe AYATA (Head of the Examining Committee)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Prof. Dr. Pınar KÖKSAL (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Assist. Prof. Dr. Filiz Tutku AYDIN BEZİKOĞLU
Social Sciences University of Ankara
Department of Political Science and Public Administration



I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Didem İŞÇİ

Signature:

ABSTRACT

TURKEY'S PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM: REACTIONS FROM THE OPPOSITION PARTIES

İŞÇİ, Didem

M.S., The Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Pınar KÖKSAL

September 2021, 116 pages

This thesis aims to examine Turkey's switch to the presidential executive system from the perspective of opposition parties. In this regard, the discourses of the Republican People's Party, the Good Party, and the People's Democratic Party, which are the opposition parties that have a parliamentary group in the Turkish Grand National Assembly are studied with the qualitative content analysis methodology. Moreover, three other minor political parties such as the Felicity Party, the Democracy and Progress Party and the Future Party are also briefly evaluated. The study reveals that despite the different ideologies and party programs of the opposition parties, a common counter-discourse has been developed against the new system and these parties see the replacement of the current system with a strengthened parliamentary one as their first priority. However, in their criticisms and suggestions, we see the reflections of their diverse ideological orientations.

Keywords: Turkey's Presidential Executive System, Political Opposition Parties, Qualitative Content Analysis, Strengthened Parliamentary System

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE’NİN CUMHURBAŞKANLIĞI HÜKÜMET SİSTEMİ: MUHALEFET PARTİLERİNDEN GELEN TEPKİLER

İŞÇİ, Didem

Yüksek Lisans, Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Pınar KÖKSAL

Eylül 2021, 116 sayfa

Bu tezin amacı Türkiye'nin cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine geçiş sürecini muhalefet partilerinin perspektifinden incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi bünyesinde siyasi parti grubu bulunan muhalif partiler olan Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, İyi Parti ve Halkların Demokratik Partisi’nin cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemi üzerine geliştirdikleri söylemler nitel içerik analizi metodolojisi ile ele alınmıştır. Ayrıca Saadet Partisi, Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi ve Gelecek Partisi gibi siyasi partilerin söylemleri de benzer şekilde incelenmiştir. Çalışma, muhalif partilerin sahip oldukları farklı ideolojilere ve parti programlarına rağmen bu partilerin yeni sisteme karşı ortak bir karşı-argüman geliştirdiklerini ve bu sistemin güçlendirilmiş bir parlamenter sistemle değiştirilmesini birinci öncelik haline getirdiklerini öne sürmektedir. Ancak muhalif partilerin eleştirileri ve önerileri sahip oldukları farklı ideolojik eğilimleri de yansıtmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi, Muhalefet Partileri, Nitel İçerik Analizi, Güçlendirilmiş Parlamenter Sistem

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Pınar Köksal. This thesis would not have been possible without her guidance, patience, encouragement, scientific perspective, and constructive contribution throughout my study. I also would like to thank members of the committee Prof. Dr. Ayşe Ayata and Assist. Prof. Dr. Filiz Tutku Aydın Bezikoğlu.

I would like to thank my friends Köklem Seren, Mine Tanrıöver, Merve Maraloğlu, Ebru Akgün, Zeynep Özmen, Seçil Eda Doğan, Şebnem Güzeloğlu, Ali Onur Gitmez, Asya Bülbül, and my colleagues Kübra Aytaç, Ömer Naim Küçük, Batuhan Parmaksız, Dilek Çakır, Serra Kutan, Melike Pınar and Didem Özay for their priceless support. I also thank Deniz Catherine Hamilci, who helped me with the proof reading.

Lastly, my father, mother, sister and my little Kerem who have warmly supported me deserve huge thanks. Finally, I am grateful to my companion Halil İbrahim Kuru who has shouldered the burden of this journey with me. Without his support, I would not be able to get past this process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	x
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Literature Review	5
1.2. Methodology and Outline	12
2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM IN TURKEY	15
2.1. Pre-AKP Period	15
2.1.1. The Ottoman Legacy	15
2.1.2. The Republican Era Until the 1980 Coup	17
2.1.3. After the 1980 Coup	20
2.2. The AKP Period	24
2.2.1. 2007 Presidential Crisis and Constitutional Referendum	24
2.2.2. Erdoğan as the First Publicly-Elected President of Turkey	26
3. THE FEATURES AND THE JUSTIFICATIONS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM	32
3.1. The General Characteristics of the Presidential Executive System	32
3.1.1. Duties and Powers of the Executive	32

3.1.2. Duties and Powers of the Legislative	34
3.1.3. Duties and Powers of the Judiciary	35
3.2. Justifications on the Presidential Executive System	36
3.2.1. Compatability with the Turkish Political Culture	36
3.2.2. Political Stability	38
3.2.3. Economic Development and Prosperity	40
4. A QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES’ DISCOURSE AGAINST TURKEY’S PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM.	41
4.1. The Republican People's Party (CHP)	42
4.1.1. Criticisms of CHP regarding the Presidential Executive System	43
4.1.2. Solution of CHP: The Strengthened Parliamentary System.....	49
4.2. The Good Party (İyi Parti)	51
4.2.1. Criticisms of İyi Parti Regarding the Presidential Executive System	52
4.2.2. Solution of İyi Parti: “Improved and Strengthened Parliamentary System”	53
4.3. People's Democratic Party (HDP)	56
4.3.1. Criticisms of HDP Regarding the Presidential Executive System	57
4.3.2. Solution: Pluralist Parliamentary System Reinforced with Local Democracy	61
4.4. The Felicity Party (SP)	64
4.4.1. Criticisms of SP Regarding the Presidential Executive System	64
4.4.2. Solution of SP: Return or Reform	66
4.5. The Democracy and Progress Party (DEVA)	67
4.5.1. Criticisms of DEVA Regarding the Presidential Executive System	67
4.5.2. Solution of DEVA: Strengthened Parliamentary System	69
4.6. The Future Party (GP)	70
4.6.1. Criticisms of GP Regarding the Presidential Executive System	71

4.6.2. Solution of GP: Strengthened Parliamentary System Reinforced with Full Democracy	73
5. CONCLUSION	75
REFERENCES.....	81
APPENDICES	
A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET	110
B. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU.....	116



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
BBP	Büyük Birlik Partisi (Great Union Party)
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
DEVA	Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi (Democracy and Progress Party)
DP	Demokrat Parti (Democrat Party)
EU	European Union
GP	Gelecek Partisi (Future Party)
HDP	Halkların Demokratik Partisi (Peoples' Democratic Party)
HSK	Hakimler ve Savcılar Yüksek Kurumu (Council of Judges and Prosecutors)
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (National Movement Party)
RTÜK	Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurumu (Radio and Television Supreme Council)
SP	Saadet Partisi (Felicity Party)
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Partisi)
TRT	Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation)
TÜİK	Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (Turkish Statistical Institute).
TSK	Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri (Turkish Armed Forces)
YSK	Yüksek Seçim Kurulu (Supreme Election Council)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to analyze Turkey's transition to the presidential executive system from the perspective of opposition parties. Turkey undertook a systematic shift to the “presidential executive system” (*cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemi*) through the ratification of Law No. 6771, which generated revisions to the 1982 Constitution with a referendum held on April 16, 2017. As a result, 85,43% of the population voted, and a slight margin of 51,4% of the valid votes favored the presidential executive system (YSK, 2017).

The presidential executive system is claimed to be a presidential model in which legislative, executive, and judiciary are designed according to the principle of separation of powers with unique arrangements customized to Turkey's needs and political culture, and therefore, usually named as Turkish style presidential executive system of government. Previously, the switch to the new system was planned to be completed in 2023, the hundredth year of the Turkish Republic's establishment, but the AKP government declared an early election for the parliament and the presidency. On July 9, 2018, Turkey officially switched to the new system and the regulations regarding the harmonization process remain to be completed. As of August 2021, the system will be completing its third year in practice. However, there are concerns about whether this period is the final stage or not in the government system debates for Turkey.

As elaborated in the second chapter of this thesis, discussions on Turkey's switch to a presidential system are not new. Although the parliamentary system has always been associated with Turkey's political system, there have been certain justifications put on the agenda of the country by those politicians and scholars who believed that the presidential executive system is a better executive model for Turkey. However, this recent switch caused a major social and political polarization in Turkey.

In general, it has been strongly rejected by the major opposition parties. As such, this thesis aims to answer the following research questions: Why do the opposition parties in Turkey object to the presidential executive system and insist on switching back to a strengthened parliamentary model? What are the reasons behind the agreement of these parties on this switchback despite the fact that they have diverse ideologies and opposing programs on several other issues?

For this thesis, three main opposition parties which could reach the required number of deputies to form a group in the parliament and have a critical stance towards the new executive model are chosen, and their rhetoric regarding this new system in Turkey are analyzed. These parties are the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), the Good Party (*İyi Parti*), and the Peoples' Democratic Party (*Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP). Furthermore, three minor parties such as the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi*, SP), the Democracy and Progress Party (*Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi*, DEVA), and the Future Party (*Gelecek Partisi*, GP) with a smaller electoral base but by and large sharing the similar ideologies and background with AKP will be mentioned to provide a better understanding of their general stance against the new system.

CHP is the first political party to be analyzed. It is at the center-left of the political spectrum, emphasizing principles of republicanism, Atatürk's nationalism, statism, secularism, populism and revolutionism (CHP, 2018a). As emphasized in their 2018 election manifesto, CHP is the party of foundation and liberation of Turkey via democracy, development, and modernization (CHP, 2018b). As a legacy, the party indicates that they are the leading figures of multi-party democracy and all the democratic institutions of Turkey, especially the Turkish Grand National Assembly of Turkey (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*, TGNA). Thus, they claim to be the guarantor of the parliamentary regime (CHP, 2018b, p.35). CHP has been the main opposition party since 2002, and it represents a significant segment of voters by getting 22,6% of the votes in the last general elections (YSK, 2018) and 30,8% in the last local elections (YSK, 2019). For this reason, it is the first party to be addressed when examining the critical discourses on the presidential executive system. Moreover, CHP is the leading force and the most important constituent of the Nation Alliance (*Millet İttifakı*)¹ which

¹ Nation Alliance is a platform formed by the following opposition parties: CHP, İyi Parti, SP and Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti*, DP). The platform campaigned for a "no" vote against the

has displayed a significant performance against the People's Alliance (*Cumhur İttifakı*) in the referendum process of the presidential executive system.²

İyi Parti, the second partner of the Nation Alliance, is another opposition party criticizing the new system heavily. As a recently established split party from the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP), the resentment among the supporters of this party regarding its leader Devlet Bahçeli's unconditional support to the new system prepared the establishment of İyi Parti. In its party program, İyi Parti stated that it would protect the founding philosophy, values, and unitary structure of the republic and counted among its main objectives and principles to build and maintain a strengthened parliamentary system by reestablishing the separation of powers as well checks and balances (İyi Parti, 2018, p.5). In addition, the leadership of Meral Akşener receives high public attention and the party achieved significant success by getting 10,14% of the votes and in the last general elections (YSK, 2018) and 8,12% in the last local elections a short time after its establishment (YSK, 2019).

As a representative of the pro-Kurdish and left-wing political movements, HDP made an important move as the third biggest party group of the parliament with 11,53% of the votes and 67 seats in the last general elections (YSK, 2018) and 7,93% in the last local elections (YSK, 2019). HDP positions itself as a political party that "unites all the oppressed and exploited; all excluded and ignored peoples and faith communities, women, workers, laborers, villagers, youth, unemployed, retired, disabled, LGBT individuals, immigrants, those whose living spaces have been destroyed." The party aims to enable a democratic government of peoples with the help of all intellectuals, writers, artists, and scientists. (HDP, 2014, p.1). However, the party is strongly criticized due to its relations with Kurdish separatist groups. Although it is not a partner of the Nation Alliance, the party acknowledges that they were in the same direction with CHP and İyi Parti regarding the opposition to the presidential executive system on behalf of the survival of democracy in Turkey. Before the constitutional referendum, the co-chairman of the party, Selahattin

presidential executive system. After the presidential referendum, this collaboration has continued in the following electoral periods and in between them.

² People's Alliance is a platform formed by the supporters of the presidential executive system, namely AKP, MHP and Great Union Party (*Büyük Birlik Partisi*, BBP). After the presidential referendum, this collaboration also continued in the following electoral periods and between them.

Demirtaş, came to the forefront with his powerful rhetoric against the system and President Erdoğan. However, he and several other party members were arrested during the presidential referendum and its aftermath.

It is worth noting that, although MHP initially strongly opposed the presidential executive system, shortly before the referendum held in April 2017, its position dramatically changed. From then on, MHP stopped being in opposition to the newly proposed model and started to support President Erdoğan. In that sense, this party will not be considered within the scope of the analysis of this thesis on the ground that it explicitly supports the new system by establishing an alliance with the ruling AKP. Nevertheless, the party's and its leader Devlet Bahçeli's shifting approach will also be mentioned during the thesis.

Although this study will focus mostly on CHP, İyi Parti, and HDP, there will be references to three other political parties with a minor electoral base. One of them is SP, which received only 1,36% of the votes in 2018 (YSK, 2018), but the party is crucial in terms of the ideology it represents: the right-wing conservative Islamist National Outlook movement, which has a special significance in Turkish political history. In terms of its political ideology, it can be said that the founding ideas of SP are pretty much the same as AKP. Recently, it is a member of the Nation Alliance as well. It is remarkable because SP stands out as the party with the most divergent political ideology within the alliance. Even if SP and AKP are coming from similar ideological routes, the former has a clear stance against AKP's presidential executive model.

GP and DEVA are also important because they are established under the leadership of two former AKP deputies in the forefront. Ahmet Davutoğlu, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, the former Prime Minister, and the former chair of AKP, has worked closely with Erdoğan and even took an active role during the constitutional referendum campaign in favor of the new system. Ali Babacan, the former Minister of State, the Minister of Economy, and the chief negotiator for the European Union (EU), was also a close political associate of Erdoğan and remained a member of AKP until 2018. Although their voter base is unknown since there has not been any election to which these two parties participated yet, as recently emerged split parties from AKP, these parties are seen as critical in terms of their arguments against the presidential executive system.

1.1. Literature Review

The literature that will be used in this thesis is the literature developed after 2016 that analyzes Turkey's recently adopted presidential executive system. However, the government system debates in Turkey dated back to the 1980s and intensified specifically during the 2007 presidential crisis and the following constitutional referendum. The years 2017 and 2018 constitute cornerstones in terms of the approval of the presidential executive system via a constitutional referendum and its official introduction.

The recently emerged but vast literature on Turkey's presidential executive system analyzes the constitutional transition from two perspectives. On one side, there is a discussion on the new system contributing to Turkey's democratic consolidation, and on the other, there is a discussion on this new system as a dangerous phase of Turkey's democratic backsliding and authoritarianism. Here, it must be pointed out that those scholars who support the new system remain a relatively smaller group.

For those scholars who have a positive view, the presidential executive system is an initiative for further democratization of Turkey, since it aims to eliminate the bureaucratic tutelage, to ensure demilitarization, to end the double-headedness in the administration, to ensure political and economic stability, and to implement a fast and effective administration (Alkan, 2018a; Bayram, 2016; Gülen & Miş, 2017; Kuzu, 2011; Sobacı et al., 2018). For those scholars, various malfunctions of the parliamentary system will be fixed thanks to the new presidential executive system. Therefore, Turkey will become more democratic, prosperous, and peaceful.

In contrast, according to critical scholars, Turkey's past and present characteristics provide a fertile ground to observe a rebirth of traditional authoritarian one-man rule in this system without effective checks and balances. Turkey's political system has always shown authoritarian tendencies, and democracy could not be fully internalized for decades. There seems to be a wide consensus among those scholars that Turkey institutionally and legally became a hybrid regime neither completely democratic nor completely authoritarian after the transition to this new system. Especially after the 2017 constitutional referendum, it is claimed that this direction

towards authoritarianization gained momentum and was institutionalized with the new system.³

Within this general framework, the new system is analyzed further by looking at four major themes: (1) whether or not this system is compatible with the Turkish political history and political culture, (2) whether or not the political developments that led to the 2017 referendum had positive or negative impact, (3) whether or not the principle of separation of powers functions and, (4) whether or not the new system would result in an efficient bureaucratic structure.

As for the first theme, the advocates of the presidential executive system claim that this system is compatible with Turkey's deep-rooted political history and administrative culture, and Turkey finally reaches the most appropriate form of government (Duran, 2017). Those scholars indicate that Turkish political culture desires strong and charismatic leadership (Türk, 2017, p. 9) and a stable and decisive government (Fendoğlu, 2013, p.584). For them, the insistence on the parliamentary system is because of the overidentification between democracy and the parliament due to Western influence. However, since the very beginning, parliamentarianism has never functioned properly in Turkey. So, this mismatch between the governmental system and the political culture put the country in very difficult periods and caused important damages, resulting in social and political instabilities, tutelage in bureaucracy, and economic crises and underdevelopment. For example, after the 1876 transition to the parliamentary system, the Ottoman Empire lost most of its lands, its power in the global order, and its population due to the parliamentarian system's inadaptability, which was a copied version from the Western states. The 1924 Constitution, which was prepared anew after the proclamation of the Republic, also

³ For those scholars who focus on the authoritarian characteristics of the new executive model, the switch strengthens, legitimizes, and institutionalizes the characteristics of the hybrid regimes in Turkey (Bayülgen et al., 2018). This regime has been studied under certain categories such as "competitive authoritarianism" (Esen & Gümüşçü, 2016; Akkoyunlu, 2017; Akman & Akçalı, 2017; Castaldo, 2018; Çalışkan, 2018; Yılmaz & Turner, 2019), "electoral authoritarianism" (White & Herzog, 2016; Whiting & Kaya, 2019), "hegemonic party rule" (Çınar, 2019), "plebiscitary presidentialism" (Gözler, 2017; Yılmaz, 2020), "neo-patrimonial sultanistic regime" (Karaca, 2020), "Erdoğanist regime" (Yılmaz, Caman & Bashirov, 2020), and "hyperpresidentialism" (Sözen, 2019). However, the most commonly used political terminology for Turkey's current regime is "competitive authoritarianism" Competitive authoritarian regimes are defined as "civilian regimes in which formal democratic institutions exist and are widely used as the primary means of gaining power; however, incumbents' abuse of the political power places them at a significant advantage vis-à-vis their opponents. Competition is thus real but unfair" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p.1).

provided the transition to a parliamentary system. In this system, the President was assigned to play a symbolic role as the head of state, but this provision was never realized as he was always at the forefront of state administration (Demirel, 2017).

After the transition to the multi-party system, in certain periods where there were stable one-party governments under strong leaders such as Menderes, Özal, and Erdoğan, Turkey has shown much better performance. There were remarkable practical similarities with the presidential system (Gülener & Miş, 2017). In contrast, the other periods with coalition governments were problematic, and they opened the way towards three military coups, six military coup attempts, several clashes between different political groups, many political and economic crises, and other disturbances. The two-headed structure of the executive, including the Prime Minister and the President, and the high possibility to form a coalition government within the parliamentary system were two of the most often used arguments by scholars. In this regard, it is stated that Turkey created its own version of the parliamentary system instead of the classical one. This group of scholars also emphasize the uniqueness of the presidential executive system to make it more compatible with Turkish political culture. Instead of a Turkish-style parliamentary system, a Turkish-style presidential system is more consistent with the realities of Turkey (Karatepe & Altınok, 2019). So, the incompatibility of the parliamentary system was one of the most important reasons for the switch to the much better presidential system.

For critical scholars, the presidential executive system is interpreted differently in Turkey's political history and culture. The features such as strong leadership, one-headed executive, and strong efficiency of the single-party government presented as part of Turkish political culture are taken as the impediments for democratization and thus have to be controlled and eliminated. To accept such features implies that Turkish political culture may develop around a cult leader, and the new system can therefore be considered a continuation of this deep-rooted authoritarian political characteristics, which cannot be considered a positive development for the democratization process of Turkey. The adaptation of the parliamentary system was a breaking point to leave behind the past authoritarian trajectories. Acknowledging that there has not been a radical change in the relationship between the leaders and the masses, the characteristics of parliamentarianism were at least putting pressure on those leaders who established charismatic dominance and have authoritarian tendencies. The

presidential executive system, however, works completely in the opposite direction. Therefore, the transition to the presidential executive with pre-modern historical references shows the desire to turn back to an authoritarian system and results in a backward critical juncture to break the path dependency of customized and internalized practices of the parliamentary system in Turkey, which has developed over a century (Ete & Kotan, 2015; Kaboğlu, 2016; Demirel, 2017, Yazıcı, 2017; Özdemir, 2018).

Regarding the claims of uniqueness and authenticity of the presidential executive system, critical scholars also think that being unique and authentic does not mean that this system is more compatible with Turkey's political regime and more democratic. Rather the new system is perceived as a cover-up to justify anti-democratic practices and authoritarian tendencies (Arat, 2020, p.239). These scholars explain their concerns about Turkey's transition to presidentialism by showing democratically backsliding parts of the world such as Latin America, Africa, and post-Soviet states, where democratic political traditions are not internalized, and the elites desire to shape the political system. In such countries, presidential systems stand out more favorably because they offer a fertile ground for leaders to be in the frontline, similar to Turkey. They claim that besides the United States, there is almost no properly functioning presidential democracy globally, and Turkey's presidential executive system will not change this reality (Al, 2020).

These scholars also emphasize that Turkish society is heavily polarized along cleavages based on ethnic diversity, sectarian differences, lifestyle, and political differences (Kalaycıoğlu, 2014, p.1). The implementation of the presidential executive system is claimed to result in political instability in such an atmosphere. The introduction of the presidential executive system has further divided the society (Dikici-Bilgin & Erdoğan, 2018, p.30; BTI, 2020, p.12).

The second theme in the literature is about the impact of political developments before the 2017 referendum. Even though the constitutional amendment of 2017 was ratified by this referendum, it is noted that the minimum requirements for a democratic constitution-making process were not even barely met. Yanaşmayan and Petersen (2020) define the political context of the constitutional referendum as catastrophic, emphasizing the significant events such as the Gezi Park protests in 2013, increasing polarization due to the 2014 presidential elections to be held for the first time, the

failed peace process with the Kurdish minority, the failed coup d'etat attempt on July 15, 2016, and the following state of emergency. These events increased the tensions in society resulting in more pressure on the political opposition, academia, media, and civil society (Yılmaz & Turner, 2019, p.691). Furthermore, during the pre-referendum period, no real discussion could be made as the views of the opposition groups could not be heard, and these people were persecuted as if they were criminals (Tombuş, 2020). In this context, according to Gözler (2017b, pp.35-38), the debates on the new system were deflected from its purpose, and it turned into a plebiscite around the cult of personality of President Erdoğan for both the supporting and opposing sides. Concerning this polarization, Erdoğan's populist style intensified the distinction between “us” and “them” and deepened social cleavages.

Counter-arguments for these claims suggest that the political crises experienced under the parliamentary system and the recent coup d'etat attempt triggered the government to implement a radical reform in the executive system. Indeed, it was a democratic process that aimed to answer the society's basic needs and eliminate the previous constitution's undemocratic elements, which had been adopted after the 1980 military coup and reflected the spirit of the repressive and tutelary military regime. Moreover, the constitution was prepared by AKP, which had received 49,5% of the votes, and MHP, which had received 11% of the votes back in the 2015 elections (YSK, 2015). The constitutional resolution was subsequently proposed to the parliament by the TGNA Constitutional Commission and approved by a majority of the delegates, followed by a referendum. This constitutional change was developed on a civilian basis for the first time in Turkey, and it had the potential for a fresh start and a pluralist and conciliatory politics, especially when supported by rules and institutions (Alkan, 2018a, p.52). As such, the 2017 constitution-making process and the approval of the new system was a giant step towards democratic consolidation realized by a wide social consensus.

The third theme in the literature looks heavily at the principle of separation of powers in the new presidential executive model. There seems to be a wide consensus on the concern that the President as the head of the state and the sole representative of the executive strengthens his/her position vis-a-vis the Turkish parliament and judiciary. This is seen as a formal abolishment of separation of powers that the one-man rule in the executive will be unequally powerful, while the parliament is

dysfunctionalized without any meaningful supervision mechanisms, and the judiciary became dependent (BTI Index, 2020, p.12).

The first significant point in this framework is the decreasing power of the legislature after the removal of the vote of no confidence, and fewer mechanisms to check the executive (Esen & Gümüşçü, 2018a & Esen & Gümüşçü, 2018b). The second significant point is the concern of a “partisan presidency,” as in this new system, the President does not need to be impartial. As a divided society, Turkey will be affected negatively by such a president’s discourses and actions. This may create a danger of fusion of the state and the party, notably around the President’s personality. This may also create a danger of institutional erosion and fusion of the state and the party, notably around the President's personality cult (Karaca, 2020, p.70). Furthermore, due to the unclear divisions in terms of the duties and jurisdictions of both the executive and the legislative, there are several areas in which conflicts and crises on responsibility may emerge. This seems to be more of a case for presidential decrees on the one hand and the parliamentary laws on the other (Atar, 2019; Keskinçay, Kaya & Temel, 2020).

Regarding the relations between the executive and the legislative, two of the most important topics of discussion are the simultaneous parliamentary and presidential elections and the mutual dissolution of the two organs (Gözler, 2016). With simultaneous elections, it is highly possible that both the presidency and the parliament would reflect the same political orientation. Nevertheless, in democratic presidential systems, elections at different periods represent shifts in voting behavior and establish a framework for checks and balances. A final point regarding the principle of separation of powers is related to the position of the judiciary. It is suggested that this new system will make the judiciary dependent and instrumentalized (Sözen, 2019).

However, a small circle of scholars, most of whom are closely associated with the pro-government NGOs, suggest that the presidential executive system contributes to democratization with a sharp implementation of separation of powers. Specifically, the Foundation for Political, Economic, and Social Research (*Siyaset, Ekonomi ve Toplumsal Araştırmalar Vakfı*, SETAV) undertook a mission to publish articles conduct several conferences to inform and persuade the people, as well as the intelligentsia to support the presidential executive system. They acknowledge that the

President representing the executive power of the state will be strong, but this is a positive development on behalf of the national will. It will not undermine the power of the legislature and judiciary, and none of the three branches of the state will be superior to the others. The advocates of the presidential executive system suggest that it is a must to strengthen the executive to achieve political stability (Fendoğlu, 2012; Yaman, 2014; Aslan, 2015; Alkan, 2018a, Kılıç, Güleler & Miş, 2017).

One of the most important scholars that paved the way for the transition to the presidential system in Turkey and an active member of AKP, Burhan Kuzu was claiming that Turkey's transition to a presidential system would be more democratic because it brings separation of powers due to the legal, political responsibility and accountability of the President (Kuzu, 2011). Furthermore, it has been suggested that in this new system, the parliament will not be bypassed by the President and the parliament is still the supreme legislative organ (Alkan, 2018a; Turan).

The last theme of the literature is about bureaucratic efficiency introduced by the presidential executive system (Nacak, 2020). The new system is portrayed as a solution to the irrational, inefficient, and slow administrative mechanisms full of pointless bureaucracy and paperwork (Alkan, 2018b; Akıncı, 2019; Akman, 2019; Karatepe & Altunok, 2019; Kırışik & Öztürk, 2020). Osmanbaşoğlu (2018) categorizes these changes as 'political innovations' in institutions, processes, methods, and policies. In this regard, one of the most important innovations is about the President's appointment of senior public administrators as a step to break the bureaucratic tutelage by disabling the bureaucratic elites to take root and making them respect the national will. In this context, reducing the number of ministries, simplifying the structure of public institutions, uniting all important agencies under the office of the presidency (Fedai, 2018, p.473), reducing ministries' roles to a more technical and supervisory area, and making them responsible to the President (Güzelsarı, 2019), and creating new mechanisms through presidential offices and boards are considered as the other main changes within the bureaucracy. It is claimed that while many dysfunctional institutions were eliminated, a more straightforward corporate structure by amalgamating institutions with similar job descriptions is aimed to be obtained (Sobacı, Köseoğlu & Miş, 2018). Additionally, these changes are expected to be more dynamic and less bureaucratic in terms of time consumption since it envisages a faster and more effective policy-making process and organizational structure, which is more

appropriate in the 21st-century vision of governance. This system aspires to technocratic governance with more specialization to achieve a division between politics and governance.

Moreover, for many years, the Turkish bureaucracy has been defined as the center of tutelage, especially in the judiciary and the military. According to Kalaycıoğlu, Turkey has witnessed several inefficient governments and “non-elected political forces” such as the military would affect politics. However, it is claimed that with the new system, an opportunity has arisen for strong, determined, stable, and programmed governments which will enable Turkey to take more confident steps on the path of development (Akkoyun, 2018; Mercimek, 2018).

