

# Democracy Game in Turkey

*Alper Duman*

## 1 What is Democracy?

We define democracy as the regime in which the following five institutional settings are structures are well in place: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture <sup>1</sup>.

The underlining principles in a democracy are the extent of limitation and accountability of the governing body and the participation of the general people in the political process that shape the public affairs.

In general there are three ways to achieve democracy according to Barington Moore Jr.:

1. (ED) The Elite simply chooses or forced to be democratic in order to maximize long-term wealth after the masses make the cost of autocracy/monarchy/dictatorship prohibitively costly. This is the European/ North American Way
2. (ND) The Elite opts for industrialization without democratization. The outcome would be either fascism (Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan) or socialism (Russia, China). Then the rules of the game evolve into a full-fledged democracy or flawed democracy depending on international parameters and local dynamics.
3. (BD) The Elite offers an implicit social/political contract. While the Elite sustain their power, the non-elite may be promised an acceptable level of social/political mobility. This is the latest and most unstable path. (i.e. India, Turkey?, Latin America)

There exist a widely shared perception that higher income levels lead to or even cause more democracy. And sometimes vice versa.

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<sup>1</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit, Democracy Index 2010

There is also an argument that collectivist societies are less likely to be democratic.

Another hypothesis is that democracy requires decentralization and market economy.

We believe that this is not so.

We will portray a more complicated picture.

## 2 Players and Rules of the Democracy Game

We adopt an evolutionary/institutionalist framework in which democracy emerges as an equilibrium result of underlying overlapping multiple games in each five categories.

The Elite and non-elite match and play the underlining games. If the composite result favours democracy then democracy will prevail.

The strategic interactions and payoffs depend on many variables and parameters, such as: (1) labor share, (2) general productivity, (3) kin/tribe/community based constraints, (4) taxation, (5) the number of Elite and non-elite groups, (5) mobility, (6) historical lock-ins

Institutional evolution can reveal itself by (1) fiat, (2) decentralized spread of behavioural norms, (3) the intentional collective action, and (4) some combination of the three or all.

## 3 Democracy Internationally and Across Societies

Democracy as a an equilibrium path along a political Coasean framework is put forward and developed by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (AR). The argument is that democracy can emerge if the economic and political parameters are convenient for a political Coasean juncture. The Elite makes concessions and delegates power to the non-elite and the non-elite in turn makes credible commitment no to seize the wealth of the Elite and nullify the power of the Elite. This is rather a coordination game. Democracy emerges if it is risk-dominant.

## 4 Determinants of Democracy Game

The anchor of the comparative studies of democracy and authoritarian regimes is the Barrington Moore Jr's, Social Origins of Democracy and Dictatorship [?]. Moore's comparative perspective frames the issue on couple of major axis. One is the mode of property rights regime. The other is the way

monarchy, aristocracy, bourgeoisie and the peasants/common people interact.

The mode of property rights allow or constrain the productivity of the productive classes and the accumulation of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie. Thereby, non-royal groups, especially the aristocracy may have relative autonomy from the monarch or the absolutist executive power and put limits to the discretionary politics.

The chain of power delegation and political participation then reaches to the bourgeoisie and the mass of people slowly but steadily.

In some cases, as in Asia especially in Japan (and in Russia), this process will be more likely be punctuated as major crisis, wars and revolutions cause structural shifts in power dynamics.

The bottom line for democracy is that the majority has a voice in the system, rather than exit.

Adam Przeworski (199?), pursues the puzzling intuition of Karl Marx. If the property-less class is the majority in a capitalist society then democracy is inherently unstable as the majority would demand the a radical redistribution of power and income/wealth from the Elite (the bourgeoisie).

Przeworski's answer is built on Gramscian hegemony and consent. Democracy internalizes consent among the non-elite as democratic institutions bind even the Elite and make room for the participation of the non-elite in public decision making.

The indeterminate nature of democratic processes and bargaining legitimize the capitalist democracy.

Acemoglu et. al. (2005) [?] critically evaluate the hypothesis that higher income levels cause more democracy. The study shows that the association is due to omitted historical institutions going back to 1500.

Once income is instrumented or fixed effects for countries are introduced the assumed association between income and democracy disappears not only for the last 50 years but also for the last 150 years as well.

As the settler mortality and population density in 1500( proxies for extractive political/economic institutions for the colonies) decline the democracy performance improves.

The date of independence also matters in a similar way. The latter the independence the lower the achievement a country accomplishes in terms of democracy.

Acemoglu et. al. (2005) emphasize that the crucial institutional factor is the degree of the constraints on the executive power.

1. Democracy requires credibility.

2. Democracy requires people use and depend on transaction contracts rather than face-to-face, informal arrangements.
3. Democracy requires removal of clientalist networks.
4. Democracy requires efficient level of public goods provision.

