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Naveed Hada April 15, 2015

Comparing Christian and "Islamic" Democratic Parties: Is the Turkish AKP a Muslim Counterpart of the German CDU-CSU?

by

Naveed Hada

Dr. Vincent Cornell
Advisor

Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies

Dr. Vincent Cornell
Advisor

Dr. Carrie Wickham
Committee Member

Dr. Sam Cherribi
Committee Member

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Abstract

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By Naveed Hada

Some observers of the Middle East believe that the Turkish Islamist party, AKP, is indeed a Muslim equivalent of European Christian Democratic parties. However, the AKP strongly denies being characterized as such, to the extent that it even refrains from classifying itself as "Muslim Democrat." While some argue that this is because the AKP does not want to be recognized as a political party with a religious affiliation and agenda, others claim that the party is hesitant because self-identification with the similar symbols and vocabulary of Christian Democratic parties may encourage speculation that it is inspired by and draws from Western models of governance. Whatever the reason may be, a label like this can have serious political and electoral repercussions for the AKP, causing alienation of its secular or traditionalist constituencies or both, and which might result in military or judicial intervention. Nonetheless, the tension between the AKP's official rhetoric and the observed patterns and trends demands additional research and analysis. This thesis has attempted to address this very question of the similarity in the origins, evolution and current incarnations of the AKP and European Christian democracies. Using the German CDU-CSU as a model, which has been described as the "classic" case of Christian democracy in Europe, my thesis has endeavored to address the following question: whether and in what ways is the Turkish Islamist party (AKP) comparable to the German Christian Democratic party (CDU-CSU)?

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Introduction

> "Some people may think differently of the AKP. They may look towards such bodies as the Christian Democratic parties in Europe. That is their view and their reality. We do not share it."[1]
>
> – AK Party Chairman, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Interview 2002

As the above excerpt from one of Recep Tayyip Erdogan's early interviews indicates, the official rhetoric of the AK Party strongly denies any ideological, institutional, and/or methodological association with European Christian Democracy. However, despite the AKP's renunciation of self-representation in religious terms and explicit rejection of any equivalence to Christian Democracy in particular, scholars such as William Hale, Ergun Özbudun, and Stathis Kalyvas have suggested the possibility of a comparative analysis between political Islam in Turkey and European Christian Democracy. According to these scholars, the ideals and practices of Christian Democracy seem to have traveled outside of Europe, especially to the world of political Islam, and appear particularly evident in the case of the Justice and Development Party in Turkey.[2] In other words, a parallel development has occurred in Turkey, with similar causes and outcomes, impacted by the European experience. Kalyvas and van Kersberg, for example, ask this very question toward the beginning of their essay on Christian Democracy: "Does the Christian democratic model travel beyond Europe and

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[1] Interview with Seref Ozgencil, *The New Europe I*, no. 2 (December 2002), as qtd. in Hale "Christian Democracy and the JDP," *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006. 66

[2] Kalyvas, Stathis. "The 'Turkish Model' in the Matrix of Political Catholocism" in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, edited by Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012, 189-199.

Christianity?" They respond with a "qualified yes."[3] The prospect of a comparative study on this subject is also suggested by the fact that the AK Party is frequently regarded, in both scholarly literature and in social media and journalism[4], as an "Islamic incarnation" of Christian Democratic parties "on the grounds that it holds to liberal democratic values but is influenced and informed by Islamic beliefs."[5] Additional academic curiosity about the supposed nexus between the AK Party and the Christian Democracy seems to have arisen as a result of the AKP's efforts at seeking an alliance with the European People's Party (EPP), which connects the major Christian Democratic parties in the European Parliament.[6]

Interestingly, despite the connections that are conceived between these two political movements by scholars and political observers alike, the ruling Islamist party of Turkey appears adamant in distancing itself from being defined as a political movement of religious orientation akin to its Christian Democrat counterparts. So much so that the party vehemently refrains from calling itself "Muslim Democrat," which it believes may imply, at least nominally, some form of appropriation of ideas or practices from Western-style political parties with religious roots. In his speech to the Center for Strategic Studies in Washington, D.C., Erdogan famously stated:

> Our party is the product of the continuity of the Turkish national existence. In some western newspaper and publications, my party is described as "an Islamic party" or as "Muslem democrat." These characterizations are not correct. This is not because we are

[3] Stathis N Kalyvas and Kees van Kersbergen. "Christian Democracy." *The Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010): 183-209.
[4] Arda Can. Kumbaracibasi, "Party Ideology" in *Turkish Politics and the Rise of the AKP: Dilemmas of Institutionalization and Leadership Strategy*, [London: Routledge, 2009], 155.
[5] Sultan Tepe, "A Pro-Isalmic Party? Promises and Limits of Turkey's Justice and Development Party,"*The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the Ak Parti* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006), 107-136.
[6] Hale, William. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006. 67.

> not Muslim or Democrat, but because we believe the two need to be considered in two different contexts.[7]

The AKP's apparent reluctance to label itself as a "Muslim Democrat" party demands an explanation. While some argue that this is because the AKP does not want to be identified as a political party with religious motivations and objectives, others contend that a self-categorization as "Muslim Democrat" may affirm speculations that it is inspired by and draws from Western models of governance. Whatever the reason may be, a label like this may have serious electoral repercussions for the AKP, causing alienation of either its modern or traditionalist electorate or both.

Nevertheless, this contradiction between the AKP's rhetoric and the trends observed by certain contemporary scholars of political Islam and Christian democracy gives rise to an interesting dilemma that demands further investigation and research. This thesis is therefore a modest attempt at addressing this very question about the substance and extent of comparison between the AKP and European Christian democracy. However, considering the scope of this project, I have limited my analysis to only one European Christian Democratic party, the German CDU-CSU. The CDU-CSU coalition is regarded as one of the more successful examples of the Christian democratic experience in Europe, as it has a long and substantive political, institutional, and ideological history. As a result, it is often described as the "classic" case of Christian democracy in Europe.[8] These attributes associated with the German CDU-CSU coupled with its extensive political history, in turn, increase the value of the CDU-CSU as a representative for the phenomenon of Christian democracy in Europe more generally.

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[7] Recep Tayyip Erdogan, from his speech given at the Center for Strategic International Studies on December 9, 2002, qtd. in Tepe, "A Pro-Isalmic Party?" 118.
[8] Kalyvas and van Kersbergen, "Christian Democracy," 183-209

The primary research question that this thesis seeks to address is the following: whether and in what ways is the Turkish AK Party comparable to the German CDU-CSU? In order to examine this query, I delve into a qualitative analysis of various primary sources, which include party programs/manifestos, policy manuals, and other relevant party literature. In addition to this, my analysis draws upon various empirical surveys, speeches and media interviews of party leaders and representatives, and a personal interview, conducted as a part of a research trip to Turkey through the Washington Semester Program at American University in Spring 2014. The research methodology also involves an in-depth review of secondary sources: existing theories, discussions, and scholarly debates surrounding the subject.

There are, however, two recognized limitations of this research project. First, I realize that there is an apparent discrepancy in the relative age and experience of the two parties. While the CDU-CSU has been a powerful political force in Germany since the end of the Second World War, has dominated German government for over 4 decades, and has served as a leading opposition party for almost two decades, the Turkish AKP can still be regarded as a budding political party that only recently finished its first decade of political presence. Although most of its major party leaders and representatives have been significantly involved in previous Islamist movements, the AKP as an organized political party with a centralized leadership is a comparatively recent phenomenon. Keeping this mind, while some broader comparisons between the two parties have been outlined, a major part of the analysis focuses on the ideologies, institutions, and processes of the formative years of the two parties. Second, my access to resources on the German CDU-CSU was also limited. On the one hand there is a scarcity of academic resources both in English and German on the CDU-CSU. On the other hand,

my inability to access scholarship in the German language serves as additional restraint. Hence, I recognize that the disparity in the number of sources at my disposal for this analysis may have hindered my prospect of reaching fully definitive conclusions in some cases. Being cognizant of these limitations, I have tried to carefully balance the number and substance of sources used for both cases and have endeavored to stay as objective as possible for the purposes of my main analyses and conclusions.

Having addressed the background of the research, I will now outline the structure of the thesis. The discussion begins with chapters 1 and 2 presenting a sequential account of the rise and growth of the AKP and the CDU-CSU parties respectively. The objective of the first two chapters is two-fold. First, they present a timeline of the events leading to the emergence and development of the political parties. This timeline, in turn, serves as a background for the comparative analysis of the two parties conducted in the third chapter. Second, the two chapters also attempt to contribute to the existing scholarship on the AKP and the CDU-CSU by addressing some of the current questions/dilemmas brewing in the respective disciplines. Finally, the third chapter delves into the main comparative questions about the conditions of development, ideology and discourse, support structures, policies and initiatives of the AKP and the CDU-CSU.

The thesis concludes by showing that although the AKP rejects any identification with the Christian Democratic parties, there are sufficient parallels between the AKP and the CDU-CSU to make the continued study of this issue a meaningful exercise.

I. Origins and Evolution of Political Islam in Turkey

Introduction

The sudden emergence in mainstream politics followed by a massive electoral victory in the 2002 national elections of Turkey's ruling Islamist party – the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi* AKP, popularly known as the AK Party) – came as a surprise to many scholars and observers of the region. More than ten million Turkish voters cast their ballots for the AK Party, resulting in its first political triumph with almost two-thirds of the seats in the Parliament.[9] Although pre-election polls predicted AKP having a substantial lead in the run up to the elections, no one foresaw it gaining 34% of the vote in Turkey's remarkably fragmented party system.[10] Especially in a political environment dominated by the Kemalist ideology of ultra-secularism since 1928, the actualization of an organized Islamist opposition movement was hard to imagine. When political Islam in the past had attempted to break through the political dominance of Kemalist elites and somehow managed to acquire government office, it was either sidelined or taken down by military intervention. Hence, the dream of Islamically oriented political parties to establish and maintain a political system conducive to their theological principles and practices never successfully materialized until the emergence of AKP in the early 2000's. The AK Party, which characterizes itself as a "conservative democratic party," was an offshoot of the previous Virtue (*Fazilet*) Party. In order to distinguish itself from its predecessors, the new Justice and Development party "dramatically highlighted a process of and commitment to

[9] R. Quinn Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light: the Transformation of Political Islam in Turkey." *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (2004): 339.
[10] Ibid, 339.

institutional change and ideological moderation."[11] Despite having explicit Islamic roots and being led by a conservative Sunni Muslim (the current Turkish President Reccep Tayyip Erdogan), the AK Party managed to portray a moderate, quasi-secular image in front of domestic and international audiences. Moreover, AKP's unprecedented success in three consecutive national democratic elections has proven that political Islam in Turkey has arrived, but in a radically different form than it had been in the past. Such a profound transformation of Turkish politics demands inquiry into the origins and evolution of political Islam in Turkey and the AK party in particular.

As a result, in its attempts to provide a sophisticated historical account of the rise and development of political Islam in Turkey for the comparative purposes of this thesis, this chapter does so in the context of addressing the much-heated debate on the scope, substance, and limits of the AK Party's ideological, rhetorical, institutional, and behavioral moderation. For this purpose, I will utilize the inclusion-moderation theory, pioneered by Samuel Huntington, and further developed and criticized by various leading experts on Islamist movement change. This approach to the chronological account of AKP's evolution will serve as a concrete premise for a more nuanced and analytical comparative assessment between the Turkish AKP and the German CDU-CSU in the final chapter of this thesis.

In order to contextualize the development of the AK party in particular, it is necessary to first outline the social and political contexts in which the early Islamist movements in Turkey emerged. Hence, starting with a discussion of the Kemalist system in Turkey, this chapter delves into the political developments that took place until political Islam formally emerged, and will show how certain advances that surfaced in

[11] Ibid. 339.

this period impacted the political discourse of the AK party. Moreover, it will show how the AK party tactically appropriated and/or denounced certain tenets of its predecessors, and why such selectivity was imperative for the fulfillment of its political and electoral ambitions.

Historical Context

The relationship between Islam and the state in Turkey saw a dramatic change after the collapse of Ottoman Empire in the wake of World War I. Inspired by Western notions of secularism and modernism, Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938), the founder of the Turkish Republic, aspired to reconfigure the socio-political and economic institutions of the new republic by demolishing the Ottoman legacy.[12] In order to legitimize his control and prevent any potential backlash from the conservative religious leaders of a devout Islamic community, Ataturk coercively and strategically ruled out the notion that "state authority and authenticity relied upon an attachment to Islam."[13] In other words, Islam was stripped off its responsibility to provide political legitimacy in exchange for religious influence in state affairs, as was the case under the Ottoman Empire.[14] As a result of this, Turkey was officially declared a secular republic in 1937, as Article 2 of the Turkish Constitution echoes: "The Republic of Turkey is a democratic, secular and social state." Article 42, on the other hand, underlines the explicit separation of religion and politics as it states: "No one shall be allowed to exploit or abuse religion or religious feelings, or

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[12] Ahmet Kuru, "Reinterpretation of Secularism in Turkey: The Case of the Justice and Development Party." *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006), 136-160.
[13] William M. Hale and Ergun Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey: The Case of the AKP* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), Intro, xvi-xxi
[14] Karen Barkey, "Rethinking Ottoman Management of Diversity: What We Can Learn From Modern Turkey?" in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, edited by Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 19-21.

things held sacred by religion, in any manner whatsoever, for the purpose of personal or political influence, or for even partially basing the fundamental social, economic, political and legal order of the state on religious tenets." Finally, Article 86 of the Constitution renders it "unlawful for political parties to attempt to change the secular nature of the state."[15]

Following the French model of laïcité, the secularism that Atatürk instituted was authoritarian and politically exclusive, and was particularly harsh on individuals and groups calling for a religiously inspired political system or the re-establishment of the Caliphate.[16] Instead, Kemalism, a combination of Ataturk's ultra-secular ideology and his desire for totalitarian control, itself became the new official ideology of the republic in the late 1920s. This was manifested in various 'modernist' reforms aimed at incorporating the values of European civilization into Turkish sociopolitical and legal frameworks.[17] For example, Kemalist Turkey, as Omer Taspinar points out, borrowed "Western legal codes from Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, together with the Latin alphabet and the Western calendar, Western holidays, and Western dress."[18] This modernist project also entailed controlling religious institutions that were carried over from the Ottoman times. The process of institutional de-Islamization included measures like "closing down former Islamic schools (*medreses*), replacing religiously-inspired civil and legal codes with newer versions premised strictly upon western prototypes, and mandatorily replacing the Arabic script [of Ottoman Turkish] with a form of Latin

[15] Constitution of the Republic of Turkey: http://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf as qtd. in Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 339-340.
[16] 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad An-Na'īm, "Turkey: Contradictions of Authoritarian Secularism," in *Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of Shari'a* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 196-206.
[17] Hanioglu Sukru, "The Historical Roots of Kemalism" in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, edited by Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 32-61
[18] Omer, Taspanir. "Turkey: The New Model?" *Brookings Institute*. (April 2012) http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/04/24-turkey-new-model-taspinar

alphabet."[19] In addition to these symbolic changes, the Kemalist government also made every effort to assert its monopoly over the discourse and practices of the religious establishment in Turkey. To this end, in 1924, the state formulated a "Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet Isleri Baskanligi*) associated with the Prime Minister's office as a substitute for the office of *Seyh ul-Islam,* the head of the Sunni religious establishment in the Ottoman Empire."[20] As a result of this policy, "all Sunni religious functionaries and properties were placed under state control."[21] Overall, it can be argued that the Kemalist state was not so much inclined to eliminate Sunni Islam from Turkey as it was determined to systematically control and dictate its practice. In the Kemalist secular order, leaving organized religion as a private matter, like in other Western secular republics like the US, was not an option.[22] This control mechanism in turn demanded that the state "must constantly interact with religion, at the risk of conflict."[23]

As a *Ghazi* (warrior) in a war of national resistance, who successfully confronted the European forces that intended to divide up Turkey among themselves, Ataturk emerged as a national hero with popular support and legitimacy.[24] He exploited this "traditional type of legitimacy to launch a drive for anti-traditional change, but his status as a national hero has remained virtually unchallenged, even among those who did not take easily to some of his tenets."[25] Capitalizing on his military credentials, Ataturk instituted a top-down system of indoctrination, intended to inculcate Turkish citizens with

[19] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* xvi-xxi
[20] Ibid., xvi-xxi
[21] Ibid., xvii.
[22] RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 32-35.
[23] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* Intro, xvii
[24] Ibid. xvii
[25] Ibid. xvii.

"modernist, secularist, and nationalistic values."[26] However, his policies also impacted the fabric of the Turkish society, engendering a deep cultural divide between the "West-oriented ruling elites – state bureaucrats, army officers, and urban professionals of the new Republic – and the vast majority of the rural masses, with strongly held traditional values and belief systems."[27] This societal division, as Serif Mardin argues, intensified in the formative years of the new republic and eventually created a definitive "cleavage between the state-dominated center and the periphery, dictating most academic analysis of the post-Turkish politics." [28]

New political opportunities in the aftermath of the Second World War led to the formation of the first opposition party to the ruling CHP, known as the Democratic Party (DP), in 1950.[29] This new party understood the cultural dynamics of Turkish society and strategically exploited them for its electoral ambitions. DP's leadership identified itself as "an anti-elite, anti-establishment" group calling for an end to the totalitarian rule of the CHP. They also called for an equal and fair democratic system, an end to state control over the national economy, and attention to rural created demands for agricultural growth.[30] In addition to this, the DP expanded its electoral market by tapping into the grievances of other dissenting groups among the Turkish population, of which Muslim conservatives were an integral part.[31] By offering limited concessions to religious groups and calling for a balance between modernity and tradition, the DP was able to amplify the appeal of its political message. As a result, the counter-elite, anti-authoritarian narrative of the DP coupled with demands for "majoritarian democracy, economic privatization,

[26] Ibid. xvii-xvii; RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 32-35.
[27] Ibid. xvii
[28] Serif Mardin, "Center Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?" *Deadalus* 2, no. 1(1973): 169-90
[29] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* Intro, xvii-xxi.
[30] Ibid. xviii.
[31] Ibid. xviii.

populism and a more traditional Turkish identity" created the building blocks of a new liberal center-right tradition in Turkish politics.[32] This new political tradition advocated by the DP was to become reflected in the political persona of the current AK party.

The DP made several efforts to appeal to the conservative Muslim majority by advocating initiatives such as "allowing the Arabic *adhan* (Muslim call to prayer), establishing state-sponsored schools for training Muslim chaplains and preachers (*Imam Hatip Okullari*), and constructing new mosques."[33] However, it did not give in to the fundamentalist demands of the religious factions to alter the civil and criminal legal codes in compliance with the *Shari'a* and made every effort to remain as close as possible to the secular nature of the republic. Nonetheless, like any opposition party deemed dangerous to the status quo and the deeply entrenched political supremacy of the Kemalist loyalists, the DP was closed down as a result of a military coup in 1961.[34] Despite this political failure, it can be argued that the DP paved the way for center-right politics in Turkey. Subsequently, Turgut Ozal's Motherland Party (ANAP, 1983-1991), 'which was a successor of the DP, adopted these policies, except with a stronger focus on "internationalism and a fuller commitment to an open economy."[35]

The following decades, however, saw the emergence of a political movement with explicit religious agenda, practically emerging in the 1970s and gaining momentum, after various crackdowns and constitutional bans, in the 1980s and the 1990s. Unlike the center-right parties of the past that had attempted to strike a balance between the secular character of the Turkish state and the traditional demands of the majority of its electorate,

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[32] RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 32-37.
[33] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* Intro, xviii.
[34] RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 32-37.
[35] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* Intro, xviii; AND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 32-40.

this new Islamist movement categorically advocated for a political system based on moral values and principles derived from religious scriptures and legal codes, and inspired by prophetic traditions.[36] The new Islamist movement proactively condemned the secular activities of the Turkish state, which it believed was antithetical to the norms and practices of the Ottoman times. The following section analyzes in detail the emergence and rise of political Islam in Turkey, the internal divisions and reformations that took place as it evolved, and the lessons it provided for the AK party that helped frame its political narrative and behavior.

