

The Rise of the New Generation Pro-Islamists in Turkey: The Justice and Development Party Phenomenon in the November 2002 Elections in Turkey

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This analysis reviews the main characteristics of the Turkish party system, presents a historical evaluation of the context of the most recent November 2002 elections and analyses in depth the nature of the patterns that emerge from the provincial election returns. The account underlines the challenges awaiting the newly elected Justice and Development Party on the domestic social and economic fronts as well as potentially dangerous events in foreign relations with the EU and the Cyprus and the Iraqi conflicts.

THE POLITICAL PARTY SPECTRUM

Despite deep economic crises and political tensions, 14 national legislative elections have been held in Turkey since May 1950, following a questionable first experience in 1946. Turkish democracy has persevered through turbulent social change, bloody political conflict, separatist movements and military interventions. Among the salient features of the Turkish party system, the apparent lack of continuity, together with ever-increasing fractionalization and volatility of electoral support, are the most significant. From the very beginning of multi-party elections, the banning of parties by military regimes or the Constitutional Court impeded the establishment of well-defined party identification among the electorate. Consequently, electoral preferences have been forced to regroup behind newly founded parties as well as switching continuously from one party to another in search of a better patronage deal. As such, a long-term understanding of the ideological characteristics of Turkish party preferences remains at best blurred.

TABLE 1
 IDEOLOGICAL GROUPS IN THE TURKISH PARTY SYSTEM

Extreme-Left (EL)	Centre-Left (CL)	Centre-Right (CR)	Extreme-Right (ER)
People's Democracy Party <i>(Halkın Demokrasi Partisi – HADEP)</i> Democratic People's Party <i>(Demokratik Halk Partisi – DEHAP)</i>	Republican People's Party <i>(Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi – CHP)</i> Democratic Left Party <i>(Demokratik Sol Partisi – DSP)</i> New Turkey Party <i>(Yeni Türkiye Partisi – YTP)</i>	Motherland Party <i>(Anavatan Partisi – ANAP)</i> True Path Party <i>(Doğru Yol Partisi – DYP)</i> Young Party <i>(Genç Parti – GP)</i>	Pro-Islamist Felicity Party <i>(Saadet Partisi – SP)</i> Justice and Development Party <i>(Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP)</i> Nationalist Nationalist Action Party <i>(Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi – MHP)</i> Grand Unity Party <i>(Büyük Birlik Partisi – BBP)</i>
Programmatic/Policy Platforms			
Ethnic Kurdish nationalist Pro-EU Support base is east and southeastern Anatolia	Strictly secularist Pro-EU Relatively more state interventionist Relatively more urban Alevi support (CHP) Charismatic leader (DSP) Support base is western and coastal provinces	Secularist on policy matters but courting the brotherhoods Pro-EU Market oriented economic policy Opportunistic populism in economic policy Support from relatively more developed rural segments Support base is western and coastal provinces	Pro-Islamist Pro-Islamist Relatively more eurosceptic Relatively more state interventionist Populist in economic policy Sunni supporters Close relations with Islamist circles Support base is central Anatolia Nationalist Ethnic Turkish nationalist Anti-European Sunni supporters Populist in economic policy Relatively more state interventionist Support base is central Anatolia

Admittedly, Turkish politics is characterized by a number of overlapping ideological cleavages. These are shaped around discussions of left versus right, Islamism versus secularism, and ethnic Turkish nationalism versus the ‘Kurdish identity’. Accordingly, fitting all the political parties into a multi-dimensional ideological space is more appropriate.¹ However, a longitudinal analysis of ideological cleavages and the shifting electoral support behind them is only available for the conventional left-right scale within which I continue the following discussion. Table 1 attempts to provide a shorthand reference point for the parties’ ideological and programmatic orientations. As expected from such an undertaking, the table leaves many of the subtleties concerning Turkish parties, their ideology and constituencies out of the picture. There is also a great deal of variation within each category of parties as well.

The Parties

Extreme left: For lack of a better category along the conventional left-right spectrum, the People’s Democracy Party (*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi* – HADEP) and the Democratic People’s Party (*Demokratik Halk Partisi* – DEHAP), have been placed in the extreme-left category. Although DEHAP/HADEP’s rhetoric resembles the extreme-left, its distinguishing trait is its emphasis on ethnic Kurdish identity. It is hard to find a policy area other than those concerning Kurdish identity politics and topics related to the European Union (EU) on which HADEP effectively distinguishes itself from the rest of the party system.

Centre-left parties: Deniz Baykal’s Republican Peoples Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* – CHP) and Bülent Ecevit’s Democratic Left Party (*Demokratik Sol Parti* – DSP) share a common historical root. DSP leader Bülent Ecevit led CHP for a long period pre-1980, effectively shaping its turn toward a modern left-wing policy stand in the late 1960s. Ecevit separated from the CHP elite in the aftermath of the 1980 coup. His charismatic leadership distinguishes DSP from the rest of the parties and was responsible for the party’s steady rise to dominance in the 1999 elections. In summer 2002, İsmail Cem, Ecevit’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, resigned from DSP and, together with other MPs who resigned, formed a new left-leaning party, the New Turkey Party (*Yeni Türkiye Partisi* – YTP). Although YTP attracted a lot of attention at the beginning, it eventually failed to convince enough of the voters and remained well below the ten per cent threshold of electoral support required to gain parliamentary seats.

Policywise, the most striking difference is DSP's clear nationalist and Turkish ethnic tone compared to CHP. While both parties were for a long time sceptical of market-oriented economic policies, both have adopted a more liberal economic policy stand over the last decade. Nevertheless, compared to the centre-right, their economic policy has always been more interventionist. CHP especially traditionally depended on a sizeable Alevi support. Both CHP and DSP have been pro-EU in their foreign policy preferences. Sharing a common root in CHP, whose leadership cadres were the leading figures in Turkish modernization, both parties have always been strictly secularist. Although both DSP and CHP have been re-orienting their stand on religion by developing close contacts with some religious communities, both parties still represent bastions of secularism. In the 2002 elections, YTP tried to use pro-EU policy positions as the basis of its electoral campaign, but failed to link these in an adequate and convincing way with the electorate's main economic concerns.

Centre-right: It has long been claimed that the Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi* – ANAP) of Mesut Yılmaz and the True Path Party (*Doğruyol Partisi* – DYP) of Tansu Çiller possess a common single root. This derives from the Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi* – AP) of the 1960s and 1970s, which was led by Süleyman Demirel (later President of the Republic), and from Adnan Menderes' Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti* – DP) of the 1950s. Nevertheless, both parties have managed to maintain a distinct geographical base in the predominantly developed coastal provinces. Both are pro-EU and pro-market in their economic policies. These two parties dominated the administration in the post-1980 period but failed to meet the expectations of the masses. Both have been hit by various corruption scandals, alienating them from a public suffering from the recent economic crises.

The Young Party (*Genç Parti* – GP) of Cem Uzan has been included in the centre-right category. This categorization is potentially controversial for GP, mainly due to its populist policy stands and anti-Western attitude in many policy areas. However, GP's support remains heavily based on the same developed coastal regions from which ANAP and DYP as well as the centre-left CHP, DSP and YTP also derive their support. GP remains heavily dominated by its leader Cem Uzan who is a prominent businessman with a blemished background. Apart from regular business ties to various parties, the GP leadership does not have strongly convincing ties with the grass roots of the nationalist movement and thus was categorized as an opportunist populist party of the centre-right.

Extreme right: The last decade of the twentieth century witnessed the rise of once marginal parties of the extreme-right to a dominant position in Turkish elections. First in the 1994 municipal elections, the pro-Islamist Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi* – RP) captured the largest metropolitan centres. In less than two years, RP, with only 21.4 per cent of the vote, became the largest party in a fragmented party system. RP has its roots in the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi* – MSP) founded in 1973, following the National Order Party (*Milli Nizam Partisi* – MNP) founded three years earlier. For most of the post-1960 period, electoral support for the pro-Islamist parties remained on the fringes of the system.² Never before the second half of the 1990s did the pro-Islamist tradition capture more than 12 per cent of the popular vote alone.

