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Democracy, Identity, and Foreign Policy in Turkey: Hegemony Through Transformation, by E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, ix, 202 pp., ISBN: 9780230354272

Turkey has been experiencing a significant transformation process since 2002 when the Justice and Development Party-AK Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) came into power. After the economic, political and domestic security crises during 1990's in Turkey, the AK Party was able to win the first elections held on 3 November 2002 just after its establishment. Under AK Party rule, Turkey witnessed structural transformations in education, health education, transportation, and infrastructure fields; and in democratization, regional integration with foreign policy activism. It's economic success consolidated AK Party's domestic and regional popularity and support. Therefore AK Party won three elections–in 2002, 2007, and 2011. Popular Arab Spring uprisings, which began late in 2010 in the Middle East and North Africa, dramatically affected Turkish politics – in particular AK Party's- and Turkey's foreign and economic policy began to be tested.

E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu's book, *Democracy, Identity, and Foreign Policy in Turkey*, offers a critical analysis of Turkey's transformation and foreign policy orientation under AK Party rule. The book focuses on the dynamics of modern Turkey's transformation since the establishment of Turkey in 1923. It examines social, political, and economic aspects

and factors of AK Party's increasing dominance in Turkey's politics. Keyman and Gumuscu addresses Turkey's transformation with four dimensions: modernization, democratization, globalization and Europeanization. According to the authors, Turkey's politics lived through four periods: from 1923 to present the process of modernization; from 1950 to present the process of democratization; from 1980 to present the process of globalization and from 2000 to present the process of Europeanization. The authors also argue that four transformation processes produced four political segmentations which dominate contemporary Turkish politics. The modernization process generated center-periphery cleavages; the democratization process generated left-right cleavages; the globalization process generated global-national cleavages; and the Europeanization process generated identity-citizenship cleavages (16–18).

The AK Party emerged within the context of globalization and Europeanization processes and faced both risks and opportunities in Turkey. Keyman and Gumuscu claim that the AK Party succeeded in transforming Turkey both economically and politically by rejecting 'Islam as an ideology and present[ing] itself as an economically liberal, socially conservative center-right party' and consolidating its power with election victories which the authors label as 'electoral hegemony' (p. 33). Unlike their predecessors – the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*) and the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*)- the AK Party adopted free-market understanding, reform and democratization processes and aimed to become a full member of the European Union with an active foreign policy. The book alleges that Turkey made significant progress with AK Party's democratizing, transformative politics and proactive foreign policy, thanks in particular to ongoing European Union (EU) membership negotiations.

On the other hand the book asserts that AK Party's success in Turkey's in the last decade derived from the lack of strong opposition. As the authors note, opposition parties remained a weak alternative to power during AK Party rule (pp. 55–57). Turkey's dynamic domestic and foreign policy ensured both economic development domestically, and de-securitization in foreign policy with a zero-problem-with-neighbors-policy regionally. Whereas Turkey made progress until the Arab Spring uprisings, regional crises began in 2010 dramatically affecting Turkey's politics.

Turkey's top-down transformation and modernization process since 1923 confronted identity crises in the globalization and Europeanization era. In terms of identity politics, Keyman and Gumuscu state that Turkey faced two major issues: the Kurdish problem and the tension between Islam and secularism. The authors point out that republican nationalist views precluded the expression of Kurdish identity and interests (socially, culturally, and politically). With respect to the first major issue, 'the more the Kurdish demands did not find parliamentary expression, the more the Kurdish radical ethno-nationalism initiated its claims for recognition through violence and terrorism' (p. 103). Turkey held twice general elections in 2015, and the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*) won 12,96% of the vote and 80 of 550 seats in June; and 10,76% of the vote and 59 seats in November. Though Kurdish political representation in the parliament reached the highest level in 2015, it did not contribute to prevent violence and terrorism, in particular PKK terorrist organization's attacks.

With respect to the second major issue, Islam and secularism, the book highlights that 'laicism' concept of secularism, which means 'constitutional control of religious affairs' continued with 'the resurgence of Islam' (p. 127). Furthermore, the book notes that under AK Party rule, the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*) was strengthened 'in favor of Sunni Muslims' (p. 137). The book also argues that despite the suspicions that AK Party had a secret agenda based on Islamic alteration of Turkey's state, the ruling party did not take any steps against the state's secularist structure, and rather AK Party

opened Islam in the public domain, for example, by lifting the headscarf ban in universities and the public sphere (p. 136). According to the authors, socialization of Islamic identity and transformation of secularism under AK Party rule also led to economic transformation. In this sense Anatolian cities achieved significant success in the economy by creating new organizations such as Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (*MÜSİAD*).

The authors discuss that Turkey's transformation under AK Party rule challenged and responded 'state-centric' understanding of transformation. The AK Party was able to manage four transformation processes; modernization, democratization, globalization and Europeanization soon after assuming rule. Yet AK Party's electoral victories and 'transformation produced hegemony' in Turkey (p. 163), in other words AK Party 'replaced the "strong-state tradition" with "strong-government tradition"' (p. 53). The near political future of Turkey will show applicability of adopting a new constitution, solving Kurdish problem and being a full member of the EU, that is democratic consolidation, as the authors emphasize.

Democracy, Identity, and Foreign Policy in Turkey presents a multidimensional analysis of Turkey's transformation under AK Party rule. From a critical perspective, the book underlines how the AK Party used the electoral victories instrumentally in consolidating its political power in Turkey. However, the book is prudent whether AK Party's transformation and political power led to democratic, transparent and good governance. In this sense, the book discusses the political transformation of Turkey as hegemonic under the AK Party and suggests that Turkey still needs democratic consolidation in order to establish desired political standards. It suggests that Turkey can achieve ideal democratic transformation by drafting a new constitution, solving the Kurdish issue in a peaceful manner and restarting negotiations with the EU.

In another point of view, whereas the June 2015 election, in which AK Party did not reach the vote share and seats to form government alone after 13 years rule, proved to be wrong the book arguments about AK Party's hegemony, the renewed general election in November, in which AK Party re-achieved to form government alone by winning 49, .50% of the vote and 317 seats, justified the arguments of the book that AK Party is perceived as the champion party to govern Turkey. All in all, the book contributes to contemporary Turkey studies' literature by critically analyzing the domestic, regional and global transformation and challenges of Turkey in terms of democracy, identity and foreign policy in last decade. Keyman and Gumuscu's book is advisable to scholars, students, and researchers who are interested in Turkish politics.

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