Political Islam in Turkey I: From Erbakan to Erdogan

The rise and eventual electoral success of Islamist politics in Turkey is often described as a distinctive experience in the Islamic world, caused, for the most part, by a longstanding secular-nationalist Turkish ideology that created political and ideological cleavages within Turkish society. Some scholars of political Islam argue that it was the deepening discord between the secular-oriented ruling elite and Islamic civil society that made the emergence and solidification of religious opposition parties and their desire for formal participation in politics inevitable.[37] However, it is also important to note that, in addition to the presence of this ideological division, what makes Turkey a unique case, in contrast to other states (such as Syria, Uzbekistan, Algeria, Indonesia, Iraq, and Yemen) that also witnessed a similar form of secular-religious schism surging in the mid-twentieth century[38], is the presence of a democratic environment since the 1950s in which

[36] Gareth Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey: Running West, Heading East?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 130-140.
[37] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 341.
[38] Ibid. 341.

this division was nurtured. Analyzing the evolution of political Islam in Turkey shows how constant interactions and negotiations, in a "fairly credible" democratic context, between Islamist political actors and the Turkish political system transformed the Islamist parties strategically, institutionally, and conceptually. This understanding stems from a theory of democratization and political transformation that has been advanced by political scientists such as Samuel Huntington in order to explain the processes and motivations that underlie the growth of political parties in democratic. This theory, known as the "participation-moderation hypothesis[39]" contends that "the emergence of political opportunities can provide for shifts in Islamists' perspectives on democracy, causing Islamist parties to undergo 'internal secularization' by redefining and reinterpreting religious ideas and practices to accommodate secular ideas."[40]

While useful, this theory runs into a problem of simplistic assumptions and implications about the concept of "moderation". Leading experts on Islamist movements such as Carrie Rosefsky Wickham[41], Jillian Schwelder[42], and Murat Somer have further problematized the presumption that mere participation in democratic politics unavoidably leads to moderation. In her new book the Muslim Brotherhood, Wickham, for example, introduces the dimension of process to this theory, arguing that moderation is not an end state, but an ongoing process that may be driven by "specific experiences, incentives, and

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[39] Samuel Huntington, "How? Characteristics of Democratization: Compromise and the Participation/Moderation Trade-off" in *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 164-174.
[40] Mehmet Gurses, "Islamists, Democracy, and Turkey: A Test of the Inclusion-moderation Hypothesis." *Party Politics* (June, 2012): 2.
[41] Carrie Wickham, "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egypt's Wasat Party." *Comparative Politics* 36 (2004): 205-28; Carrie Wickham, "Islamist Parties and the Idea of Moderation." Paper presented at CSIS, Washington, D.C. (January, 2008).
[42] Jillian Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates?: Rethinking the Inclusion-Moderation Hypothesis." *World Politics* 63 (2011): 347-76

disincentives as a result of political learning."[43] She further takes issue with the term "moderation" as used by this theory, as it implies "an overarching, internally consistent, and linear process of behavioral or ideological change when in fact an Islamist group may 'moderate' its official rhetoric and practice in some areas and not in others."[44] Here Wickham makes an important distinction between behavioral moderation and ideological moderation. Both Schwedler and Wickham emphasize that "some Islamist parties may moderate their strategies and tactics before they moderate their ideology," hence underlining "the process element within moderation as a phenomenon that may occur in stages and on some issues before others."[45]

This more nuanced understanding of the inclusion-moderation theory is reflected in and useful for explaining the evolution of Islamist politics in Turkey. While there were episodes of tactical moderation in the practices and narratives of early Islamist parties like the National Salvation Party (MSP) and the Welfare Party (RP), it was not until the emergence of intraparty cleavages within the RP in late the 1990s that ideological changes visibly occurred in Turkish political Islam. Hence, strategies and tactics seemed to have preceded ideological moderation.

Following from the preceding analysis of change within Islamist movements, I argue that changes in political priorities and different modes of "moderation" in the behavior and worldview, under specific temporal and spatial contexts, of Islamist actors in Turkey result from iterated periods of political learning. Although religious objectives

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[43] Carrie Wickham, "Conceptualizing Islamist Movement Change," in *The Muslim Brotherhood* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013), 6.
[44] Ibid., 6.
[45] Quinn Mecham and Julie Chernov-Hwang, "Introduction: The Emergence and Development of Islamist Political Parties," in *Islamist Parties and Political Normalization in the Muslim World*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 8-9.

were not completely abandoned, the Turkish Islamist movement continuously reconfigured its message and actions to engage the political regime on its own terms.[46]

The following discussion on the origins and evolution of political Islam in Turkey from the first formal Islamist party, the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Paritisi* – MNP), to the current ruling party, the AKP, will show how at various occasions the Turkish Islamist movement has reframed its discourse to gain legitimacy for strategic purposes, and at what point in its history visible ideological differences appear to have surfaced.

As mentioned earlier, the existence of the religious right in Turkish politics was formerly limited to minority factions in the mainstream center-right parties such as the DP and the ANAP. However, the first political entity in Turkey echoing Islamic themes rose onto the political scene in the 1970s with the establishment of the MNP, under the guidance and leadership of Necmettin Erbakan, on 28 January 1970.[47] Erbakan and the co-founders of the MNP were associated with the "Iskender Pasa community of the Naksibendi Sufi order (*tarikat)*" that strongly furthered the notion of the formation of an Islamist party with deep roots in traditional Islamic orthodoxy.[48] The leaders of this party realized that in order to solidify their support structure and appeal to the Turkish electoral base–lying at the political and social periphery–that ascribed to their Islamic doctrinal identity, they should distinguish themselves with a narrative that was explicitly religious and traditional in its orientation. Toward this end, the MNP called for the revival of traditional values, principles, and institutions of Islam. They advanced an anti-western sentiment and criticized the Kemalist attempt to "replace the Islamic-Ottoman state and

[46] Ibid. 340.
[47] RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 40-42; Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 3; Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 131.
[48] Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 131.

culture with a Western model as a historic mistake and the source of all ills in the Turkish society."[49] Not surprisingly, such an overt stance against the establishment was perceived as a direct threat to the secular character of the Turkish republic by the Kemalist military and political elites, resulting in a constitutional ban against the MNP in 1971. As Hale and Özbudun note, the MNP was closed down partly "on account of its alleged anti-secular activities," but also "as a result of the political conjuncture created by the military intervention on 12 March 1971."[50]

Nevertheless, the disbandment of the MNP did not in any way stall the Islamist project that Erbakan and his supporters were working towards. In fact, the demise of the MNP was succeeded by the formation of another Islamist party with similar ambitions of arriving at the political forefront through the ballot box and then leveraging their acquired political power to reinstitute religious ideologies. The MNP's immediate heir was the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi*–MSP), which was established briefly after Erbakan came back to Turkey from "self-imposed exile" on 11 October 1972.[51] MSP had a similar anti-western, anti-secular agenda, which demanded a resurgence of the political and operational strategies of the Ottoman Caliphate era, and continued to "highlight a focus on the notion of public morals and virtue (*ahlak ve fazilet*)."[52] Unlike the MNP, the MSP was not only able to participate in formal elections, but was also successful as a medium-sized party in the 1973 parliamentary elections, winning 11% of the vote and 48 assembly seats.[53] The ideological differences between the other two winning parties, the CHP and the Justic Party (AP), paved the way for the MSP to enter

[49] RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 40
[50] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 3
[51] Ibid. 3.
[52] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 341.
[53] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 3

"a coalition government of the left-of-center Bulent Ecevit with Erbakan appointed as the deputy prime minister."[54] In the following parliamentary elections of 1977, however, the MSP's vote share fell to 8.6 % and its share of assembly seats fell by 50%.[55] Just as the MSP was in the process of adjusting to this new political setting and consolidating its power base, the civil conflict of the late 1970s stimulated the military (National Security Council - NSC) to intervene and redesign the country's constitution in 1980.[56] This systematic reframing of the constitution was geared precisely towards banning and eliminating not only the political parties, but also the "political leaders of the 1970s from Turkey's political future," especially the ones with Islamic orientation.[57] Notwithstanding the ban on political leaders, the MSP once again rebranded and renamed itself in response to this crackdown, and remerged onto the political scene as the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi – RP) in 1983, with Erbakan taking back executive power in 1987 after his release from prison.

What is interesting about the post-MSP period of political Islam in Turkey is that the new Islamist parties seemed to actively employ a more strategic methodology to navigate their way through the dominant fabric of the political system – each having learned something from the shortcomings of its predecessors and capitalizing on this knowledge to engineer political strategies accordingly. This trend starts to become visible especially after the MSP's experience in parliament. This is because the Islamist movement in Turkey, after coming in close contact with the democratic structure that gave it the opportunity to procure and exercise political power, increasingly mastered an understanding of the prospects and limitations of the political structure, and thus was able

[54] Ibid. 3.
[55] Ibid. 3.
[56] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 341-42
[57] Ibid. 342.

to tailor its rhetoric and behavior in a way that could potentially serve it electorally. I argue that it was precisely because of this growing knowledge of the benefits and restrictions of the Turkish political system as a result of formal participation in the political process that enabled the succeeding RP to rebrand its outward image, and triggered a process of ideological "moderation" at least on some levels within the party.

Instances of this pattern first appeared in how the RP chose to redefine itself after the closing down of the MSP. Not surprisingly, the RP did not claim to be a conservative religious movement similar to its predecessor. Rather, it suggested "a strong commitment to social justice and positioned itself as a political competitor with parties of the left," calling for radical political change as opposed to overtly calling for the resurrection of traditional Ottoman institutions and practices.[58] The RP's semi-revised discourse did not need a long time to become popular among the masses, as evident from its increased vote share after each consecutive election. A major surprise, however, came following the 1994 municipal elections, which resulted in the Islamist victory of more than 25 provincial centers, including two of the most important cities of Turkey (Istanbul and Ankara).[59]These electoral successes were a testament to the fact that the Islamist impact in Turkey was multiplying–a reflection of this could be seen further in the electoral results of 1996, which allowed Erbakan an opportunity to head an administration as Turkey's first Islamist prime minister.[60]

It is important here to note that with the RP's self-reinvention, the military and other Kemalist loyalists could not categorize it as a militant Islamist organization anymore. The new image of the party served it well in terms of establishing itself as

[58] Ibid. 342.
[59] Ibid. 342.
[60] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 342.

foremost a political party, rejecting the image of an Islamist propaganda movement that it was accused to be. Key themes of the RP's campaign included "the importance of social justice, Turkey's exploitation by the West, religious freedom, ethnic tolerance, promotion of private enterprise, creation of an interest-free 'Islamic' economy, an end to state corruption, and denunciations of an 'imperialist Zionist system' that threatened Turkey's national independence."[61] This agenda helped the RP categorize itself as an anti-system party and simultaneously maintain their underlying ideology–a legacy of the MNP–of "national viewpoint" (*milli gorus*). While on the surface this ideology called for the promotion of 'national and moral values,' the main objective, as Hale and Özbudun highlight, was to enhance the Islamic values.[62]

Another aspect of the RP's strategy that made it distinctive from its predecessors and from other Turkish political parties was its organizational structure. RP's competitor parties were generally very "elitist in their orientation and outreach, and were unable to successfully develop organic relations with the masses."[63] Unlike these other political parties in Turkey, the RP was efficient in establishing "substantial support at the grassroots level through an extensive organizational structure."[64] This meant giving special attention to local activities, such as "appointing neighborhood and street representatives that could serve as the RP's presence on the ground, attend and participate in community-based events, and most importantly dispense aid and other social services to those who had been neglected by previous governments."[65]

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[61] Ibid. 342.
[62] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 4.
[63] Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 153-160.
[64] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 343.
[65] Ibid. 343.

While the RP was gaining support at the grassroots level, Erbakan's government was in a very tough position politically. It was struggling to strike a balance between establishing a functional relationship with its coalition partners, appeasing its political constituents who were expecting substantive political and cultural changes, and avoiding provoking the military in anyway that could elicit a potential intervention. But soon some of Erbakan's radical and unparalleled domestic and foreign policies started to alienate its coalition partners and make the military and other secular political parties suspicious of its intentions. For instance, Erbakan's proposal of formulating an economic bloc of Muslim countries (D-8), his invitation to the leaders of the Sufi religious brotherhood (*tarikatlar)* for Ramadan dinner, and the "initial expansion of Islamic educational and bureaucratic organizations, as well as a new openness to Islamic identity and symbolism in the public sphere" made him and his party vulnerable to various allegations among the Kemalist establishment.[66] Similarly, the building of a mosque in the center of Istanbul, under the tutelage of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, then mayor of Istanbul, although it garnered popular support for the party and Erdogan himself, alarmed the military, which feared that it was only a matter of time before the state institutions and Turkish society were completely flooded by Islamic clerics.[67]

In addition, political constraints to stay loyal to their coalition partners and increasing pressures from the military to toe the secular line caused the RP to start to lose popular support. For example, the corruption scandal of 1996 involving key members of the Ciller Party, RP's coalition partner, compelled Erbakan to "come out publicly and defend the Ciller Party in the interest of preserving the fragile union."[68] This disturbed

[66] Ibid. 343.
[67] Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 153-160.
[68] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 343.

the supporters of the RP, who remembered "Welfare's promise to root out corruption."[69] Mounting demands from the army further forced the Erbakan government to take steps that made its constituency nervous and suspicious. Major controversy erupted when the RP, an ardent supporter of anti-Zionism, had to succumb to the military demand of signing a military collaboration agreement with Israel.[70] As a result, a large number of Erbakan's supporters in Islamic civil society groups accused him of having forgotten his promises and withdrew their support. This left the RP even more vulnerable and susceptible to military maneuvering, which eventually caused the Islamist movement to lose power and undergo yet another constitutional ban.

This occurred as a result of the NSC's growing suspicion of creeping Islamization in Turkish politics. This suspicion culminated in the military's rather direct threat to the RP that required the party to make some decisions that would mean political estrangement from those who had elected them to government. These demands included: "closure of hundreds of religious schools, tight controls over religious brotherhoods, and restrictions on Islamic dress."[71] Quite reluctantly and with slight alterations, Erbakan eventually signed the recommendations put forth by the NSC. However, there was no genuine interest or willingness shown on the part of the RP to implement the suggested recommendations. This behavior along with the persistent penetration of Islamic sympathizers into Turkish civil society and political institutions infuriated the military, which led ultimately to the fall of the RP and the forced resignation of Erbakan in June 1997.[72] The process that led to the fall of the RP is known as the '28 February Process.[73]'

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[69] Ibid. 343.
[70] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 4.
[71] Ibid. 4.
[72] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 344.

As a result, the RP had to go through a judicial proceeding in 1998 following which the Constitutional Court, citing "evidence confirming its actions against the principles of the secular republic", officially disbanded the party.[74] In the end, Erbakan and six additional central leaders of the RP (including its two vice-presidents and three MPs) were legally constrained from partaking in any political activity for a period of five years in compliance with Article 69 of the Turkish constitution.[75]

One prominent member of the RP who particularly stood out in these events was the mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Erdogan was brought under scrutiny by the local state court on charges of "dividing people by inciting them along the lines of … religious differences."[76] This allegation arose as a result of Erdogan's speech at a political demonstration in the southeastern town of Siirt, where he recited some verses from Turkish nationalist poet Ziya Gokalp: "Minarets are our bayonets, domes are our helmets, mosques are our barracks, believers are soldiers."[77] This recitation cost Erdogan his mayorship and threatened his eligibility to run for any future political office. However, with the benefit of hindsight, what is most interesting here is to see what Erdogan stood for during his time as mayor of Istanbul and to analyze, as will be shown in the following sections, how the political priorities of this staunch supporter and advocate of traditional Islamic values changed over time, as he emerged as one of the reformist members of the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* – FP), the successor of RP. Erdogan spearheaded the movement for the internal reformation of Islamist politics, calling for more harmonious relations between Islam and democracy, secularism, and universal human rights. The

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[73] Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 160-164; Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 4; RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 44-47
[74] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 4
[75] Constitution of the Republic of Turkey: http://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf
[76] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 345.
[77] Ibid. 345.

trajectory of his personal transformation will show how political actors, with iterated episodes of interaction with the political system, can modify their rhetoric and conduct in pursuit of specific political gains.

In sum, it can be argued that the RP strategically reframed its message and political image and thus enjoyed considerable electoral popularity at the municipal level. However, it was not effective in translating its rhetoric into practice and could not efficiently function as the head of the national government owing to "the constraints of governing with a coalition partner and the political boundaries set by the military establishment."[78] Therefore, most of the RP's campaign promises remained unfulfilled because of "the political compromises Erbakan had to make to remain in power."[79]

When it became clear that the RP was soon going to be shut down, the Islamist movement once again had prepared itself to reappear on the political scene with a revised identity. A few close allies of Erbakan established a new party in December 1997, this time under the name of *Fazilet* or Virtue Party (FP). In an attempt to delink itself from the RP, the FP felt the need to modify its narrative. Owing to the accumulating pressure from the secular factions of Turkish society and the notorious legacy the RP had left behind, this need was so strongly felt that the FP chose to categorically reject much of RP's 'just order' and 'national view' rhetoric. Instead, it took a more practical focus on "Republican values, a market economy, and Turkey's relationship with Europe."[80] On various occasions, Recai Kutan, a long-time friend and supporter of Erbakan and the new leader of the FP, emphasized that *Fazilet* was "not merely a new name to the same old party, but it was a new political movement with a fundamentally democratic agenda."

[78] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 345.
[79] Ibid. 346.
[80] Ibid. 346.

This is because Kutan associated the demise of the RP as "a direct consequence of grave democratic deficit in Turkey."[81] Thus, this tactical shift to calling explicitly and adamantly for a fair and democratic system emanated from FP's growing realization of the benefits it could amass with more religious and political liberty. As Mecham notes, "Under an increasingly democratic system, they believed the future was theirs."[82]

Even though the FP was able to garner moderate support with its rebranded image, it was only able to thrive for a short period of time. This is because the nature of opposition that the FP had to confront was multi-dimensional. In other words, the FP was not only resisted by Kemalist elements, but it also had to battle with the brewing internal rift ignited by Erbakan's anti-democratic policies in party politics. It is at this point that we witness a departure from merely tactical changes in the attitudes and rhetoric of Islamist actors, and a turn toward some form of meaningful ideological moderation taking place. These young modernists in the group came to realize that the secular values were not just a Western phenomenon that was antithetical to the principles of Islam, as the traditionalists in the group had them believe. Rather, they recognized that consensus (*ijma*) and other core tenets of democracy were at the center of Islamic teachings as well.

This cleavage between the traditionalists (*gelenekciler*) and the reformists (*yenilikciler*) first started to surface towards the end of RP's term in office. The division was essentially a product of a power struggle between Erbakan's loyal allies and a younger generation led by emerging party leaders such as Erdogan and Abdullah Gul.[83] While the young reformists called for a more inclusive and participatory approach to intraparty politics, the traditionalists vehemently defended the status quo. Tensions

[81] Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 164-167.
[82] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 345.
[83] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 18-19

further intensified when Abdullah Gul, the representative of the reformists, challenged Recai Kutan, the serving party leader and the representative of the traditionalist group, for party leadership at the new FP congress. While the incumbent candidate retained his leadership in a tough race, albeit with a very small margin (663 votes for Kutan and 521 votes for Gul), the growing rift between the traditionalists and the reformists further deepened and led to a short period of political chaos in the month prior to the 1999 election.[84] The traditionalists wanted the elections to be postponed until the ban that denied Erbakan's political participation was lifted, so he could officially lead the party into the next elections. Abdullah Gul and his supporters, however, were resolute that the elections take place as scheduled, realizing that Erbakan's notorious reputation among the elites and the masses alike would have negative consequences on the election results. Although the elections took place as originally planed in April 1999, the "hypocrisy of the new 'democratic' Virtue's anti-democratic move was widely apparent."[85] This concerned many of the voters who questioned whether the FP was really determined to establish a democratic order or was only absorbed in bringing Erbakan back to power. Such actions on the part of the FP also reinforced the already-prevalent military narrative that the party was no more than a camouflage for the RP, which was trying to cover its ulterior motives. As a matter of fact, "prominent members of the FP were regularly accused of 'Islamic dissimulation (*takiyye*)."[86]

Growing skepticism of the FP among the voters and military propaganda against its leadership certainly impacted the electoral outcome. The party's overall national vote share fell to 15.4% from 21% in the previous election, making it the third party in the

[84] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 349.
[85] Ibid. 347.
[86] Ibid., 347.

parliament.[87] This decline in both the vote share and its national popularity had already paved the way for FP's demise; however, it got a further blow due the headscarf controversy immediately following the elections. Merve kavacki, one of the newly elected deputies, refrained from removing her headscarf in the National Assembly and faced a backlash from the members of the secular parties on her first appearance in the assembly. Consequently, the FP became a focus for the ongoing headscarf controversy in Turkey.[88] This episode served as a pretext for the state prosecutor to launch a legal case against the FP, calling for its termination on the grounds that it was "serving as a focus of anti-secular activity and for remaining an extension of the banned Welfare Party."[89] This proceeding culminated in the final closure of the party by the Constitutional Court in June 2001.