In the aftermath of the 1995 general election, the pro-Islamist policy agenda found a significant reflection in the RP and the centrist DYP coalition. The challenge of the pro-Islamists to secularist Republican principles led to a series of reactions. It polarized secularists against anti-secularists, Sunnis against Alevis and even widened the existing cleavages between the Turkish and the rising Kurdish nationalists. The peak of the tension was reached when the then ruling RP-DYP coalition was openly challenged by the military representatives of the National Security Council (NSC) in its meeting of 28 February 1997. Issued after nine hours of deliberations, the NSC's declaration expressed uneasiness about attempts to harm and ultimately change the secular, Kemalist nationalist and democratic character of the Turkish constitution. Several precautionary measures, demanded especially by the military branch of NSC, were also submitted to the cabinet. These included demands for the regulation of Koran courses, social and economic activities of various Islamic brotherhoods (*tarikats*) and a halt to government appointments that were seen as aimed towards building an Islamic cadre within the state bureaucracy. RP leader Necmettin Erbakan tried to resist the impositions by the military but did not obtain much political support. Under pressure, he signed the NSC decisions, and formally, the '28 February process' began.³ The unofficial 28 February process was *de facto* brought to an end only by the early general elections of April 1999.

In the meantime, the Constitutional Court closed down RP in January 1998 on the grounds that the speeches of several party leaders were against the secular constitution. The Court also banned the former Prime Minister Erbakan and five other prominent party members from political activity for five years. The RP leadership had already a new party to turn to under the name of the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* – FP). Recai Kutan became the new leader of the party and, by the end of April,

FP had become the new address of almost all of the unbarred RP deputies. According to a 1995 constitutional amendment, FP could not claim any ties to RP. The Constitutional Court eventually closed down FP in June 2001 on similar grounds to previous pro-Islamist parties.

Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi* – SP) was immediately founded by the FP leadership in July 2001. However, in the meantime, a sharp leadership cleavage appeared in the ranks of the pro-Islamists. The old guard of the movement remained in SP while the relatively younger generation founded the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – AKP) in August 2002 under the leadership of the former Istanbul mayor, Tayyip Erdoğan, who at the time was banned from politics on grounds of inciting religious hatred. AKP participated in the 2002 elections under Erdoğan's leadership, but Erdoğan himself could not be elected to Parliament because of his continuing ban.

Pro-Islamist parties typically appeal only to Sunnis and maintain good working relations with Islamist circles at large. Many of the pro-Islamist economic policy stands carry overtones of populism and interventionism, especially in favour of the Anatolian small merchant and industrialist communities. On ethnic identity questions, the pro-Islamist parties have always been more able to appeal to Kurdish ethnicity, whereas the nationalists have always used anti-Kurdish rhetoric and policy stands to develop their electoral base.

The months leading to the 1999 general election witnessed the momentous capture of Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partia Karkaren Kürdistan* – PKK), widening corruption scandals, mass demonstrations against the religiously sensitive ban of headscarves at the universities, as well as the death of the ultra-nationalist leader Alparslan Türkeş and subsequent reshaping of the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* – MHP). The capture and trial of Öcalan, as well as the developments leading to NATO's military action in Kosovo, helped increase the nationalist fervour in the country. DSP, which had been in power for almost two years preceding the election, either as a coalition partner or as a single minority government, greatly benefited from these developments. When the polls closed, it became obvious that DSP was neither alone, nor was it the major benefactor from shifting electoral preferences. As expected, DSP became the largest party with 22.2 per cent of the vote, up nearly 52 per cent from the 1995 election. The surprise came with MHP, which captured the second largest vote share after DSP and reached nearly 18 per cent of support, up by about 120 per cent from its share in 1995.

The *nationalist camp* has its roots in the Republican Peasant Nation Party (*Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi* – CKMP), founded in the

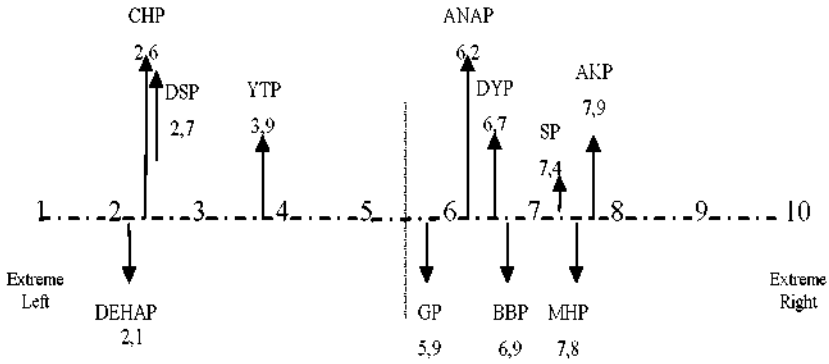
aftermath of the 1960 military coup and led by Alparslan Türkeş until his death in 1997. The then Colonel Türkeş was an active participant in the 1960 military coup and a member of the ensuing ruling junta, the National Unity Council. He was eventually sidelined within the radical Group of 14. In 1965, he was elected to the leadership of CKMP, which in 1969 was renamed the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* – MHP). The latter remained on the fringes of the Turkish party system from the very beginning up until the 1999 election, always gathering less than nine per cent of the vote in the six elections in which it participated. MHP was also closed down by the military regime of 1980 but eventually found its way back into the party system, participating in the 1987 election as the Nationalist Work Party (*Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi* – MÇP) when it obtained 2.9 per cent of the vote – once again, its usual level of support. In 1991 it formed an electoral coalition with the pro-Islamist RP, sharing a total of about 17 per cent of electoral support. MHP contested the 1995 elections alone, remaining below the ten per cent electoral threshold and thus gaining no seats in Parliament. Despite concerted efforts to moderate its stands on domestic as well as foreign policy issues, MHP remains openly anti-European and ethnic Turkish in its policy preferences. Muhsin Yazıncıoğlu's Grand Unity Party (*Büyük Birlik Partisi* – BBP), whose pro-Islamist positions are more pronounced than those of MHP, is also included as a minor player in the nationalist camp.

Voters' Perceptions

Figure 1 below presents the profile of the Turkish party system from the perspective of the electorate. In our pre-election study of electoral preferences, the respondents were provided with a conventional one-to-ten left-right ideology scale and asked to provide a placement for each of the major parties in the system.⁴ The average score of each party as assigned by the voters overlaps with the above picture almost perfectly. According to the voters, the extreme left position is captured by the Kurdish DEHAP/HADEP while the extreme-right position is assigned to AKP. While CHP and DSP are perceived to be the other two left-leaning parties of the system, Ismail Cem's YTP is placed somewhat closer to the centre. Uzan's GP is given the most centrist position, reflecting a lack of ideological orientation in its populist stands. While ANAP and DYP are seen as leaning towards right-of-centre, the other extreme-right wing group of Table 1 above is placed on the distinct right-wing end of the spectrum.

In a temporal assessment of these self-placements on the conventional one-to-ten left-right scale, the continual shift to the right end of the

FIGURE 1
PERCEIVED POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES BY THE VOTERS



Source: Çarkoğlu, Ergüder, Kalaycıoğlu Pre-Election Study, 2002.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF VOTERS ON THE LEFT–RIGHT CONTINUUM

	1990*	1996*	2002**
Extreme Left (1–2)	7.0	9.2	7.8
Moderate Left (3–4)	14.8	10.7	7.2
Centre (5–6)	43.5	32.6	31.9
Moderate Right (7–8)	13.3	17.3	18.8
Extreme Right (9–10)	9.4	21.6	24.1
No response	11.9	8.6	10.1
	100	100	100

Notes: * Kalaycıoğlu (1999): 58.

**Çarkoğlu, Ergüder and Kalaycıoğlu (2002).

spectrum becomes quite clear. Table 2 shows that since 1990 the left-of-centre and centrist positions have been shrinking while the right-of-centre has been growing in size. Although it is hard to time precisely the shift in ideological orientations, it seems that the biggest change occurred in the mid-1990s, when the country was being torn between Kurdish ethnic separatism and the rise of the pro-Islamist movement (Kalaycıoğlu 1999: 71–2). What is striking in the new data from the 2002 election is that this shift to the right is still continuing, although it appears to have slowed down. However, in the 2002 election, while only 15 per cent of the electorate is on the left of centre, nearly 43 per cent of the electorate place themselves right of centre.