However, as some scholars argue, such efficiency could not be observed after this system has been put into implementation. It has been suggested that Presidential Policy Boards and Policy Offices became so large that the similar inefficiency and clumsiness continued (Öner, 2020). As in this new system, the President concentrates all executive power in his hands to politicize and dominate the bureaucracy. This is more of a case when the appointment powers given to the President are considered as it is observed certain bureaucratic positions are filled by the supporters of the government, leaving the principle of merit out of the picture (Gönenç & Kontacı, 2019).

Within this body of literature, this thesis evaluates the discourses of the political parties against the presidential executive system in Turkey. Based on the idea that political parties derive their legitimacy from the segments they represent, it evaluates the discourses of the political parties against the presidential executive system in Turkey. It is original because their discourses on this topic have not been studied from a systematic and comparative perspective, and the essential similarities or differences within their rhetoric in consideration of their political priorities have not been revealed yet. This thesis will attempt to fill this gap.

1.2. Methodology and Outline

In the light of the brief review presented above, this study aims to contribute to the literature by specifically looking at the critical attitudes of the political parties in Turkey regarding the presidential executive system by answering the following research questions: Why do the opposition parties in Turkey object to the presidential executive system and insist on switching back to the strengthened parliamentary

model? What are the reasons behind the agreement of these parties on this switch despite the fact that they have diverse ideologies and opposing programs on several other issues? These questions have been very critical in terms of Turkey's political agenda since 2016 and the opposition parties almost all occasions and regarding all events make references to the problems and/or shortcomings of this system on a daily basis. That's why it is important to understand their reasons in opposing the presidential executive system.⁴

In order to answer the research questions presented above, this study aims to systematically define and describe the argumentations of the main opposition parties regarding the presidential executive system by using qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is a research technique in social sciences that makes inferences through the objective and systematic description of any communication material, written, oral or visual. Content analysis, which was previously developed as a predominantly quantitative method, changed in the mid-20th century as a result of claims that analysis in this form was simplistic, ignoring the hidden meanings by reducing it to numerical data. Thus, qualitative approaches were developed within the method of content analysis.

Adopting qualitative content analysis is helpful in this thesis because it enables us to determine the presence of certain themes or concepts within the qualitative data to quantify and analyze the presence, meanings, and relationships so that it becomes possible to transform a large amount of text into highly organized and categorized concepts. In accordance with the qualitative content analysis technique, the discourses of CHP, İyi Parti, HDP, SP, GP, and DEVA are chosen as the illustrative cases to represent the political opposition parties in Turkey on the issue of the presidential executive system. The primary sources consist of all related speeches and interviews made by the party leaders and members, the websites and campaign documents of the parties, and all relevant news, newspaper articles, official reports, and legislative documents. This study aims to reveal commonalities and differences among these

⁴ Here it needs to be emphasized that although the debate on party interests is essential in understanding the role of political parties, this topic is outside of the scope of the thesis. In that sense all of the opposition parties in Turkey formulate their criticisms regarding the presidential executive system in Turkey also because of the fact that this system does not serve their interests. This is more of a case for those parties other than CHP and HDP whose chance of coming to power and/or being influential in the political system of Turkey are very slim.

opposition parties regarding Turkey's presidential executive system by looking at all these sources.

This thesis consists of four chapters. After the Introduction, in Chapter 2, the historical background of the presidential executive system in Turkey is described by looking at the developments in the pre-AKP period and the AKP period. Chapter 3 describes the characteristics of the presidential executive system. Chapter 4 is devoted to the three main opposition parties (CHP, İyi Parti, and HDP) and three smaller parties (SP, GP, DEVA) and their basic arguments regarding the new system. The main purpose of the chapter is to provide a comparative analysis of these arguments. The final chapter, Conclusion, summarizes the findings of the study and discusses them within the framework of the literature presented in the Introduction.



CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM IN TURKEY

This chapter describes the historical background of presidential system discussions in Turkey that resulted in the introduction of the presidential executive system in 2017. These debates, which have been launched since the 1980s, will be examined in two main parts: the pre-AKP and the AKP periods. In the pre-AKP period, the constitutional developments, the relevant major political events, and the arguments of the leaders who have promoted this system are explained in chronological order.

In the AKP period, the 2007 presidential crisis and the ensuing constitutional amendment, AKP's founding leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's election to the presidency by public vote for the first time in 2014, and finally, the 2017 constitutional amendments that resulted in the transition to the presidential executive system are described.

2.1. Pre-AKP Period

Turkey has experienced several political systems such as constitutional monarchy, parliamentarianism, semi-presidentialism, and the presidential executive system since 1839. In this part, first, the Ottoman legacy is briefly explained, then the republic era experiences are given.

2.1.1. The Ottoman Legacy

As the Turkish Republic's predecessor state, the Ottoman Empire's political system was an absolute monarchy, and all the state powers were concentrated in the personality of the Sultan without any meaningful legal limitation. The basis of the Sultan's power was divine and unquestionable. Although public officials were participating in the decision-making processes, and advisory organs such as the Divan,

existed⁵ in the exercise of state powers, there was no genuine distribution of state powers (Özbudun, 2014, p.25).

The beginning of the constitutional developments in the Ottoman Empire is accepted as the Charter of Alliance or Deed of Agreement (*Sened-i İttifak*) signed in 1808 between the representatives of the central government and representatives of some provincial notables. The charter aimed to ensure mutual loyalty and trust, and the parties had strengthened their duties and obligations with an oath. (Akyıldız, 2009, p.512-514). Neither the central bureaucracy nor the local powers remained faithful to the document, and it had no real impact in the long run.

The proclamation of the Edict of Tanzimat (*Tanzimat Fermanı*) on November 3, 1839, and the Reform Edict (*Islahat Fermanı*) on February 18, 1856, opened a new chapter in the constitutional history of Turkey. During the Tanzimat era (1839-1876), important steps to modernize the Ottoman Empire's administrative system and to promote certain extent of equality, freedom and civic rights of people were taken. The government issued various constitutional reforms to build a modern and systematic state administration, finance, and army. Again, however, no real progress could take place due to the absence of a set of legal principles and mechanisms to limit the Sultan's powers, who still had all state powers in his hands (Yılmaz, 2008, p.56). Nevertheless, a small group of intellectuals who were able to follow the developments in Europe, especially in France, saw the restriction of the Sultan's powers by a parliament and stipulating it with a constitution as the only solution to get rid of the danger of disintegration of the Ottoman Empire (Özbudun, 2014, p.26).

The reforms reached a climax in 1876, with the first official Ottoman Constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*) that restricted the Sultan's absolute power in the form of a constitutional monarchy. This basic law was prescribing separation of powers formally, but virtually all powers were again gathered at the hands of the Sultan again (Gül, 2018). This period was characterized as an attempt to transfer power from the Sultan to the newly formed General Assembly (*Meclis-i Umumi*).

⁵ Divan was the most important supreme decision-making body in the Ottoman Empire from the middle of the 15th century to the middle of the 17th century. Although it preserved its existence until the collapse of the empire, it lost its importance after the 17th century. In the 19th century, with the organizational reform of Mahmud the Second, the body has transformed into a cabinet system similar to today's cabinet but became symbolic (Mumcu, 1994, p.430-432).

This first Turkish Parliament was bicameral; the Chamber of Deputies was composed of 115 elected members (69 Muslims and 46 non-Muslims) and the Senate was composed of 26 members directly appointed by the Sultan (Yamaç, 2014, p.62). However, the powers of the General Assembly were rather narrow. It was necessary to get the approval of the Sultan to propose a bill, no decision could enter into force without his approval even if it were accepted by both assemblies, and the Parliament could be dissolved by him without any restriction (Özbudun, 2014, p.26). By using his powers, Sultan Abdülhamit II dissolved the General Assembly in 1878.

Yet, in 1908, due to external factors and an ever-mounting opposition of the intellectuals and military groups, Sultan Abdülhamit II was compelled to reopen the General Assembly and reinstall the 1876 Constitution. After he was dethroned, the Sultan's powers were limited, and the Parliament's powers were increased with the constitutional changes in 1909, 1912, 1914, and 1916 (Gözler, 2006). The Council of Ministers was made accountable to the Parliament. The Sultan's right to dissolve the Assembly was now conditional upon the approval of the Senate and re-elections within three months were required. Furthermore, the condition to obtain approval from the Sultan to propose laws was removed. Also, a new provision was added that required the Sultan either to approve the law passed by the Parliament in two months or to send it back for reconsideration. However, if the Parliament would accept the same law with a two-thirds majority, the Sultan had to give his approval (Kanun-i Esasi, 1876, Article 31). Basically, these early democratization attempts were conceived as the first steps towards parliamentarianism since the Parliament was always at the forefront of these developments. This Parliament's pioneering role in the modernization and democratization process has left marks in the following decades.

2.1.2. The Republican Era Until the 1980 Coup

In the last years of the Ottoman Empire and during the Turkish War of Independence, we see the establishment of a Constituent Assembly with extraordinary powers. The 1921 Constitution was written by this Assembly led by the founding figure of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, with clear indications to establish a new state based on the principle of national sovereignty. It envisaged a strict unity of powers according to which the legislature and the executive could work in harmony in order to make the decisions to save the country in a quick and effective manner. In this system, legislative and executive powers were gathered in the

Parliament, and the unity of powers was therefore institutionalized (Tanör, 1996). According to the 1921 Constitution, it was unequivocally stated that the Parliament would administer the State of Turkey with its government called “Grand National Assembly Government” (Article 3). Another remarkable point was the absence of the position of head of state. According to Özbudun (1992), this is an example of a democratic parliamentary government as much as possible, even in an environment where ideal democratic conditions were not possible.

In the 1924 Constitution, the first constitution of the Republic of Turkey proclaimed a year earlier, a hybrid system between an assembly government (*meclis hükümeti*) and a classical parliamentary system was created with the visible feature of unity of powers (Fendoğlu, 2015, p.67). According to the 1924 Constitution, the TGNA was the supreme and essential organ of the state. It used its sovereign right on behalf of the nation alone and held both legislative and executive powers (Article 4). However, the Parliament could exercise its executive power through the President and the Council of Ministers (Article 7). The Parliament could unilaterally supervise and dissolve the government at any time (Article 7). The way the government was established is that the President chose the ministers from the members of the Assembly and got the approval of the Assembly (Article 44). In this respect, the functioning of this system was quite similar to the parliamentary model. It should be noted that, despite these steps, an effective judicial mechanism was not established yet.

Although the 1924 Constitution had a democratic spirit in general, the era in which it was put into application coincided with the one-party rule of CHP. In the year 1950, however, came a major turning point when Turkey made a real switch to a multi-party system. In the May 14, 1950 elections, which was the first election where there was an alternative other than CHP, the handover of government from CHP to the Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti*, DP) was experienced. DP, which entered the elections with the slogan “Enough is enough, the nation has a say!”⁶ overwhelmingly won 416 of the 487 deputies. DP won the 1954 and 1957 elections and ruled the country for ten years until it was removed from power with the military coup of May

⁶ “*Yeter söz milletindir!*” was the major slogan of DP that was used during its election campaign with which it blamed CHP’s monopolistic attitude in the political arena. The slogan also would reflect the idea that DP was the real representative of the “national will” (*milli irade*) (Kalaycıoğlu, 2014, p.1).

27, 1960. The organizers of the coup claimed that the DP governments violated the founding values of the Republic, especially secularism. This development would provide a basis for future criticisms about a tutelage mechanism over the elected representatives of the people, especially in the military.

After this coup, the 1961 Constitution was accepted with a vote of 61,7% in the referendum held on July 9, 1961, and a new constitutional order had been established (YSK, 1961). With the 1961 Constitution, the TGNA ceased to be the sole authority in the exercise of sovereignty and began to share this authority with other state organs following the principle of separation of powers (Özbudun, 2014, p.39).

The 1961 Constitution envisioned a bicameral legislature consisting of the National Assembly (*Millet Meclisi*) and the Senate of the Republic (*Cumhuriyet Senatosu*) of the Republic. Overall, the legislature was still the central actor of state administration, whereas the executive power was a secondary authority. Basically, enacting laws belonged to the National Assembly, whereas the Senate had an important role in the discussion of draft laws and proposals (Tanör, 2011). However, the two chambers were equipped with equal powers in monitoring the government via the mechanisms of the question, general discussion, parliamentary inquiry, parliamentary investigation (Articles 88-90).

While the 1961 Constitution referred to the legislature and the judiciary as an 'authority, in Article 6, it referred to the executive as a 'duty. It was stated that “the executive function is carried out by the President and the Council of Ministers, within the framework of the laws. While the President is not responsible for decisions regarding his post, the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister have this political and legal responsibility.” It can be said that the presidency was designed as a supra-political approval mechanism and a symbolic power that was expected to represent the nation as a whole (Kuzu, 1992, p. 217).

The 1961 Constitution also emphasized the principle of checks and balances, the supremacy of the constitution, and fundamental civil rights and freedoms. It also established an institutional structure to ensure that such principles, as well as civil rights and freedoms, would be implemented.⁷ Between 1961 and 1980, Turkey was

⁷ In terms of the judiciary, it is noteworthy that many new state institutions such as the Constitutional Court (*Anayasa Mahkemesi*), Supreme Council of Judges (*Yüksek Hakimler Kurulu*), the Supreme Court of Appeals (*Yargıtay*), the Council of State (*Danıştay*), the Military Court of Cassation (*Askeri Yargıtay*), and the Court of Jurisdictional Disputes (*Uyuşmazlık Mahkemesi*) were established. In

ruled by this constitution which would be amended between 1971 and 1973, a process that started with the military memorandum of March 12, 1971. The memorandum was given as a result of increased ideological tensions among left-wing and right-wing groups. In an attempt to control the situation with a stronger executive, several articles of the 1961 Constitution were changed. For example, the Council of Ministers was granted to issue a decree after the enabling act of the Parliament (Article 64) and authorized to amend the provisions regarding the exemptions and exceptions of taxes, duties and fees, and their ratio and limits (Article 61). Furthermore, the autonomy of the higher educational institutions was diminished (Article 120) and the autonomy of the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (*Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu*, TRT) was removed (Article 121). Transition to martial law was facilitated (Article 124). However, attempts like these could not put an end to the ideological tensions in the country, which further intensified with extreme political instability. As such, between 1970 and 1980, there were 12 different governments in Turkey. All these developments would eventually result in the September 12, 1980 coup.

2.1.3. After the 1980 Coup

On September 12, 1980, the Chief of the Turkish Armed Forces (*Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri*, TSK) General Kenan Evren and the other commanders-in-chief announced that the Parliament had been dismissed. Evren stated that the coup was necessary to protect the high interests of the Turkish Republic from political fragmentation, terrorism, and economic catastrophe caused by the inabilities of civil governments (Ahmad, 1985, p.211). TSK ruled the country for the next three years via the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*) until the 1983 Turkish general election. Overall, a despotic climate by the armed forces was created to depoliticize the population. All the political parties were outlawed, their leaders were imprisoned, the activities of the civil society, academia and professional organization were limited. Over 650,000 individuals had been arrested and torture was a frequently used method in interrogation until the end of 1982 (Yılmaz et al., 2014, p.11). In such

addition, the establishment of the State Planning Organization (*Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı*), the Higher Education Credit, and Dormitories Institution (*Yüksek Öğretim Kredi ve Yurtlar Kurumu*), the State Personnel Department (*Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı*), the Turkish Standards Institution (*Türk Standartları Enstitüsü*), Press Advertising Authority (*Basın İlan Kurumu*), Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (*Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu*, TRT), and the Turkish Armed Forces Assistance and Pension Fund (*Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu*) in the following years also show that bureaucratic mechanisms were aimed to be improved and institutionalized.

an atmosphere, in November 1982, a constitutional referendum was held and the new constitution was accepted with 91,4% of the popular votes (YSK, 1982).

Mainly, the 1982 Constitution increased the powers of the President on the one hand and gave the Prime Minister a superior position in the Council of Ministers on the other (Kuzu, 1982 cited in Gözler, 2000).⁸ The President now had the authority to renew the elections of the TGNA under certain conditions (Article 116). Nevertheless, the locus of the executive power remained with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet rather than the President since the presidency was idealized as a non-partisan head of state without political orientations, embracing all parts of the society. As the head of the state, the President would represent the Republic of Turkey and the unity of the Turkish nation would oversee the implementation of the Constitution and the harmonious and orderly functioning of the state organs (Article 104).

The executive power, which was recognized only as a duty in the 1961 Constitution, was now defined as both a duty and an authority. It was stated that this authority and duty should be carried out in accordance with both the constitution and laws, not only the laws as in the 1961 Constitution. In this way, the executive branch also had powers directly derived from the Constitution (Tanör, 2012, p. 104). The powers of the President were further expanded with the veto power, broader appointment authority in the highest positions within the bureaucracy, and the right to judicial review (Kuzu, 1987).

Regarding the legislature, the 1982 Constitution abolished the Senate of the Republic and adopted a unicameral parliament in order to shorten the legislative process. The 1982 Constitution also reduced the meeting quorum to one-third of the total number of members of the Parliament (Article 96) and increased the number of deputies required for political parties to form groups in the Parliament from 10 to 20 (Article 95).

The 1982 Constitution moved Turkey away from its traditional parliamentary system and introduced hybrid characteristics from both parliamentary and presidential systems (Heper & Çınar, 1996, p.491). Once the military rule ended in 1983, this constitution was subjected to criticisms by political parties and a variety of strata of

⁸ Gözler cites the work of Kuzu (1982) which suggests that if there had been a similar provision in the 1961 Constitution, many governmental crises that emerged in the 1970s would not have been experienced or would have been resolved easily.

the society. It was amended in the years 1987, 1993, 1995, 1999 (twice), 2001, and 2002 (Kaya-Osmanbaşıoğlu & Bekaroğlu, 2019). What is perhaps more important, however, is that the decade in which this constitution was put into practice was also the decade in which discussions on Turkey's switch to a presidential system would be intensified. Especially during the 1990s, Turkey would have several short-lived coalition governments. For example, between 1991 and 2002, the country had nine such governments. The blame was put on the parliamentary system for such political and economic instability (Kahraman, 2012, pp 445-446). Especially, the right-wing politicians explicitly started to express their preferences towards a presidential system.

Turgut Özal was the first leader among them to support Turkey's transition to the presidential executive system. Özal stated that he was influenced economically and politically by the USA, where he lived for two and a half years (Barlas, 1994, p.80 as cited in Çağlıyan, 2015, p.315). It is thought that his thoughts on the presidential system were shaped in this period. Özal, who wanted to solve the economic problems of the country, saw the parliamentary system as an obstacle to the realization of reforms and transformation. Özal would closely associate coalition governments with political instability. After he became President in 1989, at every opportunity, he stated that he wanted a presidential system (Çağlıyan-İçener, 2015). He has frequently criticized the notion that the President should have only symbolic powers. Due to Özal's strong leadership, the columnists and the academic circles of the period were calling him as “Elected Sultan” (Heper & Çınar 1996, p.494). Furthermore, he was indicating that the neutrality expected from the President did not make any sense. Once he said that “I myself founded the Motherland Party. We made certain promises to the people. As today's government has no independent program of its own, it is my duty to warn the government if it acts contrary to the program it adopted” (Heper & Çınar, 1996, p.495). So, Özal wanted to take an active role in fundamental issues, especially economy and foreign affairs and expressed his displeasure when the decisions were made without consulting him. In addition, he assumed that his long-term development objectives would be easier to be achieved in a system in which the President is more powerful. He became a leading figure in public debates, promoting a semi-presidential or presidential system as seen in France or the USA, respectively. Turgut Özal believed that it would be better if the President were elected directly by the people (Çolak & Uzun, 2017, pp.207-209).

The next President of the country, Süleyman Demirel, who served between 1993 and 2000, also made similar suggestions, especially after he became the President. Similar to Özal, Demirel also suggested that the President should be directly elected by the people and not act just as a body of approval. Nevertheless, Demirel was not as insistent as Özal regarding a switch to a presidential system. For him, the main duty of the President was to be a balancing force among different segments of the society. In general, it is possible to argue that Demirel did not go beyond the framework drawn by the constitution (Çağlıyan-İçener, 2015 & Çolak & Uzun, 2017).

Alparslan Türkeş, the leader of MHP, occasionally advocated a strong president directly elected by the people (Türkeş, 1979, p.164). However, Türkeş did not make any references to other political systems in the world (specifically the USA) to avoid the reactions from the nationalist community. He would propose that he favored a fully national system suitable for Turkish customs.

Necmettin Erbakan, the leading figure in the highly influential political doctrine of the National Outlook Movement (*Milli Görüş Hareketi*), and Prime Minister (1996-1997), also occasionally signaled that he favored the presidential system. In the programs of the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi*, MNP) and the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi*, MSP), both of which was headed by Erbakan, the following is stated (AA, 2017):

In Turkey, which has to develop more rapidly, the state services should be carried out efficiently and quickly. [In order to achieve that] Turkey has to introduce a presidential system in order to eliminate the practical problems. In this regard, the executive organ should be more powerful and work faster; the President must be elected by the people just as the case in a presidential system.

Lastly, Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, the founding leader of the BBP, also stated that his party advocated the direct election of the President by the people. Evaluating the hybrid government system of the period, Yazıcıoğlu stated that the President's powers were too much compared to the parliamentary system, too little compared to the presidential system, and a final decision had to be made between the two systems (AA, 2017).

All these discussions about the presidential system promoted by different politicians would be reviewed starting with the 2000s with AKP's coming to power.

In the next part, the AKP period and the developments that result in Turkey's switch to the presidential executive system are described.

2.2. The AKP Period

In 2002, AKP came to power and could form a single-party government after many years of unstable coalition governments. Soon after the party comes to power, the possibility of Turkey's switch to a semi-presidential or presidential system would be mentioned by the party leader Erdoğan, although not as a main item on the political agenda. However, it has been suggested that with Erdoğan's leadership style, Turkey's parliamentary system would become increasingly presidentialized (Akman & Akçalı, 2017, p.11). With the presidential crisis in 2007 came a significant breakthrough regarding the discussions on adopting a presidential system in Turkey.

2.2.1. 2007 Presidential Crisis and Constitutional Referendum

2007 was a cornerstone for the debates of a change in the system of government towards presidentialism (Miş & Duran, 2018, p.25). That year, President Ahmet Necdet Sezer's term was about to expire, and AKP nominated Abdullah Gül, one of the founding figures of the party, as its presidential candidate. His nomination divided society. Normally, Gül could have secured a victory relying on AKP's legislative majority but the presidential election process was interrupted as CHP and MHP, the opposition parties of that time, boycotted the first round of presidential ballot in the Parliament and engaged in widespread protests called “Republic Protests” (*Cumhuriyet Mitingleri*).⁹ CHP and MHP supported these rallies along with some non-governmental organizations such as Atatürkist Thought Association (*Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği*, ADD) and Turkey Youth Union (*Türkiye Gençlik Birliği*, TGB) (Ersay, 2013).

Afterward, CHP, as the main opposition party, petitioned the Constitutional Court to overturn the presidential vote taken at the TGNA. CHP argued that the requirement of 367 votes for the presidency specified in the constitution was not only the quorum of decision but also the quorum of meeting (Independent Türkçe, 2019) This event is known as the “367 crisis.”

⁹ The Republic Protests were a wave of mass gatherings held in Turkey in 2007 in response to Gül's candidacy, which was seen as a potential danger to the republican values of Turkey and secularism. Soon, President Sezer cautioned that the danger of Islamic radicalism was bigger than ever regarding the prospective AKP candidate for the presidency. Millions of people attended the Republic Protests in various parts of the country (BBC, 2007).

On April 27, 2007, an e-memorandum was issued by the military indicating its concern about Gül's nomination within the framework of secularism, cautioning the politicians about its role to guard the Republic and emphasizing its determination to intervene "if necessary" (Hürriyet, 2007). The Constitutional Court found the "367 claims" proper and gave the annulment decision on Gül's presidency (AYM, 2007). Eventually, AKP decided to hold an early election to end this political gridlock (Turan, 2018).

On July 22, 2007, the party obtained the support of 46,38% of the people, increasing its previous votes by more than 10% (YSK, 2007). However, even if AKP came out of the elections with an overwhelming majority, it once again was faced with 367 problems. If CHP chose to boycott the Assembly again, AKP would not be able to pass the 367 quorum. At this point, with unexpected support from MHP, the crisis was solved by opening the ways for a constitutional referendum (MHP, 2007). Eventually, Gül was elected as the 11th President of the Republic of Turkey in the third round of the presidential election held on August 20, 2007. He was the last President to be elected by the TGNA. Subsequently, on October 21, 2007, a referendum for constitutional amendments was held and 68,95% of the people voted in favor of these amendments (YSK, 2007).

The law on the constitutional amendment included arrangements about direct election of the President by the people, the election method, the term of office of 5 years, and the election of the TGNA for every four years. The prominent scholars evaluated this amendment as a significant step towards strengthening the executive and an introduction of a de-facto semi-presidentialism or presidentialism (Elgie, 2008; Robert, 2011).

In 2010, another constitutional referendum was held. In this referendum, most of the proposed amendments were about the judiciary. The structure of the Constitutional Court and the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors (*Hakimler ve Savcılar Yüksek Kurulu*, HSYK) was reorganized. The way towards individual application to the Constitutional Court was opened. Additionally, the scope of the military judiciary was narrowed in the fight against military tutelage (BBC, 2017a). As such, 2007 and 2010 referendums set the stage for a full-scale constitutional change. The debate about the 2010 constitutional amendments never ended and "the

2017 referendum is considered as the continuation of the 2010 referendum” (BBC, 2017b).

During the 2011 general elections campaigns, all four major parties, AKP, CHP, MHP, and the Peace and Democracy Party (*Bariş ve Democracy Party*, BDP)¹⁰ indicated that Turkey needed a completely new constitution.¹¹ As a result of the 2011 elections, AKP consolidated its power by getting approximately 50% of the votes and soon after the elections, a Constitutional Reconciliation Commission (*Anayasa Uzlaşma Komisyonu*, AUK) was established in which all political parties in the Parliament were represented with an equal number of representatives. However, the Commission could not fulfill its mission as all opposition parties rejected AKP’s proposal for a stronger presidency and a switch to a presidential system.

2.2.2. Erdoğan as the First Publicly-Elected President of Turkey

In 2014, the first popular presidential elections of Turkey were held. The most prominent candidates, ranked according to the votes they received, were the Prime Minister of the time and the head of AKP Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the joint candidate of CHP and MHP, Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, and the co-chairman of HDP, Selahattin Demirtaş. Receiving 51,79% of the votes, Erdoğan was elected as the 12th President of the Republic of Turkey. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu received 38,44% and Selahattin Demirtaş received 9,76% of the votes (YSK, 2014).

The year 2015 was the scene of one of Turkey's most critical general elections since a transition from parliamentary to the presidential system was clearly put forward in the public discussions. AKP wanted to continue its 12-years of success and again come to power alone, especially after the achievement of Erdoğan as the first publicly elected President of Turkey. During the election campaign, AKP officials started to underline the idea of a presidential system at almost any opportunity. Erdoğan himself stated that AKP required 400 deputies to change the constitution with

¹⁰ The BDP was founded in 2008 as the main Kurdish party in Turkey. Twenty-nine of its members were elected to the Parliament as independent members in 2011. In spring 2014, most of these people would join the [HDP](#) (Kamer, 2018).

¹¹ Erdoğan attended a TV program presented by the journalist Mehmet Ali Birand six days before the elections. He answered Birand's question, "Is there a presidential system in your heart?" with a "Yes" for the first time (Sabah, 2011). This was the first explicit sign of Erdoğan’s desire for a transition to the presidential system.

a majority in Parliament without a referendum. He would say: “Give 400 deputies, let this issue be settled in peace” (T24, 2015).

However, despite all the efforts,¹² AKP could not get the parliamentary majority to form a single-party government for the first time after 12 years and to change the constitution with the parliament majority. In the June 7, 2015 elections, AKP's votes which were 49,8% in the previous election, dropped to 40,8% (YSK, 2015a). It has been stated that one of the main factors for this result was the insufficient public support for the presidential system (BBC, 2015). Erdoğan also expressed his disappointment by saying that the discussions about the presidential system should have received more attention (Hürriyet, 2015g).

After these elections, since a single-party government could not be formed, coalition negotiations were started. As these negotiations resulted in a deadlock, general elections were repeated on November 1, 2015. In these renewed elections, AKP received 49,5% of the votes, which was enough to establish a single-party government. According to Erdoğan, the chaos and uncertainty between the June 7 and November 1 elections.¹³ made the people understand the value of stability under AKP rule. The events experienced in this period did not result in a huge crisis within the country, thanks to his strong presidency. Additionally, the failure of establishing a coalition government was presented as a flaw of the parliamentary system, and therefore the necessity to change the system was an urgent problem for Turkey's future. In his first speech after the election victory, Prime Minister Davutoğlu convoked all opposition parties on a new constitution, and AKP quickly started to form the strategy of the new constitution. However, this time, the four-party consensus was not sought (Hürriyet 2015a).