The different competing factions within the party were also ready for this closure to materialize as it would "allow the divergent tendencies a chance to finally break from each other" and formulate their own separate identities.[90] It can be argued that the encouragement for the young democrats to break away from the existing party and form a separate entity may have arisen from their growing knowledge that "greater electoral rewards could be found outside of Erbakan's influence."[91] Hence, it was "the democratic framework that provided the incentives and the opportunity for the reformists to make the split from the traditionalist leadership."[92]

The demise of the FP thus resulted in the formation of the traditionalist-led Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi* –SP) and the Justice and Development Party (AKP)

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[87] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 5.
[88] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 348.
[89] Ibid. 348.
[90] Ibid. 349.
[91] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 5.
[92] Ibid., 5.

spearheaded by the reformists. While the SP was "reduced to an insignificant minor party with only 2.5% of the votes", the AKP showed remarkable and unprecedented success both electorally and in terms of its policies.[93] The following section analyzes in detail the creation and development of the AK party.

Political Islam in Turkey II: Formation of the AKP and Departure from Tradition

First of all, it is important to underline that the development and rise of the reformist tendencies within an Islamist party and calls for the internal reconfiguration of its traditional understandings and practices challenges the longstanding Western myth that paints Islamist movements as singular, monolithic entities with rigid, unalterable agendas that are antithetical to any form of reformation. According to this understanding, all Islamist parties are inherently incompatible with democracy and liberalism. To the contrary, the preceding discussion on the transformation of the Islamist movement in Turkey and the evolving internal cleavages within the movement shows that increasing participation in a democratic context can motivate individual political groups to moderate their discourse, conduct, and ideology, and simultaneously negotiate with the existing political system in ways that are lucrative for their political survival and success.

This motivation can clearly be seen in the AKP's redefinition of its political ideology and behavior. The AK party, led by the former mayor of Istanbul Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul, believed in a more conciliatory approach to the secular state and actively distanced itself from its forerunners, realizing that calling for an Islamist

[93] Ibid., 5.

project on the state level was political suicide. As Article 4 of Section 2.1 of AKP's party program outlines:

> Our party considers religion as one of the most important institutions of humanity, and secularism as a pre-requisite of democracy, and an assurance of the freedom of religion and conscience. It also rejects the interpretation and distortion of secularism as enmity against religion.[94]

This, Ihsan Dagi argues, was not only "a personal choice on the part of these leaders, but also a realistic political strategy," which also manifested in AKP's openness towards EU integration.[95] This meant accommodating EU requirements for membership and incorporating Western values such democratization, universal human rights, and social justice. Such policies were attractive not only to a wide array of the Turkish population, but also resonated with the worldview of most of the AK party's leadership. The AKP also saw a potential partnership with the EU as an opportunity to lessen the influence and power of the military and establish a political system that would expand religious tolerance and ensure its own political survival.[96]

While there had been instances of reinventing a party's political language with each succeeding party since the MSP, what united all Islamist parties until the formation of the AKP was a common underlying ideology of 'national outlook' (*milli gorus*). The forerunners to the AKP "maintained this ideological line consistently," although with variations in how the ideology was interpreted, presented, and applied given the pressures and constraints of the political environment in which each party functioned. Nevertheless,

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[94] AK Parti, Party Programme (Section 2.1-Fundamental Rights and Freedom): https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_

[95] Ihsan Dagi, "Turkey's AKP in Power." *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 3 (July 2008): 25-30

[96] Umer Cizre. "A New Politics of Engagement: The Turkish Military, Society, and the AKP" in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, edited by Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 122- 149.

despite their tactically engineered rhetoric and behavior, the ideology of 'national outlook' largely dictated the course for all Islamist parties until the AKP.[97] This ideology imagines "an essential and intrinsic contradiction between Western and Islamic civilizations in which the West is seen as "false" (*batil*) and the Muslim world and civilization are seen as the "righteous" (*haq*)."[98] As a result, the national outlook parties considered "all other Turkish parties as blind imitators of the West, either of its exploitative capitalist version, or its materialist socialist version."[99] This anti-Western sentiment also impacted the foreign policies of the *milli gorus* oriented governments. Erbakan and his supporters strongly rejected Turkey's prospect for accession into the EU, labeling it as an exclusive "Christian Club." According to this view, Turkey's request for EU membership "is a treason against our history, concept of civilization, culture, and most important of all, our independence."[100] Moreover, proponents and advocates of this ideology conflated the notion of Islamism with Turkish nationalism, seeing Turkey as the ultimate leader and arbiter of the Islamic world and declaring the recreation of a grand Ottoman Turkey as their chief goal. In addition, this ideology saw the founding principle of modern Turkey, secularism, as antithetical to core Islamic values and principles, and as a source of oppression on practicing Muslims.[101]

As highlighted earlier, the AKP realized that the 'national outlook' ideology was not only damaging to the image of political Islam, but it was also becoming archaic and irreconcilable with the contemporary Turkish political scene. Hence, with the AKP leadership, who themselves did not agree with most of the tenets of this ideology, we see

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[97] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 5.
[98] Ibid. 6.
[99] Ibid. 6.
[100] Ibid. 6.
[101] Dagi, "Turkey's AKP in Power," 26; Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey*, 131-139.

the recognition of a dire need for a radical departure from *milli gorus* altogether. The first thing the AKP did to disassociate itself from the 'national outlook' discourse was to re-characterize its ideology as "conservative democracy", even avoiding the label 'Muslim Democrat'. Evidence of this ideological transformation can be seen in the acronym of the party itself: *Ak* is Turkish word, whose literal translation into English means "white" or "clean."[102] This suggested that the new party was unpolluted by the corruption and fraud of the past and that it had started on a new path–one that had no resemblance to its predecessors.

Apart from the overall party transformation, there was considerable evolution in the stance of the party leader, Erdogan, as well. As discussed earlier, during his time as Istanbul's mayor, Erdogan overtly supported the idea of an Islamic nation. His statements like the following are a clear testament to that argument: "My reference is to Islam;" "Is democracy a means or an end? ... We say that democracy is a means and not an end;" "The system we want to introduce cannot be contrary to God's commands;" and "You will be either Muslim or a Secularist. These two cannot exist together."[103] However, soon after the AKP was established, "he dismissed these statements as incorrect or claimed that they had been quoted out of context and required explanation."[104] We can see a substantial shift in Erdogan's rhetoric here. In his own words:

> My political views have always been in a state of constant evolution… Turkey wishes to rest on a synthesis between its Islamic identity and modern values, thus to provide the world with a new "renaissance" perspective which can be a new source of inspiration.[105]

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[102] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 349.
[103] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 9.
[104] Ibid. 9.
[105] Tayyip Erdogan, from his speech given at the Center for Strategic International Studies on December 2004

Such a transformative statement, coming from someone who in the past has been quoted to have said: "I am a servant of *Shari'a*" and the "imam of Istanbul,[106]" is indicative of some form of evolution in his ideological outlook.

Moreover, he did not completely reject secularism anymore. Instead, Erdogan and the AKP only criticized authoritarian secularism as practiced by the CHP, and called for an inclusive secularism that was conducive to the freedom of personal beliefs.[107] In the political character and message of the AKP, one can notice traces of the center-right political tradition of Turkey that was launched with the DP and was carried over until the ANAP, as discussed earlier. This shows that the AKP and its leaders realized that the pure Islamist message of its predecessors was a "liability." Hence, in order to protect itself from the antagonism of the military and the possibility of a constitutional proceeding that could lead to its eventual closure, the AKP had to disown that image and instead create a new one. This process of creating a new image started with the withdrawal of the crescent moon logo that was associated with the Islamic identity of the Welfare, Virtue and Felicity parties; and instead the AKP designed a new logo that was "simply a glimmering light bulb with the slogan "continual light" (*surekli aydinlik).*"[108]

In addition to these symbolic gestures, the AKP also tried to strike a strategic balance in its message and appeal to a wider electoral constituency. It attempted to attract not only the traditional rural and middle class citizens of the Turkish population, but also reached out to the West-oriented, liberal-minded elites. The AKP did not completely rule out the role and significance of traditional values, as its competitors in the SP would have

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[106] Qtd. in RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 55
[107] Ahmet Kuru, "Reinterpretation of Secularism in Turkey: The Case of the Justice and Development Party." *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006), 136-160.
[108] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 351.

us believe. Rather, the AKP emphasized the need to reproduce a "system of local and deep-rooted values in harmony with the universal standards of political conservatism."[109] Hence, the AKP's political agenda was "populist in style" and it promised to act as a bridge between a customary and a modernizing Turkey. The following excerpt from Erdogan's 2004 American Enterprise Institute speech essentially summarizes the AKP's emphasis on creating equilibrium between modernity and tradition:

> A significant part of the Turkish society desires to adopt a concept of modernity that does not reject tradition, a belief of universalism that accepts localism, an understanding of rationalism that does not disregard the spiritual meaning of life, and a choice for change that is not fundamentalist. The concept of conservative democracy, in fact, answers to this desire of the Turkish people.[110]

The AKP did not only make shifts in its political and religious outlook, but also prioritized the resolution of economic issues that had plagued Turkish society for many years. Tapping into economic grievances further helped the AKP divert popular focus away from its Islamist roots. As the RAND corporation report states, the AKP knew that the IMF (International Monetary Fund) model was not functioning well and was only adding to the economic misery of the Turkish people. So, it was politically intelligent to define its 2002 election platform as "Democracy and Development," focusing on issues of poverty, unemployment and underemployment, and the deteriorating quality of life.[111] Even more, the AKP coupled these calls for bread and jobs with demands for an inclusive democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and reduced military interference in civil affairs. The devaluation of the Turkish currency, the collapse of the banking sector, and

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[109] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 9.
[110] Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's speech at the American Enterprise Institute, *Conservative Democracy and the Globalization of Freedom,* January 29, 2004, source: Yavuz, *The Emergence of New Turkey*, 333-340
[111] RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 51-56

an unprecedented economic downturn of more than 9 percent in 2001, all contributed to the demise of the previous government and the rise of AKP.[112] Being aware of the growing economic discontent among Turkish citizens, the AKP was able to reach out to both sides of the ideological divide by tapping into issues that united them both. It proposed "formalizing liberal market policies designed to attract foreign investment and integrate Turkey more closely into the global economy."[113] Increasing investment from the West and growth in the market economy triggered at home proved to be an unprecedented achievement of any political party.

These factors explain the reasons behind AKP's surprising success in the 2002 elections. This electoral success and domestic popularity, however, was not just limited to the first term. Instead, it repeated itself in the July 2007 elections, when the AKP procured 46.6% of the vote – an incredible increase, almost 12 percent from its previous vote share in the 2002 elections[114], and in the June 2011 elections with a 49.8% of the vote share.[115] In essence, these three consecutive victories made it clear that the AKP, as rightly asserted by Tanju Tosun, went on to become the majority party instead of just being a religious offshoot of the former Islamist parties.[116]

To conclude, this chapter presents a chronological account of the rise and development of political Islam in Turkey in the context of the current debate on the scope and substance of AKP's ideological and behavioral "moderation". This comprehensive account is a modest attempt at outlining the background information for the purposes of

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[112] Ibid. 45-51.
[113] Ibid. 45-51.
[114] Ibid. 49.
[115] Constanze Letsch, "Recep Erdogan wins by landslide in Turkey's general election," *The Guardian*. June 12, 2011.
[116] Tanju Tosun, "The July 22 Elections: A Chart for the Future of Turkish Politics," Private View, No. 12, Autumn 2007, p. 54. qtd. in RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 49.

comparison between the AKP and the CDU-CSU in the final chapter. The next chapter delves into a similar analytical examination of the timeline of the events that contributed to the emergence and growth of the CDU-CSU in Germany.

II. Historical Origins and the Development of Christian Democracy in Germany

Introduction

Despite the significant role Christian democracy has played in streamlining the politics, society, and economy of postwar Germany, there appears to be a dearth of extensive scholarship, both in English and German[117], on this subject historically.[118] Maria D. Mitchell, in her book *The Origins of Christian Democracy*, emphasizes that "political representations of the Catholic faith such as Christian democracy have failed to attract scholarly attention equal to their Marxist, Fascist, Liberal, or even Green counterparts."[119] David Broughton explains that one of the chief reasons behind this surprising lack of literature on such an important topic arises from "the difficulty in defining a Christian Democratic ideology, as it is hard to relate such an ecumenical ideology to other parties that can be defined and located much more easily using the left-right scale."[120] Nevertheless, this trend was at least partially reversed in the mid- and late-twentieth century with leading scholars such as Pridham, Kalyvas, Hanley, Mitchell, and Weidenfeld investing greatly in the subject. These scholars are celebrated as the founding contributors to a multi-dimensional study of Christian democracy and German politics. However, effective attempts at compiling and exploring their diverse body of literature have been less frequent. A chronological and analytical account of the flag-bearer party

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[117] Geoffrey Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany: The CDU/CSU in Government and Opposition, 1945-1976.* [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977], Intro:11

[118] Stathis N Kalyvas and Kees van Kersbergen. "Christian Democracy." *The Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010): 184.

[119] Maria D. Mitchell, *The Origins of Christian Democracy: Politics and Confession in Modern Germany*, [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012], Intro: 3

[120] David Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany: Is There Any Alternative?" in *Christian Democracy in Europe: A Comparative Perspective*, edited by D. L. Hanley [London: Pinter Publishers, 1994], 101.

of Christian democracy in Germany, the Christian Democratic Union (*Christlich-Demokratische Union*–CDU) and its Bavarian counterpart the Christian Social Union (*Christlich-Soziale Union*–CSU), thus seems extremely relevant and important for the comparative approach of this thesis. Establishing a clear and concise understanding of the historical and socio-economic conditions under which this coalition party emerged and was nurtured will serve as a contextual framework against which a meaningful comparison between the AK party and the CDU-CSU[121] can be conceived. Toward this end, this chapter intends to undertake a nuanced examination of the existing scholarship on the historical origins of the CDU-CSU, the processes and mechanisms that impacted its development, the ideological and strategic transformations that occurred along the way, and finally, the evolution of intraparty dynamics and power relations. Starting with an overarching assessment of the origins of Christian Democracy in continental Europe in general, the chapter subsequently delves into a more specific discussion of how this movement became a key player in devising the most significant policies for the postwar political agenda in Germany.

Historical Context

Christian democracy, originally in its Roman-Catholic form, emerged as a mass movement in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the beginning, it was merely a cultural opposition to the emerging notions of economic and political liberalism.[122] As Kalyvas explains, it was predominantly a mass Catholic alliance aimed at denouncing

[121] The Christian Democratic party of Germany, CDU-CSU, operates as a coalition party. The main CDU, and its Bavarian counterpart CSU formed a "working coalition" in February 1947. In certain instances, I will simply use the name CDU to refer to the different regional branches of the party.
[122] Nino Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy: Principles and Policy-Making.* Handbook for the European and International Cooperation. Berlin, Germany: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung E.V., 2011, 13.

and challenging "the ascendancy of liberalism in Europe from a fundamentalist, theocratic, and traditional perspective."[123] In addition to this, the deteriorating social conditions, especially among the working class population, that resulted from the advent of the Industrial Revolution further alarmed the Church. Premised upon "the philanthropic principles of the Christian faith, this Catholic social movement was geared towards finding solutions to social problems by resisting liberalism."[124] Nevertheless, there were subsequent proposals for the transformation of this sociocultural movement into organized political activism, as "these activists realized that their interests lay in the consolidation and further expansion of parliamentary and electoral democracy, institutions that could provide them social and political power."[125] Not surprisingly, this call for an organized political activity was not welcomed by the Church, which saw it as a threat to its own monopolistic authority over issues of religion and politics.[126] Pope Pius IX (1846-1878), for example, issued an edict straightforwardly resisting the Catholics of Italy from participating in any kind of political organization. He dismissed the practice of the "secular, political game of its members, and the competition for followers, voters, parliamentary seats and political power."[127] With Pope Leo XIII's (1878-1903) ascension to leadership, the Vatican reconsidered and eventually eased its confrontational attitude toward liberalism and other contemporary sociopolitical ideologies. It still did not encourage political activity by Catholics, which it feared could pave the way for democracy and consequently threaten the existing monarchies.[128] The Church and the

[123] Kalyvas and van Kersbergen, "Christian Democracy," 186
[124] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 16.
[125] Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Strategies and Outcome." in *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*, [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996], Intro: 1-21.
[126] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 16.
[127] Ibid, 16.
[128] Ibid, 15-16.

proponents of political Catholicism did, however, agree on the possibility of social disorder as a derivative of liberal policies, and thus mobilized collectively for social reform. As a result, Pope Leo XIII disseminated his first papal social circular called "*Rerum Novarum"* (On Capital and Labor) in 1891.[129] This encyclical was basically an attempt to propose a third way that rejected the ideas and practices of both socialist and liberal orders. Pope Leo's circular discredited the notion of unmonitored capitalism and asserted that "the free operation of market forces must be tempered by moral considerations."[130] The encyclicals further emphasized the importance of "greater fairness in wages, state involvement and regulations in the economic process when needed, and the right of association for workers."[131]

Ironically, while the Church actively avoided calling for the creation of political movements for the actualization of these social demands, the social doctrine of Leo XIII was a crucial element "for the development of Christian Democracy not only in terms of its theoretical foundations and its pragmatic approach but also with regards to the formation of political parties."[132] Employing the rationalist model of party formation, Kalyvas and Kersbergen examine the rather unusual and paradoxical emergence of confessional parties, "not as a consequence of the desire of the organized church, but in opposition to it."[133] According to this explanation, the branching out of these political parties from the control of the Church was in fact an unintended consequence of the tactical policies the Church implemented in reaction to the escalation of liberal

[129] Ibid, 15.
[130] Ibid, 15.
[131] Ibid, 15.
[132] Ibid, 15.
[133] Kalyvas and van Kersbergen, "Christian Democracy," 186.

anticlericalism and mass politics during the late nineteenth century.[134] As highlighted earlier, the church first initiated a mass social movement to shield itself from the forces of liberalism. In doing so, it formed a coalition with political parties that promised to bolster the interests of the church in exchange for its political and electoral support. This resulted in the politicization of the movement originally launched by the church for the purposes of addressing the social ills that it saw in liberalism.[135] Ultimately, the unpredicted electoral success of the church-backed parties "provided the means for the political emancipation of Catholic activists from the church."[136] The resultant political movement embraced a Catholic identity, emerging as a firm challenger to the supremacy of the church on political matters.

Using religious rhetoric for electoral and organizational motives, these new political actors gained legitimacy and popular support from a majority of their Catholic constituency. They successfully incorporated their supporters into "the newly formed social network associations, cooperative trade unions, and even political activities."[137] These new confessional parties of Western Europe soon transformed into well-organized mainstream political entities enticing people from a multitude of backgrounds–ranging from "entrepreneurs, business owners, and craftsmen" to "employees, farmers as well as workers."[138]

Radical developments in Christian Democracy surfaced after the end of the First World War. The substitution of the monarchy with democratic republics gave the political parties a new status and responsibility. For instance, the Center Party, per its

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[134] Ibid, 186.
[135] Ibid, 186.
[136] Ibid, 186.
[137] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 16.
[138] Ibid, 16.

guidelines in 1922, described itself as a "Christian popular party that … is determined to implement the basic values of Christianity in government and society, as well as in economy and in culture."[139] Its legal and administrative motivations derived from the "Christian idea of the state and government and its commitment to its role under the constitution."[140] Tragically, the Christian Democratic parties, which were staunch supporters of parliamentary politics and expansion of the social welfare state, could not sustain themselves in the face of the challenges posed by fascism, National Socialism, and communism. As a result, the democratic parties and their trade unions in Germany and elsewhere in continental Europe were ultimately disbanded a few months after "the seizure of power by the National Socialists in 1933."[141] After the Second World War, however, the Christian Democratic parties were reestablished and this time radically changed the course of politics in Europe. Immediately following the war, Western Europe was not only plagued with economic recession, but was also in a state of political turbulence. The disintegration of political institutions took its toll on the overall social makeup of post-war Europe. The old conservative parties "had been fatally discredited by their role in allowing the fascists and Nazis to come to power."[142] In such a time of political crisis, Europe needed an alternative that could not only help in the reconstruction of a dismantled system, but could also provide psychological comfort. In this context, Christian Democracy was seen as the sole savior. As Almond, in his article *The Political Ideas of Christian Democracy* asserts, "in the chaos of post-war Europe, the [Catholic]

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[139] *Richtlinien der duestschen Zentrumspartei* (1922), in Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 16.
[140] Ibid, 16.
[141] Ibid, 16.
[142] Mitchell, Maria. "Materialism and Secularism: CDU Politicians and National Socialism, 1945-1949." *The Journal of Modern History* 67 (1995): 279.

church stood as the only ubiquitous non-communist and non-Nazi institution."[143] Relying on and seeking refuge in the church as a potential cure for existing political and social problems might also have been facilitated by the fact that the Vatican officially abandoned its distrust of democracy, which had been a prevalent attitude in Catholic Christianity before WWII.[144] For example, Pope Pius XII openly endorsed democracy as a political practice compatible with the Church's ideology. This endorsement by the Vatican was a green light to observant Catholic Christians to play an active role in the politics of the postwar Europe.[145]

It was in this context that the Christian Democratic party of Germany, the CDU-CSU, was established in 1945. Although there were many offshoots of Christian Democracy in postwar Europe, the CDU-CSU coalition stands out as one of the most successful examples. The CDU-CSU has been a powerful force in German political life dominating government office for over four decades since 1949. Moreover, what makes the CDU-CSU an interesting case study is the fact that the influence of its practices and ideologies appears to have transcended the boundaries of Germany and impacted the worldview of political parties in other parts of the world.[146] The following section discusses the historical, ideological, and organizational formation of the CDU-CSU, as well as its position in Germany's post-war political atmosphere.