THE NOVEMBER 2002 ELECTION: CONTEXT AND RESULTS

In the aftermath of the April 1999 election, a relatively more stable (although ideologically diverse) coalition was formed by the centre-left DSP, nationalist MHP and centre-right ANAP. However, two major earthquakes hit the country in the summer and autumn of 1999. The government appeared paralyzed in the face of these natural disasters while civil society took the initiative in rescue efforts. The image of a clumsy government unable to respond to the country's emergency needs was never fully overcome. The political impact of the financial crises that hit the country in November 2000 and February 2001 was even more severe. Political manipulation of fiscal policies leading to an unsustainable public debt are commonly diagnosed as the underlying reason for these crises, which resulted in unprecedented urban unemployment and a record depreciation of the Turkish lira against all foreign currencies. The crisis peaked on 21 February 2001 with an overnight devaluation of the Turkish lira by about 50 per cent. By the end of 2001, about 2.3 million people had lost their jobs and the economy had contracted in real terms as much as 8.5 per cent. Together with the August 1999 earthquake, the devastating impact of the economic crises seems to have been reflected in the political arena in the form of disturbingly deep alienation from the current political parties.

The November 2002 election indicates several important trends. First, the elections brought a landslide victory for yet another pro-Islamist party, which came to power this time with an overwhelming majority in the Parliament. The rise in support for the pro-Islamist AKP of Tayyip Erdoğan marks the progression of electoral collapse of centrist politics. The left-leaning CHP is the only other party that was able to pass the ten per cent electoral threshold and gain seats in parliament. However, CHP remained about 14 percentage points below AKP, at around 20 per cent of the vote (see Table 3).

TABLE 3
ELECTION RESULTS AND AGGREGATE PARTY SYSTEM
CHARACTERISTICS 1999–2002

	Vote % 1999	Share % 2002	Wins and losses % %	Seats in the Parliament	
				1999	2002
Democratic Left Party (<i>Demokratik Sol Parti – DSP</i>)	22.19	1.22	-20.97	136	0
Nationalist Action Party (<i>Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi – MHP</i>)	17.98	8.34	-9.64	129	0
Virtue Party (<i>Fazilet Partisi – FP</i>)*	15.41	2.48	-12.93	111	0
Motherland Party (<i>Anavatan Partisi – ANAP</i>)	13.22	5.13	-8.09	86	0
True Path Party (<i>Doğru Yol Partisi – DYP</i>)	12.01	9.55	-2.46	85	0
Republican People's Party (<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi – CHP</i>)	8.71	19.40	10.69	0	178
People's Democracy Party (<i>Halkın Demokrasi Partisi – HADEP</i>)**	4.75	6.23	1.48	0	0
Grand Unity Party (<i>Büyük Birlik Partisi – BBP</i>)	1.46	1.02	-0.44	0	0
Justice and Development Party (<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP</i>)	0.00	34.28	34.28	0	363
Young Party (<i>Genç Parti – GP</i>)	0.00	7.25	7.25	0	0
Independents***	0.87	0.99	0.12	3	9
Total	96.60	95.89		550	550
Other Parties	3.40	4.11	0.71		

Notes: * In 2002 Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi – SP*).

** In 2002 Democratic People's Party (*Demokratik Halk Partisi – DEHAP*).

*** In 1950 nine independents gained seats in the Parliament, compared to ten in 1954 and 13 in 1969.

Second, the persistently high volatility in electoral preferences rose to a higher peak, with a somewhat more concentrated support behind two parties in the system (see Table 4). The Turkish party system's inability to stabilize is a peculiar puzzle. The detrimental effects of recurrent military regimes on generations of patronage-based socialization into politics, oppressive legal constraints on civil society and the lack of openness of political parties to any institutionalized impact of civil interest groups on the policy-making process beyond sheer patronage-seeking initiatives are among the factors that contribute to lacking stability in electoral politics.

Third, the fact that none of the incumbent coalition partners could reach the ten per cent electoral threshold required to gain parliamentary representation indicates the great importance attached by voters to the devastating impact of the recent economic crisis on their personal lives. Compared to the 1999 election, the coalition partners together lost

TABLE 4
PARTY SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS 1999–2002

	1999	2002
Volatility	20.15	50.91*
Fractionalization	85.15	81.44**
Ideological Volatility	12.70	20.00*
Effective Number of Parties	6.73	5.39
Vote unrepresented in the Parliament (%)	18.32	45.33
Extreme-Left (EL)	6.02	7.27
Centre-Left (CL)	31.35	21.77
Centre-Right (CR)	26.77	16.13
Pro-Islamist & Nationalist (PIN)	34.85	53.37

Notes: * Highest (ideological) volatility ever in the Turkish party system. When FP is taken as the precursor of both SP and AKP, the volatility drops to 38 per cent.
**Lowest fractionalization since 1991 elections.

Volatility index (V) is calculated by using $i=1, \dots, N$ parties in the following formula: $V = \{(\frac{1}{2}) \sum_i (|Vote\%_{i,t} - Vote\%_{i,t-1}|)\}$. The index lies between 0 and 1. $V=1$ represents a completely unstable system whereas $V=0$ represents one where all parties obtained the same vote shares as they did in the previous election. See Pedersen (1979).

Effective number of parties (ENP) = $1/(1 - \text{Fractionalization Index})$. The fractionalization index (F) is calculated by using election outcomes for $i=1, \dots, N$ parties in the following formula: $F = \{1 - \sum_i (Vote\%_i)^2\}$. F varies between 0 and 1. It reaches a minimum of zero when one party receives all of the popular vote. As the number of parties receiving relatively small electoral support increases, the index will approach to one. See Rae (1967) on F, Laakso and Taagepera (1979), Taagepera and Shuggart (1989) on ENP.

about 39 percentage points of electoral support. The two major opposition parties, the pro-Islamist SP, which suffered a loss of 12.9 percentage points, and Çiller's centre-right DYP, which lost 2.5 percentage points, also did not perform much better.

Fourth, the collapse of the centrist parties brought a populist newcomer to the Turkish electoral scene: GP. With the help of financial backing from its leader, Cem Uzan, a business tycoon who has enjoyed perplexing success, GP was able to attract about seven per cent of voters away from the centrist hopefuls. Fifth, besides AKP and the centre-left CHP, the only other opposition party to gain votes above its 1999 level of support was the ethnic Kurdish DEHAP/HADEP.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE 2002 ELECTIONS

AKP, as the largest of the two parties above the ten per cent threshold for representation in Parliament, now firmly controls the executive office. The advantage of forming the first single-party government since 1991

may help to ease the existing tensions and power struggles within the pro-Islamist camp. However, divisions remain very much alive in all parties. Although CHP under Baykal was the only other party to win seats in the new parliament, the party leadership has suffered from criticism that it failed to realize the left's potential in an election shaped by the impact of economic crisis. While CHP captured 42 more seats in 2002 than Ecevit's DSP in 1999, the centre-left overall lost about ten percentage points compared to 1999 and has consequently been pushed out of government. Given that the executive has been monopolized by the pro-Islamists, it is difficult for the CHP leadership to claim a victory in the 2002 election.

The centre-right leaders, Mesut Yılmaz of ANAP and Tansu Çiller of DYP, were both forced to resign within a few weeks after the election. These resignations are a novelty, since the continued shrinking of centre-right electoral support since the 1987 elections had not resulted in any leadership changes in the past. On the nationalist front, the loss of 9.6 percentage points of electoral support for MHP leaves room for intraparty struggles. The carefully orchestrated media campaign by the GP leadership continues, threatening the wounded parties of left and right.

On the pro-Islamist front, the old-guard leadership under the guidance of Necmettin Erbakan is simply waiting to return to politics as usual in order to carve into the AKP constituencies. As a new party, AKP lacks organizational coherence. Its parliamentary group includes defectors from centre-right parties as well as representatives with centre-left leanings. In a group of more than 360 parliamentarians, the AKP leadership is bound to face some resistance from MPs who will remain unsatisfied with the way ministerial and other portfolios are being distributed as well as with the government's performance. Such parliamentarians may choose to defect on group decisions and on occasion may go unnoticed and/or unpunished by the leadership. Other party leaderships, especially those of GP and the rival pro-Islamist SP, may try to attract these MPs to their parties in order to form a parliamentary group. In short, managing a large parliamentary group may be more difficult and tricky than a relatively smaller one. Consequently, governing on the basis of such a large and heterogeneous parliamentary group, taking decisions and legislating them through Parliament may not be as easy as it may seem at first sight.

In short, ideologically, the election results may mean the consolidation of centrifugal tendencies, thus marking an end to centrist political parties and their leadership. In an optimistic scenario, AKP may manage to transform itself, developing from its pro-Islamist roots into a new centrist conservative party that is not alienated from the republican

principles of the Turkish party system. In a pessimistic scenario, the presence of the inexperienced AKP in the executive office may lead to considerable clumsiness in decision-making and legislation. Eventually, it may represent the institutionalization of peripheral reactions, bordering on a counter-revolution challenging the very foundations of Turkey's secular republican regime.