¹² According to OSCE (2015), the 2015 general elections were the most unfair and unequal election of Turkey because the sources of the state were used in favor of President Erdoğan, who openly violated the principle of impartiality.

¹³ Between June 7 and November 1, Turkey experienced a deadly bomb attack in an HDP rally in Diyarbakır on June 5. Afterward, the mediations between AKP and HDP, known as the “Solution Process (*Çözüm Süreci*)” announced to be ceased on July 17, 2015. Following that, on July 20, 2015, a deadly suicide attack was carried out in Şanlıurfa on the Syrian border. On July 23, 2015, operations against PKK and ISIS terrorist organizations were launched. Then, in August, short-term self-government was declared in 4 provinces and 15 districts with a large Kurdish population. On September 6, 16 soldiers died in a PKK attack. On September 8, attacks on HDP buildings were carried out across the country. The ISIS attack on the peace rally in Ankara on October 10 was recorded as the biggest terrorist attack in the history of Turkey, with the death of 102 people.

Following Erdoğan's taking office in 2014 and the victory of AKP in 2015, the presidential system became one of the most hotly debated topics on the political agenda. Erdoğan was no longer concealing his desire for a transition to the presidential system, and he clearly expressed this by defining the current structure as a de-facto semi-presidentialism. He also strongly emphasized that they will build a new Turkey as a result of necessities in both domestic and international affairs. As put forward by a scholar, “Relying on his election by popular vote, and his declaration during the presidential race, Erdoğan took an interventionist stance as president, unlike his predecessors whose roles had been rather symbolic” (Bardakçı, 2016, p.6).

Erdoğan's presidency has witnessed various changes in terms of the symbolic position of the President, the structure of the presidency, the impartiality of the President, and the relationship between the Prime Minister and the President. First, Erdoğan started with some noticeable symbolic changes. For example, the handover ceremony of President Erdoğan was ostentatious compared to previous such ceremonies, and for the first time, an international delegation including 14 presidents, 12 prime ministers, six heads of Parliament, three vice-presidents, seven vice-prime ministers, 36 ministers from several countries, and representatives of 9 international organization was present in the ceremony (Hürriyet, 2014a). Another symbolic change was the new Presidential Palace which, according to Erdoğan, would represent the prestige of the country. Additionally, Erdoğan declared that he would preside over all of the cabinet meetings after his election. It was already possible for the President to chair the cabinet if necessary, but this was an exceptional practice until then, and Erdoğan seemed to break away from this pattern. Such a move was inferred as an attempt to control the Cabinet and Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. In addition, it was considered as a violation of constitutional boundaries because it was against the notion of a neutral president. After Erdoğan became the President, the cabinet started to meet at the Presidential Palace, and this was seen as a sign of de-facto transition to the presidential system (Bardakçı, 2016, p.6).

As for the changes in the structure of the presidency, one of Erdoğan's first actions as soon as he took office was to establish several directorates directly responsible to him. Özbudun, while evaluating the change in the organizational chart in an interview, said the following (Hürriyet, 2014b):

This change is legally proper but can be discussed politically. It is obvious that there is an effort to establish a shadow cabinet because almost each of the established directorates is equivalent to a ministry in terms of the job description. This change is an indication of the desire for de-facto presidentialism without changing the constitution.

The principle of impartiality of the President was another point that was now questioned. Even before he became the President, Erdoğan's travels to different cities of Turkey to express his views in mass public rallies during the electoral campaign process were very controversial. As a reaction, the opposition had asked the YSK to take action about the clear violations of the principle of impartiality (Hürriyet, 2015b). In response to these criticisms, Erdoğan stated that he was only sharing his views and was not engaging in politics. According to him, it was unimaginable for a president to remain silent and not express his views before a general election (Hürriyet, 2015c).

Finally, in 2016 a significant development took place regarding the relationship between the President and the Prime Minister. About six months after the establishment of AKP's single-party government, Prime Minister Davutoğlu resigned upon the request of President Erdoğan. One of the most articulated reasons for this resignation was Davutoğlu's reluctance for a presidential regime. Davutoğlu was more cautious towards a presidential executive system and emphasized more the necessity of a checks and balances mechanism. This development, which was presented as a problem of a parliamentary system, would be used as a justification to get rid of double-headedness and conflict of authority within the executive.

Following Davutoğlu's resignation, Binali Yıldırım was elected as the new Prime Minister and AKP leader. From the moment Yıldırım took office, he acknowledged that the natural leader of the party was Erdoğan and expressed his loyalty to him. In the extraordinary congress of AKP in which Binali Yıldırım was elected as the Prime Minister. A letter written by Erdoğan was read aloud, and the party members stood up and showed their respect to their natural leaders (Hürriyet, 2016). During Yıldırım's prime ministry, changing the governmental system became a primary task and Yıldırım himself worked very hard to that end even if he knew that if the change was realized, his position as the Prime Minister would be abolished. In the first Cabinet meeting after this congress, Yıldırım would say the following: "Our President is our leader. We are Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's party. We have to walk with our leader. This is the current political condition. Our mission is to make this condition legal" (Selvi, 2016).

On July 15, 2016, a coup attempt took place that would have significant political repercussions.¹⁴ The attempt failed to result in increased support for Erdoğan and AKP government. This development would also be used as a further justification by Erdoğan to get rid of the military tutelage and to realize a switch to a presidential system. During this period, he further strengthened his authority by issuing numerous executive orders. In this catastrophic environment, MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli also said that AKP's proposal on the presidential system could be discussed. This switch of Bahçeli started the negotiations between the two parties. However, as proposed by Bahçeli, two parties have agreed on the name of the system would not be called presidentialism (Hürriyet, 2016). As a result of the negotiations, the presidential executive system (*cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemi*) emerged as a common proposal. MHP explicitly declared that it would support AKP to put its proposal to the public referendum. According to MHP, Turkey was facing a significant national threat and the system change was closely related to a matter of survival (*beka sorunu*) (Akşam, 2019). In this process, the alliance between AKP and MHP became more solid, resulting in the establishment of the Peoples' Alliance (*Cumhur İttifakı*). Taking into consideration that the total of their votes was around 60%, they decided that this was a good time for the constitutional referendum. As mentioned earlier, the referendum took place on April 16, 2017, and the new constitution was approved by a slight margin of 51,4% of the votes (YSK, 2017).

After the constitutional referendum, early elections are called by Erdoğan and on June 24, 2018, both the general and presidential elections are conducted according to the rules of the new constitution. In the presidential elections, Erdoğan, as the candidate of the People's Alliance, received 52,59% of the votes in the first round. CHP candidate Muharrem İnce received 30,64%; HDP candidate Selahattin Demirtaş received 8,4% and İyi Parti candidate Meral Akşener received 7,29% of the votes. In the general elections, AKP won 42,56 % and MHP won 11,1% of the votes, which made the total percentage of votes for the alliance 53,66% of the votes. As for the members of Nation Alliance, CHP received 22,64; İyi Parti received 9,96%, and SP

¹⁴ July 15, 2016 coup attempt was carried out by a faction within the Turkish Armed Forces, which is mostly connected with the Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ), previously considered as a religious community. Over 300 people were killed, and more than 2,100 were injured. Mass arrests followed, with at least 40,000 detained, including several public officers. A state of emergency was declared on July 21, 2016, and the process, which was extended seven times at three-month intervals, ended on July 19, 2018.

received 1,34% of the votes. HDP, which entered into the elections without taking part in any alliance, received 11,7% of the votes. (YSK, 2018).

The presidential executive system officially entered into force on July 9, 2018, with the oath-taking ceremony of President Erdoğan. In the next chapter, the general characteristics of this system as well as how it is justified by AKP, will be analyzed in detail. These characteristics and justifications would be the basis of the reactions of the opposition parties, which share a consensus on their rejection of the system.



CHAPTER 3

THE FEATURES AND THE JUSTIFICATIONS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part aims to describe the general features of the presidential executive system, established by a constitutional amendment including 17 articles. For this purpose, the changes will be evaluated under the categories of the executive, legislature and judiciary.

In the second part, the justifications on the presidential executive system developed by the supporters of this new system, mainly AKP, will be examined. Accordingly, AKP's discourse is explained under four main categories: (1) Compatibility with the Turkish political culture, (2) Political stability, and (3) Economic development and prosperity.

3.1. The General Characteristics of the Presidential Executive System

Turkey's presidential executive system, officially entered into force on July 9, 2018, by Law No. 6771 (Law on Amending the Constitution of the Republic Of Turkey, has 17 articles that redefine the duties and powers of the three main state organs. This part looks into these new regulations in closer detail.

3.1.1. Duties and Powers of the Executive

The constitutional reforms stipulate that the executive power and function shall be exercised solely by the President (Turkish Const. amend. Article 8) instead of the earlier version of "President with the council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister." In connection, the terms of "Prime Minister" and "Council of Ministers" were removed from all the articles in which the powers, duties and responsibilities of the executive were stated.

According to the new system, the President shall be directly elected by the people in two-round elections for five years and two consecutive terms. The political party groups or the political parties that obtained more than five percent of the

votes can propose a presidential candidate. Also, a hundred thousand electorates can collect signatures and propose their presidential candidate. If a presidential candidate gets an absolute majority of valid votes, he or she would be elected. If this majority cannot be achieved in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be conducted on the second Sunday after the first round. The top-level candidates from the first ballot can compete in the second round, and the candidate with the most valid votes will be elected. Similar to the previous regulation, if a member of the parliament becomes President, his or her seat in TGNA shall be ended. However, perhaps the most remarkable change is that the President does not have to end his/her political party affiliation in the new system. (Turkish Const. amend. Article 101)

In addition to these changes, the President in this new system is given several significant powers about decrees. The “decree-law” (*kanun hükmünde kararname*, KHK) which was previously prepared by the cabinet after the authorization law (*yetki kanunu*) given by the TGNA is replaced with the “presidential decree” (*cumhurbaşkanlığı kararnamesi*, CBK) (Turkish Const. amend. Article 104). According to Article 104, the President has the authority to issue presidential decrees on matters regarding executive power. However, the presidential decrees cannot restrict fundamental rights, individual rights, political rights or duties guaranteed in the constitution. No presidential decrees shall be issued on those topics that are specifically regulated by laws. If there is a contradiction between presidential decrees and the laws, the laws will take precedence. Additionally, the President has been given criminal liability (Turkish Const. amend. Article 105).

The structure of the Council of Ministers has also been changed and it now shall act as a committee subordinate to the President. The President can easily establish and abolish ministries. Furthermore, ministers are appointed and dismissed by the President. In a similar fashion, the President has the upper hand regarding the newly established vice presidency position. The President can appoint as many vice presidents as he wants and can remove them from office.

These people can be elected from among the deputies, but their seats shall be emptied when they are elected. Besides, the President also appoints and removes top bureaucrats through presidential decrees. In addition, he/she can determine the procedures and principles regarding these appointments (Turkish Const. amend. Article 104).

Finally, certain key agencies (*başkanlıklar*) that are influential in areas such as bureaucracy, military, and economy are directly responsible to the President. Among these agencies, there are such as the State Supervisory Council (*Devlet Denetleme Kurulu*), the Directorate of State Archives (*Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı*), the Secretariat-General of the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu Genel Sekreterliği*), the National Intelligence Organization (*Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı*), the Presidency of the Defence Industries (*Savunma Sanayii Başkanlığı*), the Presidency for Strategy and Budget (*Strateji ve Bütçe Başkanlığı*), The Turkey Wealth Fund (*Türkiye Varlık Fonu*), the Presidency of National Palaces Administration (*Milli Saraylar İdaresi Başkanlığı*), the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) are operating under the President of the Republic (T.C. Resmi Gazete, 2018).

3.1.2. Duties and Powers of the Legislative

In the presidential executive system, the number of deputies in the TGNA was increased from 550 to 600 (Turkish Const. amend. Article 75), and the age to be elected as a deputy was reduced from 25 to 18 (Turkish Const. amend. Article 76).

One of the most controversial changes was holding general elections and presidential elections on the same day every five years (Turkish Const. amend. Article 77). It was suggested that there would be less of a chance for the TGNA to scrutinize the executive in such simultaneous elections. This is mostly due to the possible tendency of both the legislature and the executive dominated by the same political party. Furthermore, the TGNA no longer has the legislative duty and power “to scrutinize the Council of Ministers and the ministers, to authorize the Council of Ministers, and to issue decrees having the force of law on certain matters” (Turkish Const. amend. Article 87).

Another change is about the promulgation of the laws by the President. If the TGNA accepts a bill vetoed by the President, the same bill has to be accepted by an absolute majority (Turkish Const. amend. Article 89). As such, it becomes more difficult for the TGNA to override a presidential veto. As such, the veto power granted to the President does not only delay but also complicate legislation (TBB, 2017).

In this new system, both the President and the parliament have the right to call an early election. The President can unilaterally use this power, while the parliament

needs three-fifths of the total number of its members. However, if the President serves his second term, he can rerun for office if the TGNA decides to renew the elections.

Last but not least, there are further limitations on the parliament about acquiring information and inspection. Articles 99 and 100 that were about the means of parliamentary investigation and censure mechanisms are now taken away from the TGNA. The budgetary power of the parliament is now also limited since the President can put into practice the provisional budget of the previous year without the TGNA approval.

3.1.3. Duties and Powers of the Judiciary

In Article 9 of the amended Constitution, it is stated that the judicial power of the state will be carried out by “independent and impartial courts” on behalf of the Turkish nation (Turkish Const. amend. Article 9). There is also an emphasis on the civilian judiciary and the military judiciary is completely abolished. The exception, however, is in the cases of military disciplinary courts and wars (Article 142).

Additionally, the structure and election method of the members of Council of Judges and Prosecutors (*Hakimler ve Savcılar Kurulu*, HSK) members has changed, and the influence of the President over this institution has been increased, especially regarding the appointment. The number of its members have been reduced from 22 to 13, three of which are directly appointed by the President. Furthermore, the Minister of Justice and Ministry Undersecretary are also the other members of the HSK. The other remaining seven members are elected by the Parliament (Turkish Const. amend. Article 159). However, considering the President’s power over his party’s parliamentary group, the President has the upper hand in the appointment of the top positions in the judiciary (Solaker & Butler, 2017).

When these constitutional amendments and the general structure of the new system are evaluated, it is seen that the balance between the legislative and the executive has shifted in favor of the executive. AKP also acknowledges this observation but considers it as a necessity for a strong Turkey. In this manner, Erdoğan also defines the relationship between the main state branches as “harmony of powers” (Hürriyet, 2016b). From this point on, the next part looks at how President Erdoğan and AKP government justify this system.

3.2. Justifications on the Presidential Executive System

President Erdoğan and AKP government have prepared the above-mentioned constitutional amendments by claiming that the presidential executive system was a necessity and priority for Turkey. This system has been justified by its supporters by making specific references to three main ideas (1) Compatibility with the Turkish political culture, (2) political stability, (3) economic development and prosperity.

3.2.1. Compatibility with the Turkish Political Culture

One of the most frequently used justifications for the promotion of the presidential executive system was the need for an original political system uniquely designed for Turkey. In this framework, this new system was supported due to its compatibility with Turkish political history and culture. A skeptical view on the Western administrative systems has started to be expressed in parallel with the statements of AKP's neo-Ottomanist political stance. As such, after 200 years of crisis and search for an ideal government system, AKP claimed to provide a perfect solution which depends on Turkey's ancient administrative traditions (Hürriyet, 2016b).

Nihat Zeybekçi, Minister of Economy back then, claimed that the transition to the presidential executive system was a “historical requirement, even a sort of independence war that was as important as the proclamation of the republic” (Hürriyet, 2017a). Likewise, Erdoğan and other top-level party officials often emphasize Turkey's long-standing political culture and traditions in the Seljuk and Ottoman periods. In this framework, for example, Erdoğan once said that “The presidential system exists in our history, genes and traditions” (Hürriyet, 2015d). Şeref Malkoç, who was the chief advisor of Erdoğan, also mentioned the political stability of the Ottoman Empire and suggested that the domestic and national constitution (*yerli ve milli anayasa*) is in line with the spirit of Turkey's statist character. He would say, “We are a nation that had existed for thousands of years. We had built 16 states. We are not a tribal state” (Hürriyet, 2016c).

According to the supporters of this new system, from the 18th century onwards, Turkey has always adopted governmental systems that emerged in the Western countries, which have totally different economic, social and political structures. However, in practice, Turkey has never fully adopted these different systems in their original versions. This implies that Turkey's parliamentary system has never been a typical parliamentary system. This is quite natural as each country has

its unique historical, social, and cultural characteristics that result in authentic political systems. Expressing that Turkey has a democracy that is Anglo-Saxon in form and French in spirit, Erdoğan emphasized Turkey's need to create its own version (Hürriyet, 2015e). When asked how to create this unique system, Erdoğan said the following (Hürriyet, 2016d):

We can take what fits us from the USA, from France, from anywhere in Europe, or South America. Any of them does not have to be copied exactly. So that it can be an original and unique presidential system appropriate to our traditions.” He added that the new system would be created in the same manner as honey is created, taking whatever is required from every flower and mix them.

From time to time, specific references are made to the eras of Atatürk and İnönü, during which Turkey experienced strong leadership which resembled presidentialism despite the parliamentary system outlined in the constitution. Erdoğan often cites the Atatürk period as a successful era in which many reforms were realized and rapid decisions were taken because of strong leadership. In doing so, he claims that, while Atatürk preferred the parliamentary system, he ostensibly favored the presidential system in practice. Erdoğan once said to the opponents of the new system who would criticize it as a one-man rule regime by making a reference to Atatürk. By emphasizing the problems between the President and the Prime Minister during the Atatürk era, he would say (Hürriyet, 2017b):

Did Gazi get along with Prime Minister İnönü? No, he could not. Did he want his resignation? Yes, he did... İnönü came after him. The same thing happened. He also could not get along [with his Prime Ministers].

Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım would also refer to the Atatürk era in order to justify the new system (Hürriyet, 2017d):

Those who say no to change and development cannot create anything new. Those who are afraid of novelty cannot write history. Think of Gazi Mustafa Kemal. On his way to Samsun, there were those who opposed him as well. There were those who said no. The armistice press was saying no in unison. Gazi Mustafa Kemal paid no attention to any of them. He came and built a new spirit in Anatolia. We have achieved our independence with this spirit of innovation and change. We established our republic with this understanding of renewal and carried it to the present.

İnönü's period, on the other hand, was also portrayed as a one-man rule, although in more negative terms. İnönü's strong leadership is evaluated as autocratic, especially regarding the understanding of the “National Chief.” Erdoğan would suggest that they wanted this new system so that people's will would no longer be disregarded by certain centers of tutelage, as well as people who would aspire to the

National Chief era. (AA, 2015). İnönü's period was also mentioned as proof of the possibility of the rise of autocratic leadership in parliamentary systems. At one point, Erdoğan claimed that the skeptics are opposing the presidential system at the cost of contradicting their own history just because it was suggested by AKP.

The final period that AKP referred to strengthen the justification of the need for a presidential system was after 1980. As discussed earlier, the presidential model had slowly been articulated on the public agenda thenceforth. The remarks of former leaders of right-wing politics, most notably Turgut Özal, about the need for system reform have also been utilized by AKP officials.

3.2.2. Political Stability

Maintaining political stability and efficacy is the second central theme used by AKP to justify the new system. AKP officials often made references to several short-lived governments between 1960 and 2002 to demonstrate the parliamentary system's inability to achieve stability in Turkey. The problem of double-headedness within the executive branch was considered to give rise to several governmental crises over the course of many years. Furthermore, this situation prevented institutionalization and continuity within the bureaucracy (Akıncı, 2017).

Regarding the issue, the mayor of the metropolitan city, Samsun Yusuf Ziya Yılmaz would also focus on the importance of political stability by saying the following (Hürriyet, 2017d):

Multi-headedness, instability and the tutelage system made everything difficult for the country. However, the trust and stability came with the single-party government of AKP. The trust [that the people feel] towards our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became an image [of the country]. The people now enjoy stability, no longer want to live in those years of instability and say yes to comprehensive change.

Furthermore, the country would no longer have constantly renewed elections due to governmental crises that would occupy the political agenda of the country.

Another reason for the switch to the presidential executive system was given in relation to preventing coups and coup attempts, all of which have left traumatic marks in the history of Turkey. According to Aslan (2018), the parliamentary system has a tendency to empower the appointed officials at the expense of elected ones, therefore, facilitating a tutelage system. These appointed officials assumed guardianship which gave them a base to interrupt the democracy. However, the new system would establish a 'new Turkey', in which there will no longer be attempts like

the ones on May 27, September 12, February 28, December 17-25 (p.144). In the presidential executive system, since the officials would be appointed by the President, this would put an end to the old tutelage regime (Aslan, Miş & Eren, 2014 cited in Aslan, 2018).

Another point indirectly related to the arguments of political stability is about the parliament. AKP suggest that, in the presidential executive system, the parliament actually would be more powerful because of the new regulation that the power to make laws is given only to the Parliament (Ak Parti, 2017a, p.6). This is claimed to increase the efficiency, speed and coherence in state administration because now the ministers are not involved in law-making but they are dealing only with implementing them.

In addition to these ideas, in favor of the new system, it was also suggested that a conciliatory political culture would be developed (Ak Parti, 2017a, p.3). Since the President would be directly elected by the people with more than 50 percent, a consensus would be achieved and polarization would decrease. The mutual powers given to the President and the parliament regarding dismissing each other and renewing the elections were presented to resolve the crises through reconciliation. A more responsible, rational and harmonious understanding would prevail in politics (Ak Parti, 2017a, p.7). All these factors were expected to further contribute to political stability.

One final point that can also be seen in relation to political stability was about security. The presidential executive system was presented as a system to increase the state's capacity in its fight against terrorism (Ak Parti, 2017a, p.5). For Erdoğan, those who oppose a presidential system in Turkey have close ties with the terrorist organizations (mainly PKK and FETÖ), those who look down on the people, the Armenian diaspora, and the opposition members who share similar views (Hürriyet, 2015f). For him, in the presidential executive system, quick, decisive and effective security policies could be formulated, further contributing to political stability in the country (Ak Parti, 2017b). With strong security policies, Turkey's contribution to regional and global peace and stability would also increase (Ak Parti, 2017a, p.8). In this context, it was also suggested that under strong and efficient leadership, the country's defense industry would also develop (Hürriyet, 2016c).

Overall, the environment provided by the new system was claimed to enable Turkey to finally reach the level of democracy and political stability that it deserves. Erdoğan would reject the accusations of authoritarianism made by the opposition parties, and he said that there would be no election if he were a dictator (AlJazeera Türk, 2015).

3.2.3. Economic Development and Prosperity

A third key aspect in AKP's justification for the presidential executive system was the idea that presidentialism would provide citizens economic growth and prosperity. Erdoğan claimed that the parliamentary system was the biggest barrier to Turkey's development. The country was unable to attract foreign capital due to political and economic uncertainties. However, the party suggested that thanks to this system Turkey will realize its developmental goals of 2023 since there will no power vacuum in the administration even if the governments change. For example, Erdoğan stated that "The basic logic of the new executive system is based on trust and stability. Getting the support of more than 50 percent of our nation means embracing the entire society and clearly signalizes that there is the necessary program, plan, project and pluralist understanding. When one appears before the nation again five years later, he must be the winner in the hearts of the majority and meet their expectations in order to receive more than 50 percent of the vote" (Hürriyet, 2017f).

According to Erdoğan, the presidential executive system has an accelerating effect on the economy. According to him, "This energy is present in our people, our businessmen. We have a tremendous capacity at the point of brainpower. In order to complete all tasks, we must overcome the problem of leadership. Strong leadership is a must... You need to be comfortable [as a strong leader] with your decision and speed up the decision-making process, and achieve stability" (Hürriyet, 2016e).

Erdoğan occasionally stated that almost all democratic and economically developed countries have a presidential system because this system ensures quick decision-making, efficiency and productivity as well as eliminates the stagnating effects of bureaucracy. At one point, he would suggest that more than half of the G20 countries are governed by a presidential system (Hürriyet, 2015f; Hürriyet, 2017g).

CHAPTER 4

A QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES' DISCOURSE AGAINST TURKEY'S PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM

After the switch to the presidential executive system, the discourses and strategies of Turkish politics have undergone significant changes. Starting from the constitutional referendum, Turkish politics has entered a phase of bipolarity between the supporting and opposing sides of the presidential executive system. Although there are several disputable areas within these two blocs, the main division is about the government system of the country. While the People's Alliance is supporting the presidential executive system, the Nation Alliance is harshly criticizing and aiming to replace it with a strengthened parliamentary system.

As mentioned in the Introduction, this thesis evaluates the discourses of the political parties against the presidential executive system in Turkey. For this purpose, this chapter expands on the three main political opposition parties' argumentations against this system. These parties are CHP, İyi Parti and HDP. In addition, three other opposition parties, namely SP, DEVA and GP, which have relatively less voter base and media coverage but significantly share a similar ideological background with AKP, will be referenced to draw a detailed picture in the dissent discourse against the new system.

In this manner, firstly, each party's self-definition, general evaluations regarding their conjunctural position within contemporary Turkish politics, and characteristics of their general voter base profile will be explained briefly. Afterward, the qualitative content analysis of these opposition parties' discourses against the presidential executive system will be given. As the aim of this analysis is to classify the parties arguments, the general themes will express their main concerns regarding

the new system. Without focusing on the frequency of the themes, this analysis reveals the implicit meanings of these general themes.

4.1. The Republican People's Party (CHP)

The Republican People's Party (CHP) is the first political party of the Republic of Turkey. The party's foundation was based on the War of Independence and several groups that supported this war. In 1923, CHP was established by the founder of the Republic and the first chairman of the party, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Based on the idea that the only representative of the Turkish nation is the TGNA, CHP established a strong relationship between the national will, parliamentary system and Turkish democratization. It plays a historical role in establishing this ground. From September 9, 1923, until May 14, 1950, the party ruled the country on its own. After 1950, however, it became Turkey's first political opposition party.

CHP describes itself as a social-democratic and leftist political party. Emphasizing that Atatürk is the party's permanent leader, the party adopts the six basic principles: republicanism (*cumhuriyetçilik*), Atatürk's nationalism (*Atatürk milliyetçiliği*), statism (*devletçilik*), secularism (*laiklik*), populism (*halkçılık*) and revolutionism (*inkılapçılık*). With this background, the party assumes a protector role of constitutional institutions, specifically, the TGNA as the source of democratic governance (CHP, 2018a).

Today, CHP presents itself as the main actor of the democratic opposition or the struggle for democracy. Currently, one of the party's main discourses seems to be the defaults of the presidential executive system. In fact, almost any malfunction that happened after the switch to the new system is presented as if it was caused by this system. However, until June 30, 2021¹⁵, CHP did not provide a comprehensive general framework besides the continual declarations of party members and reports prepared on specific subjects. To examine the party's discourse against the new system, the sources were taken from the speeches of the top party officials, the news regarding the party's stance on the issues related to the system, and official party reports.

The main reason why CHP opposes the presidential executive system is the obstacles this system puts in front of Turkey's democratization. For the party, the

¹⁵ On that date, the party announced a document of 29 articles which were presented as the main text supporting a Strengthened Parliamentary System. In this part of the chapter, references to this document which is still yet to be completed as of August 2021, are also referred to.

presidential executive system is not only incompatible with Turkey's political traditions based on parliamentarianism but also destroys the separation of powers.

4.1.1. Criticisms of CHP regarding the Presidential Executive System

First of all, CHP does not even use the term presidential executive system as it does not see this new system as a proper form of government system. Instead, the party uses the phrases like “one-man regime” (*tek adam rejimi*), “one-man tutelage system” (*tek adam vesayet sistemi*), “the palace administration” (*saray yönetimi*), or “my own government” (*şahsım hükümeti*). CHP refers to the literature by saying that there is no such concept as a presidential executive system. In addition to the above-mentioned concepts, it is suggested that the literature can only name this system as “presidential system with a boss” (*patronlu başkanlık sistemi*), “a hyper-presidential system” (*hiper başkanlık sistemi*) or “a monocracy” (*monokrasi*)” (CHP, 2020a). It is considered to be a conscious choice not to quote the name of the system. The party leader Kılıçdaroğlu also stated that “There is no such government system, it is a fiction, it is an arbitrary one-man rule ... In the 21st century such an arbitrary government is named dictatorship” (CHP, 2018c).