The Formative Years of the CDU-CSU (1945-1949):

The present discussion starts with analyzing the foundational tenets of the CDU-CSU, the processes that underlie the formation of its revised identity, the challenges the

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[143] Garbiel Almond, "The Christian Parties of Western Europe," *World Politics* I (1948): 749.
[144] Paolo Pombeni, "The Ideology of Christian Demcoracy." Journal of Political Ideologies 5 (2000): 297
[145] Hale, William. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006. 68.
[146] Kalyvas and van Kersbergen, "Christian Democracy," 200.

party faced in its early days and as an opposition, and how it finally strengthened its political position and expanded its electoral market. The basic underlying idea behind the formation of the CDU-CSU was to restore a political system based on Christian values and principles of morality to combat the ills of secularization in the postwar world. As Geoffrey Pridham describes, "the full adoption of these [Christian] principles was presented as the only real solution for Germany's future following the Third Reich."[147] This idea in turn served as the most instrumental element in the creation and legitimization of the CDU-CSU.

Moreover, although German Christian Democracy was originally predominantly Catholic in its orientation, outlook, and participation, it soon realized that the collapse of the Weimar Republic before WWII demanded the creation of a political system that could claim to represent the broader interests of German society at large and not just a particular denomination. Therefore, the first major phase "in the consolidation of the post-war party system in West Germany was the regrouping of Catholic, conservative, and, to some lesser extent, liberal political forces under the banner of Christian Democracy."[148] The shared experience of Nazi tyranny played an important role in erasing confessional divisions that had long been a dominant characteristic of German politics. Taking advantage of this new social dynamic, the Catholic CDU-CSU soon started to establish alliances with its Protestant counterparts.[149] This not only helped the CDU-CSU to expand its support base, but also allowed it an opportunity to reinvent itself as an all-inclusive party whose ultimate objective was "*Die Neugestaltung des duestschen*

[147] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 22.

[148] Ibid, 21.

[149] Geoffrey Pridham, "The Government/Opposition Dimension and the Development of the Party System in the 1970s: the Reappearance of Conflictual Politics" in *Party Government and Political Culture in Western Germany*, edited by Herbert Döring and Gordon Smith, [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982], 133.

Lebens – (The Reshaping of German Life)."[150] The ecumenical nature of its ideology with increasing "diversification and looseness" in its political narrative helped the budding Christian Democratic party assert its legitimacy and garner popular backing. The efforts of the CDU-CSU to reach out across various socio-economic and ideological barriers to strengthen its electoral base is summarized, albeit in a slightly exaggerated manner, in the following statement by an anonymous French commentator: "This party is socialist and radical in Berlin, clerical and conservative in Cologne, capitalist and reactionary in Hamburg and counter-revolutionary and particularistic in Munich."[151]

In addition to an all-encompassing program, the CDU-CSU infused a much-needed sense of optimism in German society and redirected the guilt of the past toward the call for a stable future–one that needed to be designed from scratch and that unequivocally and indiscriminately rejected the models and political conduct of the past.[152] This promise and sentiment are echoed in the CDU manifesto of 1945 called the "Frankfurt Principles:"

> We want a new Germany. A Completely different one… different from that which existed before 1933 or before 1914. We simply do not wish to continue from where our predecessors had to leave.[153]

This 'Renaissance Image' helped the CDU-CSU distinguish itself from its political competitors, such as the SPD (the Social Democratic Party), who were seen as an extension of the pre-1933 socialist party. The CDU-CSU had a freshness in its tone, which was "predominantly utopian and moralistic," and could not be ignored and

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[150] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 22.
[151] Leo Schwering, *Vorgeschichte und Enstehung der CDU* (1952): 24, qtd in Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 22.
[152] Mitchell, Maria. "Materialism and Secularism," 279-80
[153] *Die Anfrange der Christlichen Demokraten und der Lieberalen in Hessen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Baden und Wurttemberg im Jahre 1945* (1954): 60, qtd in Pridham, Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 22.

therefore resonated strongly with a large section of the German population.[154] As a result, the CDU-CSU acquired both "a positive symbolic meaning and sufficient flexibility to provide a common umbrella" that integrated different political and religious proclivities and regional factions.[155]

The next major task for the CDU-CSU, however, was to establish itself as an organized political party with a strong infrastructure. Although its narrative had started to gain momentum among the population, it lacked the structural capacities and resources to coordinate activities that could help translate popular support into tangible electoral gains. This was primarily because of the loose, decentralized nature of its administration and its absolute reliance on regional/local models of governance. As Pridham notes, "There being no effective central party machine, the burden of organizational work and decisions devolved to the regional branches of the CDU."[156] On one hand, there was a lack of willingness and consensus among most regional leaders to formulate a central body, as they were too occupied with local politics. On the other hand, "the power struggles between a few competing local leaders to assert their dominance in the CDU by means of establishing and eventually monopolizing the central authority meant that any attempt by one leader to launch a central organization was checkmated by his rivals."[157] Lack of a central authority in its formative years put the CDU-CSU at an additional disadvantage compared to its rival, the SPD. Although having lost much of its public support due to its links to pre-1933 politics, the SPD could still count on its organizational traditions and networks from the past and leverage them for political

[154] Mitchell, Maria. "Materialism and Secularism," 280.
[155] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 24.
[156] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 44.
[157] Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 103-105

mobilization.[158] By contrast, the CDU-CSU had to begin with the "rudiments of party organization."[159] The dearth of administrative and operational expertise coupled with inexperienced party members added to the CDU-CSU's frustration. Eventually, the CDU-CSU leaders organized their first national conference at Bad Godesberg in December 1945, which resulted in "the formation of an interzonal office, also known as a zone coordination committee, in Frankfurt shortly afterwards." [160]

One of the major challenges the CDU-CSU faced in order to solidify its political position in its early days was to appease the protestant electorate and accommodate their interests effectively.[161] While the alliances between the Catholic and Protestant wings of the party were formalized on an official level, there was mistrust and suspicion brewing on the local level. The attitudes and concerns of local priests, for example, were still reflective of the historical antagonism shared by the two confessional groups. Often, the solution was simply to make the idea of cooperation between Protestants and Catholics "intelligible to ordinary people", whose opinions of the 'other' were still polluted with the sentiments of prewar hostilities.[162] Paul Baush, co-founder of one of the regional branches of the CDU in Wurttemberg, conjectured that "the aim of a 'confessional bridge' appeared too 'intellectual' in the localities he visited."[163] This problem of confessional cooperation was crucial in relation to the political position of the new party, particularly during the first few years after the War. In an environment where party image and political alliances were critical for electoral outcomes, alienating an important and considerably large constituency was not an option. Hence, influential leaders of various

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[158] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 44.
[159] Ibid, 44-45.
[160] Ibid, 45.
[161] Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 105.
[162] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 44.
[163] Qtd in Ibid, 41.

regional branches of the party soon mobilized to respond to this problem by carefully considering the 'confessional arithmetic,' "in appointments to internal positions even to the extent of overpropotional representation, in the hope of attracting more Protestants into the party."[164] As a result, many important party positions were assigned to Protestants. For instance, the Hesse branch of the CDU was comprised of one Catholic chairperson and one Protestant deputy chairperson, with 16 other team members being equally divided between the two confessions.[165] Actions like these helped the party leadership bridge the confessional gap to its advantage, which was further solidified when the CDU-CSU became the governing party in the 1950s.

In sum, the shortage of infrastructure and organizational capacity, the dearth of effective resources and facilities, and inter-confessional differences were some of the most crucial challenges the CDU-CSU had to confront in the beginning of its history. This resilient party, however, overcame these obstacles relatively quickly and asserted its political position as a reliable and stable party. This was evident in the instrumental role it played in the Parliamentary (led by Konrad Adenauer–leader of the British Zone CDU-CSU) and Economic Councils of 1948-49, which were responsible for devising the Basic Law (constitution) for the new Federal Republic of Germany, which was established on 23 May 1949.[166] By the time of the inauguration of the Federal Republic in 1949, "the CDU-CSU had acquired many of its distinguishing political and structural characteristics", and had obtained domestic and national prominence.[167] Predictably, this popularity translated into the CDU-CSU's electoral triumph in the 1949 Bundestag Election, making it the strongest party in the parliament with 31% of the votes (almost

[164] Ibid, 43.
[165] Ibid, 43.
[166] Ibid, 51.
[167] Ibid, 51.

139 of the total 402 seats) leaving its strongest competitor the SPD behind with 29% of the votes and 131 seats in the parliament.[168]

Finally, the question of filling the vacuum of formal party leadership was solved easily and unarguably. Konrad Adenauer, who had been methodically consolidating his position inside the party, was seen as the perfect candidate to lead the party. Pridham notes:

> Adenauer's accepted position as the patriarch of the Christian Democrats, his chairmanship of the influential British Zone CDU and his reputation gained earlier in the year as the President of the Parliamentary Council made his nomination as CDU-CSU Chancellor candidate inevitable.[169]

Any other possible challengers were ruled out by the party, as they "lacked his [Adenauer's] tactical finesse … or they suffered from the lack of solidarity within their own political base."[170] The regional leaderships also understood the strategic significance of electing Adenauer as the party head, whose "recognized qualities as leader and whose country-wide appeal were to provide the new party with its most important single integrating force."[171] The party's collective faith in Adenauer's potential as an influential and charismatic leader was affirmed with his election as the first Chancellor of postwar Germany on 15 September 1949. This important development reinforced the CDU-CSU's political ascendancy and determined its role in the 1950s as the "Chancellor's Party."[172]

Undoubtedly, the occupation period of Germany (1945-1949) can be regarded as one of the most significant periods in the history of the development of the CDU-CSU.

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[168] Ibid, 50.
[169] Ibid, 60.
[170] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 35.
[171] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 52.
[172] Ibid, 52.

From successfully disseminating its ideological message to consolidating its support bases and reorienting the divergent and problematic tendencies within the party, as well as streamlining its administrative and organizational infrastructure to ultimately giving the new Germany an integrative leader, the CDU-CSU solidified itself in this period in a manner that paved the way for its sustained supremacy in German politics to this day.

CDU-CSU in Power I: From Adenauer to Kiesinger

After its victory in the 1949 Federal elections, the CDU-CSU established a coalition government with the liberal FDP (Free Democratic Party) and the conservative DP (German Party). The first post-war government had evoked mixed sentiments in the national consciousness. Citizens were optimistically looking to the government for economic and psychological relief as well as for cultural and social redevelopment of the new Federal Republic. Cognizant of the needs of the society and politics of the time, the CDU-CSU, under the tutelage of Konrad Adenauer, launched remarkable initiatives that helped establish their reputation and political domination in Germany.[173]

Adenauer's primary agenda of reconstructing the worn-torn Germany was three-fold: First, there was an urgent need of concrete domestic policies, especially in the arena of economics. In this regard, one of the historic reforms taken by the CDU-CSU was the introduction of a social market economy. The idea behind this new model of economy was to "object to the values of planned economy, restraining the excesses of private capitalism through the independent control of monopolies, free competitive production

[173] Sarah Elise Wiliarty, "The Postwar CDU: Origins of a Corporatist Catch-All Party," in *The CDU and the Politics of Gender in Germany: Bringing Women to the Party,* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010], 51-53

and social justice for everyone."[174] This approach was a rejection of the traditional economic policies that curtailed individual and societal achievements. Ludwig Erhard, then minister of the economy, was the engineer of what came to be called the *Wirtschaftswunder* or 'economic miracle' of Germany. As early as the 1950s, the German economy was seeing unforeseen heights: "soaring growth rates, a rapid decline in unemployment rates, incredible wage growth, stable prices, and adequate employment and social security while maintaining public accounts."[175] The success of the CDU-CSU government's economic initiatives can be gauged form the fact that some of the plans implemented in the first couple of years of its administration have survived until the present day, such as the pension system launched in 1957 with the purpose of safeguarding living standards in old age. Another important social plan introduced by the government of Adenauer was the so-called 'burden sharing' of "financial compensation of those German citizens who had been affected by wartime destruction and expulsion."[176] Such a rapid economic transformation was nothing short of a miracle. The German population that had been counting on the new administration was incredibly satisfied with these deliverables. This success in turn further legitimized the supremacy of Christian Democracy as the only viable political alternative for a prosperous German future.

The second part of Adenauer's agenda included strengthening ties with the West and European integration. Adenauer understood the multifarious benefits that alignment with the West could yield in terms of asserting Germany's position in the international community. This understanding resulted not only from his concerns about the Soviet

[174] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 34.
[175] Ibid, 34.
[176] Ibid, 34.

expansionist project and his adamant anti-communist stance, but also from his belief that "our cultural origins and our ethos make us part of Western Europe."[177] His unwavering commitment to the objective of coalescing with the West was soon translated into various reforms and treaties. For instance, with "the Treaties of Paris on 5 May 1955, the Federal Republic regained partial sovereignty and became a member of NATO."[178] This recognition of partial sovereignty in turn led to the formation of the *Bundeswehr* (German Federal Military), within the framework of NATO, and subsequently, the initiation of general conscription in 1956.[179] Furthermore, Adenauer focused on making the possibility of European integration a reality. Toward this end, he spearheaded several intra-European coalitions during his time in office, such as "the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM)."[180]Finally, the third project on Adenauer's agenda was to reconcile with the Jewish people and their representatives.[181] This effort was very important for Germany to indicate to the international community how remorseful Germany was of its past and that it was heading towards an advanced path.

The preceding discussion of the CDU-CSU's initial domestic and international policies shows the sharp political acumen with which the party, and especially its leader and Germany's first Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, operated. Such an incredible first decade attested to the CDU-CSU's competence as a reliable and steadfast political machine. The national sense of pride and faith in the CDU-CSU was reflected in the elections of 1953 and 1957, with CDU-CSU winning 45.2% and 50.2% of the votes

[177] Ibid, 35.
[178] Ibid, 35.
[179] Ibid, 35.
[180] Ibid, 35.
[181] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 62-63

respectively.[182] Not only was its support base solidified, the CDU-CSU was able to woo away supporters of its archrival, the SPD. This was evident in CDU-CSU's takeover of the SPD's electoral constituency, leaving the SPD with only 16.4% and 18.4% of the total votes in the 1953 and 1957 elections respectively.[183] As Pridham summarizes, "This strength of electoral successes together with the impact of the Government's policy successes helped to explain the public's recognition of the CDU/CSU's dominance."[184]

Interestingly, even though the party was doing impressively in office until 1959 and its image was quite rosy on the surface, internal confrontations started to brew towards the end of the first decade of its leadership. This marked the beginning of a period of calls for internal reformation.[185] There are two key explanations for this new emerging intraparty phenomenon. The first concern was the renewed threat of the SPD's expanding influence on CDU-CSU's electorate. After having suffered colossal electoral defeat in the elections of 1953 and 1957, the SPD was determined to reassert its political position by revising its rhetoric and by reconfiguring its organizational and administrative apparatuses.[186] This strategic reinvention proved quite successful for the SPD, causing serious damage to CDU-CSU's share of the votes in the 1961 Bundestag Elections.[187] Suffering such a major electoral defeat for the first time in any Bundestag election since the War came as a big blow to the CDU-CSU. This especially alarmed the youth groups within the party about the party's future. The party saw this failure as a direct result of its absolute reliance, institutionally and psychologically, on Konrad Adenauer, and the lack

[182] Ibid, 50.
[183] Ibid, 50.
[184] Ibid, 51.
[185] Pridham, "The Government/Opposition Dimension," 134-135
[186] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 114.
[187] Ibid, 115.

of a consolidated party identity independent of Adenauer.[188] Hence, the party was famously known as being the "party for the Chancellor," as opposed to being a "governing party."[189] A leading daily newspaper, *Christ und Welt* (Christ and World), once remarked: "Adenauer's political weight had concealed many weaknesses of the party for it appeared as if people in the Union regarded the existence of Adenauer as a sufficient substitute for hard organizational work."[190] Fear of this seemingly irretractable dependence on a single party figure soon transformed into another major concern about the succession and its implication for the party's position in the post-Adenauer era. It was widely accepted that the 85-year old Chancellor would have to step down before the next elections in 1965. Hence, the party had no choice but to reorganize itself as a central, leading force and depart from its previous role as an auxiliary body that operated at the Chancellor's behest. However, in the context of the economic recession that afflicted Germany in the early 1960s, the party also had to shift its focus in its immediate policies.[191] While calls for internal adjustments did not stir formal debates and did not result in substantive structural changes within the party at this point, the seeds of reformation had been sown.

Subsequently, in the context of the economic crises and as a result of his declining political prominence, Adenauer, under extreme pressure from the FDP coalition party at the time, resigned in the aftermath of the Federal parliamentary elections in 1963.[192] The German Bundestag appointed Ludwig Erhard as the second Chancellor of Germany on 16

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[188] Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 113-115.
[189] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 57.
[190] Chris und Welt, 7 May 1959, qtd. in Pridham, Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 57, as qtd. in Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 57.
[191] David Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 115
[192] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 142.

October 1963.[193] Although he was a celebrated economic minister and was famous for having designed the economic miracle of post-war Germany, Erhard was unable to maintain his former reputation during his Chancellorship. Erhard's reforms were met with criticism both from within the party and from the German population at large. Even though he was re-elected as Chancellor in the 1965 elections with the CDU-CSU winning 47.6% of the national vote, this electoral success did not translate into popular support for his policies.[194] With the advent of "economic and budgetary difficulties in 1966 which resulted in the second recession during the post-war period and a sharp increase in unemployment rates," his reputation as an economic specialist and as an able national leader was tarnished further.[195] Consequently, amidst growing criticism, the CDU-CSU's coalition partner withdrew from the government and Erhard resigned from office on 1 December 1966.[196] Interestingly, the CDU-CSU formed its next coalition with its longtime political rival, the SPD, in December 1966, known as the "Grand Coalition" of 1966.[197] As a result, "Kurt Georg Kiesinger (CDU-CSU) was appointed Chancellor, Willy Brandt (SPD), the governing mayor of Berlin, became Vice Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Karl Schiller (SPD) was appointed Minister of Economics." [198]This Grand Coalition lasted for about 3 years until 1969, when the CDU-CSU coalition, after having remained in office for two decades, was sidelined to the opposition benches, and a new coalition government was formed between the FDP and the SPD. Increasing mistrust in the CDU's leadership and its socioeconomic policies as a result of two economic recessions since 1960 coupled with other political parties gaining

[193] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 37.
[194] Ibid, 37.
[195] Ibid, 37.
[196] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 164.
[197] Ibid, 164-165
[198] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 37.

momentum and appealing to the electoral market by tapping into these economic grievances were the reasons attributed to CDU-CSU's electoral defeat. However, this defeat reinvigorated calls for restructuring the party that had previously surfaced towards the end of Adenauer's rule. Thus, the ensuing 13-year period in the opposition benches marks one of the most important periods in the CDU-CSU's political history, which paved the way for internal reflection and much-needed policy adjustments.

The CDU-CSU in Opposition and Internal Adjustments

After having been in power for two decades and having served as the founding leaders of German politics, the loss of office was very traumatic for the morale of the CDU-CSU. Pridham explains that the reality was so hard for the CDU-CSU to make sense of that for a long time it stayed in a state of denial. While it served as an opposition party in the government, it acted like a "governing party in the waiting-room."[199] In the words of Ranier Barzel, the party chairman from 1964-73, the CDU-CSU "did not unpack its bags," implying that it was only a matter of time before it reassumed the office that was exclusively and rightfully theirs.[200] However, this attitude was transformed radically in the aftermath of the 1972 elections, in which CDU-CSU experienced massive electoral defeat at the hands of the SPD-FDP coalition. Observers at the time had started to call the CDU-CSU a party of the past, that "it was electorally in a structural minority situation," or that "it was in danger of setting into a shrinking process."[201] This was a wake-up call for the party to readjust itself and address the intraparty grievances that had been brewing since the latter half of the 1960s.