Despite the appearance of instability and exclusiveness, the recent elections fit the pattern established since the 1983 democratic transition of widespread popular dissatisfaction with political parties. The resulting volatility of preferences keeps the winners as well as losers of the recent election very much on the alert. The winning AKP is under pressure to deliver concrete signs of relief on the economic front as well as some ideologically significant policy changes and even reversals, in order to keep its support base. The losers of the left and right are alert to preserve their core constituencies from infringements by the GP campaign as well as trying to build on the failures of the AKP government.

This entire struggle is also shaped within the boundaries set by the radical policy transformation necessitated by the prospect of EU membership. Further EU adjustment policies seem to have been deferred to the future as a result of the decisions taken at the EU's December 2002 Copenhagen Council which effectively put EU-Turkey relations into cold storage until December 2004. An additional factor putting pressure on the AKP government and potentially forcing the party to deviate from its election promises is the Iraqi front. The impending military operations in Iraq could effectively paralyze the executive, which would once again be unable to take the necessary precautions on the economic front while having to engage, maybe even militarily, in the developing conflict.

In both instances, AKP's pro-Islamist roots operate as an effective constraint on the leadership's possibilities of flexibility and ability to compromise and co-operate in the short run for long-run gains. Besides an ideological inclination to scepticism if not hostility towards the west, an important factor limiting AKP's credibility is its inexperience in government affairs. For most AKP members, their most serious public administration experience has been at the municipal level. Although several have served in government and even held significant posts, it is not possible to find leadership figures among the AKP cadres with decision-making experience and a proven track record for delivering dependable decisions. As a result, it is likely that AKP will have trouble managing the portfolios of ministries such as foreign affairs and defence and the bureaucracies of the Central Bank and the Treasury. These have long had an autonomous command, running on relatively well developed merit-based performance evaluations.

However, the winners of the November 2002 election seem committed to the Turkish modernization project, aiming to integrate with Europe despite their eurosceptical Islamist constituency. The complex requirements of EU membership and their domestic and foreign policy implications – ranging from the resolution of the Cyprus conflict to the military's role in the political system, from the reduction of human rights violations to the implementation of minority rights in education and broadcasting – pose the greatest challenge to the Turkish political system. The fact that the country now has a single party government to push the necessary bills through Parliament is a great asset. However, AKP's roots in the pro-Islamist movement invites resistance and scepticism on the part of the secularist Ankara establishment and their partners in mass politics. It seems that it will be this very struggle between the AKP leadership and the secularist establishment that will shape the future of the country.

In particular, AKP's pro-Islamist background is potentially troubling for the country's constitutional system since the new government could conceivably change the Constitution with little difficulty, with the help of the few independent MPs. Since AKP's seat advantage in the Parliament is not reflected in a majority of the vote share, if AKP fails to obtain CHP's co-operation in such constitutional changes, the opposition parties will justifiably question the legitimacy of these amendments and pressure AKP to back down. In other words, if AKP decides to pursue a policy agenda in contradiction with the secularist establishment whose centrist representatives are now largely unrepresented in the parliament, then its single-party tenure is more likely to be a source of crisis than a chance to engage in constructive policy-making. AKP is thus under pressure to build a consensus within Parliament in order to maintain the legitimacy of its tenure in government.

Below, I provide a short overview of the characteristics of the Turkish party system and electoral behaviour and evaluate the outcome of the November 2002 election in the light of these historical patterns. More specifically, I focus on the geographical patterns that emerge from the 2002 election and argue that a pro-Islamist, conservative and potentially anti-system electoral constituency is growing at the centre of the Anatolian peninsula. The Kurdish electoral constituency is also firmly established in the eastern and southeastern provinces. The fact that this constituency is consistently left out of the Turkish representation system presents a formidable task for the Turkish party system. The remaining coastal provinces are historically more centrist in their preferences but seem to have provided a critical level of support for populist appeals in the last election.

The geographical divisions reflect the socio-economic cleavages in Turkey, which seem to have become more sharply established during the economic crisis that hit the country in 2001. Accordingly, the economic policy arena and especially regional development policies constitute the fundamental short- as well as long-term policy challenge facing the AKP government. Besides the simmering domestic economic and political challenges, the AKP government will also have to deal with intricate foreign policy issues including the EU candidacy, the Cyprus conflict and approaching war in and around Iraq. In all of these policy areas, the Turkish electorate is divided across ideological, ethnic, religious and geographical cleavages. Could the AKP's tenure in executive office stop the growing imbalance between the regions and ease the tensions arising from their different policy preferences? Answering this question might prove to be the long-term challenge facing the Turkish politico-economic system.

A SMORGASBORD OF PARTY SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS AND VOTE DETERMINANTS IN TURKEY

The following characteristics of the Turkish party system and electoral behaviour are informative for understanding the significance of the November 2002 election and what lies ahead.

Volatility of Electoral Preferences

The high level of electoral volatility is indicated by the fact that, since the first competitive elections in 1950, on average nearly 23 per cent of the electorate has changed its preferences from one party to another in two consecutive elections. In post-1980 elections, the high volatility was primarily due to party closures and mergers. In contrast, in the last three elections in 1995, 1999 and especially in 2002, voters changed their party preferences although most parties remained in existence. This is a clear indication that voters, especially in the 2002 election, left the existing parties on purpose as a punishment for their performance, whether within the ruling coalition in the cases of ANAP, DSP and MHP, or in opposition in the cases of DYP and SP.

Indeed, between the 1999 and 2002 elections, nearly half of the electorate seems to have shifted from one party to another. When the party system is divided into the four ideological groups indicated above – the extreme-left, centre-left, centre-right and pro-Islamists/nationalists – we observe that about 20 per cent of the voters also seem to have switched group between 1999 and 2002. Only Baykal's CHP and the Kurdish DEHAP gained on their 1999 vote level. Increasing volatility seems to benefit new right-of-centre parties, that is, AKP and the populist GP.

The pro-Islamist and nationalist group of parties started with about 11 per cent of electoral support in 1987. This rose to about 17 per cent in 1991. In 1995 they garnered about 30 per cent. In 1999, MHP and FP, together with other minor parties, obtained about 35 per cent. Finally, in 2002 the pro-Islamist SP and AKP together with the nationalist MHP and other minor parties reached an all-time high with a total of nearly 54 per cent of the vote. As such, this group is about 3.3 times larger than the centre-right parties and about 2.5 times larger than the centre-left parties. Given high electoral volatility, it is not clear whether this electoral support base is consolidated and stabilized. However, it is apparent that the once marginal pro-Islamist and nationalist parties currently command the greatest electoral appeal in the country. If the past pattern of highly volatile electoral support continues, the next election may bring a sizeable deterioration in electoral support for AKP. Nevertheless, if the past three elections provide any meaningful clues for the future, such a decline might create yet another new right-of-centre or a purely populist winner, since the centre-right party group now seems to lack electoral credibility.

Persistent Fragmentation of Electoral Support

Electoral support in the post-1980s Turkish party system is also increasingly fragmented. Despite the very limiting ten per cent nationwide electoral threshold, an increasing number of parties was able to attract voters' support in post-1980 elections. In addition to the fragmented election results, parties continuously split into smaller splinters, thus increasing the number of parties in Parliament. The main reason for such post-election divisions has been the inability of the larger umbrella parties to keep intraparty opposition under control. Their strictly hegemonic party organizations do not allow for any internal democratic deliberation and consensus building. As a consequence, while electoral preferences have remained very volatile, they have also remained highly fragmented.

Compared to 1999 and 1995, the party system in 2002 is less fragmented. However, it is more fragmented than in 1991. Even more disturbing from the perspective of party system stability is that social, economic, ethnic, sectarian and thus regional differences in electoral preferences dominate the election results. Since the 1950s, it has always been local and regional rather than national factors that have shaped election results (Çarkoğlu and Eren 2002). My calculations with the unofficial election results from the provinces show that the overall dominant position of the local component in election results continues in the Turkish party system. However, the national component has risen for the AKP and CHP vote. More importantly, AKP became the first

party in Turkish electoral history to gather behind it a uniform nationwide swing in its favour.