For CHP, this system and its shortcomings were seen as illegitimate and even as a part of the mentality of a “palace coup” (*saray darbesi*) several times. Once Kılıçdaroğlu said the following: “First of all, let me say that the April 16, 2017 referendum continues to be illegitimate with all of its consequences. However, this does not mean that I am not in this play because I do not find the new constitutional order that emerged with this referendum legitimate. We continue our struggle for democracy by constantly arguing that this new constitutional order is not legitimate” (CHP, 2020b).¹⁶

As a result, according to CHP, Turkey is moving away from its democratic customary practices developed thanks to a century of experiences within the parliamentary regime. As Faik Öztrak, the vice-president and the spokesperson of CHP emphasized that the founders of the Republic prioritized the absolute will of the people represented by the Parliament. Öztrak said that (CHP, 2019a):

A very clear tissue incompatibility exists between this ‘one-man regime’, where the will of the Palace is essential, and the ‘foundation mortar of our

¹⁶ The system was perceived as illegitimate by CHP not only because of its provisions but also due to the allegations regarding the violations of principles of election law and constitution during the referendum process (Selçuk, 2017).

country', where the will of the nation is essential. It is not possible to change for the course of history. Therefore, it is also not possible for this freak one-man regime (*ucube tek adam rejimi*) to survive in [our] lands that are our homeland ... We will continue to work hard to crown our Republic with an advanced, modern and completely new democratic parliamentary regime based on separation of powers and strong checks and balances mechanisms.

Similarly, in a party document, it was stated that "We are a nation that is connected to its history, traditions, and customs. Why do we ignore our 140-year history?" (CHP, 2017). In a document prepared by the party's science platform, the following is suggested (CHP Bilim Platformu, 2020):

Our Republic, which was rebuilt on the ruins of a collapsed and bankrupt empire, has realized a citizen-based transformation with its parliamentary democracy and its merit-based institutions. The palace regime, after nearly 100 years of Republican experience, has dropped Turkey's dynamic society, economic capacity and institutional accumulation even behind the countries in its category, with a system called the Presidential Executive System.

Another major concern of CHP is the principle of separation of powers. The party claims that AKP collected all the legislative, executive and judicial powers in one hand by a fabricated system that does not even exist in the world. The result is the elimination of democratic values and goals (CHP Bilim Platformu, 2020). The new system puts the executive power at the center of state administration. In its simplest form, this constitutional amendment creates a one-man regime, as mentioned above. We even see a transfer of the legislative authority to the executive branch through several regulations but most importantly via presidential decrees. The national will is taken from the people and given to the [Presidential] Palace. (Kaboğlu, 2017; CHP, 2017).

According to CHP, the legislative branch of the state, the TGNA is dysfunctionalized because both its law-making powers and mechanisms for checks and balances are limited. Kaboğlu, a deputy of the party, made an evaluation of the presidential executive system after three years of implementation by showing that the Parliament with 600 members has passed only 80 laws, excluding international agreements. During the same period, President Erdoğan has issued an equal number of decrees. He would also point out that more than half of those 80 laws enacted by the Parliament, were "bag laws" which included regulations on unrelated matters, including omnibus law (*torba yasa*). During this time, 3,678 bills were proposed to the TGNA, out of which 2,530 were submitted by CHP, 292 were submitted by HDP,

290 were submitted by AKP, 282 were submitted by MHP and 254 were submitted by İyi Parti. However, not a single bill proposed by the opposition parties could become law. Moreover, CHP applied to the Constitutional Court for the annulment of 55 of 80 presidential decrees. Only 5 of these applications were rejected; the others were not even taken to the agenda. Furthermore, it would take an average of 17 months for the Court to make its decision on a single presidential decree. For Kaboğlu, this resulted in large numbers of presidential decrees to be issued in areas that should actually be regulated by law. As such, the Constitutional Court has avoided its duty of supervision and its main duty of supervision over the executive branch (Gazeteduvar, 2021).

In this context, the claim that there will be more popular representation in the Parliament due to the increase in the number of deputies from 550 to 600 is definitely not accepted by CHP. This is, in fact, nothing but wasting the resources of the state because the additional 50 deputies will bring a financial burden of 187,000,950 TL for a period of five years (CHP, 2017). Furthermore, according to Bülent Kuşoğlu, deputy chairman of CHP, after the transition to the new system, legislative traditions are no longer followed, especially in acquiring information from the several basic state institutions.¹⁷ As for the power of financial control of the TGNA, there are also important limitations. The right to make the budget, similar to other rights of the Parliament, can no longer be fully exercised. Because in this new system, the budget is prepared in the Palace instead of the Parliament (CHP, 2021a). In this context, it must finally be pointed out that the President's power to dissolve the TGNA, a decision that can be taken by the President alone and without any justification, further reduces the role of the Parliament and makes it vulnerable (Cumhuriyet, 2019).

Another indication of the lack of separation of powers in this new system is the partisan presidency. For CHP, the President has to be impartial and be able to represent all citizens as well as advocate their rights. (Habertürk, 2021). A very basic indication of this partisanship can be seen in presidential appointments to top-level

¹⁷ Some of these institutions are Turkish Court of Accounts (*Sayıştay Başkanlığı*), Central Bank (*Merkez Bankası*), Capital Markets Board of Turkey (*Sermaye Piyasası Kurulu*), Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (*Bankacılık Düzenleme ve Denetleme Kurulu*), Turkey Wealth Fund (*Türkiye Varlık Fonu*), Social Security Institution (*Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu*) and other relevant ministries accountable to the TGNA under different laws.

bureaucracy.¹⁸ These appointments of officials such as the judges, prosecutors, and rectors are considered to be partisan. According to CHP, these decisions have reduced the quality of public services and the trust of citizens, especially in the courts. Those appointments that were made without taking merit into account caused great concern within the party. Moreover, the news about some public officials who are closer to AKP was receiving more than one salary from different public offices became a hotly debated issue that the party paid close attention to. It is claimed by the Deputy Chairman Fethi Açıkel that AKP, which came to power with the promise of abolishing the political and bureaucratic tutelage, established the tutelage of the Palace. This kind of event resulted in a serious problem of brain drain (CHP, 2020c).

Another reflection of the partisan presidency is about the favors provided to those people who are close to AKP. It has been suggested by CHP that “By avoiding the supervision of the parliament and the judiciary, the government rules the country not for the benefit of the people, but for the interests of a small group” (CHP Bilim Platformu, 2020). For example, despite a total economic crisis, it is stated that the President, who lives in his Palace and is completely disconnected from the people, turns a deaf ear to the real problems of the people (CHP, 2017).

The partisan presidency also resulted in a slower bureaucracy in contrast with AKP's suggestions that under the new system, it would be faster and more effective. This is due to the fact that it is the President who wants to control every aspect of state administration. In this new system, it has been suggested that the ministers cannot take any action without the approval of the President. As for bureaucrats, they are not even taken into consideration (CHP, 2020d).

Lack of separation of powers in this new system is also claimed to have a negative impact on the justice system of the country as well as its judicial institutions. This new system significantly increased the President's control over the judiciary.

In this context, one particular incident, the arrest of CHP deputy Enis Berberoğlu, would be a turning point for the party. On June 15, 2017, CHP leader Kılıçdaroğlu started to march from Ankara to Istanbul with the slogan of “Rights! Law! Justice!” (*Hak! Hukuk! Adalet!*) which is known as “March for Justice” (*Adalet*

¹⁸ Among the most hotly debated appointments were Erdoğan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak's becoming Minister of Treasure and Finance as well as a series of appointments made to the position of Chair of the Central Bank.

Yürüyüşü). Many party members, people from several NGOs, and citizens accompanied Kılıçdaroğlu during those 25 days.¹⁹ When he completed the march, Kılıçdaroğlu said that “This march is our first step,” and held a big rally in which he declared his demands in 10 main articles. One of these demands was the immediate switch back to a parliamentary system instead of a one-man regime (Cumhuriyet, 2017).

In the following years, several other developments were also evaluated by CHP as explicit indicators of the lack of justice in the country. Among those events, there were lawsuits with controversial decisions such as Ankara Gar Massacre, the Soma mining disaster and the Çorlu Train Massacre. Furthermore, appointments of trustees (*kayyum*) to public institutions, municipalities, companies and NGOs caused great concern. The secret decision taken by the President on the transfer of the Tank Pallet Factory (*Tank ve Palet Fabrikası*) to the Ministry of National Defense and the privatization of Military Factory and Shipyard Management (*Askeri Fabrika ve Tersane İşletme A.Ş.*) would also be severely criticized (CHP, 2019b). Likewise, the claim that there is an unexplained loss of \$128 billion in the country's foreign exchange reserves is seen as another reflection of the lack of justice and administrative capacity within the new system (CHP, 2020e).

Another major event was the presidential decree on March 20, 2021, with which Turkey terminated being a party to the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence. CHP, along with the other opposition parties and NGOs, have harshly criticized and claimed that the decision was unlawful. The unlawfulness did not only come from its content but also from its being nonprocedural. It is suggested that it was a grave legal mistake to terminate a convention passed by the Parliament, which was responsible for ratifying international conventions. According to Öztrak, once this road is opened, it will be possible for Erdoğan to withdraw from other conventions and agreements such as the European Convention on Human Rights, Treaty of Lausanne or Montreux Convention (CHP, 2021b).

¹⁹ During the march, Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım and President Erdoğan compared the march to the July 2016 coup attempt and accused the participants and Kılıçdaroğlu of being in the same line with FETÖ (Hürriyet Daily News, 2017).

In relation to such developments, CHP suggests that the desire to control the media and violation of freedom of speech can also be seen as indicators of the control of the judiciary by Erdoğan. In this regard, it is said that the pressure over the journalists became a widely used tool within this new system since the judiciary is under the control of AKP. It is further claimed that the Radio and Television Supreme Council (*Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurumu, RTÜK*) is also used as a punishment mechanism (CHP, 2020f; CHP, 2021c). The country ranked last among the OECD countries in freedom of press and media pluralism. Being the country with the second-highest number of imprisoned journalists in the world after China is another dimension of CHP's criticisms. These practices have not only been limited to traditional media organs but have also been frequently encountered in social and digital media platforms (CHP Bilim Platformu, 2020).

As a result of all these developments, Turkey now is placed last among 41 OECD countries in terms of legal certainty (*hukuki kesinlik*) (CHP Bilim Platformu, 2020). The Deputy President of CHP Muharrem Erkek called this process an “injustice pandemic (*adaletsizlik pandemisi*)” (CHP, 2020a).

As can be seen from the above discussions, the major concern of CHP about the presidential executive system is about democratization. That being said, however the party also claims that there is a major economic cost of this system for Turkey.

According to CHP, Turkey is in its biggest economic depression as a result of this new system. According to this argument (CHP Bilim Platformu, 2020):

Turkish economy is stuck in the grip of the one-man regime with high-interest rates, high inflation, high exchange rates, high unemployment and high indebtedness... the system destroys confidence and the predictability in the economy, hinders investments and deepens poverty, made unemployment chronic, and causes a loss in the value of the Turkish Lira.

Also, the following analysis is made that the arbitrary, wasteful and unplanned economic policies of the palace regime dragged Turkey into a deep social depression. The current economic crisis, which is one of the most serious crises in our recent history, has made our citizens unable to meet their most vital needs and has left them alone with the feeling of burnout. There are even allegations that the new system has an effect on the suicidal tendencies of the citizens because it has become extremely difficult for young people to establish a family and maintain family unity as a result of the mismanagement of economic affairs after the switch to the new system. Furthermore, the one-man regime uses the media, on which it has a monopoly, to hide

that it has plunged the country into crisis and depression (CHP Bilim Platformu, 2020).

The expenditures of the presidential Palace, which are growing every year, as well as the expenses of the summer palace, winter palace, aircraft and luxury vehicle fleet, are also heavily criticized by CHP. The regime is characterized as a regime of waste by the party. As Kılıçdaroğlu claimed: “83 million works for one person. 83 million works for one family. 83 million works for the needs of the Palace, 83 million works ... The middle class has completely disappeared” (CHP, 2020g).

4.1.2. Solution of CHP: The Strengthened Parliamentary System

As mentioned earlier, in June 2021, CHP prepared a report in which the main principles of a strengthened parliamentary system were described. Such a system is seen by the party as a solution to the problems caused by the presidential executive system (CHP, 2021d).²⁰

According to this report, first of all, the principle of separation of powers, the backbone of democracies, will be fully implemented. Regarding the executive, the President will be non-partisan and neutral. All the actions of the President will be subject to the rule of counter-signature, and the actions he will take alone will be clearly regulated in the Constitution. The Prime Minister will be elected from among the members of the TGNA, and as the head of the executive branch, he will receive a vote of confidence from the Assembly. The ministers will be determined by the Prime Minister. To ensure political stability, it will be easy to form the government and difficult to overthrow it. The mechanisms of vote of confidence and constructive vote of no confidence will be introduced. For the vote of confidence, a higher number of positive votes will be sufficient. For the vote of no confidence, an absolute majority of the total number of members will be sought. If the party that received the highest number of votes in the election cannot form a government, this task will be given to the party that received the second-highest votes at the end of a certain period of time.

In this proposed model, the powers of the Parliament would be increased. This organ will be composed of elected representatives of the nation. Electoral constituencies for the citizens living abroad will be created so that these citizens will be represented in the Parliament.

²⁰ Unless otherwise indicated, all references about the strengthened parliamentary system are taken from this report.

The ways in which the Parliament controls the government, such as general discussion, parliamentary inquiry, parliamentary investigation and interrogation, will be made more effective. A Final Account Committee (*Kesin Hesap Komisyonu*) will be formed in the Parliament and the chairmanship of this commission will be given to the main opposition party.

In order to make the separation of powers function properly, the structural changes of all constitutional institutions will be completed. By amending the public procurement law, it will be ensured that all public tenders are made transparent and are free from favoritism. A National Tax Council will be established for a fair tax policy. A strong strategic planning organization will be established. It will be ensured that the public can also propose laws to the Parliament, the practice of bag laws will be terminated, and the opinions of professional chambers, trade unions and non-governmental organizations will definitely be taken during the law-making process. The independence and assurance of regulatory and supervisory institutions, especially the Central Bank, will be ensured. The structure and the duties of the Constitutional Court will be reorganized on the basis of the rule of law and an independent judiciary. The Council of Judges and Prosecutors will be abolished, and the Supreme Council of Justice will be established. The Board will be organized in two separate chambers, judges and prosecutors. The Minister of Justice and his undersecretary (Deputy Minister) will not take part in the Board. Lawyers will also be represented on the Board. Decisions of the Board will be open to judicial review. The Chief Public Prosecutor and Deputy of the Supreme Court of Appeals will be elected by the General Assembly of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Election Board will be reorganized as an election court. An appeal will be made to the Constitutional Court against the decisions of this body. Inequalities between the prosecution and the defense will be corrected. Prosecutors and lawyers will sit on the same level in the courtrooms. Academic freedom and administrative, financial and scientific autonomy of universities will be ensured, and the Higher Education Council (*Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu*) will be abolished.

In order to realize all these, necessary legislative changes will be made starting from the Constitution. Political Ethics Law will be enacted so that politics will no longer be a tool for unjust enrichment. In addition, steps will be taken to eliminate social exclusion, to prevent violence and abuse (especially against women and

children), and to apply positive discrimination to disadvantaged groups. In addition to these measures, a new balance between the central and local governments will be established. The revenues of local governments will be increased, trustee (*kayyum*) practices will be terminated, and those who come by-election will be guaranteed to go by-election. Public administration will be organized according to the principles of merit, effectiveness and transparency. Oral examinations will be abolished in public procurement, and in some exceptional cases, audio and video recordings will be mandatory.

4.2. The Good Party (İyi Parti)

İyi Parti, the second partner of the Nation Alliance, is one of the parties criticizing the new system the most. The party, established on October 25, 2017, is considered a split party from the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP) in terms of its leader and cadre. In its party program, İyi Parti stated that it would protect the founding philosophy, values, and unitary structure of the Republic and counted among its main objectives and principles to build and maintain a strengthened parliamentary system and to reestablish the separation of powers and the principle of checks and balances (İyi Parti, 2018, p.5).

Considering the political career of the leader of the party, Meral Akşener, who was active in parties such as True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi*, DYP) and MHP, it would not be wrong to say that İyi Parti comes from the center-right, nationalist and conservative background (BBC Türkçe, 2017c). Ever since it was founded, the party prioritized Turkey's economic problems as well as the everyday difficulties faced by the citizens. İyi Parti claims that the country's main agenda should be economic development. At one point, Akşener stated that they see the electorate as their patron (*velinimet*) and said the following: “When the voter is a patron, the politician talks about [public] service, employment, [the problems faced by] craftsmen, pensioners, retirement age victims (*emeklilikte yaşa takılanlar*), farmers, and the non-boiling pot” (AA, 2020). In this manner, since she became the leader of İyi Parti, Akşener is traveling to different parts of Turkey and listening to people's economic problems. As such, Akşener adopted a citizen-friendly approach by naming herself ‘Sister Meral’ (*Meral Abla*) (İyi Parti, 2021a). She blames Erdoğan and his government for ignoring the peoples' real problems and using the state resources on behalf of his family and

friends. Akşener and her team believe that Turkey's economy will not improve until Erdoğan leaves office.

4.2.1. Criticisms of İyi Parti Regarding the Presidential Executive System

Meral Akşener defines the new system as “a partisan presidency” (*partili cumhurbaşkanlığı*) in most of her speeches and describe it as being “freak” (*ucube*) and “outdated” (*çağdışı*) (BBC Türkçe, 2017d). Akşener suggests that Turkey’s primary problem is this system which has to change urgently. She would suggest: “Turkey cannot [continue to be ruled with] this system even for one week, let alone until 2023” (PolitikYol, 2021). Furthermore, as stated in one of the party's documents, the public also does not support this system. Even after the 2016 coup attempt, such a system that promoted a strong presidency could not get broad support from the people (İyi Parti, 2021b).

As mentioned earlier, İyi Parti’s main agenda is the economy ever since its establishment. Although Akşener and party members refer to political problems (especially in response to daily events), blame the system for being non-democratic and Erdoğan for being an authoritarian one-man ruler (İyi Parti, 2021c), their focus continues to be economy. The speech of Cihan Paçacı, the chairmen of the Department of Economic Policies in İyi Parti, summarizing the last period of Turkey, can be evaluated in this direction (Sözcü, 2020a).

The erosion in democracy and justice after the system change in 2018 has reduced trust in Turkey in the world. With this decrease, appointments based on merit in terms of managing the economy were abandoned. As a result of the interference of those officials who have little interest in economics and wrong economic decisions, Turkey since 2018 has drifted into a serious crisis.

On a daily basis, the top-level officials of the party bring economic problems to the attention of the public and often point to the presidential executive system as the cause or the accelerator of these problems. According to Akşener, President Erdoğan himself has become a structural problem of the Turkish economy and all the economic problems are interpreted as direct or indirect results of this new system and the personality of Erdoğan. Akşener also claimed that this freak system is the product of Erdoğan’s selfish desires as well as his distorted mentality that resulted in him turning his back on his nation while he is living in his Palace (İyi Parti, 2021d). The expenditures of the Palace and the waste in public administration are also important for Akşener. In one of her speeches, she would give the budget of the Palace as 8,6 million Turkish liras, which corresponds to a total of 3,700 minimum wages on a

monthly basis (İyi Parti, 2021d). Akşener once said the following: “If someone asks me, ‘what is the partisan presidential executive system?’, I would answer that it is the price rise, cruelty, and sentencing one’s own nation to poverty” (Milliyet, 2021).

4.2.2. Solution of İyi Parti: “Improved and Strengthened Parliamentary System”

Starting from its establishment process, İyi Parti’s approach against the presidential executive system and proposal to switch back to the parliamentary system is consistent. On May 26, 2021, İyi Parti presented its concrete proposal as an “improved and strengthened parliamentary system” (*iyileştirilmiş ve güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sistem*) (İyi Parti, 2021b).²¹ When we look at this document, we see that it includes eight main principles, five of which are directly about the improved and strengthened parliamentary system.

The first principle is “the Impartial President.” Following the necessities of the parliamentary system, this principle organizes the executive so that it should consist of a President and a Council of Ministers with a Prime Minister. The President, as a non-partisan figure, should represent the state and the unity of the nation. The legislative power, which was taken away by arbitrary practices of the President, should be transferred to the Turkish Grand National Assembly again. The President’s authority to appoint new members to the executive and judicial institutions and boards will be commensurate with his role as the head of state. For instance, the appointments of the Chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces (*Türk Silahlı Kuvvetler Genelkurmay Başkanlığı*), the heads of MİT and Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*), ambassadors and governors will be made with a tripartite decree (*üçlü kararname*) in which the President has some say.

As for the election procedure of the President, İyi Parti does not provide a clear suggestion. It is stated that both the popular vote and the parliamentary vote for the election of the President are possible, but this decision should be given in a consensual manner with the participation of all political parties. However, the President is planned to be elected for a one-time six-year term because if he is elected more than once, it will be inevitable for him to be engaged in the conflicts of daily politics in order to be reelected for a second term.

²¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all references about the strengthened parliamentary system are taken from this report.

In addition to the President, the executive will also be composed of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers, elected from within the Parliament. If any of the political parties cannot receive the required votes to form a single-party government, a coalition government will be established. However, the coalition partners will prepare a coalition protocol and share it publicly before such a government comes to power.

The second and third principles of the document (“The Understanding of Pluralist Democracy, Participative Administration and Strong Assembly” and “Strong Supervision with the Separation of Powers”) are intertwined with each other. In this sense, the following provisions are suggested: The parliamentary commissions will be reorganized to enable the substantial participation of the professional and non-governmental organizations. So that a healthy base for the evaluation of the draft laws can be achieved. The practice of omnibus law will be abandoned. All political parties in the Assembly will contribute to the process of law-making fairly and effectively. The ways of obtaining information and supervision will be re-regulated so that the mechanisms of vote of no confidence and parliamentary inquiry will be brought back. The power of the Parliament in the making of the budget and the appointment of top-level bureaucrats will be increased.

For this understanding to be implemented, there will be a fight against corruption through the mechanisms of “Political Accountability” (Executive Responsibility to Parliament), “Administrative Accountability” (Responsibility of Public Administrators to the executive power to which they are affiliated) and “Citizen Accountability” (both the executive and the Parliament’s responsibility to the citizens).

Besides, a planning institution is to be established with a new vision. Furthermore, the Turkish Statistical Institute (*Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, TÜİK*) will be refunctionalized to provide data, formulate policies, make projections, and coordinate ministries. The Central Bank will be made independent again, and no intervention will be allowed. Additionally, the relations between the central and local governments will be reorganized democratically. Specifically, it is stated that if a relationship between a terrorist organization and local administration is detected, the elections will be renewed instead of appointing trustees.

The fourth principle is the “Rule of Law, Fully Independent and Impartial Judiciary.” In this part, the following are stated: The working conditions of the members of the judiciary will be ameliorated by insurances provided to them in economic, geographical and professional terms. One of the most important institutions in this category is the HSK and the Constitutional Court. Their selection procedure of their members will be reformed to reflect the will of the TGNA and the people.

The fifth and final article that is related to the improved and strengthened parliamentary system proposal of İyi Parti is “Fair and Free Elections.” Some of the important provisions can be summarized as below-mentioned. Designing the elections in the new system proposal is explained under “Fair and Free Elections.” It has been stated that the election threshold will be reduced to 5 percent. Also, the financing of political parties will be more transparent, and the elections will take place around the principles of political ethics. The supervision of the principles mentioned earlier will be carried out by the Constitutional Court, which is authorized in this regard, through the notifications made at the beginning and end of each election period. At the beginning of the election period, the Ministers of Justice, Internal Affairs and Transportation will be dismissed, and the President will appoint new ones. Additionally, the necessary measures will ensure the complete impartiality of institutions such as TRT and Anadolu Agency (*Anadolu Ajansı*), both in their general broadcasting policies and in their election-specific broadcasts. The national and international election observers will supervise the electoral processes.²²

Quite in line with this document, at almost each weekly parliamentary group meeting of the İyi Parti, Akşener concludes her speeches by emphasizing her party’s proposal on the improved and strengthened parliamentary system. She states that if their proposal can be put into action, Turkey will finally reach the economic level that it deserves given the high potential of the country. For example, once Akşener said that: “Under the İyi Parti government, we will establish an improved and strengthened parliamentary system. Democracy will function, the law will function, and justice will be there. When these are achieved, the investment will come [to Turkey]” (İyi Parti, 2021e). In another speech, she said the following (İyi Parti, 2021f):

We will build a rich and happy Turkey, hand in hand with our nation, thanks to the improved and strengthened parliamentary system ... Turkey has

²² The other three articles are as follows: “Merit in the State”, “Human Rights and Individual Freedoms, Strong Social State, Strong Civil Society and Strong Youth”, and “Free Media.”

everything that is needed to be strong, rich and happy. However, we cannot utilize this potential with this freak system. Therefore, at the first ballot, we will stop this incompetency, this indifference, which kills our people's hopes and wasting the energy of the country. We will make the potential of Turkey to return to our nation as wealth.

In conclusion, it can be seen that İyi Parti presents its discourse against the presidential executive system revolving around economic problems. Although this discourse is strong in its tone, it offers relatively less variety of arguments compared to the other political opposition parties. Nevertheless, the party's proposal on the improved and strengthened parliamentary system is very comprehensive and detailed. However, in line with their criticisms, Akşener's statements illustrate that the party's approach in their own governmental system model basically aims to reach economic development and prosperity.

4.3. People's Democratic Party (HDP)

As mentioned earlier, HDP defines itself in its party bylaw as follows (HDP, 2014):

HDP embraces all oppressed and exploited peoples and faith communities, women, workers, laborers, peasants, youth, unemployed, retirees, disabled, LGBT individuals, immigrants, those whose living spaces have been devastated, intellectuals, writers, artists, and scientists, as well as all the forces who struggle together with these groups.

In addition, the party displays sensitivity towards gender equality at all levels of decision-making and adopts a noteworthy structure in which a man and a woman take place at every position in the administration, starting from the highest position, which is party leadership (HDP, 2014). Although, the party recently declares that they are in a process in order to represent everyone in Turkey, the party is known as a pro-Kurdish party and leftist party.

HDP describes Turkey's existing political system as anti-democratic and claims to “represent all groups marginalized by the system to end all forms of oppression, exploitation, and discrimination and to construct a life worthy of human dignity (HDP, 2014). HDP is significant, as argued by some scholars, in terms of being the first pro-Kurdish party that passed the 10% electoral threshold with an alternative vision of ‘radical democracy’ that argues for minority rights and checks on the centralized state in opposition to AKP’s majoritarian democracy understanding. (Whiting & Kaya, 2019, p.92).

Selahattin Demirtaş, the co-chairman and the presidential candidate of HDP in the 2014 presidential elections, secured 9,8% of the votes. In the parliamentary elections held in 2015, HDP would receive 8,7 % of the votes. It has been suggested that these developments made HDP a game-changer in Turkish politics since AKP could not obtain the required number of deputies to change the constitution (Bardakçı, 2016, p. 10). After the 2015 general elections, Erdoğan first wanted to convince HDP by promoting a certain level of rights to the Kurdish people. However, these attempts did not produce concrete results, and Demirtaş increased his criticisms towards AKP government and President Erdoğan. Demirtaş's promise "We are not going to make you the president" (*Seni başkan yaptırmayacağız*) became one of the most important slogans of the election campaign (HDP, 2015). Although the majority of HDP votes in the national elections came from the cities located in the Southeast region of Turkey, the party was also supported in big cities such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir (YSK, 2015)

In the following years, however, the pressure on HDP and Demirtaş increased. Several party officials, as well as Demirtaş, were arrested mostly because of claims of supporting terrorist organizations. Therefore, it became very difficult for the top party leadership to conduct their campaign against the presidential executive system in 2017. HDP became one of the central actors of the anti-presidential opposition in the country.

When we look at the main reasons for the party's opposition to the presidential executive system, we see two main arguments: The "monist" structure of the new system and increased difficulties for all disadvantaged groups, including the Kurdish people brought about by it.

4.3.1. Criticisms of HDP Regarding the Presidential Executive System

As a starting point, HDP defines this new system as "monist" (*tekçi*). Similar to CHP and İyi Parti, terms such as "one-man state," (*tek kişilik devlet*) "one-man regime," (*tek adam rejimi*) and "one-party state" (*tek parti devleti*) are used (HDP, 2017a). The party defines the presidential executive system as a "state of disorder" (*cumhurbaşkanı sistemsizliği*) (HDP Ekonomi Çalışmaları Grubu, 2020). This system is not even considered a legitimate system due to the unfair constitution-making process in which there was almost no room left to HDP and the conditions of the state of emergency after the 2016 coup attempt. Similarly, on June 24, 2018, elections were a sudden operation to bypass the will of the people when the top officials of HDP were

in jail. In the special report on the violations of presidential and parliamentary election rules, it is claimed that the state power was used in favor of AKP and MHP (HDP, 2018a).