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[199] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 188.
[200] Ibid, 188.
[201] Rudolf Wildenmann, "CDU/CSU: Regierungspartei von morgen – oder was sonst?' in *R. Lowenthal and H.P. Schwarz, Die Zweite Republik* (1974): 345, 361, qtd in Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 207.

This process of change coincided with the appointment of a new leader to the party Chairmanship in 1973. Helmut Kohl, at the age of 29, was the youngest member in the state parliament of the Rhineland-Palatinate.[202] Kohl, much like Adenauer in his determination and personality, played an important role in the revival of party practices. It was under his tutelage that the CDU-CSU acquired a more contemporary and professional demeanor. Particularly, the party "strengthened its programmes, increased the number of full-time staff and strengthened local structures."[203] Moroever, he was successful in appealing to more members from a multitude of socio-economic backgrounds, causing the party membership to rise to an unprecedented height of 700,000.[204] Kohl was famous for having transformed the CDU-CSU into a "modern and efficient people's party."[205]

When Kohl took office, one of the challenges the CDU-CSU had been facing was its reliance on traditional methods of governance, which meant looking to one leader to dictate the course of the party. However, Kohl attempted to critically reassess this deeply entrenched tradition and called for developing the CDU-CSU into a "pragmatic political force."[206] As a result, a new mechanism of 'programmatic revitalization' was put in place that aimed at institutionally and ideologically integrating the divergent and loosely-linked multiple factions within the party. Other developments in this period included emphasis on youth participation. Compared to the previous chairmen of the CDU-CSU, Kohl (43 at the time) was able to use his persona as a relatively young leader to solicit support from the youth of the party. He also invested in equipping the young people with adequate

[202] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 40.
[203] Ibid, 40.
[204] Ibid, 40.
[205] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 212.
[206] Ibid, 208.

resources and expertise needed to establish and solidify connections within and outside the party.[207] Kohl emphasized the need of modernizing party methodologies and practices and the role of the new generation in it in one his earlier interviews: "The changes in the society, the growing up of a new and younger generation, the consequences of the Bundestag elections for our policy – all this must be well considered."[208] As a result, special efforts were made to respond to the demands of the younger generation and to cultivate informed dialogues and debates within the party. Lastly, Kohl was aware of the growing disintegration within the party because of its long history of loose organizational structure. In one of his interviews, he openly admitted this flaw and resolved to overcome it by promoting intraparty democracy:

> Integrating does not mean sweeping conflicts or problems under the table. It means rather promoting conditions which make it possible for conflicts to be clearly and fairly carried through; that in a party no hostile reactions develop, that in the course of objective conflicts one can say clearly and decisively: that this will be carried through, then it must be voted on and then the will of the majority will prevail, during which one must always remember that the majority can be wrong and the minority can be right.[209]

By encouraging collective participation, Kohl attempted to reach out to the minority groups within the party that had previously felt disenfranchised and were frequently left out of the process of decision-making, leading, in many cases, to defection from the party.

With its revised programmatic and organizational makeup, the CDU-CSU was ready to effectively engage yet again with its electoral constituency. One of Kohl's goals

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[207] Ibid, 214.
[208] Helmut Kohl, *Aufbruch in die Zukunft (1973)*: 6, qtd. in Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 224.
[209] Der Spiegal, 4 June 1973: 36, qtd. in Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 215.

was to give the party "new ideological motivations." He realized that the growing popularity and influence of the SPD necessitated that the CDU-CSU reinforce its rhetoric and present to the German people an alternative to the values presented by the SPD (hence the new slogan, 'Alternative 76').[210] For this purpose, Kohl made every effort to remind the people of Germany of the CDU-CSU's original identity as an ideologically flexible and all-encompassing party–an aspect of its character that was proactively publicized by Adenauer, but had been gradually forgotten. In his speech to the Manheim Congress in June 1975, for example, Kohl underlined this very idea:

> The CDU is today *the* liberal, *the* social, *the* conservative party in the Federal Republic of Germany – based on firm principles but not ideologically constricted, it is prepared for acting decisively with clear alternatives in German policy.[211]

In times of declining economic conditions, reiteration of the fact that the CDU-CSU was an all-inclusive party which, unlike its socialist counterpart, the SPD, gave precedence to the values and interests of the federal republic above any personal, party-related agenda was received very well by its electoral audience. All of these internal and external transformations revised the overall party image and led to its eventual return to government after having spent 13 years in the opposition benches. With the breakup of the SPD-FDP coalition, Helmut Kohl was finally appointed as the Federal Chancellor on 1 October 1982.[212]

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[210] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 222-229
[211] *Bundesparteitag der CDU* (1973): 61-62, qtd. in Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany,* 225
[212] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 40.

CDU-CSU in Power II: From Kohl to Merkel

Helmut Kohl is regarded as one of the most successful leaders in German political history. Soon after his arrival in office in 1982, he undertook substantive reforms in order to revive the country's economy. His focus was to strengthen the principles of Ludwig Erhard's social market economy. His effort in turn led to "the stabilization of social security contribution rates and the lowering of both government expenditures and inflation rates."[213] As a result of his robust economic policies, Germany's "gross domestic product steadily rose while the number of people in employment rose to 2.24 million in the period between 1982 and 1989 and the rate of annual government borrowing declined."[214] In addition to its focus on economic reforms, Kohl's administration is remembered for the historic event of German reunification. On November 28 1989, Kohl presented a 10-point proposal to the parliament recommending steps for the first phase to accomplish reunification.[215] As a result, "the currency, economic, and social union between the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic was created on 1 July 1990 followed by the signing of the Unification Treaty, which spelled out the details of German reunification, on 31 August 1990."[216]

Moreover, following in the footsteps of Adenauer, Kohl also invested greatly in increasing intra-Europe integration. His European policy success stories include "the Schengen Agreement of 1985, which aimed at abolishing all internal border controls; the Maastricht Treaty of 7 February 1992, which created the European Union and led to the creation of the economic and monetary union (EMU); and the Amsterdam Treaty of 2

[213] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 40.
[214] Ibid, 40.
[215] Ibid, 41.
[216] Ibid, 41.

October 1997, which allowed for institutional and structural reforms of the EU."[217]Despite these initial victories, the second half of Kohl's 16-year leadership was confronted with some serious challenges, such as that of incorporating an economically feeble East Germany into the broader western German society. With growing domestic pressure from the SPD-led parliament and other political opposition groups, the CDU-CSU, under Kohl's apt leadership, was eventually able to manage steady reparation of these socio-economic fractures. As a result of his remarkable contribution to the reformation of the party's programmatic leadership, ideological motivations, and organizational structure, political experts regard Kohl as the one of the most influential figures in the history of the CDU-CSU.[218] The testament to this popularity and success of Kohl's policies can be seen from his repeated electoral successes in 1983, 1987, 1990, and 1994, and the accolades he received from the international community for his insightful leadership.[219]

Eventually, however, the CDU-CSU was pushed back once again into the opposition after not being able to secure a majority of votes in the parliamentary elections of 1998. Having served in the opposition for seven years, the party re-emerged, acquiring office with a resounding electoral victory in the 2005 federal parliamentary elections, this time, however, with a female party leader. Angela Merkel, the first female Chairperson of the CDU-CSU, was appointed as the party head on 10 April 2000.[220] Two years later, Merkel assumed the leadership of the CDU-CSU parliamentary group. Although she initially faced resistance from some conservative factions of the party, she was soon able to establish a place for herself within the party. Her charisma, wisdom, and political

[217] Ibid, 41.
[218] Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 113-116
[219] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 41.
[220] Wiliarty, "Introduction," I

acumen gained her admiration domestically and internationally. Interestingly, apart form being the first woman Chancellor and the youngest candidate to hold this office, Merkel is also the first Chancellor to be born and raised in the German Democratic Republic (GDR).[221]

Under Merkel's leadership, the CDU-CSU, after procuring 35.2% of the national vote in the 2005 elections and consequently becoming the strongest faction in the German Bundestag, formed a Grand Coalition with the SPD.[222]Although the focus of the CDU-CSU's policies has not changed much since Kohl, with Merkel's arrival as the party head, the party has definitely been investing more significantly in strengthening its foreign policy. This involves taking active measures to foster relations with other western countries, especially Germany's neighbors, Poland and France, and its strategic partner, the United States. Merkel has also reached out to countries like China, India, and Russia to cultivate positive and healthy diplomatic relationships.[223] Moreover, under Merkel's leadership, the CDU-CSU has shown support and advocacy for the cause of global human rights and social justice. Another interesting policy that Merkel's CDU-CSU has explored extensively is the debate on climate protection. This doesn't come as a surprise, considering Merkel's role as Minister of the Environment in the early 1990s. She is remembered to have "organized and hosted the first United Nations conference on the issues of climate and environment in 1995."[224] This meeting "marked the start of global efforts at reducing the emission of greenhouse gases."[225] Her resolve to address this issue also reflects in the policies she implemented as Chancellor. One of the commitments she

[221] Ibid, II.
[222] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 44.
[223] Ibid, 44.
[224] Ibid, 44.
[225] Ibid, 44.

made immediately after her assumption of office was agreeing to "Germany's obligation to reduce CO2 emissions in a swift and sustainable manner."[226] Her innovative and proactive stance on different local and international policy issues earned her respect and admiration within the party, among the opposition groups, and among the ordinary population of Germany. Her popularity proved lucrative for the party in the following national elections of 2009, which gained the CDU-CSU, and its coalition partner the FDP, an absolute majority in the Bundestag.[227] By winning over 332 out of 622 seats, this new Christian-liberal coalition appointed Angela Merkel as Chancellor of the Federal Republic for the second time.[228] Merkel's second term in office, however, was followed by a severe episode of global economic and fiscal crisis. The efforts of the administration were thus dedicated chiefly towards the economic reconstruction of the society.

With all these successes, intelligent political decisions, and wise party leadership, the CDU-CSU has regained the trust of its followers, which it seemed to have lost in the 1970s. Enjoying its position as the ubiquitous political party with an all-embracing campaign message, the CDU-CSU dominated yet another federal elections in 2013, winning 41.5% of the votes and forming a coalition government this time with the SPD.[229] The consecutive electoral successes of the CDU-CSU are a vivid indication of the fact that it has been able to satisfy a vast majority of the German population. Given the number of years it has served in office since the formation of the Federal Republic and the various instrumental policies and reforms it has instituted, the CDU-CSU can be

[226] Ibid, 44.
[227] Wiliarty, "Introduction," III.
[228] Ibid, III.
[229] P.K. and K.N.C. D.H. "German Election Results: Who's in the Haus?" The Economist, September 23, 2013.

unequivocally regarded as the major architect of postwar German socio-political and economic history.

To conclude, the intention of this chapter was to accomplish two goals: first, to draw a chronological sketch of the political history of Germany and the role its leading political party, the CDU-CSU, has played in it. This account is extremely important considering the dearth of resources, both in English and German, that deal with the question of Christian democracy in Germany. Often ignored as a convoluted ideological system, the Christian democracy is definitely understudied. A few experts on the subject, however, have tackled its various themes and explained each of them in great detail, but scarcity of a comprehensive account that entails, with a decent degree of detail, the origins and evolution of the Christian Democratic movement in Germany is palpable. This chapter is a modest attempt to fill that vacuum. Second, the contents of this chapter offer a nuanced historical insight into the career of the CDU-CSU, highlighting especially the processes and dynamics of its evolution. This insight in turn will serve as the context and the background for the comparative issues discussed in the next chapter. In other words, looking exclusively into the pre-war history of Germany, followed by an examination of the formative years of the CDU-CSU, and finally, observing its ideological, organizational, and behavioral evolution as the leading political party establishes a concrete blueprint, on which a substantive and academically valuable comparative study between the CDU-CSU and the AKP can be envisaged.

III. Comparing the Turkish AKP and the German CDU-CSU: Conditions of Development, Ideology and Rhetoric, Support Structures, and Policies and Initiatives.

Introduction

Building on the analysis from chapters 1 and 2, the first section of this chapter draws comparative conclusions about the historical circumstances/conditions of emergence of the AKP and the CDU-CSU. The results from this section in turn set the premise for the comparative analysis undertaken and the conclusions derived in the following sections. Starting with a detailed examination of the ideological formation of the two parties, the second section then compares the political language and discourse embraced by these parties and their motivations behind them. The succeeding section compares the attributes and significance of the support structures of the two parties. The final section evaluates, through a comparative perspective, the policies advocated, developed, and implemented by the AKP and the CDU-CSU as the heads of their national governments.

Conditions of Development

The first two chapters of the thesis have outlined a detailed account of the origins and evolution of religious and political movements in Turkey and Germany, and of the AKP and the CDU-CSU in particular. While the preceding chapters provide two separate, although extensive, accounts of the emergence and development of the two political parties under study, this section will briefly draw some comparative conclusions based on those accounts.

One underlying similarity evident in the formative years of both the AKP and the CDU-CSU was the compelling need felt by these parties to define themselves primarily in terms of what they opposed, and not necessarily in terms of what they stood for. This, for the most part, was an outcome of the crises from which they emerged. By no means is the severity of the crisis in the two cases analogous, but it was the sentiment of helplessness among the population and its distrust of the former practices and institutions that obliged the emerging parties to market themselves as reparative and productive alternatives.

The CDU-CSU, for example, was born in the aftermath of the Second World War when the majority of the German population, which was morally, financially, and psychologically damaged, needed a fresh social and political force–one that did not just condemn the values and behaviors of the past, but in practice stood in stark contrast to the very nature and essence of its Nazi predecessor. Similarly, when the AKP emerged in 2001, Turkey was in the midst of one of the gravest economic crises in its history.[230] The Turkish people censured the economic institutions and practices of the past as they awaited the arrival of a new and fresh political force with a constructive agenda. As Arda Kumbaracibasi notes, "Most of the parties that governed prior to the AKP's formation were entangled in corruption and incompetence." They were also willfully ignorant of and insensitive to the peculiarities of Turkish economic problems, which, in turn, paved the way for Turkey's economic debacle of 2001.[231] Moroever, there was brewing discontent among the population concerning the mounting authoritarian pursuits of the

[230] Ziya Onis. "The Political Economy of Turkey's Justice and Development Party" in *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz, [Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006], 207-235.
[231] Arda Can. Kumbaracibasi, "Party Ideology" in *Turkish Politics and the Rise of the AKP: Dilemmas of Institutionalization and Leadership Strategy*, [London: Routledge, 2009], 155.

Kemalist establishment. The AKP's rejection of the assertive political ambitions of the Kemalist leadership and its subscription to the notion of transparent democracy and a free-market economy, as opposed to the state-centered economy of the past, evoked optimism among a vast majority of Turkish citizens.

In such situations, the recognition of the emerging AKP and the CDU-CSU and the resonance of their political messages depended as much on what notions and practices they rejected as on the alternatives they presented. Hence, the main parallel that can be drawn between both parties is the fact that both movements were formed following a period of serious economic, political and moral crisis, which, in turn, greatly impacted the formation of their political identities.

What makes the circumstances of development of these two parties different, on the other hand, were the structural and constitutional restrictions, or lack thereof, that preceded their respective formations. For example, the preexisting institutional frameworks that the AKP had inherited from the political system from which it emerged restricted its political conduct in many ways.[232] Unlike the CDU-CSU, the AKP did not have the opportunity to reconstruct the basic political institutions and structures of society from scratch. As Kumbaracibasi states, "The legacy of its forerunners and the secularist bounds imposed by the Turkish constitution" made it obligatory for the AKP to continuously negotiate and work out its relationships with the existing system.[233] The CDU-CSU, on the other hand, was born in a context where "the war had swept away old structures as well as ideas."[234] It was not restrained by previous constitutional and

[232] Umer Cizre. "A New Politics of Engagement: The Turkish Military, Society, and the AKP" in *Democracy, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, edited by Ahmet Kuru and Alfred Stepan (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 123-124.
[233] Kumbaracibasi, "Party Ideology," 156.
[234] Ibid.,156.

structural constraints, and thus was not expected to abide by any preset tenets and principles from the past. This, in turn, provided the CDU-CSU with an opportunity to become an influential voice in the creation of Germany's foundational constitution, which determined Germany's socioeconomic and political future in the postwar period. The preceding analysis shows that while there are some similarities in the historical circumstances of the AKP and the CDU-CSU, there are equally, if nor more, profound differences as well. This is because the CDU-CSU, unlike the AKP, did not have a legacy of association with formerly banned religious parties that were seen with suspicion in the society. Moreover, the political environment in which the CDU-CSU emerged had no constitutional or structural limitations, as the political models of the past had been swept away as the result of WWII. The AKP, on the other hand, had to strategically navigate its way by bargaining with the deeply entrenched elements of Kemalist elements. These conditions at the time of the respective emergence of both the AKP and the CDU-CSU determined their ideology and identity in large ways.

Ideology, Identity, and Rhetoric

The ideologies of the two parties can be defined in part as the product of their rejection of the political worldviews and practices of the past. This makes even more sense once they are examined within the context of the similarities between the dominant political systems in Turkey and Germany prior to the AKP and CDU-CSU's political ascendancy. As my discussion with Dr. Vincent Cornell revealed, the Nazi Party of Germany, apart from its "satanic aspects," was ironically quite similar in certain aspects of its ideology to the Kemalist party of Turkey: both parties were radically secular, anti-religion and anti-tradition, totalitarian, and staunch proponents of state-centered

nationalism.[235] Although the severity and extent of their approach and actions against the conservative-religious factions of society may have differed, the basic elements of the two ideologies seem quite in line with each other. It is therefore no surprise to witness the rise of oppositional elements, particularly from the religious segments of the society, against such extremist ideologies in both Germany and Turkey. In Germany, for example, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), a Lutheran pastor and theologian, emerged as a fervent anti-Nazi dissident who opposed the blatant tyranny of the Nazi party and rebelled against its immorality.[236] Similar figures with a moral and ethical standpoint, inspired by the principles of faith, emerged in Turkey as well. For instance, Erdogan and Abdullah Gul, similarly to Said Nursi, renounced the ideas and practices of Kemalist totalitarianism and ultra-secularism. It was in this context of religious and ethical reformism that certain significant tenets of AKP and CDU-CSU's identity were shaped, at least in their rudimentary forms.

As a result, The CDU-CSU classified itself primarily as an anti-Nazi party, "viewing the Third Reich as the pinnacle of atheism and materialism."[237] This anti-Nazi stance is evident in the opening paragraphs of the *Kolner Leitsatze* (The Guiding Principles of the CDU) issued in June 1945:

> National Socialism has plunged Germany into a catastrophe, which is without parallel in her long history. It has covered the German name in the eyes of the whole world with shame and humiliation. All this would not have overwhelmed us if wide circles of our nation had not let themselves be governed by an avaricious materialism. In this way far

[235] Notes from bi-weekly thesis discussions; supervisor: Dr. Vincent Cornell. 16 Oct. 2014
[236] Dietrich Bonhoeffer Biography – text qtd in http://www.christianity.com/11536759/
[237] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 25*

> too many fell victim to National Socialist demagogy, which promised each German a paradise on earth.[238]

This preamble shows that the CDU-CSU was anti-Nazi "not only from a political-ideological standpoint, but also from a moralistic view."[239] A similar sentiment was voiced at an intraparty conference in March 1946, where the British Zone CDU reiterated the need for the "purging of Nationalist Socialist thinking" and the discarding of the principles of Nazism owing to its "devaluation of individual human life and thought and its general effect on German society."[240] Interestingly, the CDU-CSU's self-identification as a resistance movement against the notions of National Socialism reverberates even in the current manifesto of the party. As Article 4 of Section I of the party manifesto states:

> The spiritual and political principles of the CDU-CSU are a result of patriotically motivated resistance to National Socialism.[241]

This clearly indicates that one of the key aspects of the CDU-CSU's identity is its antagonism and opposition to Nazi values and actions.