According to the logic of our model, the initial level of political credibility can lead to three types of democratization. Some new democracies are endowed with political competitors who have well-known policy stances and are immediately able to make credible promises to most voters. Such democracies almost immediately pursue policies in the broad public interest. In other new democracies, political competitors are not credible, but politicians nevertheless prefer to invest in their own ability to make credible commitments to voters, rather than to channel their appeals through patrons. In these democracies, public policy improves over time, as politicians become more broadly credible. In the third category of new democracies, however, politicians prefer to rely on patrons. These democracies are most vulnerable to delayed political development: As long as politicians rely predominantly on patrons, they do not invest in their own credibility. (Keefer, *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization*)

## 5 Democracy Gap in Islamic Societies

Platteau (2010) argues that: Driving this governance gap are comparatively low scores in the area of public accountability how well citizens can access government information and hold their political leaders accountable rather than in the area of quality of public administration the efficiency of the bureaucracy, the strength of the rule of law and protection of property rights, and the control of corruption and quality of regulations.

It is striking that military spending represents a much larger proportion of Gross Domestic Product in MENA (about 6%) than in any other region of the world (about 2% in all developing countries or in all developed countries).

Bernard Lewis (2002) cogently puts out:

?Since the state was Islamic, and was indeed created as an instrument of Islam by its founder, there was no need for any separate religious institution. The state was the church, the church was the state, and God was head of both, with the Prophet as his representative on earth. . . . From the beginning, Christians were taught, both by precept and practice, to distinguish between God and Caesar and between the different duties owed to each of the two. Muslims received no such instruction?.

A sort of internal war based on "religious outbidding" ensues.<sup>6</sup> This second scenario is more plausible if the ruler has decided to himself encourage the rise of religious movements in order to counter secular, left-wing political forces.

Askiya Muhammad Ture (1493 - 1528), who became one of the most renowned rulers of the Songhai Empire, took the title of "Caliph of the Soudan" upon his return from a pilgrimage in Mecca (in 1496). Using his new Islamic credentials, he embarked upon a jihad and quickly displaced political contenders (Davidson, 1991, p. 106; Lapidus, 1988, p. 494).

Rather than a conflation of religion and politics, the problem appears to be the easy manipulability of religion by the state.

The absence of centralized religious establishment facilitates the task of rulers with authoritarian tendencies who want to secure the allegiance of some religious authorities to back unpopular policies.

While in the Catholic church the right to excommunicate is monopolized by the Vatican, in the lands of Islam any judge can issue a fatwa against an individual, a group or a political regime considered to be impious or infidel: "the decision to oppose the state on the grounds that it is insufficiently Islamic belongs to anyone who wishes to exercise it" (Zakaria, 2003, pp. 124, 125, 144).

The fact that rulers often deemed desirable to claim a measure of Islamic legitimacy to sustain their political authority over Muslims did not make the state they controlled Islamic (p. 52).

Even if the ruler was unjust or impious, it was generally accepted that he should still be obeyed, for any kind of order was better than anarchy? (Hourani, 1991, p. 144)

The effects of instrumentalization of Islam most closely resemble those of the instrumentalization of ethnicity.

Why religious outbidding eventually led to secularism and representative government in England while it did not so far have that effect in Muslim countries.

fiscal needs of European sovereigns, especially in times of war, forced them to bargain with merchants and bankers who demanded the respect of fundamental liberties and accountability of government in return for their financial support through loans and taxation (see, e.g., Bates and Lien, 1985; North and Weingast, 1989; Tilly, 1992).

As pointed out by Charles Tilly, many Third World states "have acquired their military organization from outside, without the same internal forging of mutual constraints between rulers and ruled."

As underlined by Karl Marx, a modern market economy cannot develop in the absence of a civil society understood as an autonomous sphere of

economic activity, unimpeded by political and religious restrictions.

Ottoman state which drew upon all four schools of Islamic law in its law-making, institutionalized various systems of Sufism (Islamic mysticism) within its urban communities and military organizations, and did not hesitate to use customary law in order to placate its disparate population of Christians, Jews, and followers of different schools within Sunni Islam (Goffman, 2002, p. 73).

Power elites used Islam and the language of religion in self-defense against opposition groups that were frustrated at the failures of corrupt, secretive, authoritarian, and ineffective states which did not deliver on what they promised (Hourani, 1991, pp. 452-53).

Kadizade Mehmed, whose sermons emphasized the evils of innovation ("every innovation is heresy, every heresy is error, and every error leads to hell"). In Egypt, for example, the number of Muslim NGOs increased from six hundred in the early 1970s to two thousand in the mid-1980s, and the number of private mosques grew from fourteen thousand to forty thousand from the early 1960s to the early 1980s (Huuhtanen, 2005, pp. 78-79; see also Harik, 2005, for a detailed review of the Hezbollah's social activities in Lebanon).

By the same logic, educated and urbanized women wearing the Islamic veil may do so as a manner of escaping traditional norms that control their physical movements outside the family space.

Ghislaine Lydon (2007) has lent further support to Kuran's thesis by arguing that a basic flaw in Islamic legal systems lay in their failure to invest paperwork with legal personality.

because the institution of the waqf benefited the economic elite (since they could thereby protect their wealth), it discouraged them from demanding the constitutional enforcement of private property rights.

By preventing the emergence of large commercial enterprises, Islam made potential opposition to autocratic rule more fragmented and less effective.

In conjunction with the deep-rooted habit of personalizing exchanges and attributing responsibility for an adverse externality to a natural person or group rather than to a legal person, makes the establishment of the rule of law such a hard challenge in the Middle East today (Kuran, 2004b, pp. 86-87).