The puzzle remains to be solved, however: why do Turkish electoral preferences fail to stabilize around a few political parties, despite institutional arrangements such as the ten per cent electoral threshold for representation in the parliament? Several clues can be found in the historical background to present-day electoral competition:

- Frequent military interventions, that not only closed down major parties but also changed the institutional structure of the party system, impede the development of partisan attachment among the electorate. Together with parochial cultural traits and low social capital in terms of trust in fellow citizens, such political socialization creates a real obstacle to the stabilization of electoral preferences.
- Parties fail to develop close ties with their constituencies and target groups. Although this is partially due to the political party law imposed by the 1980 military regime, it also stems from the oligopolistic leadership hierarchy. Such a structure gives no incentives to the party leadership to connect with the people at large; instead, they concentrate on distribution of patronage.
- Party politics evolved primarily around rent creation and patronage distribution. Hence, parties did not have to rely on their organizations to mobilize their constituencies or to raise resources, since they could rely either on the share of rent or patronage they captured or on state funds.
- As long as patronage creation and distribution is possible, these cartel parties did not have to rely on ideological argumentation. Through their organizations, parties excluded civic involvement that might have allowed their constituencies to influence them and instead focused on the control of patronage distribution. Hence, popular participation was reduced to mere electoral participation.
- Lowering the voting age to 18 in 1995 increased the proportion of the electorate that was socialized into politics during the post-1980 era. These younger voters not only have little partisan commitment to any party but also tend to vote on the sole basis of economic expectations, because of the urgent needs generated by recurring economic crises.

Impact of the Electoral Law

The third notable characteristic lies in the electoral system, which requires a party to gain more than ten per cent of the valid votes nationwide in order to gain representation in the parliament. Accordingly, a party obtaining 9.9 per cent of the valid votes nationwide gets zero seats in parliament, whereas a party receiving one more vote than ten per cent could get about 55 seats or ten per cent of parliamentary seats. Thus, the return in terms of seats for these additional votes over ten per cent nationwide support is quite large. This provision in the election system was introduced in the aftermath of the 1980 military regime to keep relatively small regional parties out of parliament. It has consistently kept 14 to 19 per cent of the electorate unrepresented since 1987.

In 1987, 19.8 per cent of the votes cast remained unrepresented, leaving the centrist DSP as well as the right-of-centre MHP and Islamist RP out of Parliament. In 1991, the electoral coalition between the RP and MHP helped keep the unrepresented votes to a bare minimum. However, in 1995, the two parties opposing one another on the Kurdish issue, that is the nationalist MHP and the ethnic Kurdish HADEP, remained outside parliament while the total unrepresented votes reached 14.4 per cent. In 1999 when the last general election took place, while MHP managed to win representation, the centre-left CHP was sidelined and 19 per cent of the total votes cast remained unrepresented. No major electoral coalitions were formed for the November 2002 election. As a result of the persistent fragmentation in preferences, the unrepresented portion of electoral preferences in the parliament has now reached a peak at about 45 per cent of the vote. Besides the sheer size of this unrepresented vote, its ideological character is also quite significant. In November 2002, with the exception of CHP, all centrist parties remained outside Parliament.

DEHAP also found itself in a peculiar position once again in November 2002 as the sole representative of Kurdish ethnicity. The electoral heir of HADEP of the 1990s, DEHAP once again remained out of Parliament while significantly expanding its electoral base in comparison to the 1995 and 1999 elections. DEHAP reached a higher support level than ANAP, SP, DSP and BBP and has now become the sixth largest party in the system. DEHAP's regionally concentrated electoral support which remains unrepresented in Parliament increases the representational bias in favour of those parties that capture the second largest vote shares in those provinces where they dominate. When DEHAP failed to achieve parliamentary representation because it fell below the ten per cent electoral threshold nationwide, those parties that came second to DEHAP in the south-eastern provinces get

disproportionately more MPs than their vote shares would normally allow them if DEHAP were to get representation. While in 1995 and 1999, the pro-Islamist RP and FP benefited from HADEP's exclusion from the Parliament, in 2002 it was AKP which exploited this advantage.

The Significance of Economic Performance

Recent electoral experience indicates a remarkably high correlation between electoral support for the incumbent party or coalition and economic performance during its tenure. Çarkoğlu (1997a) shows that the worst (better) the economy performs during inter-election periods, the largest is the drop (gain) in the electoral support for the party or coalition that is responsible for this performance. Observing such close correlation between their electoral fate and their economic policy performance, the incumbents try to manipulate their economic policy tools in such a way as to please their target constituencies. Such manipulations are observed in agricultural support prices, government employment and salary rises, and delays in price increases of goods and services controlled by the public sector (Çarkoğlu 1995; Ergüder 1980; Gürkan and Kasnakoğlu 1991). Nevertheless, incumbents seem to fail more often than they succeed in their efforts to stay in power. As a result, the economic balance gets worse.

A key observation in the aftermath of the November 2000 and February 2001 economic crises is that such economic manipulation is primarily responsible for the ever-increasing public debt and its consequent crisis. Accordingly, the present economic austerity programme aimed to limit the ability of governments to engage in politically motivated policy manipulations. Nevertheless, intricate public bidding and spending arrangements that may take place before elections still make political manipulation of the economy possible. However, before the November 2002 election, the incumbent DSP–MHP–ANAP coalition seemed unable to deliver any significant amelioration in the economic conditions facing broad electoral masses. Accordingly, the coalition's electoral support of about 54 per cent in the aftermath of the 1999 election shrank to about 15 per cent in November 2002. This constitutes the largest drop in Turkish electoral history for an incumbent or coalition in two consecutive elections.⁵

Regionalization

The last striking characteristic of the aggregate election outcomes across the Turkish provinces lies in the clear pattern of geographical regionalization. The past electoral record indicates that for the 1950–99 period, Turkish provinces can be grouped into three regions.⁶ In the east

and southeastern part of the country lie the provinces where there has been overwhelming support for the ethnic Kurdish parties in the post-1990 period. A second region covers the coastal provinces from the eastern Black Sea down to the eastern Mediterranean, including the whole of the Trace and Aegean provinces. The third region covers a large number of provinces that lie in between the other two regions. As I will illustrate in detail below, these three regions reveal a clear pattern reflected in their socio-economic characteristics as well as political preferences.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE NOVEMBER 2002 ELECTIONS

The Regional Dimension

Provincial similarities in election outcomes are typically attributed to the effects of various socio-economic factors as well as to the historical and contextual background of the provincial locality shaping the election milieu. Nevertheless, conventionally, provincial election returns are used within the framework of geographical regions, despite the fact that wide cleavages may exist even between provinces in the same region. However, geographical regions have little, if any, meaning when trying to understand political dynamics. An alternative to using geographical regions is simply to create regions on the basis of election results alone and then to attempt to explain the emerging patterns of regionalization by examining various socio-economic factors. I have previously used this method to analyse the April 1999 general election and found clear patterns that overlap with provincial levels of socio-economic development as well as party system characteristics (see Çarkoğlu 2000; Çarkoğlu and Avcı 2002). Below, I again use cluster analysis to derive provincial regions in the November 2002 election.⁷

Table 5 and Figure 2 show the provincial clusters that emerged from the November 2002 election results. A total of six clusters summarize similarities in provincial election results in a compact way. Each cluster is derived so as to make the variation within the cluster of electoral support for parties as small as possible, while at the same time preserving the differentiation across clusters in terms of the distribution of votes across parties between the clusters.

In the first cluster, we observe 12 provinces in the east and south-eastern Anatolia. DEHAP/HADEP with its Kurdish ethnic identification emerges as the dominant party, with an average of about 40 per cent support, while AKP remains at 15 per cent. Centre-left CHP with about nine per cent comes third in this cluster and all the rest of the parties are below ten per cent.⁸ In clusters 2, 3, 4 and 6, AKP is the dominant party.

However, the nature of competition is significantly different across these clusters. For instance, in cluster 2, AKP averages about 47 per cent while CHP comes second with an average of only about 13 per cent support. As such, AKP is obviously the dominant electoral power in these 29 provinces with little competition from the rest of the parties. Similarly, AKP gets an average of about 33 per cent in cluster 3 while CHP comes second with nearly 21 per cent, followed by the nationalist MHP and centre-right DYP with about 11 per cent each. Accordingly, in cluster 2 we have about three effective parties while in the third cluster we find four effective parties. In the peculiar Black Sea province of Rize, AKP obtained once again a level of support comparable to cluster 2. However, this time the centre-right ANAP obtained about 28 per cent support. This exceptional performance by ANAP is due to the fact that its leader, Mesut Yılmaz, is originally from Rize. In cluster 6 we see four provinces where independent candidates did exceptionally well, averaging about 15 per cent while AKP still had about 34 per cent support. The rise of the independents seems to have pushed the centrist parties below ten per cent in this cluster. Only in cluster 5 do we observe CHP leading with about 24 per cent support, followed closely by the far-right AKP with 18 per cent, the centre-right DYP with 16 per cent and the nationalist MHP trailing with about ten per cent.