When we look at the claims of HDP regarding the presidential executive system to be inherently monist, we see that it is basically about the legislative, executive and judiciary powers being concentrated at the hands of the President. However, HDP does not even officially recognize Erdoğan as the legitimate head of the state or the President of Turkey. In the party's official documents as well as the speeches of the party members, Erdoğan is referred to as “the head of AKP.”²³ Another reason why Erdoğan is not accepted as a legitimate President is his being a partisan president who does represent only his party's interests. Erdoğan does not represent the people at large and he marginalizes all people who do not support him (HDP, 2017a).

As for the legislature, HDP criticizes the power of the President to dismiss the Parliament, suggesting that the Parliament is now suspended and has no real function and/or a control mechanism (HDP, 2020a). Furthermore, the TGNA is said to be a guided assembly under the guardianship of the executive (T24, 2019a). Saruhan Oluç, group deputy chairman of HDP, indicated that within the first year of the presidential executive system, the number of laws enacted in the Parliament was less than the number of articles regulated by presidential decrees. This shows that Turkey has become a party state governed not by laws but by decrees. Moreover, most of the laws passed by the Parliament were enacted by a method like the omnibus laws. According to Oluç (Yüksekova Haber, 2019):

There is a parliament, but the bills are being prepared in the Palace and in the ministries. Even a single comma of the incoming proposals cannot be changed. The opposition can only voice their criticism. They (AKP and MHP) pass the bills that they want with their parliamentary majority. Therefore, the Parliament cannot become the focus of a democratic negotiation culture.

This is further complicated by the President being the head of a political party because this gives him the right to determine the list of candidates for deputies through which he could have an influence on the composition of the Parliament.

As for the executive, HDP also criticizes the broad powers of the President, which is seen as one of the biggest problems of the new system. According to the party, the system aims to institutionalize fascism, the Parliament has no function and control

²³ for example see HDP Ekonomi Çalışmaları Grubu, 2020.

mechanism (HDP, 2020a). The Assembly is said to be a guided assembly under executive guardianship (T24, 2019b). In a system where there is no separation of powers, there is an executive dominance in every aspects of life. In this regard, HDP underlines that the President is able to do anything he desires, as especially is seen in the appointment and the dismissal of any public personnel. Furthermore, he can appoint vice-presidents (as many as he wants), ministers, governors, and rectors without any transparent criteria. HDP further criticizes the structure of the cabinet with the claim that the Ministers are also serving the monist government of President Erdoğan. They are responsible to the President, who determines their fate. In particular, the appointment of Berat Albayrak, as the Minister of Treasury and Finance, one of the most important ministries of the country, was met with great reaction within HDP. It has been stated that such appointments show that the principle of separation of powers has now ended and state institutions have lost their autonomy (T24, 2020).

In terms of the judiciary, HDP claims that Turkey is experiencing a collapse of the justice system in which the courts are now dependent and partial. HDP co-chairman Mithat Sancar stated that there is no such body as the judiciary. Arbitrary arrests and unfair trials have become commonplace, especially for HDP members and supporters such as Selahattin Demirtaş and Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu (HDP, 2020a). Another co-chairman of the party, Sezai Temelli, further argues that there is not even a constitution that is implemented in Turkey since it can easily be violated. In one of the party reports, it is stated that “for the palace regime embodied in Erdoğan, justice is not seen as a field of responsibility but as a method of discipline” (HDP, 2020b).

Even if HDP criticizes the new system as monist due to Erdoğan’s control over the legislative, executive and judicial branches, the party makes very frequent references to the specific problems of the Kurdish people. HDP blames the presidential executive system by presenting it as limiting the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Kurdish people. According to the party, one of the main aims of the presidential system was to destroy the social democratic opposition, especially the Kurdish political movement. Even regarding some of the longstanding problems of Kurds, such as education in their native language, the party blames the presidential executive system. Moreover, this new system, with its centralist understanding, undermines local

democracy (Yüksekova Haber, 2019).²⁴ HDP strongly criticizes this system, with its “trustee order” (*kayyum düzeni*) replaces popularly elected local mayors and public officers. According to HDP members, this is not different from a coup, and it is the continuity of the oppressive mentality of the 1980 intervention. HDP, which says that democracy starts locally, opposes the appointment of trustees by decrees and the dismissal of approximately 15,000 Kurdish workers and civil servants as well as approximately 300 village headmen (*muhtar*). Furthermore, co-mayors of 93 municipalities, hundreds of city council members and provincial council members, as well as over a thousand party members were also arrested. For HDP, the state of emergency, which brought the logic of governing the country with decrees, and the presidential executive system, which perpetuated this regime, are responsible for this situation. In the local elections held on March 31, 2019, it is suggested that this was not a simple local election but a struggle for democracy because of all these negative developments. According to Temelli, the results of the local elections paved the way for a new policy and showed that Turkey could not develop with this system. In another speech, Temelli suggested that in these elections, the idea that the system was well institutionalized and that there would be no change in the ballot box was promoted. However, with HDP's strategic moves, AKP lost the elections resulting in the questioning of the system (HDP, 2019a).

In addition to its claim that the new system creates further problems for Kurds, HDP criticizes it as being sexist and triggering the violation of women's rights. HDP's Women's Assembly Election Declaration names this system as “one man or all man” (*tek adam hep adam*) system. It is further stated that the presidential executive system aims to strengthen male dominance in the country (HDP, 2017b). Similarly, prior to the 2018 presidential elections, in one of the party documents, it was stated that the party “will stand against the regime that ignores women by bringing the model of Erdoğan's masculinity into [our] households” (HDP, 2018a). In this framework, the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention by a unilateral decision of President Erdoğan without consulting women's organizations was interpreted as taking away the rights

²⁴ Here it must be pointed out that HDP is not only concerned with the democratic autonomy of the Kurdish people in Turkey but also in neighboring countries such as Syria and Iraq. The party claims that the presidential executive system will cause more conflicts in the region due to the increasing power of Erdoğan and his ambitions.

of women. It was by no means lawful because the convention was adopted with the decision of the TGNA (HDP, 2021).

Although HDP puts a specific emphasis on the disadvantaged strata of the society, the general economic problems of Turkey are also evaluated in their relation to the presidential executive system. The new system triggered the exploitation of labor, increased unemployment, decreased real wages and debt. The new economic principles of this system are “corporatism, nepotism, social insecurity, irregularity, instability” (HDP, 2018b). In one of their reports, it is stated that in this new system. Accordingly, the public resources are used recklessly and Erdoğan rules the country as if it is a company and he is the CEO of this company (HDP, 2019b). For the ministers working in the private sector, a top party official Pervin Buldan suggested that “Each ministry has created a monopoly in its own field. It's almost like a Presidential Company System” (*Cumhurbaşkanlığı Şirket Sistemi*). (HDP, 2020c).

In short, under the new system, Turkey's economy suffered a lot. In particular, the Turkish lira has experienced a great loss of value. In addition, the strengthened perception that it is necessary to be close to the government as a way to get rich has become widespread. HDP claims that the cost of switching to the presidential executive system was approximately 100 million Turkish Liras, only in 2018. Even in the pandemic period economic report, this waste has not decreased. Approximately 3,3 billion TL of aircraft were purchased for the presidency from the discretionary fund. Erdoğan's palace expenditures reached 3 billion TL. Furthermore, it is stated that the cost of the summer palace built for Erdoğan is 550 million TL (HDP, 2020c). In addition, HDP claims that with this new system, the natural resources of Turkey are also destroyed for the sake of the economic benefits of AKP's advocates. In this sense, Buldan claims that the presidential executive system is a system that damages not only democracy and justice but also the environment (Gazeteduvar, 2020).

4.3.2. Solution: Pluralist Parliamentary System Reinforced with Local Democracy

According to HDP, Turkey's democratization can be achieved only if a comprehensive constitution-making process with a populist, democratic, just, liberal, egalitarian, non-sexist, and majoritarian mentality recognizes ethnic, religious and cultural differences in the society is adopted (HDP, 2017a). In this direction, it is said that all kinds of democratization steps are open to negotiation because there is a need

for a social contract to put an end to the style of political tension that divides Turkey (Yüksekova Haber, 2019). Not just the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, but also political parties, media organs, civil society, academia and local governments should be invited to those debates. The main proposal of HDP is a pluralist parliamentary system reinforced with local democracy (HDP, 2019a).

However, unlike CHP and İyi Parti, HDP claims that there is a legacy “coming from the late Ottoman era which is chauvinist and nationalist and having a conflictual mindset as well as policies based on denial and genocide. In order to create a fully democratic system, HDP promotes promises on parliamentary system strengthened by local democracy (HDP, 2017a).

While emphasizing the one-man regime, Demirtaş said the following in his election letter he wrote from prison: “If I am elected, I won’t and cannot rule the whole country by myself ... The first thing I will do when I am elected will be to transfer a significant part of my powers to the TGNA, municipalities, provincial councils, non-governmental organizations, universities and public assemblies. Decision-making, implementation and supervision processes should be carried out with [people’s] direct participation” (HDP, 2018c). Demirtaş also criticizes that no party has yet presented a comprehensive study of what they mean by a strengthened parliamentary system. To fill this gap, Demirtaş wrote an article in T24 in which he explains what HDP proposes in terms of the strengthened parliamentary system (Demirtaş, 2020).²⁵

According to this article, the first Law on Political Parties should be reconsidered. The dominance of the leader in the parties should be ended, the condition of pre-election should be legalized, and the 50% gender quota in the determination of the deputies and mayor candidates should be introduced.

Second, the electoral system should change. The election threshold should be abolished, and every party that receives one percent of the vote should be represented in the Parliament. YSK should be independent and impartial, and the elections should be held in an equal, fair, reliable and transparent environment. Conducting an election campaign with state resources should be subject to sanctions, and a fair financial support mechanism should be established for all political parties.

²⁵ Unless otherwise indicated, all references about the strengthened parliamentary system are taken from this report.

Third, the pressure on media should be removed, and freedom of expression should not be hindered. The owners of media establishments should be legally prevented from carrying out directly or indirectly commercial relations with the government. RTÜK's supervisory and sanctioning power should be used within democratic boundaries.

Fourth, it is underlined that the civil society formed by trade unions, professional chambers, associations, foundations and platforms should actively participate in local and national public debates and law-making processes. A strong civil society is shown as the insurance of a strengthened parliamentary system.

Fifth, the authorities and budgets of the municipalities should be increased. The appointment of trustees should be abolished, and the laws that laid the groundwork for these anti-democratic practices should be removed. Significantly, Demirtaş states that comprehensive local government reform is necessary.

Sixth, in line with the principle of checks and balances, the mechanisms of interpellation, written and verbal questions should be strengthened. In addition to that, both the deputies at an individual level and the Assembly as a whole should be more active.

Seventh, HSK should be divided into two as the Council of Judges and the Council of Prosecutors. Also, democratic and participatory methods should be adopted in the selection of members to these boards. Emphasis is placed on principles such as the legal guarantee of judges, personal rights, and the principle of merit in recruitment. In addition, it is also stated that the conditions in prisons should be improved.

Eighth, it is expressed that the improvement in the economy will only be possible with democratization. In relation to that, an understanding of transparency is emphasized, in which not only the Parliament but also every citizen will have a say in the auditing of the budget. In this context, the discretionary fund should be abolished, and the principles of absolute equality and transparency should be acted upon in public tenders. For public investments above a certain cost, a local or national referendum should be mandatory.

Finally, it is stated that it is essential to implement the principle of merit in the recruitment and appointment of senior bureaucrats in the public sector. Waste, pomp, luxury consumption and bribery should be removed from bureaucracy.

4.4. The Felicity Party (SP)

The Felicity Party (SP) was formed on July 20, 2001, following the closure of Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*, FP) by the Constitutional Court for violating the secularist principles in the constitution. While the party's 'innovative' (*yenilikçi*), and 'conservative-democrat' (*muhafazakar demokrat*) wing established AKP, its relatively traditional and conservative members founded SP (Coşkun & Yanar, 2020). SP is closely associated with the legacy of FP and its founding leader Necmettin Erbakan's system of ideas called the National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*) movement (SP, 2019a). However, SP's popular support has drastically reduced with the rise of AKP. The party has not been quite successful at the ballots, gaining around 2 to 4% of the votes between the 2002 and 2019 elections; as such, SP failed to pass the 10% electoral threshold to be represented in the TGNA. Despite this, the leader of the party, Temel Karamollaoğlu stated that "SP is the party which has the most specific weight (*özgül ağırlık*) in Turkish politics" (NTV, 2019). Today, SP is a member of the Nation Alliance and its discourse against the presidential executive system is significant to be analyzed because those criticisms come from an ideological perspective that is relatively similar to AKP's.

4.4.1. Criticisms of SP Regarding the Presidential Executive System

Unlike the other political opposition parties analyzed in this thesis, SP is the most moderate party in criticizing the presidential executive system. Although the party acknowledges that the current system does not work properly, it suggests that it can be fixed with some reforms within the system (SP, 2020a). SP criticizes the new executive model mostly under two main themes: lack of separation of powers and economic instabilities.

As for lack of separation of powers, the party, similar to other parties, claims that there is an unbalanced power distribution among the state institutions in which the executive is given more powers. The legislature, however, is now more passive and the judiciary more dependent (SP, 2020b). In addition, considering that this powerful executive is carried out by the President, who continues to be a party member, such broad powers given to the executive are seen as a major problem that increases the polarization in the society and makes the boundaries between the party and the state blurred (SP, 2020a).

Another major problem is the declining quality of public services due to the structural problems of the new system. Despite the government's arguments suggesting that the bureaucracy would shrink after switching to the new system, the efficiency and transparency could not be achieved in public administration due to the structural problems of the presidential executive system (SP, 2019). It is also because of the disappearance of the ancient state traditions (SP, 2020c).

Additionally, the appointments made by the partisan President result in the unqualified supporters of the Erdoğan regime becoming top bureaucrats and creating an environment without any transparency and accountability. This is claimed to specifically damage the well-being of the young population (SP, 2020a). Also, the ministers' responsibility to the President instead of the public is criticized in the same manner, and it is stated that they serve the President instead of the nation. Commenting on the several natural disasters Turkey experienced in 2021, Karamollaoğlu indicated that the problem is the presidential system as implemented in Turkey because, in this system, no one bears responsibility other than the President. The ministers usually say that they are informing the President, receiving instructions and fulfilling the tasks given by him, but as ministers, they should also be responsible and take precautions (Habertürk, 2021b). Furthermore, in public administration, there is no consultation with any person or institution in the decision-making process. The country is almost entirely governed by presidential decrees or the omnibus laws, which have become a regular practice in the dysfunctionalized Parliament after the transition to the new system (SP, 2020d).

Just as in the case of the TGNA, the judiciary also faces specific problems due to the lack of separation of powers. It is claimed that it has lost its independence by receiving 'instructions' from the executive (SP, 2018). This results in several injustices in the court decisions, as seen in the repetition of the elections after March 31, 2019 (SP, 2020), or the local court decisions ignoring a Constitutional Court decision in the case of Enis Berberoğlu. According to SP, such decisions show that Erdoğan wants to be superior to law (SP, 2020f). Therefore, it is pointed out that president Erdoğan is responsible for Turkey's current situation (Karamollaoğlu, 2019). However, SP did not criticize and even supported Erdoğan's decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention on the ground that it violated traditional values of family structure in Turkey (SP, 2021a).

The second main theme regarding the criticisms of SP is about the economic instabilities that are claimed to increase after adapting the presidential executive system. According to Karamollaoğlu, the President is misguided and misinformed in an environment in which he is far from the realities of the people and it causes an increase in both unemployment and exchange rates (SP, 2020g). There are also high levels of waste (especially related to the luxury consumption in the Presidential Palace, which is seen as religiously inappropriate) and corruption (SP, 2020h; OdaTV, 2019; Diken, 2019). At one point, the Ottoman Empire is given as an example to show that glory does not mean power: “The Ottoman Empire, which ruled the world in small rooms, collapsed when it moved to palaces” (SP, 2019b). Moreover, the change of the Chair of the Central Bank five times in two years is specifically mentioned as a result of the downturn in the economy. Karamollaoğlu stated that “They [Erdoğan’s administration] first dismissed the President of the Central Bank as if he was responsible for the bad situation because he did not lower the interest rates, and then they found the person who would increase the interest rates and appointed him. However, the backsliding trend in the economy has not changed because the problem was at the top” (Sözcü, 2021a).

4.4.2. Solution of SP: Return or Reform

SP did not present a detailed study that entails their criticisms towards the presidential executive system and/or their proposed model as of 2021. Unlike other political parties, it does not have a clear stand on either reforming the existing system or going back to the parliamentary executive. From time to time, it has been suggested that the new system has important deficiencies and needs to be changed or revised (Sözcü, 2021b). The party documents show that the President should not be a party member, and the Parliament's powers should be broadened (SP, 2020i). Moreover, they emphasize that the 10% threshold should be lowered (SP, 2020b).

Due to the unclear position of SP, it is not apparent whether the party will continue to be against the new system or not. The People Alliance tries to convince SP to be on their side. Karamollaoğlu signaled that SP’s presence in the Nation Alliance could be temporary, and it is always possible to form a third alliance that leaves room for other collaborations (Cumhuriyet, 2021). In one of his speeches, he further expressed that “Alliances should only be discussed during the election periods. Allied parties can inevitably enter into a dialogue, but they are not coalitions. Coalitions are

formed to operate together, but the alliances are formed on certain principles only” (Sözcü, 2021a). In this regard, the party launched an initiative called “Livelihood Alliance” (*Geçim İttifakı*) which would be their main and permanent alliance. SP declared that “they cannot think about the elections, while the pot of the nation is not boiling” (Geçim İttifakı, n.d.). For this reason, as compared to other political opposition parties, SP’s discourse against the presidential executive system makes it possible to think that their position can be changed if the conjuncture leads them in a different direction.

4.5. The Democracy and Progress Party (DEVA)

The Democracy and Progress Party was established on March 9, 2020, headed by Ali Babacan. Babacan had worked as a Minister of State, Minister of Economy, and the chief negotiator for EU in the AKP government until 2018. When asked where the party is on the political spectrum, the officials of the party-state that “they are a mainstream party in the middle of the political spectrum and they do not want to be involved in the current polarizations of Turkey.” Additionally, they point out that they are in the process of constructing their own unique political identity as a new political party. While they say that being part of an alliance is not currently on their agenda, it can be possible during elections (DEVA, 2021a). The voter profile of DEVA is unknown because the party did not compete in any elections yet. However, the fact that Babacan and the members of DEVA are mostly coming from a similar background with AKP and a widely shared positive image of Babacan gives importance to DEVA's discourse against the presidential executive system.²⁶

4.5.1. Criticisms of DEVA Regarding the Presidential Executive System

DEVA’s main criticism towards the presidential executive system can be analyzed in two main categories, justice and economy.

First of all, according to the party, the justice system at all levels is damaged in the eyes of the people due to the lack of separation powers among the state branches. According to DEVA, President Erdoğan's power exceeds the other two branches, and he violates the rule of law easily with the tools granted to him thanks to this system. It is claimed that this situation encourages other officials to act in the same way, and hence a total crisis in justice system becomes inevitable (DEVA, 2021b). Regarding

²⁶ Babacan is usually considered to be a charismatic and successful politician in the fields of economy and foreign policy, specifically on issues related to the EU.

the excessive powers of the President, Babacan once claimed that “They [Erdoğan government] named this system as ‘presidential executive system’. However, there is no presidency and a president in this system. Currently, the person who is in that seat is taking care of issues of party chairmanship, mayorship, even general directorate and head of a department, but he does not work as a president as he is supposed to be. Thanks to this system, Mr. Erdoğan became everything except the President that Turkey needs” (DEVA, 2021c). DEVA also suggests that the ministers cannot decide on anything in this system. They all have to wait for the President's order (DEVA, 2021d). In such an environment, DEVA sees President Erdoğan as the solely responsible figure for everything, specifically regarding the malfunctions in the justice system. For example, the President was responsible for the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, which was an unlawful decision both in principle and procedure (DEVA, 2021e). The President was also responsible for an increase in violence against women, domestic violence and femicide as a result of this system (DEVA, 2020f).

Moreover, the annulment of an international agreement on human rights is perceived as a major threat because with this logic, one day, the President may terminate fundamental documents such as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) with a unilateral decision. It is a well-grounded concern for DEVA because the President said that ECHR decisions are not binding for him as seen in the decision regarding Demirtaş (DEVA, 2021g). Furthermore, according to the party, the People's Alliance does not hesitate to target the judiciary when they find their decisions inappropriate. The explicit threats keep the judges and prosecutors from doing their job (DEVA, 2021h).

DEVA also considers all these judicial problems to reflect the oppressive mentality vitalized after the July 15, 2016 coup attempt. According to the party, state brutality was very high in that period, and it has become permanent after the introduction of the new system. Babacan said that a strong democracy with the rule of law could have been established after the democratic resistance of the civilians against the coup attempt, but Erdoğan utilized this resistance for his own benefit (DEVA, 2021i). As part of this oppressive environment that emerged in the aftermath of July 15, the freedom of media and academia are also thought to be in danger (DEVA, 2021j). Moreover, DEVA pays special attention to the centralist mentality of the presidential executive system since it undermines the importance of local democracy.

Unlawful pressures towards the municipalities under the rule of any opposition party significantly increased with this new system (DEVA, 2021k).

The second theme of DEVA's criticisms against the presidential executive system is the economic crisis, which intensified after the transition to the new system and reached its peak during the pandemic. "The impoverishment of three million citizens in three years is the result of the biased presidential system" (DEVA, 2021l). DEVA claims that there are sufficient resources in Turkey and when Babacan was the minister, there was a positive trend in the economy. It is claimed that AKP's current economic administration is formed around loyalty rather than merit. In this sense, AKP is wasting resources on huge unnecessary projects and the expenditures of the [Presidential] Palace (DEVA, 2020m). In this process, DEVA also highlights that the loss of independence of the key central state organizations such as TÜİK and Central Bank makes the situation worse. According to Babacan, the resignation of Berat Albayrak also indicates that this system has gone bankrupt because this was not a simple resignation. The announcement of a minister about his resignation through his social media account, the absence of an official explanation for 24 hours, the pressure on many media organizations which could not even give information about this resignation summarizes the general structure of the system (DEVA, 2021n).

4.5.2. Solution of DEVA: Strengthened Parliamentary System

DEVA proposes a new constitution based on a strengthened parliamentary system which is different from the one implemented back in the 1990s. Taking into account the fact that the majority of OECD countries (73%), EU countries (82%), G20 countries (42%) and G8 countries (63%) prefer the parliamentary system, it is claimed that there is a correlation between parliamentary system and economic development. However, the party did not officially present a general framework regarding their proposal. Besides the occasional declarations, the party presents a proposal in their party program under the title of "A New Constitution, Separation of Powers and Strong Parliamentary System" (DEVA, 2020). In this proposal, the first point is the impartiality of the President. According to this, the President should have predominantly representative powers. Practices such as the presidential decrees will be abolished. Second, the ministers and the other central state institutions will be granted more authority and responsibility. Third, local governments will be strengthened. Fourth, efforts will be made to develop a technical capacity to increase

the participation of citizens and civil society organizations in the law-making processes. This will help TGNA to become an organ in which the will of the nation is represented at best, located at the center of the political system and use its checks and balances mechanisms. Fifth, civil society will be empowered by removing all obstacles in front of freedom of expression and association. It is stated that the party aims to build a Turkey that speaks, discusses, asks questions, and seeks its rights. Sixth, DEVA will work to restore trust in law and an independent judiciary.

DEVA officials expressed that they have completed a draft constitution of 74 articles but will first try to establish a social consensus (DEVA, 2021o). In this process, they will seek dialogue and consultation among all the political parties that oppose the presidential executive system, the civil society organizations and professional associations (DEVA, 2021p; DEVA, 2021r). According to the party, in the next elections, the political parties and presidential candidates that are on the side of a strengthened parliamentary system must make clear commitments regarding that they will not take advantage of the existing constitution, but rather they should guarantee a transition process towards a democratic parliamentary executive. In this sense, DEVA wants the duration, methodology and other details of this transition period should be clearly expressed by all the stakeholders (DEVA, 2021s).

4.6. The Future Party (GP)

The Future Party (GP) was founded on December 12, 2019, by Ahmet Davutoğlu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey between 2009 and 2014 and the Prime Minister between 2014 and 2016 (GP, n.d.). He was a close and loyal ally of President Erdoğan and they were defining their relationship as a friendship based on dedication to the common ideals (*dava arkadaşlığı*). While President Erdoğan called Davutoğlu as “my brother” (*kardeşim*) (Hürriyet, 2014). Davutoğlu stated that their friendship was so strong that it would last until his last breath, even when he was resigning from office. Further, Davutoğlu indicated that “No one has ever heard or will ever hear a negative word from me ... against our President ... Both as the President of the Republic of Turkey and as my colleague (*dava arkadaşı*), his honor is my honor, his family's honor is my family's honor” (Sözcü, 2016). However, as summarized in the previous chapters, Davutoğlu and Erdoğan disagreed specifically about the transition from a parliamentary to a presidential system. This disagreement resulted in Davutoğlu's resignation as the

Prime Minister on May 22, 2016, and from AKP on September 13, 2019. Then, he would later establish Future Party on December 12, 2019. The electorate represented by GP is unclear because the party has not yet entered into any elections since its establishment. Nonetheless, Davutoğlu's former positions and his role during the constitution-making process within AKP, as well as GP's common ground with this party, makes its current strong objections against the presidential executive system worth studying.

4.6.1. Criticisms of GP Regarding the Presidential Executive System

The deficiencies of the presidential executive system constitute an important theme in GP's discourse. In this manner, the party prepared a document (GP, 2020a)²⁷ that systematically demonstrates its stance on the current government system and their future suggestions written by constitutional law professors such as Prof. Ergun Özbudun and Prof. Serap Yazıcı. According to the document, which started the discussion by examining the 150 years of the constitutional history of Turkey, there are three basic mistakes coming from the past regarding how constitutions are written. The first mistake is the reactive nature of constitutions. It means that all constitutions were made in a rush to meet the conjunctural needs of the country instead of providing a general vision and principles. As a result, it became more difficult to accommodate these constitutions to the conditions when the conjunctures changed. The second mistake is the misleading political perception about the functions of constitutions not as a principal framework but as a definition of power relations. The third mistake is the domination of intra-elite negotiations in the constitution-making process. In this process, the public was not fully informed, and their participation was restricted. Furthermore, the extraordinary conditions after chaotic events such as military coups and coup attempts were used as an excuse to exclude the public from the constitutional discussions. These features were also valid for the recent constitution-making process. Here too, the longstanding problems waiting for a constitutional solution were ignored because the public discussions heavily focused on governmental system alternatives rather than democratic expectations. According to GP, the main deficiency of the current constitution is the lack of references to common social values regardless of political party affiliation, ideology, ethnicity, and religion. Thus, the output was an

²⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, all references about the strengthened parliamentary system are taken from this document.

authoritarian presidential executive system, which does not exist in the political science literature.

After the evaluations on the constitution-making process, the document explains the reasons for opposing the presidential executive system in three categories: “personalized executive”, “dysfunctional legislature,” and “dependent judiciary.” Starting with the executive, it is claimed that the President is given extreme powers that eliminate checks and balance mechanisms. The dual executive model was replaced with a monist executive understanding that depends on the will of a single individual. The powers of the presidential decrees and state of emergency decrees are specifically mentioned. GP states that there is almost no limitation of the subject of the regular presidential decrees. As it can be observed over the last two years of practice, the President has not shied away from taking steps to expand power in presidential decrees beyond what is specified in the constitution. 68 presidential decrees were issued from July 2018 until October 14, 2020. 40 of these decrees were enacted to amend the previous presidential decrees. This shows that [these] decrees were prepared in an extremely negligent manner. About the state of emergency decrees, what is worse than those decrees are equal to the laws and exempt from the Constitutional Court supervision. So, by declaring a state of emergency and then issuing decrees in every three months the president would be able to rule the country alone without any supervision.

In addition to all these criticisms, it is suggested that the decision-making process did not become faster and more efficient in this system, as promised by AKP. Expressing the economic problems experienced after the transition to the presidential executive system, Davutoğlu focuses on incompetence, frivolity, irresponsibility and lawlessness (GP, 2020b). The centralization of bureaucracy under the presidency, dismissing the role of the cabinet and making local governments more passive is the main reason for this situation. Davutoğlu emphasizes the inefficiencies of ministers by saying that “What is wanted in Turkey are low-profile ministers and state officials. What is wanted is one [person with a] high-profile under whom everybody should exist and work [so as to improve] for the prestige and image of that high-profile” (Sözcü, 2020b). He adds that there is a high level of competition rather than harmony and teamwork among ministers, and the aim of this competition is not to provide better service but to get credit from the President.

