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Taking up the gauntlet: fictionists in the Turkish parliament

Çimen Günay

Abstract. Turkey has a long tradition of involvement of men of letters in political transformation processes. Several important figures of literature appear as key names in the history of Turkey who contributed to daily politics, manipulated and challenged it, sometimes with the fiercest discourses. Focusing on some prominent fiction writers who accessed the parliament of Turkey, this article discusses the superposition of the role of a writer and a politician. It sheds a critical eye at their subscription to parliamentary politics, and literary activities during their term of office, and comments on the continuity of certain limiting aspects of the political culture of Turkey that troubled them during their political career.

There have been a considerable number of writers who seek public office and politicians who write novels and short stories; Mario Vargas Llosa have run for presidency of Peru, André Malraux served as Minister of Culture of Général de Gaulle and plenty of politicians like Jimmy Carter, Winston Churchill etc. wrote novels at a certain point in their lives. Such an intersection of literature and politics is not alien to Turkey, a country where the involvement of (wo)men of letters in sociopolitical transformation processes is an intellectual custom and imaginative writing is a privileged sign of intellectuality. This essay will chart, in the presence of the strong interconnectedness between politics and literature in Turkey, the political and literary positions of some prominent fiction writers who accessed the parliament. It will allude at a spectrum of political atmospheres from the single-party state to the multi-party rivalry in the parliament, and a spectrum of writers that ranges from enthusiastic servants of the Kemalist revolution to the contemporary ones, who now are more intoxicated with a sense of their own importance.

[2] Although political engagements have been intrinsic to the philosophy and works of most of the literary figures, seeking office in the parliament appears as a seldom choice, especially when fiction writers are considered. Most of the fictionists have engaged in political activity as members of civil organizations and pressure groups or simply as intellectuals who evaluate the *realpolitik* and take political sides. In contrast to those who find literature and politics incompatible, try to avoid the amorality of politics in their life, or reject any link to politics whatsoever in their ivory tower, there have also been literary figures who, both in political terms and in their capacity as writers, evaluated contribution to parliamentary politics as an intellectual duty, a distinguished form of political act, and a risk to be ventured.

[3] A recent article published in the journal *Hece* provides a list of men of letters who served as MPs in the TBMM (Turkish Great National Assembly) for certain periods since the first parliamentary convention of 1920 (Özcan 2004: 581). The list comprises a heterogeneous group who, in critical and creative writing, touched upon several components of the culture of Turkey and includes 92 names - poets, short-story and drama writers, novelists, columnists and journalists etc. - some of whom gained reputation as distinguished avatars in the politics of Turkey.

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Pre-1950 Deputies	Tenure	Pre-1950 Deputies	Tenure	Post-1950 Deputies	Tenure
A.Adıvar	1.Meclis, 1946-1950	O.O.Nakiboğlu	1943-1950	H.E.Adıvar	1950-1954
A.Rasim	1927-1932	O.S.Orhon	1946-1950 1965-1969	S.Ağaoğlu	1950-1960
Aka Gündüz	1932-1946	Y.Z.Ortaç	1946-1950	Ç.Altan	1965-1969
M.Akalın	2.Meclis	Samih Rifat	1923-1931	K.Anadol	1973-1980 1987-1991 2002-
A.K. Akyüz	1939-1945	R.A.Sevengil	1943-1950	O.Attila	1965-1969
Ö.A.Aksoy	1935-1950	İ.H.Sevük	1943-1946	Y.Z.Bahadınlı	1965-1969
C.E.Arseven	1942-1950	A.H.Tanpınar	1942-1946	E.Bayazıt	1987-1991
B.Atalay	1923-1946	H.S.Tanrıöver	1945-1957	F.H.Cumalıoğlu	1965-1980
F.R.Atay	1923-1950	A.H.Tarhan	1928-1937	Z.Danışman	1950-1960
F.A.Aykaç	1929-1950	A.K.Tecer	1942-1946	A.Doğan	1995-
İ.H.Baltacıoğlu	1942-1950	E.H.Tepeyran	1923-1927 1939-1941	B.Ecevit	1957-1960 1961-1980 1991-2002
S.Batu	1939-1943	A.İ.Tokgöz	1931-1942	İ.C.Ege	1961-1980 1983-1987
E.İ.Benice	1939-1943 1946-1950	M.A.Us	1927-1950	A.E.Erdem	1961-1980
Y.K.Beyatlı	1923-1926 1934-1946	Ö.B.Uşaklı	1943-1946	N.Evliyagil	1973-1977
H.N.Boztepe	1927-1946	R.E.Ünaydın	1922-1923	R.Garip	2002-
B.K.Çağlar	1942-1947	H.C.Yalçın	1939-1954	F.Gülay	1957-1960 1961-1977
F.N.Çamlıbel	1946-1950	S.K.Yetkin	1943-1950	F.Gürtunca	1957-1960
A.S.Delibası	1939-1946	S.Yırcalı	1946-1960 1975-1980	F.Halıcı	1968-1977
K.N.Duru	1935-1943	A.C.Yöntem	1934-1943 1950-1954	K.Kafı	1962-1965
M.A.Ersoy	1.Meclis	M.E.Yurdakul	1923-1944	Y.Karakoyunlu	1995-2002