Most striking in this cluster is the average level of 8.78 per cent support for the populist GP. In this cluster of provinces, GP obtained 18.6 per cent in Edirne, 17.5 per cent in İzmir, 13.1 per cent in Tekirdağ, 12.8 in Kırklareli, 10.3 per cent in Muğla and 10.2 per cent in Denizli. Besides these cluster 5 provinces, other GP results were 25.5 per cent in Sakarya where its leader was a candidate, 8.7 per cent in Bursa, 8.2 per cent in İstanbul 8.2 per cent and 6.8 per cent in Ankara. Thus, GP has gathered respectable electoral support in many of the most developed provinces.⁹ It remains to be seen whether the party will manage to retain this electoral base in the most developed provinces and perhaps even expand on it.

In short, where CHP looks most powerful on the electoral scene, the level of competition is also highest with nearly five effective parties in the system. Among these competing parties, the populist right-of-centre GP has a peculiarly high level of support and thus constitutes a potential source of challenge to the establishment from the modern sectors of the country. However, the AKP lead occurs in provinces where the level of competition is significantly lower, giving AKP the advantage of representation in the parliament.

Looking at these clusters, several characteristics emerge. First, we see that the core of the Kurdish electoral base has remained almost intact if

TABLE 5
AVERAGE VOTE SHARES OF PARTIES ACROSS PROVINCE CLUSTERS
IN NOVEMBER 2002 ELECTION

	Province clusters					
	1 DEHAP is by far the largest party, followed by a distant AKP	2 AKP is by far the largest party, followed by a distant CHP and DYP	3 AKP is by far the largest party, followed by a respectable CHP while DYP and MHP are trailing far behind	4 AKP is by far the largest party, while ANAP is a distant second	5 CHP leads, AKP is second with a respectable support while DYP and a distant MHP follows	6 AKP is a distant leader followed by significant vote for independents
AKP	15.13	46.60	32.89	44.10	18.46	34.20
CHP	9.24	12.96	20.51	7.40	23.96	6.45
DYP	7.88	10.21	11.11	7.40	16.09	9.50
MHP	5.12	9.28	11.34	3.10	10.28	9.38
GP	1.18	4.82	6.76	0.80	8.78	1.43
DEHAP	39.59	2.32	2.89	0.60	5.88	8.03
ANAP	7.06	4.91	5.75	28.50	6.58	1.55
SP	2.62	2.97	1.87	4.20	1.47	7.05
DSP	0.88	0.95	1.66	0.90	1.71	0.53
YTP	0.71	0.53	0.94	0.30	1.27	0.30
BBP	0.69	1.60	1.02	0.50	0.65	1.10
Independents	8.31	0.43	0.32	0.04	1.26	17.69
Number of provinces in each cluster	12	29	20	1	15	4
Share of voters for each cluster (%)	5.72	30.84	41.09	0.52	20.52	1.33

TABLE 5 (cont.)

		Provinces comprising each cluster					
		AGRI	ADYAMAN	ADANA	RİZE	ANTALYA	BİNGÖL
		BİTLİS	AFYON	AMASYA		ARTVIN	ELAZIĞ
		DIYARBAKIR	BOLU	ANKARA		AYDIN	BAYBURT
		HAKKARİ	BURSA	BALIKESİR		BİLECİK	KILIS
		MARDİN	ÇANKIRI	BURDUR		ÇANAKKALE	
		MUS	ÇORUM	ERZİNCAN		DENİZLİ	
		SİİRT	ERZURUM	ESKİŞEHİR		EDİRNE	
		TUNCELİ	GİRESUN	GAZİANTEP		İÇEL	
		VAN	GÜMÜŞHANE	HATAY		İZMİR	
		BATMAN	ISPARTA	İSTANBUL		KARS	
		IRNAK	KAYSERİ	KASTAMONU		KIRKLARELİ	
		İĞDIR	KOCAELİ	KİRSEHİR		MUĞLA	
			KONYA	MANİSA		TEKİRDAĞ	
			KÜTAHYA	SİNOP		SURFA	
			MALATYA	USAK		ARDAHAN	
			K.MARAS	ZONGULDAK			
			NEVŞEHİR	KARAMAN			
			NİĞDE	BARTIN			
			ORDU	YALOVA			
			SAKARYA	OSMANIYE			
			SAMSUN				
			SİVAS				
			TOKAT				
			TRABZON				
			YOZGAT				
			AKSARAY				
			KIRIKKALE				
			KARABÜK				
			DÜZCE				
Effective number of parties in each cluster	3.5	3.2	4.0	2.0	4.6	4.6	
Volatility index	30.1	58.3	54.3	50.2	47.9	46.5	

not expanded in the east and southeastern provinces compared to the 1999 results (see Çarkoğlu 2000). DEHAP's region starts with Diyarbakır and Mardin in the West and expands into the east, covering Muş, Ağrı and Iğdır. Compared to the 1999 elections, only in Hakkari did DEHAP obtain a slightly lower level of support than HADEP gained then. In all other provinces we observe DEHAP expanding on the pro-Kurdish average by about ten percentage points (see Table 6). We also observe that AKP expanded the pro-Islamist vote in all provinces in this region except Bitlis, Hakkari and Iğdır, where significant independent candidates were running. GP is very weak in this region, whereas MHP has expanded its narrow electoral base in 1999 surprisingly in Hakkari, Mardin, Siirt and Tunceli. Ciller's DYP was able to expand on its electoral support only in Iğdır, losing about 7.5 percentage points on average in the rest of the provinces of this cluster. At the border of this core DEHAP cluster, we observe traditionally centrist Şanlıurfa, Kars, Ardahan and Artvin from cluster 5, with significant support for DYP Baykal's centre-left CHP. Similarly, in Elazığ and Bingöl we have powerful independents. Starting from Erzurum and Trabzon in the north-east and Adıyaman and Malatya in the south-east we observe AKP's stronghold on the electoral scene.

Second, we observe that AKP was able to expand on the pro-Islamist vote of the Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi* – FP) in all clusters. The lowest gain occurs in cluster 1 and the highest in cluster 2. The latter looks like the core base of AKP whereas cluster 3 seems to shape the borders of the AKP stronghold (see Table 6 and Figure 2). In cluster 2 there is very little competition with AKP, which expanded on the previous pro-Islamist FP's vote share by about 27 percentage points. The direction of vote switches from one party to another cannot be deduced from a simple table showing party wins and losses. However, it is noteworthy that the total losses of the nationalist MHP and Ecevit's centre-left DSP are almost equal to AKP's gain. Losses by the centre-right DYP and ANAP amount to about 11 percentage points, which is about the same as the total vote obtained by two centre-left parties, Baykal's CHP and Ismail Cem's YTP, and the populist centre-right GP.

Third, two of the largest metropolitan provinces, that is Ankara and Istanbul, lie within cluster 3 where AKP still dominates to only a slightly lower degree than in cluster 2. In Istanbul AKP increased the pro-Islamist vote share by about 16 percentage points (from 21.3 per cent in 1999 for FP) and in Ankara by about 21 percentage points (from FP's 17 per cent in 1999). Combining clusters 2 and 3, we get a large region where AKP gets about 9 million of its total of about 10.7 million votes. Clearly, these two clusters form the core of AKP support. Compared to 1999,

FIGURE 2
 PROVINCE CLUSTERS IN NOVEMBER 2002 ELECTION



- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>■ 1st Province Cluster. DEHAP is by far the largest party followed by a distant AKP</p> <p>■ 4th Province Cluster. AKP is by far the largest party while ANAP is a distant AKP</p> | <p>■ 2nd Province Cluster. AKP is by far the largest party, followed by a distant CHP and DYP</p> <p>■ 5th Province Cluster. CHP leads. AKP is second with respectable support while DYP and a distant MHP follows</p> | <p>■ 3rd Province Cluster. AKP is by far the largest party, followed by a respectable CHP while DYP and MHP are trailing far behind</p> <p>■ 6th Province Cluster. AKP is a distant leader followed by significant vote for independents</p> |
|---|--|--|