Secondly, GP claims that the new system has made the legislative weaker against the executive. Davutoğlu suggests that the partisan presidency and the two-years of presidential executive system moved the axis of politics away from the TGNA and carried it to Beştepe [the Presidential Palace]. The memory, experience, representation power and the will of the TGNA have been ignored. Davutoğlu emphasizes that “Today's Assembly is an assembly that is required to go to the elections with the dissolution decision of a single person, despite the will of 600 deputies elected by the nation. Today's Assembly is an assembly that has to be elected together with the President on the same day and therefore transfers its will to the President even before the elections. Today's Assembly is an assembly whose powers even to prepare the budget have been decreased in such a way that there is no similar example in the world. Today's Assembly is an assembly which is unable to supervise none of the cabinet ministers and top-level bureaucracy as well as unable to be part of their appointments” (GP, 2020c).

Thirdly, the judiciary is claimed to be instrumentalized and politicized by the executive. According to GP, it became dependent and passive after the switch to the new system. First of all, many practices that constitute an obstacle to the rule of law have occurred. HSK, which is expected to be an autonomous institution, is now directed by the President and the majority of the Parliament under the government system. It is also noted that civil society, media and academia have also weakened. The closure of the Istanbul Şehir University, which was established by Davutoğlu and a group of academics closer to him, is also criticized in this manner (GP, 2020a).

4.6.2. Solution of GP: Strengthened Parliamentary System Reinforced with Full Democracy

GP's primary objective is to remove the presidential executive system and construct a “strengthened parliamentary system reinforced with full democracy” (*tam demokrasi ile güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sistem*) (GP, 2020a).²⁸ The party highlights that they do not want to return to the days of gridlock, blockages, tutelage, instability and uncertainty in which representative democracy is undermined under the 1924, 1961 and 1982 constitutions.

²⁸ Unless otherwise indicated, all references about the strengthened parliamentary system are taken from this document.

The proposal of the strengthened parliamentary system reinforced with full democracy is based on a soft and balanced separation of powers. The most important change is that the executive branch consists of two parts: the President, the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister are all elected by the Parliament. The President shall have only symbolic powers as an impartial and irresponsible head of state. The presidential election procedure is regulated in detail to prevent it from turning into a crisis. On the other hand, the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister are endorsed with real administrative power. In the vote of confidence for the Council of Ministers, a simple majority would be sought, but in order to overthrow the government, a qualified majority would be sought.

The proposal puts an emphasis on the right to receive information and supervision of the TGNA as well as its function of representation. It is also stated that the practice of passing omnibus laws would be ended. Furthermore, radical changes in both the Political Parties Law and the Electoral Law are proposed. The party promises those measures which abolish democracy within political parties and lower the 10% electoral threshold.

Similar to other political parties, GP also focuses on the need for a separation of powers among the three main state institutions of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. Although no specific proposals are formulated, it is stated that measures will be taken to strengthen judicial independence.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis analyzed Turkey's transition to the presidential executive system from the perspective of opposition parties. Two main research questions were asked: Why do the opposition parties in Turkey object to the presidential executive system and insist on switching back to a strengthened parliamentary model? What are the reasons behind the agreement of these parties on this switchback despite the fact that they have diverse ideologies and opposing programs on several other issues? To that end, first, the historical background of the presidential executive system in Turkey is described by looking at the developments in both the pre-AKP and the AKP periods. Later the characteristics of the presidential executive system as well as the basic arguments of CHP, İyi Parti, HDP, SP, GP and DEVA are presented.

For the purposes of this thesis, the literature on the presidential executive system with its four main themes was used: (1) whether or not this system is compatible with the Turkish political history and political culture, (2) whether or not the political developments that led to the 2017 referendum had a positive or negative impact, (3) whether or not the principle of separation of powers functions (4) whether or not the new system would result in an efficient bureaucratic structure.

This study suggests that, similar to the polarization in the literature, political parties in Turkey are also divided into two camps: the supporters and the opponents of this system. The first constitutes the governing bloc of People's Alliance (AKP and MHP) and suggests that the presidential executive system is more compatible with Turkey's political history and culture. Furthermore, the new system is adopted as a result of the societal needs of Turkey in a fully democratic atmosphere and established a firm separation of powers and a quick and effective bureaucratic structure. This bloc also supports the idea that the presidential executive system will bring more political stability.

The second bloc, the Nation Alliance (CHP, İyi Parti and SP) and other opposition parties of HDP, DEVA and GP, argue that the presidential executive system caused or at least intensified a democratic and economic crisis in Turkey. This system is not compatible with the country's political history and culture and it is accepted under a non-democratic referendum. Furthermore, the principle of separation of powers is disregarded under the new system. Also, in contrast with AKP's proposals, it does not create a quick and efficient bureaucratic structure. Instead it caused a more complicated and inefficient public administration.

When the criticisms of the above-mentioned six political parties regarding the presidential executive system are analyzed, it is clearly seen that there is a consensus that the system does not work efficiently in Turkey and has to be changed. In this manner, it can be suggested that there are some overlaps with those themes emphasized in the literature and the reasons of the criticisms for the opposition parties. In addition to this overlap, it is also observed that economic backsliding is heavily emphasized by the political parties similar to those critical scholars who suggest that democratic backsliding will cause economic deterioration.

The criticisms of CHP almost entirely overlap with the critical literature's main arguments. The party is mainly concerned about Turkey's democratic survival under the presidential executive system. Following the line in the literature, CHP suggests that the presidential executive system is not compatible with Turkey's political history and culture. As the party established by the founding leader of the country Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, it sees parliamentary democracy as essential in Turkey. In this sense, the party does not want the experiences of the parliamentary system to be wiped away. Furthermore, CHP also does not consider this system to be compatible with the requirements of the 21st century. The party officials do not even use the term presidential executive system and prefer names such as one-man regime. The backbone of CHP's criticisms is about the separation of powers. As such, presidential decrees, partisan presidency and the inability of the legislature and the judiciary to control the executive are criticized at every opportunity. In addition, CHP also focuses on economic crises. As a solution to all these problems, the party promotes a strengthened parliamentary system.

İyi Parti is mainly concerned about Turkey's economic crisis which intensified after the presidential executive system. According to the party, Turkey's political

agenda must first focus on economic problems. Almost all of the criticisms of İyi Parti towards the new system are made within the framework of the economic difficulties that the country faces. This emphasis seems to be the basis of their discourse. This situation can be explained by İyi Parti's attempts to consolidate an electoral base for itself as wide as possible. In this regard, it is possible to suggest that uniting the people around economic problems would be an easier way to increase the voter base of İyi Parti. Although, for this party, the main focus is on economy, there are other criticisms mentioned from time to time. Among those criticisms of this new system, the one-man rule of the president is dominant. Similar to CHP, lack of separation of powers is seen as a problem. It is claimed that the system favours the executive: not only the legislature and the executive but also all other state institutions were made dependent on Erdoğan. It puts certain traditions and values such as accountability, transparency and consultation in danger. Inefficient bureaucratic structure is also heavily mentioned in İyi Parti's discourse against the presidential executive system. The party has proposed an improved and strengthened parliamentary system.

HDP's pro-Kurdish and left-wing ideology reflects itself in the party's critical discourse against the presidential executive system. First, HDP does not focus on Turkey's political culture or history. If the party somehow refers to the history of Turkey, this reference includes harsh criticisms for being ultra-nationalist, monist, standardizing and statist. It is claimed that these characteristics aimed to assimilate all different identities, first and foremost Kurds. The party frequently uses the concept of tolerance and cooperation. Second, HDP decisively suggests that the process prior to the constitutional transition is not democratic, particularly because of an operation to arrest HDP deputies, including the party leader Demirtaş. With such operations, HDP claims that the peoples' will was usurped, the party was criminalized, and it could not campaign efficiently. Even though similar to CHP and İyi Parti, HDP criticizes the lack of separation of powers in this new system, its reasons of critique are quite different. The party officials underline that the system aims to eliminate all democratic opposition forces, especially the Kurdish political movement. That is why the pressure on local governments increased after the switch to this system. In this context, specifically, the arrests of numerous HDP members and officials and the appointment of trustees are severely criticized. This makes HDP different from other political parties in terms of its opposition to the presidential executive system. Finally, HDP,

similar to İyi Parti, puts an emphasis on the system's deteriorating effect on the economy and the exploitation of all people, particularly the disadvantaged groups. In this regard, HDP proposes, pluralist parliamentary system reinforced with local democracy.

Minor parties that are analyzed in this thesis were SP, DEVA and GP. Starting from SP, it is observed that this party does not have a detailed proposal as well as specific criticisms as strong as the previously mentioned three parties. Occasionally, the party suggests that in principle they are not against presidentialism. It is pointed out that presidentialism may work in Turkey but not in its current form. This new system causes a degeneration in the bureaucracy. In this context, the principle of merit and waste are specifically mentioned. Similar to the other parties, SP also focuses on economic instabilities and the poverty of the people as a part of their system criticism. Unlike the other opposition parties, however, SP officials state that they do not insist on a return to the parliamentary system.

As a recently-established split-party, DEVA has two main criticisms for the presidential executive system. The first is the economic downturn. It seems as if the party uses the previous success of its leader Ali Babacan as its main distinguishing characteristic and strength. The second criticism is deterioration of justice. This is analyzed from a broader perspective of lack of separation of powers. In this new system, there is a high level of politicization of the judiciary which results in loss of both individual and collective rights and freedoms. Although the party completed its own constitutional proposal on strengthened parliamentary system, it also put an emphasis on the importance of consultation among political actors in Turkey.

Finally, GP, as another recently-established split party, also has a critical viewpoint against the presidential executive system. From the early days of the establishment of the party, Davutoğlu has gathered an academic team to study the problems of the current system as well as the party's own proposal. GP criticized the whole process of constitution-making from a historical perspective. Similar to all of the other parties, lack of separation of powers is presented as a main concern. In addition to that bureaucratic inefficiency is mentioned as a consequence of this system. This party also offers a strengthened parliamentary system reinforced with a full democracy as a solution.

When we look at the criticisms of opposition parties to the presidential executive system in Turkey, we see certain points of consensus among them. First of all, all parties agree that this system was adopted under undemocratic conditions. However, only for CHP, İyi Parti and HDP, this raises the question of the illegitimacy of the system. For SP, DEVA, and GP legitimacy issue is not mentioned.

The second point of consensus is about the necessity of switching back to a parliamentary system. Here it must be emphasized that for SP this is an option only as this party seems to be open to a different type of presidentialism as well. However, in any case, for all parties if the switch to a parliamentary system is realized it has to be a new version of the pre-2017 model.

The third point of consensus is about the lack of separation of powers which is a major problem. All parties heavily criticized the dominance of the president in this system which works to eliminate both the legislature and the judiciary.

The fourth point of consensus is about the solutions of parties, except for SP (which does not specifically insist on any executive model), they are all working on their proposals about a strengthened parliamentary system. These proposals are more or less similar. Parties are mostly focusing on a common framework of principles and they are open to cooperation and a consensual constitution-making. Since the position of SP within the Nation Alliance is not very clear as of 2021, this party may not take part in such a process for a new constitution. In addition, although HDP suggests a strengthened parliamentary system, it has a more different perspective. For this party, ethnic polarization and lack of local democracy are major concerns that require immediate solution. Unless they are addressed by other political parties, HDP will most probably not take part in any alliance in the foreseeable future.

The fifth consensus point is specifically about President Erdoğan. All parties point out that under this new system Erdoğan is given excessive executive powers which resulted in the emergence of a one-man regime characterized by a cult of personality. This situation increases polarization in the society and requires some kind of cooperation among the opposition parties.

As a final point, it has to be pointed out that although there is a general consensus among the opposition parties regarding the necessity of the new system to change, we see different reasons behind their criticisms. Among these reasons, we see ideological orientation and the voter base profile as the most dominant ones. In this

regard, their explanations, the points that they emphasize and their arguments show variations in an attempt to keep their voters intact and to differentiate themselves from other political parties. These unique and specific concerns of the opposition parties in Turkey regarding the presidential executive system may create certain problems in terms of the realization of their proposals for a parliamentary system. Although they are all against the current executive model, they may fail to come together and to realize a switch back to a parliamentary structure. This may also have a direct impact on the future of both the People Alliance and the Nation Alliance, to the advantage of the former. It can be suggested that the Nation Alliance, unless it succeeds to bring together all of the opposition parties may not realize the replacement of the presidential executive system with a strengthened parliamentary one. A major precondition for the opposition parties for such a replacement is to agree on certain compromises and sacrifices. They all have their red lines, however, if they continue to insist on these red lines and do not soften their attitudes, their criticisms are bound to remain only in rhetoric. Nevertheless, there also seems to be a tendency for these parties to be more in contact with each other based on their common opposition to the presidential executive system which may result in their taking more concrete steps before 2023 presidential elections.

REFERENCES

- AA. (2015, February 4). *Milli şef özentileri çıkmasın diye “başkanlık sistemi” diyoruz*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/politika/milli-sef-ozentileri-cikmasin-diye-baskanlik-sistemi-diyoruz/77842>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- AA. (2017, January 25). *Merhum liderler sistem değişikliğini savunmuştu*. [Online]. (Retrieved from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/merhum-liderler-sistem-degisikligini-savunmustu/734580>. (Access date: July 30, 2021).
- AA. (2020, January 30). *Akşener: Bizler siyaseti ‘seçmen velinimettir diye kabul edenlerdeniz*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200131192802/https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/politika/aksener-bizler-siyaseti-secmen-velinimettir-diye-kabul-edenlerdeniz/1719338>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- Ahmad, F. (1985). The transition to democracy in Turkey. *Third World Quarterly*, 7(2), 211-226.
- Akıncı, B. (2017). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sisteminin Olası Demokratik ve Ekonomik Etkileri. *Electronic Turkish Studies*, 12(24), 1-16. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies>.
- Akıncı, B. (2018). Türkiye’de Kamu Politikası Oluşturma Sürecinde Yeni Aktör: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Politika Kurulları. *OPUS Uluslararası Toplum Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 9(16), 2128-2146. <https://doi.org/10.26466/opus.491006>
- Ak Parti. (2017a). *Kararımız evet: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi*. Retrieved from: https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:M7UXt4_cpR8J:https://www.akpartidenizli.com/dosyalar/baslik/%25C2%25BB-cumhurbaskanligi-hukumet-sistemi-kitapcigi-compressed-pdf1587370002.07315.pdf+%&cd=1&hl=tr&ct=clnk&gl=tr. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

- Ak Parti. (2017b, February). *Türkiye Bülteni: kararımız evet*. Ak Parti Yayın Organı, 105. Retrieved from: <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:JJDaVCErkGIJ:https://www.akparti.org.tr/media/277954/2017-subat.pdf+&cd=4&hl=tr&ct=clnk&gl=tr>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- Akkoyun, T. (2018). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükûmet Sisteminin Tarihî Değeri. *Ombudsman Akademik*, 5(9), 181-201. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ombudsmanakademik/issue/43208/468612>
- Akkoyunlu, K. (2017). Electoral integrity in Turkey: From tutelary democracy to competitive authoritarianism. *Authoritarian Politics in Turkey: Elections, Resistance and the AKP*. London: IB Tauris, 47-63. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350985438.ch-003>
- Akman, E. (2019). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sisteminde Kamu Politikası Aktörleri. *Paradoks Ekonomi Sosyoloji ve Politika Dergisi*, 15(1), 35-54. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/paradoks/issue/44176/539304>
- Akşam. (2019, March 31). *Beka nedir? Beka sorunu ne anlama gelir?* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.aksam.com.tr/siyaset/beka-nedir-ne-demektir-beka-sorunu-nedir/haber-840096>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- Akyıldız, A. (2009). *Sened-i İttifak*. TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/sened-i-ittifak>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- Al, H. (2020). Başkanlık Sistemi Üzerine: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Sisteminin Zayıf Halkası Parlamento. *Bilgi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 22(1), 14-44. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/bilgisosyal/issue/55405/693195>
- AlJazeera Türk. (2015, March 25). *Erdoğan: Seçimle Gelenden Diktatör Olmaz*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/erdogan-secimle-gelenden-diktator-cikmaz>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- Alkan, H. (2018a). Kurumsalcı yaklaşım ışığında yeni siyasetin analizi: Cumhurbaşkanlığı sistemi. *Liberte Yayınları*.

- Alkan, H. (2018b). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Sisteminin Kurumsal Özellikleri ve Demokratikleşme Sürecine Olası Etkileri. *Türkiye İletişim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 139-153. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/turcom/article/461355>
- AYM. (2007, May 1). E.2007/45, K.2007/54 Sayılı Kararı. Retrieved from: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2007/05/20070503-14.htm>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- Arat, Z. F. K. (2020). Authoritarian Shifts and the Façade of Democracy in Turkey. *Journal for Human Rights/Zeitschrift für Menschenrechte*, 14(1).
- Aslan, A. (2015, April). Türkiye İçin Başkanlık Sistemi: Demokratikleşme, İstikrar, Kurumsallaşma. *SETA*.
- Aslan, A. (2018). The Need For Change in Turkey's Political System: Democratization, Stability, Institutionalism in Turkey's Presidential System: Model and Practices (eds. Miş, N. & Duran, B.). *SETA*.
- Akman, C. A. & Akçalı, P. (2017). Changing the system through instrumentalizing weak political institutions: the quest for a presidential system in Turkey in historical and comparative perspective. *Turkish Studies*, 18(4), 577-600. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2017.1347508>
- Atar, Y. (2019). Cumhurbaşkanlığı kararnamelerinin hukuki rejimi ve anayasallık denetimi. *Anayasa Mahkemesi 56. Kuruluş Sempozyumu*. 1-15. <http://openaccess.ihu.edu.tr/xmlui/handle/20.500.12154/768>
- Bardakçı, M. (2016). 2015 parliamentary elections in Turkey: demise and revival of AKP's single - party rule. *Turkish Studies*, 17(1), 4-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2015.1136084>
- Barlas, M. (1994). Turgut Özal'ın Anıları. *İstanbul: Sabah Kitapları*.
- Bayram, S. (2016, January). Türkiye'de Başkanlık Sistemi Tartışmaları: Algılar, Argümanlar ve Tezler. *SETA*.
- Bayülgen, O., Arbatlı, E., & Canbolat, S. (2018). Elite Survival Strategies and Authoritarian Reversal in Turkey. *Polity*, 50(3), 333-365. <https://doi.org/10.1086/698203>

- BBC. (2017a, April 5). *2010 Referandumı: 'Evet', 'Hayır' ve 'Boykot' cepheleri ne demişti?* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-39462061>. (Access date: August 8, 2020).
- BBC. (2017b, April 14). *Secular rally targets Turkish PM*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6554851.stm>. (Access date: August 11, 2021).
- BBC Türkçe. (2017c, October 25). *İyi Parti hakkında bilinmesi gerekenler*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-41750673>. (Access date: August 8, 2020).
- BBC Türkçe. (2017d, March 21). *Akşener: "Başkanlık sistemi çağdışı ve ucube"*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-39335688>. (Access date: August 11, 2021).
- Bila, F. (2016, November 16). *Ak Parti ve MHP açısından başkanlık*. Hürriyet. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/fikret-bila/ak-parti-ve-mhp-acisindan-baskanlik-40279969>. (Access date: August 11, 2021).
- Bilgin, H. D., & Erdoğan, E. (2018). Obscurities of a referendum foretold: the 2017 constitutional amendments in Turkey. *Review of Middle East Studies*, 52(1), 29-42. <https://doi.org/10.1017/rms.2018.9>
- BTI (Bertelsmann Transformation Index). (2020). *BTI 2020 Country Report: Turkey*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report-TUR-2020.html>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- Castaldo, A. (2018). Populism and competitive authoritarianism in Turkey. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 18(4), 467-487. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2018.1550948>
- CHP. (2017). *Anayasa Değişikliği Nasıl Anlatılmalı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <http://dijitalmecnua.chp.org.tr/PageMecnua.aspx?Mecnua=69#p=1>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).
- CHP. (2018a, March 10). *Tüzük*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

- CHP. (2018b). *Millet İçin Geliyoruz: Seçim Bildirgesi 2018*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/yayinlar/secim-bildirgeleri>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- CHP. (2018c, July 17). *CHP Genel Başkanı Kılıçdaroğlu TBMM CHP Grup Toplantısında Konuştu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskani-kemal-kilicdaroglu-tbmm-chp-grup-toplantisinda-konustu?q=cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20h%C3%BCk%C3%BCmet%20sistemi>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).
- CHP. (2019a, September 30). *CHP Genel Başkan Yardımcısı ve Parti Sözcüsü Faik Öztrak'ın Basın Toplantısı (30 Eylül 2019)*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskan-yardimcisi-ve-parti-sozcusu-faik-oztrakin-basin-toplantisi-30-eylul-2019> (Access date: August 6, 2021).
- CHP. (2019b, January 15). *Hiçbir Devlet 20 Milyar \$'lık Tank Parlet Fabrikasını Yabancılar Peşkeş Çekmez*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/yayinlar/dijital-mecmua>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).
- CHP. (2020a, December 29). *CHP Genel Başkan Yardım CHP Genel Başkan Yardımcısı Erkek: Adaletsizlik Pandemisi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskan-yardimcisi-erkek-adaletsizlik-pandemisi-yasiyoruz?q=cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20h%C3%BCk%C3%BCmet%20sistemi>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).
- CHP (2020b, June 3). *CHP Genel Başkanı Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu: Vatandaşımız İlk Seçimde İktidarı Demokrasiden Yana Olanlara Verecek*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskani-kemal-kilicdaroglu-vatandasimiz-ilk-secimde-iktidari-demokrasiden-yana-olanlara-verecek?q>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).
- CHP (2020c, December 31). *CHP Genel Başkan Yardımcısı Açıkladı: 2020, Türkiye'nin her alanda gerilediği bir fetret ve buhran yılı oldu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskan-yardimcisi-acikel-2020-turkiyenin-her-alanda-geriledigi-bir-fetret-ve-buhran-yili>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).
- CHP. (2020d, September 27). *CHP Genel Başkanı TBMM CHP Grup Toplantısında Konuştu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp>

[genel-baskani-kemal-kilicdaroglu-tbmm-chp-grup-toplantisinda-konustu-27-ekim-2020?q=cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20h%C3%BCK%C3%BCmet%20sistemi](https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskani-kemal-kilicdaroglu-tbmm-chp-grup-toplantisinda-konustu-27-ekim-2020?q=cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20h%C3%BCK%C3%BCmet%20sistemi). (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP. (2020e, November 30). *CHP 128 Milyar Dolarlık Satış İçin Araştırma İstedi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-128-milyar-dolarlik-satis-icin-arastirma-istedi>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP. (2020f, July 22). *CHP'den Tek(el)leşen Medyanın Raporu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chpden-tekellesen-medyanin-raporu>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP. (2020g July 21). *CHP Genel Başkanı Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, TBMM CHP Grup Toplantısında Konuştu (21 Temmuz 2020)*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskani-kemal-kilicdaroglu-tbmm-chp-grup-toplantisinda-konustu-21-temmuz-2020?q=cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1%20h%C3%BCK%C3%BCmet%20sistemi>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP. (2021a, June 28). *CHP Genel Başkan Yardımcısı Kuşoğlu: TBMM Yasama Gücünün, Millet İradesinin Tecelli Ettiği Yerdir*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-genel-baskan-yardimcisi-kusoglu-tbmm-yasama-gucunun-millet-iradesinin-tecelli-ettigi-yerdir>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP. (2021b, March 22). *CHP Sözcüsü Öztrak: “Milletin Başına ‘Damat Kadar’ Taş Düştü”*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-sozcusu-oztrak-milletin-basina-damat-kadar-tas-dustu>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP. (2021c, August 12). *CHP Grup Başkanvekili Özkoç: “RTÜK Recep Tayyip Üst Kurulu Haline Dönüştü”*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-grup-baskanvekili-ozkoc-rtuk-recep-tayyip-ust-kurulu-haline-donustu?q=rt%C3%BCK>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP. (2021d, June 30). *CHP Parti Meclisi, Güçlendirilmiş Parlamenter Sistem İlkelerini Belirledi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/chp-parti-meclisi-guclendirilmis-parlamenter-sistem-ilkelerini>.

[belirledi?q=g%C3%BC%C3%A7lendirilmi%C5%9F%20parlamenter%20si stem](#). (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP Bilim Platformu. (2020, January). *Saray Rejimi Türkiye'yi Geriletiyor: Endekslerde Dibe Savrulan Türkiye*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/yayinlar/bilim-platformu-yayinlari>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

CHP Bilim Platformu. (2021, March). *Kovid-19 Gölgesinde Derinleşen Buhran: Tehlikeye Atılan Hayatlar, Yoksulluğa Terk Edilen Vatandaşlar*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/yayinlar/bilim-platformu-yayinlari>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

Coşkun, C., & Yanar, E. (2020). Milli Görüş ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi: Süreklilikler ve Kopuşlar. *Bitlis Eren Üniversitesi İktisadi Ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Akademik İzdüşüm Dergisi*, 5(2), 266-280. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/beuüibfaid/issue/57509/792271>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

Cumhuriyet. (2017, July 9). *Kılıçdaroğlu Adalet Mitingi'nde yüzbinlere seslendi: Bu daha ilk adım!* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/kilicdaroglu-adalet-mitinginde-yuzbinlere-seslendi-bu-daha-ilk-adim-777348> (Access date: August 10, 2021).

Cumhuriyet. (2019, April 23). *Kılıçdaroğlu'ndan başkanlık sistemi eleştirisi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/kilicdaroglundan-baskanlik-sistemi-elestirisi-1359224>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

Cumhuriyet. (2021a, June 2). *Saadet Partisi Genel Başkanı Karamollaoğlu: İhtiyacımız hesaplaşma değil helalleşme*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/saadet-partisi-genel-baskani-karamollaoglu-ihtiyacimiz-hesaplasma-degil-helallesmeye-1841205>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

Cumhuriyet. (2021b, February 13). *Karamollaoğlu'ndan üçüncü ittifak açıklaması*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/karamollaoglundan-ucuncu-ittifak-aciklamasi-bu-olasilik-her-zaman-var-1813539>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

- Çağlıyan, Z. İ. (2015). Türkiye’de Başkanlık Sistemi Tartışmalarının Yakın Tarihi: Özal ve Demirel’in Siyasi Mülâhazaları. *Bilig*, (75) , 313-340. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/bilig/issue/25264/267050>
- Çınar, K. (2019). The Decline of Democracy in Turkey: A Comparative Study of Hegemonic Party Rule. *Routledge*.
- Çalışkan, K. (2018). Toward a new political regime in Turkey: From competitive toward full authoritarianism. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 58, 5-33. <https://doi.org/10.1017/npt.2018.10>
- Çolak, Ç. D. & Uzun, A. (2017). Türk Siyasal Hayatında Başkanlık Sistemini Gündeme Getiren Liderler: Türkeş, Demirel, Özal ve Erdoğan. *Journal of International Social Research*. 10(50), 196 - 214. <https://doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2017.1651>
- Demirel, T. (2017). Anayasa Değişiklik Teklifi Üzerine. *Liberal Düşünce Dergisi*, (85), 137-156. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/liberal/issue/48144/609009>
- Demirtaş, S. (2020, August 17). *Güçlendirilmiş Parlamenter Sistem nedir?* T24. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://t24.com.tr/yazarlar/selahattin-demirtas/guclendirilmis-parlamenter-sistem-nedir,27709> (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA (2020, March). *DEVA Partisi Parti Programı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/temel-metinler/parti-programi>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021a). *Sık Sorulan Sorular*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/sik-sorulan-sorular>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021b, February 4). *Ali Babacan: Yeni anayasa çağrısında bulunanlar önce mevcut anayasaya uysun*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacan-yeni-anayasa-cagrsnda-bulunanlar-once-mevcut-anayasaya-uysun>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021c, January 16). *Ali Babacan: Sayın Erdoğan her şey oldu ama cumhurbaşkanı olamadı*. [Online]. Retrieved from:

<https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacan-sayn-erdogan-her-sey-oldu-ama-cumhurbaskan-olamad>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

DEVA. (2021d, January 16). *Ali Babacan: Salgının bu noktaya gelmesinin sorumlusu saray yönetimidir*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacan-salginn-bu-noktaya-gelmesinin-sorumlusu-saray-yonetimidir#>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

DEVA. (2021e, July 1). *Danıştay'ın İstanbul Sözleşmesi'ni Fesheden Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kararının Yürütmesinin Durdurulması Hakkında Talebimizi Reddetmesi Hakkında Basın Toplantısı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://hukuk.devapartisi.org.tr/haber/dan%C4%B1%C5%9Ftay%C4%B1n-%CC%87istanbul-s%C3%B6zle%C5%9Fmesini-fesheden-cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1-karar%C4%B1n%C4%B1n-y%C3%BCr%C3%BCtmesinin-durdurulmas%C4%B1-talebimizi-reddetmesi-hakk%C4%B1nda-bas%C4%B1n-toplant%C4%B1s%C4%B1>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

DEVA. (2021f, March, 20). *Ali Babacan'dan Merkez Bankası ve İstanbul Sözleşmesi Kararlarına Tepki: Türkiye Karanlıkta Yönetiliyor*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacandan-merkez-bankas-ve-istanbul-sozlesmesi-kararlarna-tepki-turkiye-karanlkta-yonetiliyor>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

DEVA. (2021g, November, 19). *Türkiye Adaletsizliklerle Yönetilemez*. [Online] Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/turkiye-adaletsizliklerle-yonetilemez>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

DEVA. (2021h, April 1). *Anayasa Mahkemesinin Kapatılması Söylemleri Hakkında TBMM'de Basın Toplantısı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://hukuk.devapartisi.org.tr/haber/anayasa-mahkemesinin-kapat%C4%B1lmas%C4%B1-s%C3%B6ylemleri-hakk%C4%B1nda-tbmmde-bas%C4%B1n-toplant%C4%B1s%C4%B1>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

DEVA. (2021i, July 14). *Ali Babacan'dan 15 Temmuz Açıklaması*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacandan-15-temmuz-acklamas-binlerce-insann-direnisi-ucube-bir-sistem-icin-kullanld>. (Access date: July 25, 2021).