Even though the AKP also characterized itself as a challenger to the institutions and practices of the past, unlike its German counterpart, it was constrained from overtly condemning or discrediting the actions and ideologies associated with the Kemalist establishment. As Chapter 1 has highlighted, the AKP emerged in a constitutionally restricted environment that had been harsh to anti-Kemalist dissidents, particularly to parties and leaders with a religious orientation and history. In order to navigate through this minefield, the AKP employed a strategic use of its political language. By establishing

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[238] Leo Schwering, *Fruhgeschichte der Chrislich-Demokratischen Union,* qtd. Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 25*
[239] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 25*
[240] Qtd. Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 25*
[241] Party Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union of German, agreed during the 21st party congress in Hanover 3th– 4th December 2007, pg. 6, source: http://www.cdu.de/international

the necessity of the renunciation of radical secularism and state-centered nationalism (which were the underlying tenets of Kemalism) as a precondition for transparent democracy, freedom of expression, and social justice, the AKP established itself as an anti-status quo party without having to explicitly reject Ataturk and his ideals. For example, the AKP's party program clearly outlines:

> No individual or institutional oppression is acceptable…The right for citizens to participate in the public decision mechanisms indicates that a democratic regime is not a one-way regime, and that it is a two-way interaction by those who govern and those who are governed. Therefore, the right to participate does not only mean to be able to vote during the election, but also to have the ways open for the citizens to make, implement and control the implementation of the public decisions.[242]

By rejecting the notion of a "one-way regime", the AKP, in turn, subtly criticized the authoritarian aspect of the Kemalist establishment. This strategic move prevented the AKP from being directly targeted by Kemalist loyalists or being labeled as "anti-Atatürk" or "anti-secularism"– consequences that Islamically oriented parties of the past had faced for being overtly critical.[243] Such an understanding of the structural limitation of the AKP emanates, as Chapter 1 argues, from its years of political learning. Ideologically, both the CDU-CSU and the AKP identified themselves as parties that stood in stark contrast to the ideas of ultra-secularism and totalitarianism-'the essential elements of Nazism and Kemalism'-which, in the national imagination, were understood as primary causes of the crises of the past. However, their rhetorical strategies and political language differed owing to the structural constraints, or lack thereof, of the systems in which they emerged.

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[242] AK Parti, party program, source: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_

[243] Kuru, "Reinterpretation of Secularism in Turkey," 136-160.

As stated previously, another important component that plays an essential role in the formation of the AKP and the CDU-CSU's identity is religion. References to religion are clearly visible in the CDU-CSU's initial campaign messages to its electorate. Following the horrific period of the Nazism and WWII, the German people were in the need of an alternative that was not only politically viable, but also psychologically comforting. In this situation, the adoption of Christian ethical principles as the basis of political life was presented as the only real solution for Germany's future following the Third Reich.[244] As the CDU-CSU's original party program from 1946, the Neheim-Husten Program, states:

> …the Christian outlook on life must again replace the materialistic outlook, and instead of the principles resulting from materialism must come the principles of Christian ethics. They must be the determining factor in the rebuilding of the state and in fixing the limits of its power, in the rights and duties of individuals, for economic and social life, for our culture and for the relationship between peoples.[245]

However, German society eventually became much less religious than it was at the time of the formation of the CDU-CSU in 1945. According to I.D. Connor, the regularity of Church attendance by German Catholics declined from 61% in 1953 to 32% by 1987, with a similar trend observed in Protestant attendance, falling from 18% to just 4% during the same time period.[246] Interestingly, despite the influence of organized religion steadily waning during the last decades of the 20th century, the practice of invoking Christian values as the guiding principles for German politics echoes even to this day in

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[244] McCauley, "The Rebirth of Democracy: Political Parties in Germany, 1944-49," 39-40
[245] Leo Schwering, *Fruhgeschichte der Chrislich-Demokratischen Union,* (appendix p. 223), qtd. Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 25*
[246] I. D., Connor, "Social Change and Electoral Support: the case of the CDU-CSU, 1949-1987, in Kolinsky, E., *The Federal Republic of Germany. The end of an era,* Berg: Oxford, 1991, 83-118

the party's manifesto. For example, Article 10 of Section I of the current manifesto asserts:

> The CDU-CSU assumes the responsibility of maintaining and strengthening the Christian-based values of our free democratic system. They are the standards and points of orientation of our political behavior. Our basic values of freedom, solidarity and justice originate from there.[247]

This shows that referencing religious values and principles in political rhetoric, even in a time when German society appears to have become almost entirely secularized, still resonates with public opinion.

Akin to the CDU-CSU, the AKP also has a religious character. Although the AKP categorically rejects the idea of political institutions based on religious legal codes and traditions, it does acknowledge Islamic ethics and morality as an important ingredient in the formation of universal values of justice and equality that are indispensable for good governance. Then Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's speech of 2004 to the American Enterprise Institute in Washington D.C. summarizes this idea:

> Universal values are embodied in the concept of democracy and supported by principles such as human rights, rule of law, good governance are the product of the collective wisdom derived from different civilizations, and Islam has played a central in forming this collective wisdom.[248]

At the same time, the AKP's association with Islam has been rather complicated since its inception, especially because of the notorious legacy of its pro-Islamist predecessors.

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[247] Party Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union of German, agreed during the 21st party congress in Hanover 3th– 4th December 2007, pg. 7, source: http://www.cdu.de/international

[248] Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's speech at the American Enterprise Institute, *Conservative Democracy and the Globalization of Freedom,* January 29, 2004, source: Yavuz, *The Emergence of New Turkey*, 333-340

Unlike the CDU-CSU, the AKP has never enjoyed the privilege of openly espousing theological values and principles for its electoral ambitions. Nor does the official discourse of the AKP have any apparent reference to the role of religious teachings in informing its political ideas or behavior. As Hakan Yavuz argues, while Islam does inspire "the core identity of the ruling AKP and its conceptions of society and character," the AKP has been averse to labels such as "political Islam," "Muslim Democracy," or any insinuation that might render it vulnerable to a backlash from the secular establishment.[249] Echoes of this sentiment can also be found in the AKP's party program:

> Our Party refuses to take advantage of sacred religious values and ethnicity and to use them for political purposes. It considers the attitudes and practices which disturb pious people, and which discriminate them due to their religious lives and preferences, as anti-democratic and in contradiction to human rights and freedoms. On the other hand, it is also unacceptable to make use of religion for political, economic and other interests, or to put pressure on people who think and live differently by using religion.[250]

As Chapter 1 has shown, this aversion is the result of the AKP's realization that it would not be politically expedient for it to define itself in religious terms. Apart from its obvious concerns about potential retaliation from the ultra-secular factions of the Turkish state, the AKP's lack of insistence on merging Islam and politics seems to arise from its knowledge of the priorities of its electorate as well. One could argue that the AKP's consistent stance on establishing and maintaining an inclusive secular state is not in fact at odds with the aspirations of its Muslim-majority electorate. This means that the majority of the AKP's voters do not see a contradiction between being a Muslim and being secular. A survey conducted by the Turkish Economic and Social Studies

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[249] M. Hakan Yavuz, Secularism and Muslim Democracy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
[250] AK Parti, party program, source: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_

Foundation (TESEV) in 2008, in which 1500 interviews were conducted in 23 Turkish provinces, indicated that more than 70% of the AKP voters (those who responded) oppose "a state based on religion or implementation of the *Shari'a*," and only 9% favor this, declining from 27% in 1995, 20% in 1998, and 16% in 2002.[251] The same survey also reported that when asked about the attributes that Turkish people would like their Federal leaders to possess, the respondents said the following:

1. Having an exemplary lifestyle for modern Turkey (86% of respondents);
2. Being a devout Muslim (74% of respondents);
3. Being a guardian of secularism (75% of respondents).[252]

Overall, the survey shows that the idea of being a Muslim in Turkey is not mutually exclusive from being secular and wanting a state, but not necessarily a society, that separates itself from the rules and regulations dictated by the religious literature and traditions of the majority. This validates my argument that the AKP's reluctance to invoke Islam and *Shari'a* in its political narrative does not only prevent it from potential backlash from Kemalist loyalists, but is also strategically viable, as it appears to be in line with the priorities of at least a large majority of it constituency. Campaigning in purely Islamist language could in fact have been counter-productive, as we see in the case of the SP, another offshoot of the *Fazilet* Party, which, despite having a pro-Islamist platform, ended up with only 2% of the votes in the 2002 elections.[253] Thus, by abandoning its Islamist image and rebranding itself as the flag-bearer of liberal democracy, human

[251] The TESEV Study (Carkoglu and Toprak, 2006) qtd. in RAND Corporation, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 23-25
[252] Ibid., 23-25
[253] Mecham, "From the Ashes of Virtue, a Promise of Light," 339-58.

rights, and a welfare market economy, the AKP was able to successfully avert Kemalist counterattacks and simultaneously prevent the alienation of its electorate.

However, this does not indicate that the AKP has completely disassociated itself from religious values and principles. Ihsan Dagi, in his essay *The JDP: Identity, Politics, and Discourse,* has argued that the AKP has changed its focus from "political" to "social" Islam.[254] This means that instead of the political representation of Islam, voters have opted for a conservative-centrist approach that is expected to gradually create social and economic networks of Islam.[255] Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in his speech to the American Enterprise Institute in 2004, emphasizes this very distinction:

> While attaching importance to religion as a social value, we do not think it right to conduct politics through religion or to attempt to transform government ideologically by using religion … Religion is a sacred and collective value…It should not be made a subject of political partisanship causing divisiveness.[256]

The preceding discussion shows that the AKP has been both strategic and meticulous about how and when to incorporate religious language in its rhetoric and political literature, realizing that the growth of Islam's political representation can be self-defeating and could lead either to military intervention or the possible alienation of a large section of its electorate.

Overall, evaluating the AKP and the CDU-CSU through a comparative lens, I would argue that a common trend in both parties is their representation of religious moral

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[254] Ihsan, Dagi. "*The JDP: Identity, Politics, and Discourse" in The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006. 88-107

[255] Ibid., 88-107

[256] Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's speech at the American Enterprise Institute, *Conservative Democracy and the Globalization of Freedom,* January 29, 2004, source: Yavuz, *The Emergence of New Turkey*, 333-340

and ethical values in secular terms. This has been done more subtly done in the case of the AKP and more explicitly done in the case of CDU-CSU, at least in its formative years. In other words, a shared element that appears in the ideologies and identities of both the parties is the association of ethical notions of religion in the popular imagination with good governance, rule of law, and human rights. Rhetorically, however, the CDU-CSU seems to be at greater liberty to make this association explicit in its political discourse, despite increasing the secularization of German society. This can be attributed to the fact that, unlike the AKP, the CDU-CSU cannot be linked to a former religious party with an infamous reputation for an extremist religio-political agenda. By contrast, in the case of the AKP, the expression of religious values seems to occur on the social level, not on the political level. This is not only because of the structural constraints and its historic Islamist connection discussed above, but also because of the electoral arithmetic of the Turkish population, which, although it appears to be quite pious socially, tends to support a conservative-centrist politics as opposed to a strictly religious politics.

A final aspect that appears to be present in the mobilization strategies of both the AKP and the CDU-CSU is their catchall appeal. Postwar Germany, which was divided in terms of both confessionalism and class, sought an adhesive force that could bridge these divides, and account for the needs and interests of German society at large. The CDU-CSU sensed this need and immediately capitalized on it by constructing an all-inclusive narrative that spoke to different groups of people from different backgrounds.

The first cleavage to overcome was the religious divide between the Protestants and the Catholics, on social and political levels alike. Chapter 2 explains in detail, this was a derivative of the historical animosity and estrangement between the two

confessions. To address this issue, there was constant assertion in the CDU-CSU's official discourse that the "question was not of one confession or the other, but of the existence of the Christian faith in Germany altogether." [257]The CDU-CSU realized that the strengths of each confessional group would make up for the weakness of the other, which, in turn, promised lucrative electoral outcomes. As Adam Stegerwald, a Christian Trade Unionist, famously said in his speech to the Congress of Christian trade unions:

> What is needed is a union for constructive forces … a strong Christian-national people's party, which the Protestants cannot create by themselves because they lack the necessary unity … and the Catholics are also too weak to organize themselves."[258]

Cognizant of the urgency of a solution, CDU leaders, like Konrad Adenauer, took strenuous initiatives to procure the support and cooperation of Protestant political leaders and activists.[259] Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that "Bundestag members of Protestant background held leading party positions, most notably Ludwig Erhard, the Federal Republic's second Chancellor."[260] Such gestures, along with a conciliatory and ecumenical narrative, were useful in helping the CDU-CSU establish its image as a non-divisive entity, and, as Pridham concludes, "reveal how much they considered [overcoming the confessional divide] the crucial step in establishing Christian democracy as a political force in postwar Germany."[261]

In addition, the CDU-CSU, in its efforts to reach out to a large cross-section of German society, endeavored to make a cross-class appeal. By characterizing itself as a "classless" party, the CDU-CSU showed its ardent disapproval of traditional parties of

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[257] Qtd. Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 27*
[258] Qtd. in Arnold Heidenheimer, Adenauer and the CDU: 1960, 7.
[259] Nino Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy: Principles and Policy-Making.* Handbook for the European and International Cooperation. Berlin, Germany: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung E.V., 2011.
[260] Ibid., 2011
[261] Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 27*

both the left and the right.[262] The CDU-CSU's official platform condemned discrimination on the ground of socioeconomic status and advanced a narrative of egalitarianism by accentuating its constituents' common identity as German Christians.[263] This, in turn, created the basis for the Christian Democrats' proclamation that they embodied a political strength with broad appeal as the *Volkspartei* (People's Party). As a result, the CDU-CSU has been "closely identified with farmers, the self-employed, and white-collar, as well as blue-collar industrial workers."[264] The significance of a classless policy for a prosperous Germany is reflected in a speech of one of the founders of the party, (Protestant) Pastor Hermann Lutze:

> Everything depends on whether we can establish links with the working class. The Christian Democratic party ought not to be simply a middle-class party, for the Christian worker must feel that his rights are just as much spoken for as any other class.[265]

This classless ideology of the CDU-CSU became engrained in its character and to this day, is a defining attribute of the party. The preamble of the party manifesto explicitly states:

> The CDU is the people's center catchall party. It still possesses vividly the political strands of thought, which resulted in its foundation…It relates to all persons of all types of levels and groups in our country.[266]

Just as with the CDU-CSU, clear indications of a catchall narrative can be found in the official party literature and rhetoric of the AKP as well. In the case of the AKP, this was achieved by introducing a new ideology called "conservative democracy." The

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[262] David Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 101-121
[263] Ibid, 101-121.
[264] Wiliarty, "The Postwar CDU," 51-79.
[265] Ulrich Fosche, Entstehung und Entwicklung der Christlich-Demokratischen Union in Wuppertal, 1945-50 qtd. in Qtd. Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 28*
[266] Party Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union of German, agreed during the 21st party congress in Hanover 3th– 4th December 2007, source: http://www.cdu.de/international

central idea behind this ideology was to propose a balanced and open appeal to all sections of Turkish society that surpassed the boundaries of belief, regions, and socioeconomic status.[267] As William Hale and Ergun Özbudun note, "The secret of the success of the AKP was to forge a cross-class coalition that included both the winners (Anatolian bourgeoisie) and the losers (the working class, poor recent urban migrants)."[268] Moreover, the AKP was mindful of the fact that its Islamist past was starting to taint its image, with some assertive secularists accusing the AKP of having a 'hidden agenda' of creating an Islamist regime in Turkey. In order to combat such accusations, to depart from the official ideology (*milli* gorus) of its Islamist predecessors, and gain the trust of Turkish citizens from all cross-sections of the society, the AKP forbade the use of any metaphors or symbols that only spoke to a particular section of the society. Rather, it presented itself as a center-right party aspiring to establish a welfare state that attended to the demands of all citizens regardless of their sociocultural or economic background. The AKP's party platform states this objective in clear terms:

> Our Party embraces without discrimination, all of our citizens, regardless of their sex, ethnic origins, beliefs and opinions. On the basis of this pluralistic concept, it is one of our Party's fundamental objectives to develop the consciousness of citizenship and to share with all our countrymen, the pride to possess and belong to the country where we live.[269]

Promoting his party as a "societal center," Recep Tayyip Erdogan in his speech at the First General Congress of the AKP on October 12 2003 further reinforced the view that "the AKP's conservatism meant a process of gradual change and evolution that sought to

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[267] William M. Hale and Ergun Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey: The Case of the AKP* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 20-23
[268] Ibid., 22
[269] AK Parti, party program, source: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_

negotiate and reconcile with the changing attitudes and demands of the Turkish public."[270] He saw democratic conservatism as a means to bridge the gap between the state and society, and to unite the center with the periphery. He concluded his speech by claiming that the AKP "repudiates religious, ethnic, and regional nationalism as the 'red lines' of the party."[271] This meant transcending divergent tendencies and seeking to stress a common, supra-partisan identity that united the entire Turkish population. Just as the CDU-CSU underscored the shared identity of its citizens as Christians, the AKP emphasized the Turkish sense of nation and its republican values as a unifying force. An example of this invocation of Turkish identity can also be seen in the party's 2002 campaign slogan '*Hersey Turkiye Icin'* (Everything is for Turkey).[272]

The AKP was also conscious of another deeply engrained division in Turkish society which broke along the lines of tradition and modernity. While the majority of AKP's voters preferred an inclusive and democratic state as opposed to a state based on *Shari'a*, on the societal level, many of them also held traditional and religious values in high regard.[273] What made this group uncomfortable was the prospect of increasing Westernization and modernization, which they feared would culminate in an end to the traditions that they held dear. On the other end of the spectrum was the pro-modernization group, which was already suspicious of the Islamist past of the AKP and worried that with greater power, the AKP would eliminate the modern and Western values that defined the post-Ottoman Turkish identity. By pledging to strike a balance

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[270] The First Regular Grand Congress of the AKP, the speech by the Party Chairman R. Tayyip Erdogan, Ankara AK Parti Yayinlari, 2003) qtd. in William M. Hale and Ergun Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 25.
[271] Ibid., 25.
[272] William M. Hale and Ergun Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey*, 25.
[273] Tepe, "A Pro-Isalmic Party?" 107-136.

between tradition and modernity and showing how these two sets of values do not have to be mutually exclusive, the AKP promulgated an integrative narrative aimed at overcoming this discord. The AKP's understanding of conservatism "is not the preservation of the existing institutions and relationships, but the preservation of certain values and acquisitions. Such preservation does not mean being closed to change and progress, but means adaptation to development without losing the essence."[274] In his 2004 speech, Erdogan addressed this issue in the following words:

> The new understanding of conservative democracy…rests upon the social and cultural traditions of our people. Our aim is to reproduce our system of local and deep-rooted values in harmony with the universal standards of political conservatism. We are for a conservatism that is modern and open to change, not one which rests on keeping the status quo.[275]

This demonstrates that the new ideology of "conservative democracy" was intended to serve as a unifier among different competing worldviews in Turkish society. This, of course, is not to say that a catchall narrative was successful in appealing to everyone. There were extremist sentiments on both sides of the spectrum that were not satisfied, but such a fresh and ecumenical description of Turkish identity did resonate with many people who were initially suspicious of the AKP's intentions at first.

In sum, I would argue that both the CDU-CSU and the AKP offered what I call a "middle trajectory", which functioned as an accommodating and synthesizing center that successfully enticed a large cross-section of German and Turkish society by providing a sense of collective identity and practical goods for all. Hale and Özbudun have also noted

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[274] AK Parti, party program, source: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum

[275] Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's speech at the American Enterprise Institute, *Conservative Democracy and the Globalization of Freedom,* January 29, 2004, source: Yavuz, *The Emergence of New Turkey*, 333-340

this trend toward a broad and general appeal in the coding of the language of the two party manifestos. As acknowledged in the introduction of chapter 2, one of the reasons why Christian Democratic parties in general, and the CDU-CSU in particular have been understudied is the convoluted nature of their ideology. This, say Hale and Özbudun, is the result of their catchall narrative, which makes it hard to place the party on the conventional left or right scale. Similar breadth and diversity can be observed in the party program of the AKP. While most of its policies and initiatives seem self-explanatory and to the point, there is still some ambiguity about how the party intends to interpret its ideology of democratic conservatism on different issues in the long run. This deliberate ambiguity and flexibility in the literature of the two parties, I argue, further attests to their aspirations of presenting themselves as catchall parties.

Support Structures

A closer analysis of the social support structures of the AKP and the CDU-CSU also reveals some striking similarities as well as contrasts, especially when observed against the backdrop of the preceding discussion of the scope and limits of their ideologies, identities, and rhetoric. In its early decades, the CDU-CSU coalition garnered electoral support mainly from Protestant and Catholic religious constituencies. As mentioned earlier, the CDU-CSU had the luxury of openly appealing to the electorate in the name of a unifying Christianity. As David Broughton notes, “The Christian Democrats [of Germany] have a particular and long-term strength in the church-attending group of Catholics. The weaker the ties of Catholics to their Church, the stronger the SPD

[German Socialist Party] becomes."[276] By disseminating political messages among religious congregations in the local Churches, the CDU-CSU was able to amass popular support. This translated into rewarding outcomes at the voting booths, as can be seen from the following statistics: in the federal elections of 1976, 54% of the electoral support for the CDU-CSU came from the Catholics, out of which 82% were "regular Catholics," who attended Church weekly; the rest of them were "irregular Catholics," who at least attended Church annually.[277] While bringing the voters to the ballot box by espousing religious themes and morals was a useful mobilization strategy for a long time, with the decline of religiosity and the rise of secularization in German society (as shown by the statistics in the previous section), the percentage of CDU-CSU's support coming directly from practicing Catholics weakened substantially.[278] The new secular masses, especially the youth, were primarily concerned about the political and economic policies of the parties, as opposed to their religious affiliations.