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M.E.Erişirgil	1942-1950	H.A.Yücel	1935-1950	E.M.Karakurt	1954-1960 1962-1965
S.Ertem	1939-1943	O.O.Nakiboğlu	1943-1950	C.Kayra	1973-1977
M.Ş.Esendal	1930-1932 1941-1950	O.S.Orhon	1946-1950 1965-1969	V.M.Kocatürk	1950-1954
İ.A.Gövsa	1927-1935 1939-1946	Y.Z.Ortaç	1946-1950	Ö.Z.Livaneli	2002-
R.N.Güntekin	1939-1946	Samih Rifat	1923-1931	M.A.Maraş	2002-
H.R.Gürpınar	1936-1943	R.A.Sevengil	1943-1950	N.Özdemir	1961-1973
İ.R.İşitman	1927-1931	İ.H.Sevük	1943-1946	Ş.Özdenoğlu	1969-1973
V.Ç.İzbudak	1924-1943	A.H.Tanpınar	1942-1946	Ö.Öztürkmen	1965-1969
K.Kamu	1939-1948	H.S.Tanrıöver	1945-1957	H.N.Pepeyi	1954-1960
Y.Karaosmanoğlu	1923-1934	A.H.Tarhan	1928-1937	R.Şardağ	1983-1987
M.F.Köprülü	1935-1939	A.K.Tecer	1942-1946	N.Tıralı	1961-1965
B.S.Kunt	1939-1946	E.H.Tepeyran	1923-1927 1939-1941	H.Uysal	1965-1969
A.S.Levend	1940-1946	A.İ.Tokgöz	1931-1942	Ö.Yaşın	1970-1973
Y.S.Mardin	1949-	M.A.Us	1927-1950	M.Ş.Yazman	1950-1954
		Ö.B.Uşaklı	1943-1946		

[4] Various names in this list are important figures in Turkish literary and political history. Among them, this essay focuses on a limited number of fictionists partly because of its confined space and partly due to fiction's specific role in the literary and political culture of Turkey. It has been fiction, what possessed an immense political power mediating between the reality and its representations, captivated an eminent popularity among many other prose genres and became one of the driving forces of the modernization process in Turkey. Although poets and writers engaged with some other kinds of prose writing (journalistic essays, cultural commentary, travel writings etc.) have also appeared as influential agents of political transformation, fiction writers have been the most significant and popular ones.

[5] This essay is intended to cover the engagement of Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Memduh Şevket Esendal, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Halide Edip Adıvar, Çetin Altan and Yılmaz

Karakoyunlu with parliamentary politics and comment on their political experiences under the chastening effects of membership in the parliament. I will sketch how they organized themselves in parliamentary politics i.e. how much of a diligent MP could they become, in which ways they wrote – in case they did – during their terms of office, to what extent they could subscribe to their roles in the parliament and to the party solidarity etc. and comment on the continuity of certain limiting aspects of the political culture of Turkey, that put all of these names in trouble within different conditions.

[6] It is important to note that this essay does not presuppose a prototypical writer/MP image which connotes that being a fiction writer implies a certain type of MP position or being a MP implicates a special way of writing. The choice of writers to be analyzed is intended to reflect the diversity of the writer/MP position; all of the above mentioned names are writers who gained reputation as a literary figure in the fields of novel, short story or drama before they are appointed as MPs and resemble each other only in their intellectual commitment to the transformation of their country and society. They have different social, and educational/occupational backgrounds and entertain diverse interests in politics and literature.

[7] It should also be underlined that neither the selected names nor the writer/MP position itself, does not suggest a specific attitude in terms of the individual position taken in the monopoly of power. Among these names, there are writers who as MPs faithfully defended the *status quo* and others who fiercely opposed to it. Each writer has a unique history in terms of entrance to the field of parliamentary politics and the abandonment of it. In the selected group of writer/MPs, there are intellectuals picked up by party leaders for parliamentary politics as well as others who initiated earlier connections with the political parties via their youth organizations. The reasons for the abandonment of parliamentary politics also differ; some of these names quitted the political arena due to intra-party problems, whereas some others had to leave the MP position as a result of the decline in the electoral support to their party.