TABLE 6
AVERAGE WINS AND LOSSES OF THE PARTIES ACROSS PROVINCE CLUSTERS

	Clusters	AKP	CHP	DYP	MHP	GP	DEHAP	ANAP	SP	DSP	YTP	BBP
DEHAP is by far the largest party followed by a distant AKP	1	2.3	3.1	-6.1	-1.1	1.2	9.2	-5.3	-10.2	-4.5	0.7	-0.5
AKP is by far the largest party followed by a distant CHP and DYP*	2	26.7	5.8	-4.0	-15.5	4.7	0.7	-7.0	-16.7	-12.7	0.5	-0.9
AKP is by far the largest party followed by a respectable CHP while DYP and MHP are trailing far behind	3	20.3	10.9	-1.8	-9.6	6.8	0.7	-6.8	-10.7	-22.2	0.9	-0.2
AKP is by far the largest party while ANAP is a distant second	4	23.3	4.1	-2.3	-5.9	0.8	-0.5	-14.9	-16.5	-9.0	0.3	-0.3
CHP leads, AKP is second with a respectable support while DYP and a distant MHP follows	5	11.2	14.2	0.5	-5.1	8.8	1.1	-8.9	-5.8	-25.4	1.3	-0.1
AKP is a distant leader followed by significant vote for independents	6	11.5	1.9	-6.7	-8.3	1.4	3.0	-10.2	-15.7	-6.6	0.3	-1.4

Note: * Except Düzce since in 1999 Düzce did not exist as a separate province.

pro-Islamist support seems to have expanded into the Aegean provinces of Balıkesir, Manisa, and Uşak. Similarly, Burdur, Eskişehir, Bursa and İstanbul, which once showed strong support for the centrist DSP, ANAP and DYP, now have quite significant AKP support (about 37 per cent).

Fourth, the coastal provinces of the Mediterranean and Aegean regions, as well as the border provinces in the Marmara and the northeast, comprise the heart of the centrist electoral base. Compared to 1999 this cluster has shrunk considerably in size.

Fifth, we observe a growing number of provinces where independent electoral support is growing. Given the limiting ten per cent nation-wide threshold for representation in parliament, this trend can only grow. It seems that in the future, those credible candidates who fall into the opposition camp within their very hierarchical parties will try to run as independents and continue their careers. However, on what basis they will be able to appeal to their local constituencies is not clear. Not being party members, they are disadvantaged in their efforts to deliver patronage in their provinces. Failing patronage, they will need to be ideologically very visible to make their mark on the electoral scene and survive in the upcoming elections. The ex-Minister of the Interior, Mehmet Ağar, managed to get himself elected once again from Elazığ. Immediately after the election he rejoined his old party, DYP (which subsequently elected him party leader in place of Tansu Ciller), and thus in a roundabout way secured a parliamentary seat for his party. Obviously, being the leader and sole parliamentary representative of his party, he is in a more advantageous position than the other eight independents in Parliament.

The Socio-Economic Dimension

We can observe a clear pattern of socio-economic differentiation across the province clusters derived from the November 2002 election results. Table 7 below provides a summary of the patterns observed. The most striking observation concerns the difference between cluster 1 and the rest of the country. In all variables included in the analysis, the east and south-eastern provinces fare significantly worse than the rest of the group. For instance, average per capita income in purchasing power parity dollars is slightly more than one-third of the cluster 5 average. On health indicators as well, the number of people per specialist doctor is about four times higher in cluster 1 than in cluster 5. Baby deaths as a share of total deaths in this cluster is about 16 per cent while in the coastal provinces of cluster 5 this share is only about nine per cent. The literacy rate is similarly about 61 per cent in cluster 1, whereas it reaches 85 per cent in cluster 5. The percentage of those of school age who

TABLE 7
SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND PARTY SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS ACROSS PROVINCE CLUSTERS*

Province clusters	DEHAP is by far the largest party followed by a distant AKP 1	AKP is by far the largest party, followed by a distant CHP and DYP 2	AKP is by far the largest party, followed by a respectable CHP while DYP and MHP are trailing far behind 3	AKP is by far the largest party while, ANAP is a distant second 4	CHP leads, AKP is second with a respectable support while DYP and a distant MHP follows 5	AKP is a distant leader followed by significant vote for independents 6	Adjusted R square
Socio-Economic Characteristics							
Life expectancy – 1997	62.86	67.21	67.46	64.30	68.41	65.55	0.13
Share of baby deaths in total deaths – 1997	15.63	9.51	8.46	1.90	8.93	11.28	0.11
Population per expert doctor – 1997	15668.42	4614.32	3999.05	3391.00	3895.00	6476.75	0.45
Literacy % – 1997	60.69	82.11	84.84	82.30	84.66	75.15	0.61
Schooling % – 1997	35.23	57.14	63.15	57.35	59.71	50.13	0.48
Share of women in income – 1997	43.38	40.59	40.04	42.70	36.47	45.50	0.29
Cars per 10000 people – 1997	94.33	344.82	561.15	348.00	513.13	189.00	0.37
Paved Village roads (%) – 1997	15.08	26.63	35.43	8.70	30.55	20.63	0.21
Per capita income (PPP\$) – 1997	2672.44	5020.84	6134.16	5600.70	6685.51	3654.60	0.22
Human Development Index – 1997	0.57	0.69	0.72	0.70	0.72	0.64	0.49
Human Poverty Index – 1997	28.42	14.07	12.96	15.00	12.60	18.50	0.59
Party System Characteristics							
Effective number of parties – 2002	3.50	3.20	4.05	2.03	4.56	4.63	0.59
Volatility – 2002	30.08	58.34	54.34	50.20	47.87	46.45	0.68
Number of provinces in each cluster	12	29	20	1	15	4	
Share of voters for each cluster (%)	5.72	30.84	41.09	0.52	20.52	1.33	

Note: * Bold figures are significant at 0.05, italicized figures are significant at 0.1 for one-tailed tests.

actually attend school is 35 per cent in cluster 1, whereas in cluster 5 it reaches 60 per cent. While there are 95 cars per 10,000 people in cluster 1, there are 513 cars per 10,000 people in cluster 5. A rural development indicator (percentage of paved village roads) also shows the disparity between cluster 1 and the rest of the country. While only about 15 per cent of the village roads are paved in this cluster, the rest of the country has about twice that percentage. All in all, the summary human development index figures also show the disparity across our clusters. The human development index averages only about 78 per cent of the average level of cluster 5. The poverty index shows an even larger gap between the two clusters: the average poverty index in cluster 1 is about 2.3 times higher than in cluster 5.

Looking at the party system characteristics across our clusters, we observe that the least developed and poorest cluster has a significantly lower degree of competition reflected in its low effective number of parties. The figure for the highest effective number of parties is observed, not surprisingly, in the four provinces where independents are powerful (cluster 6). Next come the coastal developed provinces of cluster 5 followed by the bordering AKP stronghold of cluster 3. The core AKP stronghold of cluster 2, however, has the lowest effective number of parties, as well as having the highest volatility in electoral support. From 1999 to 2002, the lowest volatility is observed in the DEHAP/HADEP stronghold of cluster 1 with about 30 per cent. Statistically speaking, volatility rates across our six clusters differ significantly from one another.

Across the six clusters identified, cluster 1 is significantly differentiated from the rest on all our indicators on Table 4. Cluster 6 is significantly different on five out of 13 indicators (seven out of ten if 0.1 level of significance is used). Cluster 2 is differentiated also on 5 out of 13 indicators (six out of ten if 0.1 level of significance is used). While cluster 4 is significantly different from the rest of the provinces on party system characteristics, in terms of socio-economic indicators it is only differentiated in terms of the share of women in total income. It is also worth noting that party system characteristics are quite well explained by our six clusters; the percentage of explained variation for the effective number of parties index is 59 per cent and 68 per cent for electoral volatility. Among others, we see that 61 per cent of literacy rate, 59 per cent of human poverty index, 49 per cent of human development index and 48 per cent of schooling rate are explained solely by the six cluster dummy variables.

CONCLUSION: WHITHER THE AKP?

The general election of November 2002 shows several macro patterns that are similar to those observed in the past. First of all, electoral volatility and fragmentation remain high. What is remarkably different in 2002 is that only two parties passed the electoral threshold, thus creating a single-party government and effectively a two-party parliament. Normally, such a parliamentary setting with a one-party government would be expected to be conducive to stability, in comparison with the multi-party coalitions of the past. However, the inexperience and inner party dynamics of the AKP government and the potentially explosive developments on the foreign policy front may not permit the much desired policy-making stability and coherence. The fact this single-party government emerged from an election that left more than 50 per cent of the electorate unrepresented in Parliament has also created problems of legitimacy.