- DEVA. (2021j, July 24). *Ali Babacan'ın 24 Temmuz Basın Bayramı Mesajı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacann-24-temmuz-basn-bayram-mesaj>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021k, May 3). *Cumhurbaşkanlığı belediyeler üzerinde vesayet makamı oldu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://yerelyonetimler.devapartisi.org.tr/haber/deva-partisinden-dan%C4%B1%C5%9Ftay%C4%B1n-belediye-i%C5%9Ftiraklerine-ili%C5%9Fkin-karar%C4%B1na-tepki>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021l, June 20). *Üç yılda üç milyon vatandaşın fakirleşmesinin sebebi: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Sistemi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://ekonomi.devapartisi.org.tr/haber/üç-yılda-üç-milyon-vatandaşın-fakirleşmesinin-sebebi-cumhurbaşkanlığı-sistemi>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021m, April 5). *Esnafın 'Namusumla Battım' İsyanı ve DEVA Reçetesi!* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://sektorel.devapartisi.org.tr/haber/esnaf%C4%B1n-namusumla-batt%C4%B1m-i%C5%9Fyan%C4%B1-ve-deva-re%C3%A7etesi>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021n, January 18). *Mevcut kötü durumun sorumlusu Cumhurbaşkanıdır*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/mevcut-kotu-durumun-sorumlusu-cumhurbaskandr>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021, February 15). *Ali Babacan: 'Son genel seçimlerin kaybedeni Sayın Erdoğan'dır'*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacan-son-genel-secimlerin-kaybedeni-sayn-erdogandr>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021, January 28). *Ali Babacan: 'Güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sistem görüşmelerini başlattık, yeni dönemin kilit kelimeleri diyalog ve istişare'*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacan-guclendirilmis-parlamenter-sistem-gorushmelerini-baslattk-yeni-donemin-kilit-kelimeleri-diyalog-ve-istisare>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- DEVA. (2021r, May 10). *Ali Babacan: 'Muhalefetin güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sistem konusunda ortak bir vizyonu olmalı'*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacan-muhalefetin-guclendirilmis-parlamenter-sistem-konusunda-ortak-bir-vizyonu-olmal>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

- DEVA. (2021s, January 6). *Ali Babacan: ‘Cumhurbaşkanı adayının parlamenter sisteme geçiş taahhüdü vermesi lazım’*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://devapartisi.org/parti/e-arsiv/ali-babacan-cumhurbaskan-adaynn-parlamenter-sisteme-gecis-taahhodu-vermesi-lazm>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- Diken. (2019). *Asgari ücretten fazla: ‘Saray’ 2018’de dakikada 1794 lira harcamış*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.diken.com.tr/asgari-ucretten-fazla-saray-2018de-dakikada-1794-lira-harcamis/>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- Elgie, R. (2008). Semi-presidentialism: An increasingly common constitutional choice. *Institute of Political Science, Academia Sinica*.
- Ersay, S.O. (2013). Müesses Nizam’ın Ritüeli Olarak Cumhuriyet (Bayrak) Mitingleri ve MHP. *SETA*. Retrieved from: <https://www.setav.org/muesses-nizamin-ritueli-olarak-cumhuriyet-bayrak-mitingleri-ve-mhp/> (Access date: August 10, 2021).
- Esen, B. & Gümüşçü, Ş. (2016). Rising competitive authoritarianism in Turkey. *Third World Quarterly*, 37(9), 1581-1606. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1135732>
- Esen, B. & Gümüşçü, Ş. (2018a). Building a competitive authoritarian regime: State–business relations in the AKP’s Turkey. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 20(4), 349-372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19448953.2018.1385924>
- Esen, B. & Gümüşçü, Ş. (2018b). The Perils of “Turkish Presidentialism”. *Review of Middle East Studies*, 52(1), 43-53. <https://doi.org/10.1017/rms.2018.10>
- Efe, H., & Kotan, M. (2015). Türkiye’de Hükümet Sistemi Tartışmaları Çerçevesinde Başkanlık Sistemi Ve Türkiye’de Uygulanabilirliği. *Kafkas Üniversitesi İktisadi Ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 6(9), 65-94. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/180205>
- Fedai, R. (2018). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sisteminde Bakanlıkların İşlevi. *Türkiye’de Toplum, Yerleşim ve Yönetim Tartışmaları, KAYSEM*, 12, 470-477. [https://www.academia.edu/39904295/Cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%](https://www.academia.edu/39904295/Cumhurba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1%20Sistemi)

[C4%9F%C4%B1 H%C3%BCk%C3%BCmet Sisteminde Bakanl%C4%B1klar%C4%B1n %C4%B0%C5%9Flevi](#)

Fendoğlu, H. T. (2012). Başkanlık sistemi. *İnönü Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi*, 3(1), 39-60.

Fendoğlu, H.T. (2015). Anayasa Hukuku. *Yetkin Yayınları*.

Gazeteduvar. (2020, July 24). *Buldan: Yıkılması gereken AKP iktidarındır, İstanbul değil*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/politika/2020/07/24/buldan-yikilmasi-gereken-akp-iktidaridir-istanbul-degil>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

Gazeteduvar. (2021, July 17). *Yeni sistemin 3 yıllık bilançosu...Erdoğan:80, Meclis 80*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/yeni-sistemin-3-yillik-bilancosu-erdogan-80-meclis-80-haber-1528840>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

Geçim İttifakı. (n.d.). [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://gecimittifaki.com/>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

Gönenç, L. & Kontacı, A. E. (2019). 2017 Tarihli Anayasa Değişikliği Sonrasında Yasama-Yürütme İlişkileri. *Türkiye Barolar Birliği Dergisi*, 2019 (145), 53-79. <http://tbbdergisi.barobirlik.org.tr/m2019-145-1880>

Gözler, K. (2000). Türk Anayasa Hukuku. *Ekin Kitabevi*.

Gözler, K. (2006). Anayasa Hukuku. *Ekin Kitabevi*.

Gözler, K. (2016). Elveda kuvvetler ayrılığı, elveda Anayasa 10 Aralık 2016 tarihli Anayasa değişikliği teklifi hakkında bir eleştiri. *Ankara Barosu Dergisi*, (4), 25-36. <https://dergipark.org.tr/pub/abd/issue/33847/374813>

Gözler, K. (2017). *Referandum mu, plebisit mi*. Türk Anayasa Hukuku Sitesi, 1-19. <https://www.anayasa.gen.tr/plebisit.htm>

Gözler, K. (2017b). Referandumdan Önce, Referandumdan Sonra. *Ekin Yayınları*.

- GP. (n.d.). *Genel Başkan*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://gelecekkpartisi.org.tr/ozgecmis/ahmet-davutoglu>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- GP. (2020a, April 17). *Siyasal Sistemde Gelecek Modeli: Tam Demokrasi İçin Güçlendirilmiş Parlamenter Sistem*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://gelecekkpartisi.org.tr/duyuru/siyasal-sistemde-gelecek-modeli-tam-demokrasi-icin-guclendirilmis-parlamenter-sistem>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- GP. (2020b, August 9). *Ahmet Davutoğlu: “Bu İktidarın Elinde Ehliyet, Liyakat, Emek, Eğitim, Siyasi Ahlak ve En Sonunda Türk Lirası Değersizleşti.”*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://gelecekkpartisi.org.tr/duyuru/ahmet-davutoglu-bu-iktidar-in-elinde-ehliyet-liyakat-emek-egitim-siyasi-ahlak-ve-en-sonunda-turk-lirasi-degersizlesti>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- GP. (2020c, April 20). *Gelecek Partisi Genel Başkanı Sn. Ahmet Davutoğlu’nun 20 Nisan Haftalık Değerlendirme Toplantısı Açıklama Metni*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://gelecekkpartisi.org.tr/duyuru/gelecek-partisi-genel-baskani-sn-ahmet-davutoglunun-20-nisan-haftalik-degerlendirme-toplantisi-aciklama-metni>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- Grigoriadis, I. N. (2016). The Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) and the 2015 elections. *Turkish Studies*, 17(1), 39-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2015.1136086>
- Gül, H. (2018). The Presidential Government System: New Model of Government in Turkey. *Social Sciences Researches in the Globalizing World*, 24.
- Gülener, S. & Miş, N. (2017). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Sistemi: Analiz. *SETA*. Şubat 2017. Sayı 190.
- Güzelsarı, S. (2019). Neoliberal Otoriterleşme, Devletin Şirketleşmesi ya da Şirket-Devlet: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi. *Ayrıntı Dergi*. 29, 39-50. <https://ayrintidergi.com.tr/neoliberal-otoriterlesme-devletin-sirketlesmesi-ya-da-sirket-devlet-cumhurbaskanligi-hukumet-sistemi/>
- Habertürk. (2021a, August, 8). *Son dakika... CHP Genel Başkanı Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu’ndan önemli açıklamalar*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.haberturk.com/son-dakikachp-genel-baskani-kemal->

[kilicdaroglu-ndan-onemli-aciklamalar-3155138](#). (Access date: August 7, 2021).

Habertürk. (2021b, July 30). *Saadet Partisi Genel Başkanı Temel Karamollaoğlu Habertürk TV'de soruları yanıtladı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.haberturk.com/saadet-partisi-genel-baskani-temel-karamollaoglu-haberturk-tv-de-sorulari-yanitladi-3148420>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

HDP. (2014, June 22). *Parti Tüzüğü*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/parti-tuzugu/10/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).

HDP. (2015, March 17). *Demirtaş: Erdoğan seni başkan yaptırmayacağız*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/demirtas-erdogan-seni-baskan-yaptirmayacagiz/5981/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).

HDP. (2017a) *Referandum materyalleri*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/referandum-2017/10062/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).

HDP. (2017b). *8 Mart El Broşürü*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/8-mart/10134/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).

HDP. (2018a, June 29). *24 Haziran 2018 Cumhurbaşkanlığı ve Milletvekili Seçim Sürecinde Yaşanan Hak İhlalleri*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/24-haziran-secim-ihlalleri-raporumuz/12219/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).

HDP. (2018b). *24 Haziran 2018 Seçim Bildirgesi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/24-haziran-secimleri-materyalleri/11967/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).

HDP. (2018d). *Demirtaş'ın Mektubu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xd_mqJF3QYecIhpM8TySYpUbec5TZ1iX/view. (Access date: August 12, 2021).

HDP. (2019a, July 2). *Temelli: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi ile Türkiye'nin yol alması mümkün değil*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/temelli-cumhurbaskanligi-hukumet-sistemi-ile-turkiyenin-yol-almasi-mumkun-degil/13291/> (Access date: August 8, 2021).

- HDP. (2019b, September 22). *Haftalık Ekonomi Bülteni*. Sayı: 67. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/ekonomi-bulteni/12355/> (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- HDP. (2020a, November 10). *Sancar: Sistem çökerken asıl sahipleri bunun altında kalacak*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/sancar-sistem-cokerken-asil-sahipleri-bunun-altinda-kalacak/14811/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- HDP. (2020b). *2020 Hak İhlalleri Raporu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://hdp.org.tr/tr/2020-hak-ihlalleri-raporumuz/14894/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- HDP. (2020c, April 6). *Covid-19 Pandemisi Döneminde Ekonomide Gelişmeler Bülteni*, (1).
- HDP. (2021, March 25). *İstanbul Sözleşmesi'nin feshedilmesine ilişkin genel görüşme talebimiz*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/istanbul-sozlesmesinin-feshedilmesine-iliskin-genel-gorusme-talebimiz/15237/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- Heper, M. & Cinar, M. (1996). Parliamentary government with a strong president: The post-1989 Turkish experience. *Political Science Quarterly*. 111(3), 483-503. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2151972>
- Hürriyet. (2007, April 29). *Genelkurmaydan çok sert açıklama*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/genelkurmaydan-cok-sert-aciklama-6420961>. (Access date: August 10, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2014a, August 30). *Bu da bir ilk*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/bu-da-bir-ilk-27106361>. (Access date: August 10, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2014b, December 12). *Gölge kabine tartışması*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/golge-kabine-tartismasi-27757166>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2014c, August 21). *Erdoğan: Genel Başkan adayımız Ahmet Davutoğlu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/erdogan->

[genel-baskan-adayimiz-ahmet-davutoglu-27049344](#). (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2015a, November 12). *Seçim bitti siyasette yeni gündem yeni anayasa*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/secim-bitti-siyasette-yeni-gundem-yeni-anayasa-40009063>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2015b, May 5). *HDP'den YSK'ya Erdoğan Başvurusu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/hdpden-yskya-erdogan-basvurusu-28923737>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2015c, May 8). *Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Kenarda beklemem elbette düşünülemezdi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-kenarda-beklemem-elbette-dusunulemezdi-28949474>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2015d, February 21). *Erdoğan'dan önemli açıklamalar*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/erdogandan-onemli-aciklamalar-28262129>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2015e, May 1). *10 Ağustos'ta çöktü*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/10-agustos-ta-coktu-28885863>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2015f, May 28). *Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan, Türkiye Otobüsçüler Federasyonu Genel Kurulu'na katıldı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-turkiye-otobusculer-federasyonu-genel-kuruluna-katildi-29129131>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2015g, December 23). *Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan muhtarlar toplantısında konuştu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-muhtarlar-toplantisinda-konustu-40030972>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

Hürriyet. (2016a, October, 22). *Ak Parti'de başkanlık için 3 model 6 formül*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/ak-partide-baskanlik-icin-3-model-6-formul-40255659>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).

- Hürriyet. (2016b, January 29). *Türk tipi anayasa modeli: Millet hazır*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/turk-tipi-anayasa-modeli-millet-hazir-40046600>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2016c, May 11). *Cumhurbaşkanlığı sistemi diyeceğiz*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskanligi-sistemi-diyecegiz-40102394>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2016d, January 6). *Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan 18'inci kez muhtarlara seslendi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-18inci-kez-muhtarlara-seslendi-40036864>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2016e, June 1). *Cumhurbaşkanı Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: Başkanlık sistemini ben daha çok gündeme getirdim*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-recep-tayyip-erdogan-baskanlik-sistemini-ben-daha-cok-gundeme-getirdim-29162578>. (Access date: 6 February 2021).
- Hürriyet. (2017a, March 16). *Bakan Zeybekçi: 16 Nisan kurtuluş savaşıdır*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/bakan-zeybekci-16-nisan-kurtulus-savasidir-40397494>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2017b, March 19). *Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Maskeli balo sona erdi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogandan-referandum-mesajlari-40400147>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2017c, February 25). *AK Parti'nin referandum kampanyası başlıyor*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ak-partinin-referandum-kampanyasi-basliyor-3-40377417>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2017d, March 20). *Bakan Yılmaz: Halkımız istikrarın tadını aldı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/baskan-yilmaz-halkimiz-istikrarin-tadini-aldi-40401085>. (Access date: August 13, 2020).
- Hürriyet. (2017e, February 18). *Erdoğan: 1923'te ilan ettiğimiz cumhuriyeti ilelebet koruyacağız*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/erdogan-1923te-ilan-ettigimiz>

[cumhuriyeti-ilelebet-koruyacagiz-40369846](#). (Access date: 6 February 2021).

Hürriyet. (2017f, February 17). *Erdoğan Kahramanmaraş'ta konuşuyor*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/erdogan-kahramanmarasta-konusuyor-40369112>. (Access date: 6 February 2021).

Hürriyet. (2017g, April 29). *Erdoğan, ziyareti öncesinde Hint televizyonuna konuştu*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/erdogan-ziyareti-oncesinde-hint-televizyonuna-konustu-40442537>. (Access date: 6 February 2021).

Hürriyet Daily News. (2017, June 16). *If you march, you should march against coups: PM Yıldırım tells CHP head*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyetaailynews.com/if-you-march-you-should-march-against-coups-pm-yildirim-tells-chp-head-114402> (Access date: August 6, 2021).

Independent Türkçe (2019, May 8). *367 fikrini o ortaya atmıştı... Sabih Kanadoğlu: Gül travmayı atlatamamış, Bahçeli'ye sadece gülüyorum*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.indyturk.com/node/29086/haber/367-fikrini-o-ortaya-atm%C4%B1%C5%9Ft%C4%B1-sabih-kanado%C4%9Flu-g%C3%BCl-travmay%C4%B1-atlatamam%C4%B1%C5%9Fbah%C3%A7eliye>. (Access date: August 10, 2021).

Independent Türkçe. (2020, December 30). *Karamollaoğlu'ndan kadın cinayetlerine tepki: Tahammül edilemez bir hal aldı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.indyturk.com/node/292901/siyaset/karamollao%C4%9Flundan-kad%C4%B1n-cinayetlerine-tepki-tahamm%C3%BCl-edilemez-bir-hal-ald%C4%B1>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

İyi Parti. (2018). *İyi Parti Tüzüğü*. [Online]. Retrieved from: https://www.iyipartiantalya.org.tr/index.php?pg=merkez_tuzuk. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

İyi Parti. (2021a, May 18). *Esnafın, çiftçinin, emeklinin Meral ablası var*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://iyiparti.org.tr/esnafin-ciftcinin-emeklinin-meral-ablasi-var>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).

- İyi Parti. (2021b). *İyileştirilmiş ve Güçlendirilmiş Parlamenter Sistem*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://iyiparti.org.tr/iyilestirilmis-ve-guclendirilmis-parlamenter-sistem>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- İyi Parti. (2021c, July 7). *Türkiye’yi fiber ağlarla öreceğiz*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://iyiparti.org.tr/turkiyeyi-fiber-aglarla-orecegiz>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- İyi Parti. (2021e, April 6). *Evlatlarımızın çaresizliğini konuşmaya devam edeceğiz*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://iyiparti.org.tr/evlatlarimizin-caresizligini-konusmaya-devam-edecemiz>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- İyi Parti. (2021f, June 9). *İnsanın gıdası tarım, tarımın gıdası sudur*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://iyiparti.org.tr/insanin-gidasi-tarim-tarimin-gidasi-sudur>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- Kaboğlu, İ. (2016). *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasasında Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun Teklifi (10 Aralık 2016)*. Ankara Barosu Dergisi.
- Kaboğlu, İ. (2017). *Yasama Yetkisi Devredilemez (27. Yasama Dönemi Uygulaması: Temmuz 2018 - Aralık 2019)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.chp.org.tr/haberler/prof-dr-ibrahim-kaboglundan-yasama-yetkisi-devredilemez-raporu>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- Kahraman, M. (2012). Hükümet Sistemi Tartışmaları Bağlamında Başkanlık Ya Da Yarı-Başkanlık Sistemlerinin Türkiye’de Uygulanabilirliği. *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 9(18), 431-457. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/mkusbed/issue/19552/208345>
- Kalaycıoğlu, E. (2014). The Challenge of à la Turca Presidentialism in Turkey. *İstanbul: İstanbul Policy Center*. https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/gte_c_18.pdf
- Kamer, H. (2018, February 11). *HEP’ten HDP’ye 30 yılda neler yaşandı?* BBC Türkçe. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-43019313>. (Access date: August 11, 2021).
- Karaca, B. Y. (2020). *Turkey's struggle with democracy: bemergent non-democratic regime in the twenty-first century* (Doctoral dissertation, Sabancı University, İstanbul, Turkey). Retrieved from:

http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/41251/1/10252622_Karaca_Basak_Yagmur.pdf

Karamollaoglu, T. @T_Karamollaoglu. (2019, June 27). *Bugün Türkiye'nin içine düştüğü durumun sorumlusu ister kabul etsin ister etmesin bizzat Cumhurbaşkanı'nın kendisidir.* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/T_Karamollaoglu/status/1144317702170972160?s=20. (Access date: August 11,2021).

Karatepe, Ş. & Altunok, H. (2019). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Politika Kurulları Kamu Politikasının Yeni Aktör ve Süreçleri. *Ankara: Püf Yayıncılık*.

Kaya, Z. N. & Whiting, M. (2019). The HDP, the AKP and the Battle for Turkish Democracy. *Ethnopolitics*, 18(1), 92-106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449057.2018.1525168>

Keskinsoy, Ö., S, Kaya, S. B., & Temel, M. (2020). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kararnamesi. *AÜSBF Dergisi*, 1-34. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ausbf/issue/58271/693306>

Kuzu, B. (1987). Anayasa hukukumuzda yürütme organının düzenleyici işlem yapma yetkisi ve güçlendirilmesi eğilimi. *Filiz Kitabevi*.

Kuzu, B. (1992). Yeni Bir Anayasaya Doğru. *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, 47 (3), 215-235.

Kuzu, B. (2011). Her yönü ile başkanlık sistemi. *Babiali Kültür Yayıncılığı*.

Levitsky, S. & Way, L. A. (2010). Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War. *Cambridge University Press*.

Mercimek, Ş. (2018). Bürokratik Vesayet Anlayışına Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi'nin Etkisi. *Uluslararası Batı Karadeniz Sosyal Ve Beşeri Bilimler Dergisi*, 2(2), 131-149. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/611243>

MHP. (2007, October 4). *Genel Başkanımız Sayın Dr. Devlet Bahçeli'nin 21 Ekim 2007 Tarihinde Yapılacak Olan Cumhurbaşkanlığı Referandum Süreci Hakkında Yaptığı Yazılı Basın Açıklaması*. [Online]. Retrieved from:

https://www.mhp.org.tr/htmldocs/genel_baskan/konusma/55/index.html

(Access date: August 7, 2021).

Milliyet. (2021, July 8). *Akşener'den zamlara tepki: İlk seçimde tıpış tıpış gideceksin.* [Online]. Retrieved from:

<https://www.milliyet.com.tr/siyaset/aksenerden-zamlara-tepki-ilk-secimde-tipis-tipis-gideceksin-6548035>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

Miş, N., & Duran, B. (Eds.). (2018). Turkey's Presidential System: Model and Practices. *SETA*.

Mumcu, A. (1994). *Divan-ı Hümayun*. TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi. Retrieved from: <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/divan-i-humayun> (Access date: August 8, 2021).

Nacak, O. (2020). Parlamenter Ve Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemlerinden Hareketle Bakan Ve Bakanlıkların Karşılaştırmalı Analizi. *Yönetim Ve Ekonomi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 18(1), 138-157. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/1013628>

NTV. (2019, April 27). *Siyasette özgül ağırlığı en yüksek parti Saadet Partisi'dir.* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/siyasette-ozgul-agirligi-en-yuksek-parti-saadet-partisidir,5dUKW5Hm-EKFtasiRcYCuQ>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

OdaTV. (2019, March 7). “Ak Parti şeklen Müslüman”. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://odatv4.com/guncel/ak-parti-seklen-musliman-07031951-157179>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Osmanbaşoğlu, G. K. (2018). Türkiye’de Cumhurbaşkanlığı Sistemi: Bir “Siyasal İnovasyon” Olabilir mi? *Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 20(3), 578-599. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ahbvuibfd/issue/42923/519206>

Osmanbaşoğlu, G.K. & Bekaroğlu, E.A. (2019). Türkiye’de Referandumlar. *Orion Kitabevi*.

Öner, Ş. (2020). Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi: Merkez-Yerel İlişkilerinde Kurumsal Değişim ve Dönüşüm. *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 19(75), 1335-1353. <https://doi.org/10.17755/esosder.625959>

Özbudun, E. (1992). 1921 Anayasası. *Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi*.

Özbudun, E. (2014). Türk Anayasa Hukuku. *Yetkin Yayınları*.

Özdemir, G. (2018). Türk Siyasi Kültürü Bağlamında Hükümet Sistemlerine İlişkin Bir Değerlendirme. *Oğuz-Türkmen Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(2), 45-86. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/608062>

Petersen, F., & Yanaşmayan, Z. (Eds.). (2020). The Failure of Popular Constitution Making in Turkey: Regressing Towards Constitutional Autocracy. *Cambridge University Press*.

PolitikYol. (2021, July 9). *Meral Akşener PolitikYol'a konuştu: "Türkiye bu sistemi, bırakın 2023'ü bu haftanın sonuna kadar bile taşıyamaz"*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.politikyol.com/meral-aksener-politikyola-konustu-turkiye-bu-sistemi-birakin-2023u-bu-hafta-sonuna-kadar-bile-tasiyamaz/>. (Access date: August 8, 2021)

Robert, E. (2011). 'Semi-Presidentialism' in Semi-Presidentialism and Democracy. *Palgrave Macmillan, London*. 1-20.

Sabah. (2011, June 6). *Erdoğan: Gönümde başkanlık sistemi var*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2011/06/06/erdogan-gonlumde-baskanlik-sistemi-var>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Selçuk, S. (2017). *16 Nisan 2017 Halkoylamasına İlişkin Bilimsel Görüş*. Ankara: CHP Bilim, Yönetim, Kültür Platformu Başkanlığı Dijital Yayınları. Retrieved from: <https://chp.org.tr/yayinlar/dijital-mecmua>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

Selvi, A. (2016, May 25). *Yeni Dönemin Yeni Yol Haritası*. Hürriyet. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/abdulkadir-selvi/yeni-donemin-yol-haritasi-40109069>. (Access date: August 6, 2021).

Sobacı, M. Z. Miş, N. & Köseoğlu, Ö. (2018). Türkiye'nin Yeni Yönetim Modeli ve Cumhurbaşkanlığı Teşkilatı. *SETA Perspektif*.

Solaker, G. & Butler, D. (2017). *Turkish MPs elect judicial board under new Erdogan constitution*. Reuters. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-politics-idUSKCN18D0T9>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Sözcü. (2016, May 5). *Başbakan Davutoğlu veda etti*. [Online] Retrived from: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2016/gundem/akp-myksi-sonrasi-davutoglundun-aciklamasi-1217259/>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Sözcü. (2017) *Erdoğan Bursa'da*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.sozcu.com.tr/2017/gundem/erdogan-bursada-1776600/>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Sözcü. (2020a, August 6). *İyi Parti Başkanlık Divanı ekonomideki olumsuz gelişmeler üzerine olağansüti toplandı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/iyi-parti-baskanlik-divani-ekonomideki-olumsuz-gelismeler-uzerine-olaganustu-toplandi-5974086/?utm_source=dahafazla_haber&utm_medium=free&utm_campaign=dahafazlahaber. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Sözcü. (2020b April, 13). *Ahmet Davutoğlu: Türkiye'de düşük profilli bakanlar isteniyor*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/ahmet-davutoglu-turkiyede-dusuk-profilli-bakanlar-isteniyor-5745145/>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Sözcü. (2021a, April 3). *Karamollaoğlu: 'Geçim İttifakı' kurmakta kararlıyız*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2021/gundem/karamollaoglu-gecim-ittifaki-kurmakta-kararliyiz-6351417/>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Sözcü. (2021b, January 14). *Bu sistem Türkiye'yi taşıyamaz, değişmeli*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2021/gundem/bu-sistem-turkiyeyi-tasiyamaz-degismeli-6210477/>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

Sözen, Y. (2019). Competition in a populist authoritarian regime: the June 2018 dual elections in Turkey. *South European Society and Politics*. 24(3), 287-315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2019.1688515>

SP. @Saadet Partisi (2019a, March 15). @T_Karamollaoğlu: “Biz Milli Görüşçüyüz. Milli Görüş, bu dünyanın ve bu ülkenin yaşanabilir olması için sağlam

prensipleri olan bir görüştür". [Tweet]. Twitter. Retrieved from: <https://mobile.twitter.com/SaadetPartisi/status/1106623545407352835>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. @Saadet Partisi (2019b, June 18). "*İhtişam güç ifade etmez. Osmanlı'ya bakarsak bunu net olarak görürüz. Küçük odalarda dünyaya hükmediyordu ama saraylara geçince yıkıldı*". [Tweet]. Twitter. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/SaadetPartisi/status/1140867879757389824?s=20>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. (2018). *Türkiye Vizyonu: Seçim Beyannamesi*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. (2019, November 3). *Parti Programı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/parti-programi>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. (2020a, June 3). *Cumhurbaşkanlığı Sistemi Yeniden Düzenlenmelidir*. [Online]. Retrieved from <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5ed7538a98c11/cumhurbaskanligi-hukومت-sistemi-yeniden-duzenlenmelidir>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. (2020b June 3). *Baraj Eşit Bir Yarışa da Engel Oluyor*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5ed7538f38c55/baraj-esit-bir-yarisa-da-engel-oluyor>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. (2020c, December 12). *2021 Reform Yılı Olmalı*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5fec7e58805f9/2021-reform-yili-olmali>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. (2020d, November 11). *Türkiye Yönetilemiyor!* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5fabe2d7e3812/%20%EF%BF%BDturkiye%20-yonetilemiyor>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).