[8] A period of more than three decades is present between Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and Yılmaz Karakoyunlu's terms of office in the parliament. There have been significant changes both in the field of politics and literature from 1920s to 1990s. The attempt to cover the political and literary positions of such diverse figures scattered throughout a time span of almost 70 years hence is also, in a way, an effort to chronicle the changes in the literary and political fields. To

concretize their positions in the political and literary circles during their appointments, I will situate Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and Memduh Şevket Esenal in the Kemalist single-party period of reformist endeavors (1923-1938), Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar in the single party years dominated by the supremacy of the 'national chief' (1938-1950), Halide Edip Adivar in the tensions of the premature multi-party period of 1950s, Çetin Altan in the spirit of freedom of 1960s which nurtured the rise of protest discourses and Yılmaz Karakoyunlu in the multivocal political atmosphere of the 1990s.

I. The state intellectual: engineers of human souls

[9] A turbulent change marks the 1920s Turkey, where the institutionalization of secularism manifested itself in radical reforms like the abolition of the Caliphate, religious courts, Sufi sects and Islamic educational institutions, modernization attempts targeted several peculiarities from language to dress codes and the new leadership acknowledged the synthesis of Turkish culture and Western civilization as the founding principle of the new state. The literary boom of patriotic heroism, which was outpoured during the war, immersed the social, political and cultural aspects of this profound transformation as moralizing themes, and imaginative writing became a powerful instrument to mobilize the masses for the adoption of the premises of the revolution. It is in such a vibrant atmosphere that the new political authority recognized the power of literary communication and transformed literature into an arresting means of indoctrination. Writers became prominent icons of the multi-leveled transformation process and settled in the political monopoly of power more visibly than ever before.

[10] In the joy of establishing a new state after the triumph of the War of Liberation, a consequential support was accorded to the new political power. Those who implicitly or explicitly took contrapositions either left the country or positioned themselves at a point more closely conforming to mainstream norms in the following periods. Intellectuals in favour of the new regime experienced the privileges of their political support and became appointed to key positions as MPs and bureaucrats after the foundation of the Republic in 1923. Several recognized men of letters, vanguards of the cultural revolution, were invited to the parliament upon the demand of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk after 1934), the leader of the independence movement and the Halk Fırkası

(People's Party) - later Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP – Republican People's Party). This esteemed award, which in spirit resembles the Ottoman Sultans' tutelage over poets who celebrate their supremacy in poems, orbited several acclaimed writers closer to the centre of political power and established a tenacious link between literary and political circles.

[11] The glamour of the Kemalist revolution was alluring and most of the respected literary and intellectual figures yielded themselves to it. The deputy position for them was a sign of honor that distinguishes the torchbearers of the new regime. On the one hand, the MP position was a distinguishing emblem but on the other, it was a political investment that party authorities kept under a strict surveillance, to record challenges and disobedience. Opposition or expression of alternative and rival thoughts was a troublesome task since party interests were justified as state interests during the consolidation of the new regime and loyalty to them defined the fundamental rule of parliamentary politics. Various oppositional gatherings were denied the opportunity to become stable institutions in this interval. The ruling power dissolved two utmost experimentations of parliamentary democracy initiated by accumulations around the Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Progressive Republican Party) in the early 1920s and the Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Free Republican Party) in 1930, before growing roots.

[12] In this framework, the task of ideologically remolding and educating people in the line of the revolution settled in the literary agendas of writer/MPs as a principal exercise of their political career. Poets glorified the charismatic leadership and authority of Mustafa Kemal. Fictionists published a significant corpus of novels and short stories devoted to the consolidation of the new regime and dissemination of its values; the patriotic hero/heroines of the wartime novels gained didactic overtones and turned into cultural reformers in the Republican novel. The socio-political atmosphere had already inspired a literary manifesto, a new social novel dedicated to the Kemalist synthesis of Turkish culture and Western civilization; but for writers engaged with parliamentary politics, the idea of this new social novel was settled in a project of spiritual engineering more conspicuously.

[13] Mustafa Kemal motivated writers to reiterate the concerns of the reforms in their writings and sometimes explicitly assigned themes to them. Reşat Nuri Güntekin's *Yeşil Gece* (*Green Night*, 1928) for example, is acknowledged to be a product of Mustafa Kemal's advice to the writer to work on the harmful consequences of religious conservatism (Emil 1989: 24).