Second, the collapse of the centrist parties continues while the right-of-centre has gained support. Without looking at the micro individual level evidence, the ideological grouping of the parties suggests that the right-of-centre in Turkey is now more than 3.3 times larger than the centre-right and about 2.5 times larger than the centre-left.

Third, socio-economic cleavages across Turkish provinces continue to shape electoral preferences. The least developed east and southeastern provinces support the ethnic Kurdish political agenda at a higher level than in previous elections.

Lastly, the appeal of the right-of-centre agenda, as represented by AKP, is not only growing in terms of the share of support received but also in terms of its geographical spread in the country. The core conservative, pro-Islamist constituency has expanded between 1999 and 2002 and now includes the inner Aegean, Eastern Marmara, Central Anatolia, almost the whole of the Black Sea and the western borders of the east and south-east Anatolia regions. The coastal regions are significantly narrower along the western and southern coasts.

The expansion of support for the conservative political agenda since the 1995 election is now well established. The remaining question is whether or not it has reached its natural limits. Is it possible to see a further expansion of this political agenda into the relatively well off coastal regions and ethnically sensitive eastern and south-eastern provinces? When and if this last stage of expansion takes place, would the pro-Islamist agenda be significantly different from its roots in the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi* – MSP), Welfare Party (*Refah Partizi* – RP) and Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partizi* – FP)?

Starting from the last question, it seems that AKP is already quite different from its predecessors because it is in power alone, facing the daily struggles of running a government and bearing sole responsibility for it. Its ideological orientations are obviously not going to change that rapidly. However, appealing to nearly one-third of the Turkish electorate has certainly mellowed its rhetoric. Further softening of its stands may be the only way to continue expansion into the coastal regions. A test of this new appeal strategy will come in the 2004 local government elections. If the AKP government assumes a peaceful policy-making role, focusing on bread and butter issues of economic policy, and succeeds in maintaining and even expanding its electoral base either vertically (by obtaining a higher share in its core central Anatolian provinces of clusters 2 and 3) or horizontally (by obtaining a higher share in cluster 5 as well as more or less maintaining its hold on clusters 2 and 3), then its need to pull back to its ideological roots will be quite low. Then we will be in a position to talk about a new centre in Turkish politics, defined and shaped by the AKP leadership.

Given the chaotic economic situation and consequent anger among the electorate toward the incumbent coalition as well as the centrist parties, who were unable to articulate the worries of the masses and respond to their demands, the inherent instability of Turkish party preferences seems to have rallied consistently across the country's regions and provinces around AKP in the 3 November elections. It remains to be seen whether AKP will be able to maintain this support until the next big electoral test in April 2004 and beyond.

The rise of the AKP in a homogenous pattern across the Turkish provinces can be seen as a continuation of the peripheral challenge to the statist centre of Turkish politics. According to Mardin's (1973) conceptualization of the centre-periphery paradigm, Turkish politics is built around a strong and coherent state apparatus run by a distinct group of elites dominated by the military and bureaucracy. The *centre* is confronted by a heterogenous and often hostile *periphery*, composed mainly of the peasantry, small farmers and artisans. The 'centre' is built around Kemalist secular principles. It represents a state-run nationalist modernization programme. The *periphery* reflects the salient features of a subject and parochial orientation. It is built around hostile sentiments toward the centralist and coercive modernization project of the centre and includes regional, religious and ethnic groups, often with conflicting interests and political strategies. The resistance of the centre à la Mardin (1973) has never been this weak in past elections. However, to what extent the peripheral forces have become reformist or reactionary against the centre of the Turkish establishment under the banner of the AKP is not yet clear.

AKP now inherits the tradition not only of the pro-Islamists but also of the patronage-minded Democrat Party (DP) of the 1950s, Justice Party (AP) of the 1960s and 1970s and the recently alienated DYP and ANAP. How the AKP leadership can balance these hardly reconcilable orientations is not clear. Will the alienated masses, hurt by the economic crisis of 2001, remain behind AKP or move to yet another new or perhaps existing party? Could they be mobilized by a leader – whether new or already in the political game – with business credentials? Or will they be attracted by a traditionally centrist party? Or by another pro-Islamist or nationalist one? Will cumulative disenchantment with the inability of the parties to respond to the basic needs and expectations of the electorate lead to a further abandonment of centrist tendencies? How rapidly will this movement to one of the extremes of the political spectrum occur? How would the existing parties and the powerful state bureaucracy react to these changes? Given developments on the international scene concerning EU membership, the Cyprus conflict and the prospect of war in Iraq, will the AKP government be able to impose its own policy agenda or simply react to events that may overwhelm it? The answers to these questions remain to be born out of impending developments.

NOTES

1. See Çarkoğlu (1998), Çarkoğlu and Hinich (2002) and Kalaycıoğlu (1998) for a multi-dimensional analysis of Turkish ideological space.
2. For their opposition to the secular regime, both MNP and MSP were banned by the military regimes of 1971 and 1980 respectively.
3. Unable to legislate, encircled by popular resistance together with increasing resignations from DYP, the coalition partners agreed on early elections under the premiership of DYP leader, Tansu Çiller. Accordingly, Erbakan resigned. However, the President asked the centrist ANAP leader, Mesut Yılmaz, to form the new government. Together with the centre-left DSP and the Democratic Turkey Party (*Demokrat Türkiye Partisi* – DTP), Yılmaz' minority government obtained a vote of confidence with outside support from the centre-left CHP. The new government was also pressured by the military to implement the policies 'recommended' at the infamous NSC meeting, and consequently delivered especially on the education policy front by passing the controversial eight-year mandatory education law.
4. The pre-election study that provides the basis of these results is a nationwide survey of the voting age population, conducted in October 2002 and including 2,028 face-to-face interviews in 33 provinces. Districts, streets and buildings where the interviews are to be conducted are randomly selected by computer. The expected margin of error is +/- 2.2 at 95 per cent confidence level. The field research was conducted by Frekans Research Company during the period 10–25 October. The project was funded by Sabancı University and the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV).
5. Complementing these macro characteristics is a number of micro individual-level findings. Scarce survey research on political preferences shows a consistent shift of voters from centrist left-right ideological positions towards the extreme-right end of

the spectrum (Ergüder *et al.* 1991; Çarkoğlu 1998; Çarkoğlu and Toprak 2000; Kalaycıoğlu 1998; 1999). As a result, only a small minority seems to have remained left-of-centre. While the centrist positions have shrunk by half, the right-of-centre positions have grown continuously and nearly 20 per cent of the voters seem to be placed on the far right position; that is at point 10 on a 1 to 10 left-right ideological scale. Multidimensional analyses show two dimensions that command the ideological competition in the Turkish party system (see Kalaycıoğlu 1998; Çarkoğlu and Hinich 2002). The first and relatively more dominant dimension is the secularist versus pro-Islamist cleavage. It is noteworthy that this cleavage largely overlaps with the centre versus periphery formations in Turkish politics and also with left-right orientations, thus being similar in many respects to western European traditions. The second dimension is the ethnic cleavage, setting the Turkish and Kurdish identities in opposition to one another.

In micro individual-level analyses, a rising disenchantment of the electorate with the existing parties becomes evident. For a long time, commercial and academic surveys have revealed that not only is a large segment of the electorate undecided as to which party to vote for, but an equally large segment simply refuses to vote for any one of the available parties (Çarkoğlu 1997b). The negative affection or simple anger is evident among this group of the electorate. The inability of governments to respond to emergency needs, even in the aftermath of the devastating 1999 earthquakes and the following economic crisis, obviously occupy an important place in the popular anger towards politicians and politics at large. Turkish electors seem simply unhappy with their lives and outraged with the politicians' inability to deliver satisfactory policies to counteract these tendencies.

6. For earlier evaluations of geographical regionalization patterns, see Çarkoğlu and Avcı (2002) and Çarkoğlu (2000).
7. See Kachigan (1991) for an overview of the cluster analysis.
8. Independents obtain 17 per cent in Bitlis, 23 per cent in Hakkari and 13.7 per cent in Siirt, averaging about 8.3 per cent for the cluster.
9. See discussion below on socio-economic characteristics of the clusters derived from the November 2002 election results.

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