The CDU-CSU was further able to solidify its social base among the middleclass and the working class alike by reiterating the cross-class narrative discussed above. Most notably, its support originated from middle class groups such as "the self-employed, executives and directors, and from the non-unionized working classes and white-collar workers."[279] There are three other social variables that can give us an idea of the overall outreach of the CDU-CSU in German society. First, the CDU-CSU tends to attract the older population of Germany more effectively than its younger population. David Broughton shows that "the party has consistently underpolled among the two youngest age groups (18-24 and 25-35) while it has overpolled in the oldest group (60+ years)

[276] David Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 101-121
[277] Ibid., 101-121
[278] I. D., Connor, "Social Change and Electoral Support," 83-118.
[279] David Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 101-121

compared to its overall electoral performance."[280] Second, the CDU-CSU has historically been able to accrue more support from women than from men. This is can also be attributed to church attendance, given the fact that the turnout of women for congregational activities in the churches was considerably higher than that of their male counterparts.[281] However, this gender gap seems to have declined since 1972 in comparison with the 1950s and 1960s –for example, the difference in gender representation fell from 9.7% in 1965 to 2.6% in 1987.[282] Third, a difference in the regional participation also contributes to the overall support structure of the CDU-CSU. Regionally, the support base of the party is divided between the North and the South. The party's support "appears to be the weakest in the northern states such as Hamburg and Bremen and strongest in the southern states such as Baden-Wurttemberg and Bavaria."[283] This does not come as a surprise, considering that the CDU-CSU's popularity "is higher in the small towns and rural areas of the South than the large cities and urban conglomerations of the North, which tend to lean more towards the SPD."[284] This regionalism in the voting patterns of the German electorate is an important determinant of where the CDU-CSU solicits much of its political support. Finally, Christian democracy in Germany, which originally emerged as a social movement, has had strong alliances with nongovernmental organizations such as "Catholic Action and Catholic labor unions", and it still continues to derive electoral support from a wide variety of such networks.[285] In sum, given the long history of the CDU-CSU in German politics, considered against the background of how much the basic structure of postwar German

[280] Ibid.,101-121.
[281] I. D., Connor, "Social Change and Electoral Support," 83-118.
[282] David Broughton, "The CDU-CSU in Germany," 101-121
[283] Ibid., 101-121
[284] Ibid, 101-121.
[285] Ibid., 101-121.

society has changed since its genesis, it can be argued the CDU-CSU relies on a widespread but increasingly deinstitutionalized social base.

In comparison with the CDU-CSU, the Turkish AKP, which inherited a strong and well-organized grassroots presence from its predecessor the RP, has been more successful in maintaining a loyal and consistent sociological base.[286] As was the case in the early decades of the CDU-CSU, the AKP's support derives largely from its conservative-religious supporters. While structural limitations keep the AKP from openly appealing to the Muslim electorate based on Islamic values, statistics show that the AKP has still been able to garner substantial support from Turkish voters who hold religio-cultural conservatism in high regard.[287] This is because the AKP is seen as a much better alternative to the elitist, authoritarian, and radically secular CHP, which is notorious for curtailing fundamental rights and freedoms with regard to religious observance. As of 2006, 53.3% of Turkish voters saw the AKP as the party "that protects rights of the people with a religious way of life more than other parties."[288] This does not mean that the Muslim electorate desires an Islamic state, but they still seek a tolerant society that is conducive to their beliefs and practices. The reason the AKP is able to promise such a society without raising more suspicion is because it vows to protect the right to freedom of religious expression under the banner of fundamental human rights in the context of a democratic system and in compliance with its pledge to embrace modernity without compromising the essence of deeply rooted Turkish traditions. In addition to its image as the protector of traditional values, the AKP's support among the conservative-religious population of Turkey can be associated with its concrete social presence in the form of

[286] Alve Cinar, "The Justice and Development Party: Turkey's Experience With Islam, Democracy, Liberalism, and Secularism." *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 43 (2011): 529-41
[287] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 28.
[288] Cited in Ibid., 28.

various "philanthropic foundations (*Vakiflar*)."[289] These foundations, which had a long history of affiliation with Islamist parties like the RP and the FP, offer "welfare services to the needy in the industrial suburbs of Istanbul and other cities."[290] These welfare activities entail "traditional Islamic charities such a providing meals for the needy through public kitchens and distributing fuel and groceries to poor families, along with establishing and equipping hospitals and clinics, providing transport and dormitories for students, distributing furniture and used clothing to the poor, and providing jobs or even spouses."[291] These organizations give AKP politicians a voter base in the poor sections of urban society, which appears to be lacking in Christian democracy in Germany.

Moroever, like its German counterpart, the AKP has also been able to secure political support through its reputation as a "classless" party. Just as with the CDU-CSU, this class-based patronage is also reflected in the regional division of the AKP's support structure. Preliminary surveys during the 2002 elections demonstrated that "the AKP was particularly well supported in central and eastern Anatolia, as well as the Black Sea region, but that it also had significant support in working-class districts of big cities in the West."[292] However, AKP's age and gender based support groups do not seem too divisive to draw concrete conclusions about their electoral implications, unlike in the case of the CDU-CSU.

Finally, another similarity between the AKP and the CDU-CSU's support structure is their connections with various nongovernmental organizations. However, this is legally troublesome in Turkey, as under the Political Parties Law, "parties are not

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[289] Hale, William. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*. Edited by M. Hakan. Yavuz. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006. 66-88.
[290] Ibid., 66-88
[291] Ibid., 66-88.
[292] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 32.

allowed to engage in political relations and cooperation with trade unions, foundations, cooperatives, or professional organizations."[293] Despite this restriction, there are many nongovernmental organizations that can be linked to the Islamist parties in Turkey. Just like the Catholic labor organizations in the case of the CDU-CSU, the AKP has alliances with labor confederations such as Hak-İŞ (the Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions), which is an umbrella labor union with 22 different member unions.[294] In terms of its connections with business groups, the AKP is strongly affiliated with MUSAID (Independent Industrialists and Business Associations), which represents "smaller but rapidly growing firms in central and eastern Anatolia, and TUSAID (Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association), which mainly works in association with "far bigger business establishments in Istanbul and other industrial cities of Western Turkey."[295]

From the preceding discussion, we can conclude that both the AKP and the CDU-CSU have been able to leverage their religious affiliations for solidifying their support structures, but in different ways. While the CDU-CSU, at least until the incidence of religiosity started to fade away from German society, was able to reap electoral and mobilization benefits by explicitly citing Christian doctrines and philosophies, the AKP capitalized on its social presence among Islamic philanthropic networks that it had inherited from its forerunners. Moreover, both parties had strong alliances with various business networks and other nongovernmental organizations and were able to bank on their catchall, classless identities to further extend their social outreach among the

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[293] *Siyasi Partiler Kanunu*, no. 2820, art. 92; text in Sahver Everdi, ed. *Secim Mevzuati* (Istanbul, 138) qtd in Hale, William. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." 68-88.
[294] Hak-İŞ - Official Website: http://www.hakis.org.tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=188&Itemid=4
[295] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 32.

working class, the middle class, and large industrial establishments alike. What makes the two parties different, however, was that the CDU-CSU did not have any previous parties whose support structure it could benefit from. Second, the CDU-CSU has now been in German politics for over 6 decades, making it very hard for it to maintain a consistent social base as a result of the remarkable social transformations that have taken place in Germany since its formation. As a result, unlike the CDU-CSU, the AKP has been able to maintain a widespread and still unified institutionalized support structure. This makes one wonder whether the AKP will preserve its base in the coming years in the face of changing social circumstances in Turkey.

Policies and Initiatives

The final section of this chapter attempts to compare the political, economic, and socio-cultural policies of the two parties, with a focus on what the official stance of the parties on these policies is, what their motivations behind certain policies are, and how successful they have been in implementing them.

Political Policies

Since its inception, the CDU-CSU has been determined to establish a political foundation inspired by the notions of liberal democracy, human rights, and social justice. In the aftermath of a tragic war, moral and institutional reconstruction meant creating systems of checks and balances that could preclude such a horrific conflict from happening again. A highlight of this commitment can be seen in the Guiding Principles of the CDU-CSU presented in December 1946:

> The Union rejects dictatorship and collectivism in all shapes and forms. Democracy is for us more than a form of government; it is an attitude of life, which has as its basis respect for human personality. Such a real democracy remains always aware of the rights of the minority when exercising the will of the majority.[296]

Although these liberal ideas, emphasizing in essence individual freedoms with respect to the state, were originally formulated in reaction to the moral degradation of the Third Reich, they eventually became the foundational elements of the political and civil institutions of postwar Germany. The CDU-CSU's commitment to democracy and social justice was soon formalized and translated into the new constitution of the Federal Republic. Articles 1 and 20 of the German Basic Law explicitly state:

> The Federal Republic of Germany is a democratic and social federal state. All state authority is derived from the people. The legislature shall be bound by the constitutional order, the executive and judiciary by law and justice…
>
> Human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.[297]

One can safely conclude that the liberal and democratic values celebrated by the founding leaders of the CDU-CSU were not just empty words. The successful institutionalization of these values led to the establishment of a state that ranks among the top ten democracies of the world today (see figure 1).[298] As Figure 1 shows, Germany, under the leadership of Angela Merkel, has shown subtle growth on the democracy indicator, moving from rank 11 in 2008 to rank 8 in 2014. The freedom score further endorses Germany's democratic credentials, scoring it 1.0 (on a scale of 1 to 7, 1 being the best

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[296] 'Die dreissig Punkte der Union' in *Grundungsurkunde der CDU-CSU* (1971), p. 8, qtd. in Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany, 29*

[297] Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany; source: https://www.bundestag.de/blob/284870/ce0d03414872b427e57fccb703634dcd/basic_law-data.pdf

[298] Global Democracy Ranking: http://democracyranking.org/?page_id=14

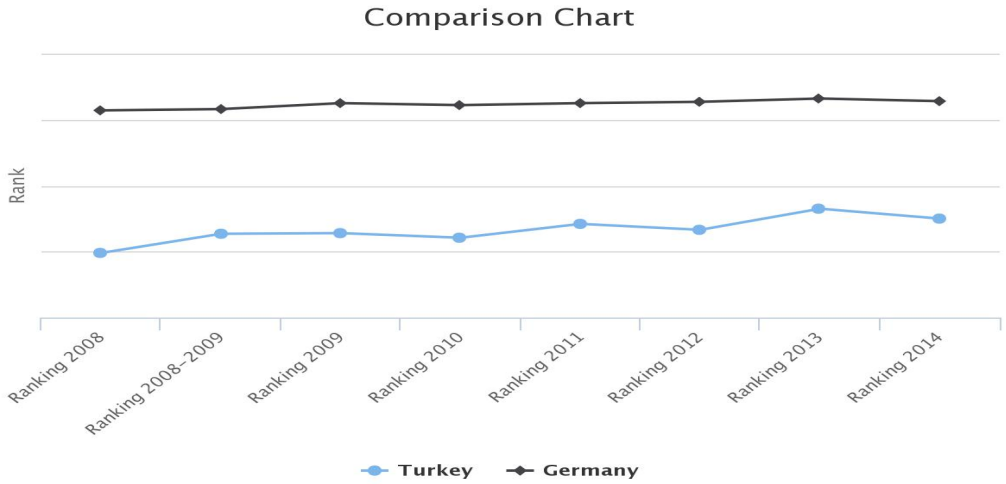
and 7 being the worst) on both civil liberties and political rights.[299] This proves that the CDU-CSU's commitment to democracy, human rights, and political freedom since its inception in the 1940s has been sincere and consistent. Another aspect of the CDU-CSU's policies that makes it stand out is its appreciation and encouragement of civil society groups. The party manifesto of the CDU-CSU expresses this commitment in the following words:

> Associations and civil society organizations and groups belong to an active and free civil society. They determine independently their duties within the limits of the general welfare. They carry on the social and political discussions.[300]

Figure 1:

Germany Global Democracy Ranking 2008: 11

Turkey Global Democracy Ranking 2014: 71



Germany Global Democracy Rankin 2014: 8

Turkey Global Democracy Ranking 2014: 64

Source: Global Democracy Ranking: http://democracyranking.org/?page_id=14

Similar to the CDU-CSU, the official literature of the Turkish AKP also stresses the importance of democracy, human rights, organized civil society and social justice. Invoking the notions of democratization and freedom of rights was strategically significant for the AKP too. The AKP realized from the experience of the past that to take advantage of political openings in Turkey and confront the assertive and authoritarian

[299] Freedom House; source: https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2014/germany#.VSD5_zt4p3w
[300] Party Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union of German, agreed during the 21st party congress in Hanover 3th– 4th December 2007; source: http://www.cdu.de/international

Kemalist elements, it would have to employ the language of democracy. As a matter of fact, the AKP was quite creative with its presentation of the idea of democracy, calling for a "pluralistic democracy" rather than a "majoritarian democracy".[301] As the AKP's party program states:

> The AK Party believes that competition among different political choices is an indispensable condition of a healthy democratic system, and the majority's will is not absolute. Majorities should never interfere with the fundamental rights and freedoms, and must respect the rights and freedoms of those in minorities.[302]

In its initial years in power, the AKP managed to follow this philosophy steadfastly. This was made easier by the fact that the EU presented Turkey with a "road map" for liberal reforms and the improvement of human rights as a precondition for the start of membership negotiations. Consequently, the AKP government continued an important program of constitutional and legal changes through a series of "Harmonization Packages."[303] Initiatives like these proved that the AKP was willing to address the "undemocratic legacy that it had inherited."[304] Such initiatives helped the AKP earn a political rights and civil liberties score of 3.0 (a one point improvement since the previous score) by the Freedom House freedom indicator.[305] Figure 1 also shows that the AKP, like the CDU-CSU, has shown an upward trend for democracy and freedom of rights, moving from rank 71 in 2008 to 64 in 2014.[306] However, it is important to note that even though both countries show an upward trend, there is an enormous gap in their overall ranks. This indicates the quality of their democratic institutions and shows how

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[301] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 32.
[302] AK Parti, party program, source: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_
[303] Hale and Özbudun, *Islamism, Democracy and Liberalism in Turkey,* 35.
[304] Ibid., 76-81
[305] Freedom House; source: https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2014/germany#.VSD5_zt4p3w
[306] Global Democracy Ranking: http://democracyranking.org/?page_id=14

committed the parties are, in relation to each other, to translate their rhetorical promises into concrete, effectual policies.

In addition, the AKP has been the proponent of an engaging and interactive civil society as well. Abdullah Gul, former President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, in his speech to the International Conference of Islamic Civil Society held on May 1, 2005 in Istanbul, reinforced the importance of a well functioning civil society:

> Civil society organizations are among the main driving forces that contribute to forming an environment of freedom where human creativity can be mobilized so as to find rational solutions to the problems…[civil society organizations] act as a bridge between government and the people, and carry great potential to facilitate the reform processes.[307]

With some exceptions, until recently the AKP has been able to uphold these principles by translating them into practical initiatives, such as the "Harmonization Packages" mentioned above. However, this trend seems to be changing, according to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International reports.[308] These reports suggest that there are visible signs of growing authoritarian tendencies in Turkey. Events such as the crackdown on Gezi Park protestors in the summer of 2013, the ban on YouTube and Twitter, the arrest of a TV celebrity for insinuating President Erdogan's totalitarian attitude, and increasing limitations on social and print media[309] have correlated, according to some observers of Turkey[310], with the declining interest of Turkey in EU integration. This decline in interest has been associated with the growing frustration of

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[307] Foreign Minister, Abdullah Gul speech to International Conference of Islamic Civil Society held on May 1, 2005, Istanbul

[308] HRW World Report: http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/turkey?page=1 ; Today's Zaman, *Amnesty International warns Turkey becoming authoritarian toward critics*, February 25, 2015: http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy_amnesty-international-warns-turkey-becoming-authoritarian-toward-critics_373637.html

[309] Ibid.

[310] Jamie Dettmer, "*Is Turkey Turning Away From the West?"* September 26, 2013; source: http://www.voanews.com/content/is-turkey-turning-away-from-the-west/1757738.html

the Turkish government toward delays in the process of accession, with President Erdogan's alleged inclination towards asserting Turkey's role as a regional leader in the Middle East and Central Asia, and his controversial statements against the West. Declining interest in the EU coupled with recent crackdowns on civil society groups in Turkey has led some to conclude that the AKP was never genuinely committed to the democratic values at all, but was only taking democratic initiatives to satisfy the criteria for entrance into the EU.

In the light of the preceding discussion, we can conclude that the CDU-CSU of Germany and the AKP of Turkey show similarity in their strong commitment to the notions of liberal democracy, human rights, and civil society. However, in terms of practice, while the CDU-CSU's policies seem in compliance with its rhetoric, the AKP's position has been rather inconsistent. While the AKP for a long time has managed to abide by the principles it laid out in its party programs (mostly as result of its aspirations for EU integration), recent events have suggested a turn toward a majoritarian/authoritarian attitude, which has raised many concerns. However, recently the government has tried to avert such suspicions by introducing the "Democratization Packages"[311] of 2014. Despite this, Human Rights groups, regional experts, and the secular establishment within Turkey all seem uncomfortable. The upcoming parliamentary elections of 2015 will therefore play a major role in determining how much things will change.

[311] Ergun Özbudun, *The Turkish Democratization Package*, in Middle East Institute, 15 October 2013; source: http://www.mei.edu/content/turkish-%E2%80%9Cdemocratization-package%E2%80%9D

Economic Policies

After the destruction in the wake of the Second World War, postwar Germany needed an economic system that would revive its economic condition in a speedy manner. For this purpose, the Christian Democrats in Germany decided to "choose a 'third way' between capitalism and state socialism, rejecting the 'materialism' of both", which they claim "ignores man's moral nature".[312] As a result, the CDU-CSU implemented the model of the "social welfare economy." As the party manifesto states:

> The CDU-CSU is the party of social market economy. Together with Ludwig Erhard it enforced social market economy against all manner of opposition during the period after World War II and brought success to the Federal Republic of Germany. The CDU-CSU rejects socialism and other forms of collectivism. This also applies to unbridled capitalism, which believes totally in the market mechanism and is not in a position to find solutions to the social issues of our time. The social market economy remains for us a model even in a reunified Germany and the age of globalization.[313]

The social market economic model is not only an economic model but also a vision of society. Within this system, "the state guarantees the framework conditions within which owner-entrepreneurs may carry out their activities."[314] This means that "the state sets the rules of competition, it protects the freedom of trade and the freedom of contracts, and ensures adequate infrastructure to facilitate the exchange of goods and services in the respective markets, such as with public investments in transport routes and

[312] Wiliarty, "The Postwar CDU," 51-79.
[313] Party Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union of German, agreed during the 21st party congress in Hanover 3th– 4th December 2007, pg. 7, source: http://www.cdu.de/international
[314] Galetti et al., *Christian Democracy,* 24.

communication networks."[315] Although the role of the state is noninterventionist and merely managerial, it plays an important role by setting the rules of the game.

Much like the CDU-CSU, the AKP came in to power following a major economic crisis. In the case of Turkey, however, "the binary divide between left and right is of far lower salience today than it was in the Europe in the 1940s and 1950s, so that the AKP does not have to concentrate on defining its position within it."[316] Turkey therefore had no pressing need to articulate a "third way" between capitalism and socialism. In fact, Turkey's economic crisis and the accumulated foreign debt that the AKP inherited from its predecessors "virtually obliged it to adhere to the economic and financial remedies prescribed by international financial institutions."[317] The "Copenhagen Criteria[318]" that it implemented in its bid for eventual membership of the EU necessitated that it establish and maintain a functioning market economy. In such circumstances, the AKP government had few practical options. There was almost no room for it to develop radical or original economic strategies, even if it had wanted to do so. The AKP thus declared its commitment to a functioning free-market economy, with all its rules and institutions, and aimed at limiting the state's role in the economy to a merely regulatory and supervisory function, even more so than the CDU-CSU. As the party program summarizes:

> Our party favors a market economy operating with all its institutions and rules. It recognizes that the State should remain in principle outside all types of economic activities. It defines the function of the State in the economy as a regulator and controller.

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[315] Ibid., 24.

[316] Hale. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." 77.