SP. (2020e, June 3). *Problemlerin Çözümü Saadet Partisi'nde*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5ed753c815373/problemlerin-cozumu-saadet-partisi%20nde>. (Access date: July 30, 2021).

SP. (2020f, October 15). *Adaletin Işığı Sürüyor*. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5f885704dbe31/adaletin-isigi-sonuyor> (Access date: July 30, 2021).

- SP. (2020g, June 3). *Vatandaş İlk Defa Cumhurbaşkanı'na Hayır Dedi!* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5ed753996ada1/vatandas-ilk-defa-cumhurbaskani%20na-hayir-dedi>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- SP. (2020h, June 3). *Yolsuzluk ve İsrafin Yerini Bilinçli Soygun Aldı.* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5ed7536958b16/yolsuzluk-ve-israfin-yerini-bilincli-soygun-aldi>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- SP. (2020i, June 3). *Cumhurbaşkanı Parti Başkanı Olmamalıdır.* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://saadet.org.tr/tr/haber/5ed753939032a/cumhurbaskani-parti-baskani-olmamalidir>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- SP. (2021a, March 22). *Türkiye'nin İstanbul Sözleşmesi'nden çekilmesini olumlu buluyoruz.* [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmTjadzORCY>. (Access date: August 13, 2021).
- T24. (2015, March 7). *Erdoğan: 400 milletvekini verin ve bu iş huzur içinde çözülsün.* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://t24.com.tr/haber/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-gaziantep-te-konusuyor,289627>. (Access date: August 12, 2021).
- T24. (2019a, July 18). *Temelli: Türkiye gelecek 4 yıl birçok değişime hazır.* Retrieved from: <https://t24.com.tr/haber/temelli-4-yil-boyle-gitmeyecek-turkiye-nin-yeni-bir-anayasaya-ihtiyaci-var,831148>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- T24. (2019b, July 18). *Türkiye gelecek 4 yıl birçok değişime hazır.* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://t24.com.tr/haber/temelli-4-yil-boyle-gitmeyecek-turkiye-nin-yeni-bir-anayasaya-ihtiyaci-var,831148> (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- T24. (2020, November 9). *HDP'den Berat Albayrak Tepkisi: Erdoğan ve kabinesinin ülkeye yapabileceği tek iyilik istifa etmektir.* [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://t24.com.tr/haber/hdp-den-berat-albayrak-tepkisi-erdogan-ve-kabinesinin-ulkeye-yapabilecegi-tek-iyilik-istifa-etmektir,913856>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- Tanör, B. (1996). *Osmanlı-Türk anayasal gelişmeleri (1789-1980).* Afa Yayınları.
- TBB. (2017). *Anayasa Değişikliği Teklifinin Karşılaştırmalı ve Açıklamalı Metni.* [Online]. Retrieved from:

http://anayasadegisikligi.barobirlik.org.tr/Anayasa_Degisikligi.aspx.

(Access date: August 8, 2021).

Tombuş, E. (2020). The people and its embodiment: Authoritarian Foundations of Constitutions in The Failure of Popular Constitution Making in Turkey. *Cambridge*.

Turan, M. (2018). Türkiye'nin Yeni Yönetim Düzeni: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi. *Sosyal Bilimler Araştırma Dergisi*, 7(3), 42-91. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/524784>

Türkeş, A. (1979). Dokuz ışıık ve Türkiye. *Emel Matbaacılık*.

T.C. Resmi Gazete. (2007). 5678 sayılı Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasasının Bazı Maddelerinde Değişiklik Yapılması Hakkında Kanun. Retrieved from: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2007/06/20070616-1.htm>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

T.C. Resmi Gazete. (2010). 5982 sayılı Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasasının Bazı Maddelerinde Değişiklik Yapılması Hakkında Kanun. Retrieved from: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/05/20100513-1.htm>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

T.C. Resmi Gazete. (2017). 6771 sayılı Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasasının Bazı Maddelerinde Değişiklik Yapılması Hakkında Kanun. Retrieved from: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2017/02/20170211-1.htm>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

T.C. Resmi Gazete. (2018). 1 no.'lu Cumhurbaşkanlığı Teşkilatı Hakkında Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kararnamesi. Retrieved from: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2018/07/20180710.htm>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

White, D. & Herzog, M. (2016). Examining state capacity in the context of electoral authoritarianism, regime formation and consolidation in Russia and Turkey. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 16(4), 551-569. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2016.1242891>

Yamaç, M. (2014). İlk Anayasa (1876 Kanun-i Esasisi). *Balkan Journal of Social Sciences*. 3(5), 54-68.

<http://acikerisim.nku.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/20.500.11776/1676/67-133-1-SM.pdf?sequence=1>

Yazıcı, S. (2017). Başkanlık ve Yarı-Başkanlık Sistemleri Türkiye İçin Bir Değerlendirme, *İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları*.

Yılmaz, D., Özyıldırım, İ., Ünüvar, Ü., Kutlu, L., & Fincancı, Ş.K. (2014). *Türkiye’de İşkencenin 22 Yılı: Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı Tedavi ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezleri 1991-2012 Yılları Arasındaki Başvuruların Değerlendirilmesi*. Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı Yayınları. <https://tihv.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2000-Tedavi-ve-Rehabilitasyon-Merkezleri-Raporu.pdf>

Yılmaz, İ., Caman, M.E. & Bashirov, G. (2020). How an Islamist party managed to legitimate its authoritarianization in the eyes of the secularist opposition: the case of Turkey. *Democratization*. 27(2), 265-282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2019.1679772>

Yılmaz, Z. (2018). Yaklaşan Haziran Seçimleri (I): Bir Sorun ve Çözüm Olarak Muhalefet. *Birikim Güncel*. <https://birikimdergisi.com/guncel/8915/yaklasan-haziran-secimleri-i-bir-sorun-ve-cozum-olarak-muhalefet>

Yılmaz, Z. & Turner, B. S. (2019). Turkey’s deepening authoritarianism and the fall of electoral democracy. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 46(5), 691-698. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2019.1642662>

Yılmaz, Z. (2020). Erdoğan’s presidential regime and strategic legalism: Turkish democracy in the twilight zone. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 20(2), 265-287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2020.1745418>

YSK. (1961). 9 Temmuz 1961 Anayasa Değişikliği Halk Oylaması Sonucu. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/halkoylamasi-arsivi/2648>. (Access date: August 1, 2021).

YSK. (1982). 7 Kasım 1982 Anayasa Değişikliği Halk Oylaması Sonucu. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/halkoylamasi-arsivi/2648>. (Access date: August 1, 2021).

- YSK. (2007). *2007/873 tarihli halkoylaması sonuçları*. Retrieved from: <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2007/10/20071031-16.htm>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- YSK. (2014). *2014/3719 sayılı kesin seçim sonuçlarına ilişkin karar*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/onikinci-cumhurbaskani-secimi/3456>. (Access date: August 5, 2020).
- YSK. (2015a). *2015/1415 sayılı kararı*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/7-haziran-2015--25-donem-milletvekili-genel-secimi/3304>. (Access date: April 28, 2021).
- YSK. (2015b). *2015/2310 sayılı kararı*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/1-kasim-2015--26-donem-milletvekili-genel-secimi/3413> (Access date: August 5, 2020).
- YSK. (2017). *2017/663 sayılı kararı*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/16-nisan-2017-anayasa-degisikligi-halkoylamasi/5002> (Access date: August 5, 2020).
- YSK. (2018). *2018/953 sayılı kararı*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/24-haziran-2018-secimleri/77536> (Access date: August 5, 2020).
- YSK. (2019). *2019/4577 sayılı kararı*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/tr/31-mart-2019-mahalli-i%CC%87dareler-secimi/77916> (Access date: August 5, 2020).
- Yüksekova Haber. (2019, June 26). *HDP'li Oluç: Yeni bir anayasayı tartışmaya varız*. [Online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.yuksekovahaber.com.tr/haber/hdpli-oluc-yeni-bir-anayasayi-tartismaya-variz-227938.htm>. (Access date: August 8, 2021).
- 1876 Kanun-i Esasi. Retrieved from: <https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/mevzuat/onceki-anayasalar/1876-k%C3%A2n%C3%BBn-i-es%C3%A2s%C3%AE/>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- 1921 Anayasası. Retrived from: <https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/mevzuat/onceki-anayasalar/1921-anayasasi/>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).

- 1924 Anayasası. Retrieved from: <https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/mevzuat/onceki-anayasalar/1924-anayasasi/>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- 1961 Anayasası. Retrieved from: <https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/mevzuat/onceki-anayasalar/1961-anayasasi/>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).
- 1982 Anayasası. Retrieved from: <https://www.anayasa.gov.tr/tr/mevzuat/onceki-anayasalar/1961-anayasasi/>. (Access date: August 7, 2021).



APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

Bu tezin amacı Trkiye'nin cumhurbaşkanlığı hükmet sistemine geiş sürecini muhalefet partilerinin perspektifinden incelemektir. Trkiye, 16 Nisan 2017'de yapılan bir referandum ile parlamenter sistemden cumhurbaşkanlığı hükmet sistemine geiş yapmıştır. Trkiye'ye özg bir başkanlık sistemi olarak bilinen bu sistem 9 Temmuz 2018 tarihinde resmen yürrlğe girmiştir. Ağustos 2021 itibariyle sistem c yılını doldurmuştur ancak sisteme dair tartışmalar devam etmektedir.

Bu kapsamda tezin literatr taraması blmnde 2016 yılından itibaren Trkiye'de geliřen cumhurbaşkanlığı hükmet sistemi literatrne odaklanılmıştır. Bu kapsamda yapılan pek ok alışmada iki genel bakış açısının olduđu gözlemlenmiştir. Literatrde sayıca daha az olan bir grup cumhurbaşkanlığı hükmet sistemini Trkiye'nin demokratikleřmesi dođrultusunda olumlu bir gelişme olarak yorumlarken, daha geniř bir grup akademisyen ise bu yeni sisteme geiři Trkiye'nin demokratik gerilemesindeki tehlikeli bir aşama olarak deđerlendirmektedir. Bu iki bakış açısı arasındaki ayrılığın altında drt temel tartışma olduđu tespit edilmiştir. Bunlardan ilki yeni sistemin Trkiye'nin siyasi tarihi ve kltrne uyumlu olup olmadığı ynndeki tartışmalardır. İkincisi Trkiye'nin yeni sisteme geiş sürecinin demokratik anayasa yapım süreçleri bağlamında gerekli standartları karřılayıp karřılamadığı zerinedir. c ve en geniř tartışılan konu yeni sistemde gler ayrılığının demokratik bir başkanlık sistemine uygun şekilde var olup olmadığı zerinedir. Son olarak, cumhurbaşkanlığı hükmet sisteminin Trkiye'de verimli ve hızlı bir brokratik dzene yol aıp amayacağı konusu tartışılmaktadır. Literatrdeki temel ayrışmalar bu şekilde zetlenirken, temel bir eksiklik olarak muhalefet partilerinin bu süreçteki konumlarının yeterince araştırılmadığı gözlemlenmiştir. Ancak muhalefet partilerinin konumu, bu sistemin geleceğı ve temsil ettikleri kitlelerin bu sisteme nasıl yaklařtığı noktasında olduka nemlidir. Bu dođrultuda, bu tezde iki temel araştırma sorusuna cevap aranmıştır: Trkiye'deki muhalefet partileri cumhurbaşkanlığı hükmet sistemine neden karřı ıkıyor ve neden glendirilmiş parlamenter sisteme gemekte ısrar ediyor? Bu partilerin farklı ideolojilere ve diđer

birçok konuda birbirine zıt programlara sahip olmalarına rağmen bu geri dönüş konusunda hemfikir olmalarının sebepleri nelerdir?

Bu soruya cevap verebilmek için nitel içerik analizi metodu kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın kaynakları 2016 yılında cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sisteminin net bir öneri olarak sunulduğu tarihten bu yana muhalefet partilerinin ve parti yetkililerinin yeni sisteme ilişkin yazılı ve sözlü açıklamaları, röportajları, seçim bildirgeleri, parti programları gibi içeriklerden oluşmaktadır. Bu kapsamda Türkiye’deki altı muhalefet partisinin cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine yönelik eleştirileri ve çözüm önerileri analiz edilmiştir. Bu partilerden TBMM’de siyasi parti grubu bulunan Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP), İyi Parti ve Halkların Demokratik Partisi (HDP) ile daha küçük bir seçmen tabanı bulunan Saadet Partisi (SP) ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi’nden son dönemde ayrılan ve henüz seçime girmeyen Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi (DEVA) ve Gelecek Partisi (GP) incelenmiştir.

Tezin ikinci bölümünde Türkiye’nin cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine geçişine kadar yaşadığı hükümet sistemi tartışmalarına dair bir tarihsel altyapı ortaya konmuştur. Bu tarihsel süreç AKP öncesi ve AKP sonrası olmak üzere ikiye ayrılmıştır. AKP öncesi dönemde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun dağılma sürecinden başlayarak yaşanan anayasal gelişmeler ve bu anayasal gelişmelere eşlik eden tarihsel ve siyasal arka plan genel hatlarıyla incelenmiştir. Ardından AKP’nin tek parti olarak hükümeti devraldığı 2002 yılından günümüze dek yaşanan ve Türkiye’nin hükümet sistemini değiştirmesi ile sonuçlanan sürecin incelemesine geçilmiştir. Bu kapsamda 2007 yılında cumhurbaşkanının seçilememesinden doğan kriz süreci özetlenerek aynı yıl yapılan anayasal referandum ile beraber Türkiye’nin fiilen yarı başkanlık sistemine geçildiği görüşüne yer verilmiştir. Döneme ait genel gelişmeler ışığında 2014 yılında Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’ın Türkiye’nin halk oyuyla seçilmiş ilk cumhurbaşkanı olması ile birlikte hükümet sistemine dair anayasal hükümlerden uzaklaşıldığı, Erdoğan’ın kendine özgü bir cumhurbaşkanlığı stili geliştirdiği ve sistemin fiilen başkanlık sistemine yakınlığı dile getirilmiştir. Bu değişiklikleri ele alırken cumhurbaşkanının sembolik konumu, cumhurbaşkanlığının yapısı, cumhurbaşkanının siyaset üstü ve tarafsız olması beklenen duruşu ve başbakan ile cumhurbaşkanı arasındaki ilişki üzerinde yoğunlaşmıştır.

Tezin üçüncü bölümünde Türk tipi başkanlık sistemi olarak ifade edilen cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sisteminin genel özellikleri yürütme, yasama ve yargı

erklerinin görev ve yetkileri kapsamında yapılan değişiklikler etrafında incelenmiştir. Yürütme gücünün tamamen cumhurbaşkanı tarafından üstlenildiği yeni sistemde yürütmenin diğer güçler karşısında daha etkili bir konuma getirildiği vurgulanmıştır. Bu doğrultuda özellikle cumhurbaşkanının seçimine ilişkin hükümlere, cumhurbaşkanlığı ile milletvekillerinin eş zamanlı olarak seçilmesine, cumhurbaşkanının partisi ile ilişkisinin kesilmesi zorunluğunun bulunmamasına, cumhurbaşkanının başta bakanlar olmak üzere tüm kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarındaki atama gücüne, cumhurbaşkanına tanınan cumhurbaşkanlığı kararnamesi yetkisinin genişliğine ve cumhurbaşkanlığına bağlanan kurumlara dikkat çekilmiştir. Yasama erkine ilişkin olarak TBMM'nin bilgi alma, soruşturma ve bütçe yapma üzerindeki gücünün azaltıldığından ve cumhurbaşkanının veto yetkisinin geciktirici olmaktan ziyade zorlaştıracı bir nitelik kazanmasından bahsedilmiştir. Son olarak yasama erki ile ilgili olarak yüksek mahkemelerin ve bu mahkemelerde görev yapan hakim ve savcıların seçimi ile disiplin mahkemeleri ve savaş haricinde askeri mahkemelerin kaldırılmasına ilişkin düzenlemelere yer verilmiştir.

Yeni sistemin özelliklerine ilişkin genel bir çerçeve sunulduktan sonra bu sisteme geçişin nasıl gerekçelendirildiğine dair bilgi verilmiştir. Bu bağlamda başta AKP olmak üzere yeni sisteme geçişi destekleyenlerin argümanları üç temel başlıkta derlenmiştir. Öncelikle sistemin Türkiye'nin siyasi kültürüne ve Türkiye'nin güncel siyasi ihtiyaçlarına daha uyumlu olduğu düşüncesi genel hatlarıyla özetlenmiştir. Ardından Türkiye'ye daha uyumlu olan bu sistemin Türkiye'nin siyasi istikrarının tesis edilmesine yönelik fayda sağlayacağı iddiası açıklanmıştır. Buna göre yürütmenin güçlendirildiği ve yürütmede iki başlılığın sonlandırıldığı bu sistemle beraber vesayet unsurları ile mücadelede hız kazanılacağı ve hem iç hem de dış tehditlerle etkin mücadele sonucunda Türkiye'nin daha güvenli bir yer olacağı düşünülmektedir. Son olarak bütün bunların tesis edilmesiyle beraber Türkiye'nin ekonomi gündemine yoğunlaşacağı, daha fazla yatırım alacağı ve gelişmişlik düzeyinin yükseleceği argümanlarına yer verilmiştir.

Tezin dördüncü bölümünde ise cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine yönelik olarak eleştirel bir söylem geliştiren muhalefet partilerinin söylemleri, nicel içerik analizi yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Analiz kapsamında öncelikle siyasi partilerin kendilerini nasıl tanımladıkları, Türk siyasi hayatındaki genel pozisyonları ve hangi

seçmen kitlesine hitap etmeye çalıştıkları özetlenmiş ve sisteme yönelik olarak geliştirdikleri eleştiriler ile çözüm önerileri detaylandırılmıştır.

İncelenen ilk parti olan Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP) tarafından geliştirilen cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine yönelik eleştirilerdeki temel unsurun Türkiye'nin demokratikleşmesine dair endişeler olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmaktadır. CHP'ye göre bu yeni sistem Türkiye'nin siyasi tarihi ve kültürüyle uyuşmamakta ve 150 yılı aşkın yıldır gelişen parlamenter geleneklere zarar vermektedir. Sistemin oylandığı anayasa referandumundan itibaren sistem meşru görülmemekte ve demokratik bir başkanlık sisteminin taşınması gerektiği özellikleri taşımadığı için “tek adam rejimi” gibi ifadelerle tanımlanmaktadır. Cumhurbaşkanının partisi ile ilişkisinin devam etmesini sıklıkla eleştiren CHP, sistemin güçler ayrılığı ilkesini yok saydığını ve verimli olmadığını da vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca CHP'ye göre cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemindeki aksaklıklar ülkenin ekonomi yönetiminde de kendini göstermiş ve derin bir ekonomik krize girilmesine sebep olmuştur. Bütün bu argümanların sonucunda cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sisteminin değiştirilmesi gerektiğini dile getiren parti, bu sistemin yerine güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sistemi önermekte ve geliştirdiği 29 ilkenin etrafında önerilen sisteme ilişkin hazırlıklarına devam etmektedir.

İncelenen ikinci parti olan İyi Parti'nin cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine karşı geliştirdiği söylemin temelinde ekonomik argümanlar bulunmaktadır. Kurulduğu günden bu yana temel söylemini ekonomi üzerine kurgulayan parti lideri ve yetkilileri, güçler ayrılığının eksikliğinden kaynaklı siyasi ve hukuki sorunlara da sıklıkla değinmekle beraber ulaştıkları genel sonucun bu sorunların da etkisiyle ülkenin içine düştüğü ekonomik bunalım olması dikkat çekmektedir. Tıpkı CHP gibi İyi Parti de iyileştirilmiş ve güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sistem olarak adlandırdıkları bir sistem önerisine geçişi savunmaktadır. Parti bu sistem önerileri üzerine somut bir belge de hazırlamıştır.

İncelenen üçüncü parti olan Halkların Demokratik Partisi (HDP), cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine yönelik geniş bir eleştirel içerik sunmaktadır. Başta Kürtler olmak üzere sistem içinde dışlandığını iddia ettiği sosyal ve etnik grupların haklarını savunmaya çalıştığını belirten ve siyasal yelpazenin solunda yer alan HDP'nin sisteme yönelttiği eleştirilerin temelinde devletin temel erkleri arasında yürütmenin orantısız bir şekilde güçlendirilmesinden kaynaklanan tekçi yapıya ve

başta sistem tarafından dışlanan gruplar olmak üzere tüm toplumun içinde bulunduğu yaşam şartlarının ağırlaşmasına dair görüşleri bulunmaktadır. HDP sistemin kabul edildiği ve yürürlüğe girdiği dönemlerden itibaren yürütmenin yargı üzerinde kurduğu kontrol sonucunda sistematik olarak hedef alındığını ve bu sebeple sistemin meşru olmadığını da dile getirmektedir. Sistemde güçler ayrılığının doğru bir şekilde işlemiyor olmasına da değinen HDP, özellikle kendi üyelerinin ve seçmenlerinin karşılaştığı yargısal süreçleri eleştirmektedir. HDP'nin cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemi yerine önerdiği model yerel demokrasi ile güçlendirilmiş çoğulcu parlamenter sistemdir.

İncelenen dördüncü parti olan Saadet Partisi (SP), incelenen muhalefet partileri arasında cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine yönelik bakış açısında en ılımlı siyasi partidir. Partinin temel eleştirileri cumhurbaşkanının partili olması, güçler ayrılığının zayıflığı, kamu yönetimine yansıyan problemler ve ekonomideki istikrarsızlıklardır. Cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sisteminin mevcut halinin işlemediğini kesin bir dille ifade eden parti zaman zaman parlamenter sisteme dönüşün mümkün olabileceğini söylemekle birlikte çoğunlukla başkanlık sistemine karşı olmadıklarını ve mevcut sistem içerisinde yapılacak değişikliklerin yeterli olabileceğini dile getirmektedir. Dolayısıyla partinin tutarlı bir eleştiri ve öneri çerçevesi sunduğu söylenemez.

İncelenen beşinci parti olan Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi (DEVA) tarafından cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemine getirilen eleştirilerde adaletsizlik ve ekonomik kriz temaları öne çıkmaktadır. Diğer partilerle benzer şekilde DEVA da güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sisteme geçilmesini önermektedir. Bu bağlamda parti yetkilileri taslak bir anayasa kaleme aldıklarını fakat gerekli değişiklikleri diyalog ve uzlaşma ile hayata geçirmek istediklerini belirtmektedir. Ayrıca mevcut sistemden önerilen sisteme geçiş aşamasında partiler arası bir uzlaşma sağlanması durumunda, ortak cumhurbaşkanı adayının mevcut anayasadan faydalanmayacağını ve parlamenter sisteme geçişi sağlayacağını net olarak ifade etmesi gerektiğini söylemektedirler. Bu bağlamda geçiş döneminin süresi, metodu ve diğer detaylarına ilişkin kesin bir metnin oluşturulması ve bunu halkla paylaşılması gerektiğinin altı çizilmektedir.

İncelenen altıncı ve son parti olan Gelecek Partisi (GP) de cumhurbaşkanlığı hükümet sistemini sert bir dille eleştirmektedir. GP hem eleştirilerini hem de önerilerini akademisyenlerle beraber hazırlanan sistematik bir dökümanda hazırlamıştır. GP'ye göre yeni sistemin sorunları anayasa yapım sürecinin reaktif, güç

merkezli ve elit odaklı olmasından başlamaktadır. Sistemin işleyişindeki en büyük sıkıntı ise sistemdeki güçler ayrılığı eksikliğidir. Buna göre yeni sistem kişiselleştirilmiş bir yürütme, etkisiz bir yasama ve bağımlı bir yargı oraganını kurgulamaktadır. Partinin çözümü ise tam demokrasi ile güçlendirilmiş parlamenter sistemdir.

Tezin beşinci bölümü olan sonuç kısmında partilerin ortak ve farklı olarak vurguladıkları noktalara ait genel bir değerlendirme yapılmaktadır. Buna göre muhalif partilerin sahip oldukları farklı ideolojilere ve parti programlarına rağmen, bu partilerin yeni sistemin mevcut haliyle yürürlükte kalmaması gerektiği konusunda hemfikir olduğunu göstermektedir. Tüm partiler bu sistemde güçler ayrılığı ilkesinin mevcut olmadığını ve gerekli denge ve denetleme mekanizmalarının işlemediğini ifade etmektedir. Bunula bağlantılı olarak cumhurbaşkanı tarafından temsil edilen yürütme erkinin diğer erkler karşısında baskın olması ve cumhurbaşkanının aynı zamanda bir partinin genel başkanı olmasının pek çok soruna yol açtığı ifade edilmektedir. Özellikle mevcut cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'ın elinde bulundurduğu güç unsurları ile bir "tek adam rejimi" inşa ettiği eleştirilerine oldukça yoğun bir şekilde yer verilmektedir. Ek olarak incelenen tüm partiler sistemin teklif edildiği, oylandığı ve yürürlüğe girdiği dönemin demokratik anayasa yapım sürecine dair asgari koşulları sağlamadığını dile getirmektedir. Özellikle CHP, İyi Parti ve HDP bunu bir meşruiyet sorunu olarak değerlendirmektedir. Bütün bu ortaklıklara rağmen, muhalif partilerin eleştirileri ve önerileri sahip oldukları farklı eğilimleri de yansıtmaktadır. Bu eleştiri ve öneriler, partilerin sahip olduğu ideoloji ve parti tabanı ile bağlantılı olarak gelişmekte ve yine partinin pozisyonuna uygun ise literatürle ortak noktalar barındırmaktadır. Saadet Partisi hariç incelenen tüm muhalefet partileri bu sistemin güçlendirilmiş bir parlamenter sistemle değiştirilmesini birinci öncelik haline getirdiklerini öne sürmektedir. Yalnızca Saadet Parti bunu bir seçenek olarak değerlendirmektedir. Sonuç olarak muhalefet bloğu içerisindeki ortak argümanlar, bu partiler arasında diyalogun ve işbirliğinin artmasına yol açmaktadır. Bu kapsamda kurulan Millet İttifakı'nın sisteme karşı olan tüm muhalif unsurları bir araya getirmesi halinde parlamenter sisteme geri dönüşü sağlayıp sağlayamayacağı gelecekte görülecektir. Bu ittifakın genişlemesi için partilerin kırmızı çizgilerini bir kenara bırakarak, belli tavizlerde ve/veya fedakarlıklarda bulunması ancak bunu yaparken parti tabanını da koruması gerekmektedir.

B. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU

(Please fill out this form on computer. Double click on the boxes to fill them)

ENSTİTÜ / INSTITUTE

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences** ☐
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Social Sciences** ☒
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Applied Mathematics** ☐
- Enformatik Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Informatics** ☐
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Marine Sciences** ☐

YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : İşçi
Adı / Name : Didem
Bölümü / Department : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi / Political Science and Public Administration

TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English): TURKEY'S PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SYSTEM:
REACTIONS FROM THE OPPOSITION PARTIES

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: **Yüksek Lisans / Master** ☒ **Doktora / PhD** ☐

1. **Tezin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılacaktır. / Release the entire work immediately for access worldwide.** ☒
2. **Tez iki yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for patent and/or proprietary purposes for a period of two years. *** ☐
3. **Tez altı ay süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for period of six months. *** ☐

** Enstitü Yönetim Kurulu kararının basılı kopyası tezle birlikte kütüphaneye teslim edilecektir. / A copy of the decision of the Institute Administrative Committee will be delivered to the library together with the printed thesis.*

Yazarın imzası / Signature

Tarih / Date

(Kütüphaneye teslim ettiğiniz tarih. Elle doldurulacaktır.)
(Library submission date. Please fill out by hand.)

Tezin son sayfasıdır. / This is the last page of the thesis/dissertation.