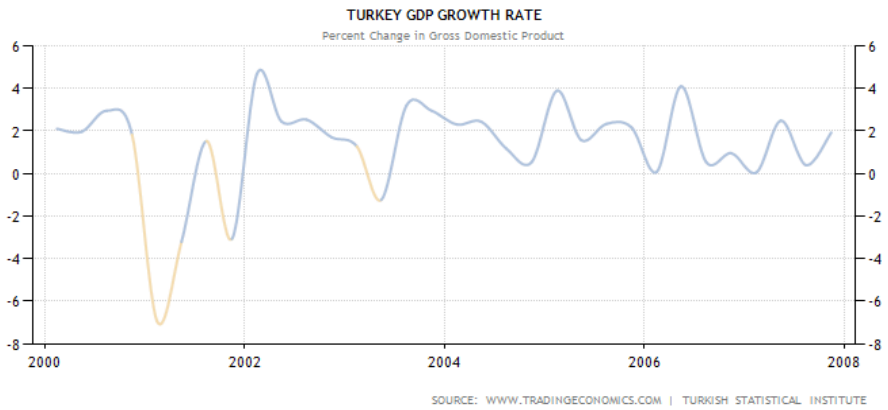
[317] Kumbaracibasi, "Party Ideology,"158-160.

[318] Notes: The Copenhagen criteria are the rules that define whether a country is eligible to join the European Union. The criteria require that a state has the institutions to preserve democratic governance and human rights, has a functioning market economy, and accepts the obligations and intent of the EU. Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copenhagen_criteria

> Therefore, it believes that a healthy system of the flow of information and documents is important. It regards privatization as an important vehicle for the formation of a more rational economic structure.[319]

The AKP's election platforms of the 2002, 2007, and 2011 elections also supported privatization and the encouragement of foreign investment in Turkey, as well as a more equitable distribution of income. This confirms the AKP's departure from its predecessors' notion of a "*Just Order*" economy.[320] The AKP's approach proved quite successful as Figure 2 indicates, with Turkey's GDP showing an unprecedented growth from 2001 to 2002, and showing stability even during the global economic crisis of 2008.[321]

Figure 2:



Source: Trading Economics: http://www.tradingeconomics.com/turkey/gdp-growth

Hence, while the CDU-CSU had to establish an economic system that addressed both the moral and social needs of the time, not only did the AKP have limited control over its economic policies considering the financial crisis in which it took office and the

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[319] AK Parti, party program, source: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_

[320] Hale. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." 77.

[321] Source: Trading Economics: http://www.tradingeconomics.com/turkey/gdp-growth

criteria set by the EU that it was obliged to follow, but the AKP, unlike the German CDU-CSU, also seemed comfortable with an economic plan that advocated the "controlled" role of the state and for economic outcomes to be determined exclusively by the free market. At the same time, however, AKP's program also advocated the principle of a "social state" that would ensure needy citizens a way of life "befitting human dignity." This means that, in some ways, the AKP seems to have paralleled the welfare state policies of the CDU-CSU without fully articulating the idea of a "social market economy."

Socio-cultural Policies

The final policy area that this chapter explores revolves around the initiatives and reforms taken by the CDU-CSU and the AKP in the arena of culture and society. Interestingly, both the AKP and the CDU-CSU share a sense of cultural conservatism: both promote values such as religious education, family, marriage, divorce, and related issues very closely. The CDU-CSU, for example, underlines explicitly in its party manifesto:

> Families are becoming more and more important and constitute the basis of society… Marriage and family constitute the most reliable social networks, when people need people. These ties remain for life.[322]

Not surprisingly, the Christian Democrats have historically opposed laws permitting divorce and abortion that were enacted in Germany in the late 1970s.[323] Apart from the role of family and marriage in society, the question of the role of religious education has

[322] Party Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union of German, agreed during the 21st party congress in Hanover 3th– 4th December 2007, pg. 7, source: http://www.cdu.de/international
[323] Hale. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." 72.

also been critical in Western European countries. Christian Democrats predictably support the principle that "religious instruction should be provided in state schools and that the state should subsidize schools established by faith-based organizations (in most cases, the Catholic church)."[324] However, with German society becoming more and more secular, such concerns have become issues of the past. Nevertheless, there is still a strong sense of cultural conservatism among many voters associated with Christian Democracy in Germany.

The AKP's attitude towards cultural conservatism in some cases clearly mirrors the position taken by German Christian Democracy. For example, the AKP's position on the role of family in the society echoes the stance of the CDU-CSU. According to the AKP's party program:

> The family constitutes the foundation of society and is an important institution playing a role in the formation of social solidarity. The way to social happiness, solidarity, peace, affection and respect passes through the family.[325]

However, secularism in Turkish society has not yet penetrated to the same degree as it has in Germany. As a result, debates on cultural issues are more prevalent in the Turkey on the social level than they are in Germany. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, for example, has maintained the position that "the state could be secular, but not individuals." In keeping with this notion, the party in its 2002 elections pledged to uphold conservatism mainly in cultural terms, arguing that "society renews itself within the context of basic institutions such as the family, school, property, religion, and morals, and that interference by the state in these matters would lead to conflict and disorder."[326]

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[324] Ibid., 72.
[325] AK Parti, party program, source: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_
[326] Hale. "Christian Democracy and the JDP." 79.

In the field of education, the party promised that facilities would be made available for instruction on religion "as a requirement of the principle of secularism."[327] The party proposed that "graduates of both religious and non-religious high schools would be given an equal chance for university admissions. This allowed graduates of the special state high schools for Imams and preachers (*Imam Hatip Okullari*) to enter university on equal terms with students from secular schools."[328] The AKP also proposed that "the obstruction of freedom of religion should be made a crime, that religious functionaries should be allowed to engage in politics in off-duty hours, and that women should be allowed to wear 'Islamic' headscarves in state institutions."[329] These proposals rekindled the suspicions of the secular establishment and triggered tensions between the AKP and the secular opposition.

While the AKP, at this point, seems more culturally conservative than the Christian Democrats in Germany, the CDU-CSU has historically shared similar conservative rigid positions on socio-cultural issues. The AKP's vehement support and advocacy of conservative social policies in the name of the fundamental human right of religious freedom has led experts like Dagi and Tepe to conclude that while Islam's institutional aspect is not invoked explicitly in political or economic matters, on the social level, the AKP seems quite resolute in protecting and promoting Islamic values and principles.

Finally, the examination of the AKP's position on these different policy areas supports my analysis of moderation theory, in which I argue that moderation is not a linear process leading to a specific end, and does not have to occur on all issues at once.

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[327]Ibid., 79.
[328] Ibid., 79.
[329] Ibid., 79.

On the one hand, the AKP has departed from the political and economic positions of its predecessors such as the RP; on the other hand, it appears to be ideologically in line with the Islamist parties' stance on socio-cultural moralities. The comparative analysis of the AKP with the CDU-CSU has further helped to understand of the nuances of behavioral and ideological moderation of religious parties when they are incorporated into the political framework through formal participation in government.

Conclusion

While many observers of the Middle East purport that the AKP is an Islamic incarnation of European Christian Democratic parties, the official rhetoric of the party vehemently denounces any such categorization. This tension between the official party narrative and the observed patterns and behaviors demands additional research and examination. This thesis has therefore endeavored to address this very question of the substance and limit of a comparison between the Turkish AKP and European Christian democracies, using the German CDU-CSU as a case study.

In order to tackle this question, I first undertook a systematic comparison of the historical circumstances of the two parties. I further compared the processes that led to the formation of their ideologies, identities and discourses. I then studied the parallels and contrasts in their social support structures, and compared the various policies and initiatives conceived and executed by the two parties. The overall findings of my research show that while there are striking similarities between these two parties, there are equally, if not more, profound differences as well. I argue that it might be too far-fetched to simply call the AKP as an Islamic 'equivalent' of European Christian democracies. This is because the historical situation in which the AKP assumed power in Turkey was fundamentally different (barring perhaps a few overlaps) from that of Christian democracy in Germany. Additionally, the relationship between religion and the principles of democracy, pluralism, and secularism are less contested/open to strict scrutiny in the case of the CDU-CSU than the AKP. At the same time, I argue that the differences that exist do not endorse the AKP's official position on the issue and its categorical renunciation of any association whatsoever with its Christian Democratic counterparts.

This is because, as my findings show, there are many intriguing similarities in terms of the two parties' social support structures and policies, particularly on socio-cultural, moral, political, and economic issues. This makes a further exploration of this question a valuable, which may yield significant implications for the future of the AKP. The following summary of my findings will provide further evidence of my claims.

First, a comparison between the conditions of development of the AKP and the CDU-CSU reveals that the two parties had quite different beginnings. The CDU-CSU emerged in the post WWII context where a religious party was seen as the only ethical alternative to the immoral and materialistic ideologies and practices of the Nazi past. Moreover, when the CDU-CSU rose onto the political scene, there were no previous institutional and structural norms to which it was expected to abide by. Neither did it have a historic connection with a previous religious party that had a notorious political reputation in Germany. Although a distrust of democracy was the prevalent attitude in the Catholic Church before WWII, this was officially abandoned by the Vatican when Pope Pius XII endorsed democracy as a political system compatible with the Church's ideology after the war. This gave the CDU-CSU the liberty to organize and operate independently of any external political pressures. The CDU-CSU was also able to play an instrumental role in the formation of the foundational political literature and practices of Germany. Hence, the CDU-CSU could play an important role as one of the crucial founding members of the postwar German society, economy, and politics. The AKP, on the other hand, emerged in a different context in which preexisting constitutional and institutional limitations greatly influenced its political language, behavior and message. Especially owing to its Islamic roots and the connection of its leaders to previously banned Islamist parties, the AKP did not, unlike the CDU-CSU, enjoy the privilege of

functioning independently of external political pressures. It had to strategically navigate its way by negotiating with the prevailing political conditions and with the forces of the Kemalist "deep state" in particular. This shows that the issue of political sincerity (versus the persistence of a gap between public rhetoric/behavior and "real" intentions) was a greater issue for the AKP than for the CDU-CSU. The conditions in which the CDU-CSU emerged saw Christian values and democracy as inherently compatible. As a result, many Germans believed that such a combination was essential for the successful preservation of Germany's national and historical identity in the postwar years. By contrast, the AKP's relationship to Islam was more controversial due to its links with earlier and more explicit Islamist groups, and its growth was frowned upon by many in Turkish society. There are, however, some intriguing similarities in the historical circumstances of the two parties as well. Both parties emerged as fresh, new voices following a period of serious economic and political crisis. In addition, what gained them political support was their image as challengers to the damaging practices and ideas of the past. However, the points of origin of the two parties seem, with the exception of these similarities, quite different in terms of the baggage they carried over from the past, popular concerns over the intentions behind their rhetoric and behavior, and the constitutional and structural limitations of the political system, or lack thereof, in which they ascended politically.

The second comparison that I made was about the formation of the ideology, identity and rhetoric of the two parties. I conclude that a major part of both the AKP's and the CDU-CSU's ideology was defined by what they opposed. As a result, the CDU-CSU identified itself as an anti-Nazi party. Echoes of this can still be seen in the current party manifesto. A similar trend was seen in the AKP's self-identification as an antiestablishment force in Turkish politics, opposing the state-centered authoritarian

secularists. However, unlike the CDU-CSU, the AKP was not able to explicitly condemn the Kemalist ideology as the root cause of the destructive practices of the past, but had to adjust its rhetorical strategies accordingly. As a result, by linking the renunciation of radical secularism and state-centered nationalism (which were the underlying tenets of Kemalism) with the principles of transparent democracy, freedom of rights, and social justice, the AKP established itself as an anti-status quo party without having to explicitly reject Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and his ideas. Hence, while the official agenda of both the AKP and the CDU-CSU showed commitment to transparent democracy and an end to radical secularism and nationalism, the ways in which they expressed this commitment and the amount of suspicion with which it was received by their respective audiences appear to have differed.

Another component that plays an important aspect in formation of the AKP and the CDU-CSU's ideology and identity is their link to religion. My research concludes that the ethical aspect of religion was prominent in the ideology of both the AKP and the CDU-CSU. In other words, a shared element that appears in the ideologies and identities of both parties is the association of ethical notions of religion in the popular imagination with good governance, rule of law, and human rights. Rhetorically, however, only the CDU-CSU seems to have had the privilege of making this connection obvious in its public discourse. This can be attributed to the fact that the CDU-CSU, unlike the AKP, could not be linked to a former religious party with an extremist religio-political agenda. On the other hand, the AKP expressed its religious association more on the social level than on the political level, not only because it feared military or judicial backlash, but also because of the priorities of the majority of its electorate, who seem to be quite pious, but tend to support a conservative-centrist politics as opposed to strictly religious politics.

Another religious issue that needs to be taken into account is the difference between traditional Islam and Christianity, both institutionally and their attitudes towards the state. As William Hale notes, "Modern Christianity does not have a state project comparable to that of Islam in its more radical versions, even if this is probably not supported by more than a minority of the World's Muslims."[330] The image of an Islamist project as articulated by Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia, which endorses *Shari'a* as the ultimate law of the land, raises questions about the ulterior motives of the political parties in Muslim countries with religious orientation and affiliations. Consequently, the claim to democratic credentials by such parties, of which the AKP is a notable example, is prone to greater scrutiny than a party with a Christian orientation. This can also be attributed to the absence of a central religious authority in Islam, unlike Christianity, that can approve or reject the validity of certain claims based on varying interpretations of religious scriptures and traditions. Hence, the CDU-CSU also differs from the AKP in the fact that it is not obliged to continuously defend its democratic credentials and oppose allegations of harboring a "hidden agenda" behind its superficial secular and democratic image.

Despite the differences mentioned above in the conditions of development of the AKP and the CDU-CSU and in their relationship with Islam and Christianity respectively, there are many substantive similarities in their strategies, support structures, and policies that can make a compelling comparison between the parties conceivable. One similarity that stands out in their mobilization tactics was their use of a catchall narrative. Both the AKP and the CDU-CSU were mindful of the widespread divisions within their societies, and attempted to overcome these divisions by offering a middle trajectory that promised practical benefits for all without discrimination. In the case of the

[330] Hale, William, "Christian Democracy and the JDP."66-88.

CDU-CSU, for example, the major cleavages that needed attention were between Protestants and Catholics, and the working class and the middle class. Driven by the desire to expand its electorate, and knowing that a postwar Germany could not afford any further socioeconomic and religious cleavages, the CDU-CSU endeavored to market itself as an inter-confessional and "classless" party, showing its ardent disapproval of traditional parties of the left and right. This all-embracing nature of the party is also reflected in its broad appeal as the *Volkspartei* (People's Party). Clear signs of a catchall narrative can be found in the official party literature and rhetoric of the AKP as well. The central idea behind its ideology of "conservative democracy" was to propose a balanced and open appeal to all sections of Turkish society that transcended the boundaries of belief, region, and socioeconomic status. The major cleavage in Turkey, however, was between the "modernists" and the "traditionalists". Although the traditionalists preferred an inclusive and democratic state as opposed to one based on the *Shari'a*, they still valued their religious traditions and desired to be able to freely practice them on a social level. At the same time, the already suspicious secular-modernists feared that the AKP had a covert vendetta aimed at erasing the modern-Western values that had been an integral part of the post-Ottoman Turkish identity. By appearing to a strike a balance between tradition and modernity, the AKP put forth an integrative narrative promising the eventual solution of this dilemma. Such a fresh and ecumenical narrative did in fact resonate with many people who were initially suspicious of the AKP's intentions. Another cleavage that needed the AKP's attention was between different socioeconomic classes of Turkish society. Although, unlike the Europe in the 1940s and 1950s, the binary divide between left and right was of far lesser importance in Turkey and the AKP was not obliged to define its position with respect to it, the party still had to address the

class issue brewing between the lower class (in this case defined less as industrial workers and more as poor urban migrants and small business entrepreneurs) and the Anatolian bourgeoisie. This was achieved by adopting a "classless" agenda, and by forging a cross-class coalition between the two divides. Many have argued that this "classless" image was a secret to the AKP's success. Hence, the parallel between the AKP and the CDU-CSU in this case was in their ability to understand the various cleavages within their societies (even though the major cleavages in the two cases were quite different) and address them by embracing a catchall rhetoric that promised to serve as unifier for conflicting interests. Evidence of this can also be found in the intentional ambiguity, breadth, and diversity of the programs of the two parties

Another similarity between the AKP and the CDU-CSU could be observed in their social bases. As Chapter 3 shows, both parties were able to leverage their religio-conservative connections to expand their support base. However, they achieved this is quite different ways. While the CDU-CSU had the benefit of mobilizing by openly appealing to Church-attending Christian voters (at least until the element of religiosity started to fade away from German society), the AKP had to tap into Islamic philanthropic networks that it had inherited from its forerunners. Additionally, both parties had strong alliances with various small and large business networks and other non-governmental groups and were able to count on their catchall, classless identities to further extend their social outreach among the working class, the middle class, and large industrial establishments alike.

Lastly, one can find intriguing similarities in the official literature on the political, economic, and socio-cultural policies of the AKP and the CDU-CSU. The party programs of both parties show an unwavering commitment to secular democracy, human rights,

social justice, and upliftment of civil society organizations. However, there are differences in the level of investment done by the two parties to make such theoretical policies practically effective. While the CDU-CSU has been quite successful in doing this, implementation of such policies on the part of the AKP seems to have been inconsistent. For the first couple of years, the AKP appeared committed to the principles of democracy and pluralism, and supported measures aimed at bolstering Turkish civil society, such as the amendments made as part of the "Harmonization Packages" of 2004. However, in recent years, especially after the Gezi park protests of 2013 and the ensuing ban on social media, the AKP seems to be turning away from pluralistic democracy, as promised in its party program, toward authoritarian/majoritarian democracy, which actively tries to contain any dissidence against the government's political conduct. Such a shift raises serious concerns over the AKP's intentions. Some argue that the AKP's initial inclination toward a more inclusive democracy was merely in its own strategic interests, as it was bidding for its membership to the EU. However, with its changing attitude toward EU accession and its growing interest in asserting Turkey's regional superiority in the Middle East and Central Asia, it is argued that the AKP has lost one of its primary motivations to maintain a pluralistic democracy. Although the AKP has responded to such allegations by implementing initiatives such as the "Democratization Packages" of 2014, its critics still seem quite suspicious and distrustful of its ulterior motives.

In terms of their socio-cultural policies, some interesting parallels can also be drawn between the AKP and the CDU-CSU. Both parties share a sense of cultural conservatism, sharing similar values in areas such as religious education, family, marriage, divorce and related issues. This can be seen in the similar language employed by the two parties in their respective party programs when discussing the significance of

the family in maintaining and strengthening the social order (as shown in Chapter3). Moroever, Hale shows that Christian Democrats have historically been staunch supporters of the principle that religious education should be provided in state schools, and that the state should subsidize faith-based schools. However, with German society becoming less religious, such issues do not appear in mainstream political debates. The AKP's stance toward cultural conservatism in some cases matches the positions taken by German Christian democracy. For example, their encouragement of religious education and faith-based schooling, and their support of the opportunity for the graduates of these schools to enter university on equal terms with students from private-secular schools indicate a similar agenda. Hence, while in its current form the AKP may appear more culturally conservative than its Christian Democratic counterpart in Germany, the CDU-CSU has historically shared similar positions on socio-cultural issues.

The third and final policy component discussed in Chapter 3 revolves around the parties' positions on economic issues. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the CDU-CSU opted for a "third way" between capitalism and socialism, rejecting the "materialism" of both. As a result, the CDU-CSU introduced a "social market economy." By contrast, the AKP did not feel the need for introducing a third way. As mentioned above, the AKP was not obliged to define itself based on the left-right scale, as its economic policies were largely based on the "Copenhagen Criteria" it was expected to follow in its bid to join the EU. At the same time, the AKP seemed quite comfortable with the idea of a limited and controlled state role in the national economy and the prospect of economic outcomes being determined by the competitive forces of free market. Ironically, however, the AKP's party platform also advocates a "social state" that pledges to provide the disadvantaged citizens a way of life "befitting human dignity."

This shows that the AKP's economic policies do in some manner mirror the welfare state policies of the CDU-CSU without explicitly pronouncing the idea of a "social market economy." This paradox, in turn, makes one wonder how the AKP's pro-market stance squares with its populist stress on public welfare and social justice.

In light of the preceding summary of my research findings, I conclude that categorizing the AKP simply as an Islamic equivalent of the CDU-CSU would be a superficial comparison, which overlooks the nuances particular to the case of political Islam in Turkey which makes the AKP a unique case – especially, given the major dissimilarities in the origins of the two parties, the different degrees of suspicion and scrutiny to which their religious affiliations and commitment to democracy and pluralism are subjected, and the differences in the constitutional and structural frameworks of the political systems in which they emerged. This is not to say that there are no similarities between the two parties whatsoever, as the official rhetoric of the AKP would have us believe. In fact, there are intriguing similarities in their support structures, political strategies, and policy agendas, which show that there is value in such a comparative examination.

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