Although Güntekin achieved a kind of balance criticizing people who make profit out of religion and some corrupt revolutionaries concurrently, the novel was mobilized as a powerful and plausible criticism of blind religious engagements for its sharp and distasteful interpretation of the religious sects. It is interesting to note that, in contrast to his contemporaries who in a privileged manner became MPs one after another, Güntekin found such a chance in 1939, only after the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

[14] Partisanship was evidently an expectation, but not all the writings were fulfilling such expectancy; although being a part of the executive and legislative power mechanism in a non-competitive political system made it difficult for writer/MPs to oppose, question or criticize party/state interests, some writers confronted them on fictional grounds. Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and Memduh Şevket Esenalp are the two writer/MPs who as politicians played distinguishable roles in the authoritarian atmosphere of the single-party years and who as writers, used the arena of fiction as a political challenge.

[15] Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu (Cairo 1889 – Ankara 1974) was a dedicated writer who quitted law school for a career in literature. He was among the intellectuals that left İstanbul in the outskirts of the War of Liberation, and joined the resistance in Anatolia. When the war was over, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk invited him to the TBMM as a MP of Mardin and his constituency was changed to Manisa in 1931 (Aktaş 1987: 42). Karaosmanoğlu was a dedicated Kemalist who found the long-term interests of the country in bureaucratic bodies. Despite his manifest support to Kemalism in its unitary and progressive goals, he was also a critical voice of it, who exercised criticism mostly on paper. Karaosmanoğlu was an intellectual who made his views expressly visible by writing rather than clashing with fellow MPs in the parliament on everyday issues. In his political memoirs, he considers the clashes in the parliament as consequences of personal interests and political greed, rather than simply oppositional thoughts and chronicles them with a tone of dislike (Karaosmanoğlu 2002: 38). He mentions the field of politics as a 'tormenting and corrosive arena' because of this fierce monopoly of power (Karaosmanoğlu 2002: 47).

[16] His occupation with politics provided Karaosmanoğlu with a genuine motivation and inspiration in the literary domains. During his membership in the parliament, Karaosmanoğlu made important contributions to the development of a theoretical vision of Kemalism by his articles in the journal *Kadro* (*Cadre*) and also published four remarkable novels: *Hüküm Gecesi*

(*Night of Decision*, 1927), *Sodom ve Gomore* (*Sodome and Gomorrah*, 1928), *Yaban* (*The Outlander*, 1932), and *Ankara* (1934) – all of which attentively deal with the socio – political struggles of the society. In his articles and novels, he made a passionate call for an uplifting nationalist consciousness and self-assuredly supported the nationalist project pioneered by the bureaucratic elites; but he also chronicled the deficiencies and susceptibilities of this project.

[17] Karaosmanoğlu's illustration of the huge gap between the intellectual elites and the peasants in his famous novel *Yaban*, was a big challenge to the promotion of the idea of a classless and homogeneous society of the Kemalist ideology. In *Yaban*, Karaosmanoğlu skillfully portrayed the gap between the intellectuals and ordinary peasants and dethroned the illusions of progress, regarding the villages of Anatolia. His utopian novel *Ankara*, which depicts the capital of the state in its early years and envisions its future social and political life, also had critical overtones in its look at the growing financial interests of the ruling elite, those who no longer consider revolution of primary importance. As reminders that point out at the controversial future of the Kemalist revolution, both novels attracted tremendous attention. Karaosmanoğlu also took this discussion to a more theoretical ground in the journal *Kadro*, and argued in simple terms that revolution cannot be considered successful in case it remains as the oeuvre of a single person or a group of elites. When divorced from fiction, these lines triggered the discipline committee of CHP, which was already alerted by Karaosmanoğlu's alternative voice, and jeopardized his political life. Although he was loyal enough to offer to terminate the journal by himself, when he was informed about the unrest in the government, Karaosmanoğlu could not prevent being 'exiled' to a foreign embassy (Karaosmanoğlu 2002: 102). CHP authorities dismissed Karaosmanoğlu with an appointment to Albania, where he resentfully devoted himself to writing his memoirs.

[18] Memduh Şevket Esendal (Çorlu 1883 – Ankara 1952) was also an ardent supporter of Kemalism but just like Karaosmanoğlu, he was painfully aware of the gap between the modernized elites and the ordinary members of his society. As a self-educated intellectual, who became one of the eminent names of Turkish short story, often acknowledged as 'the Turkish Chekhov', Esendal draws an image slightly different than that of Karaosmanoğlu. He was an intellectual dedicated to the enlightenment of masses, and a naive supporter of the idea that 'elite can change the world and teach people what is good and bad' but he was also an intellectual

who, in his retrospective interpretations of civic life, stressed the importance of public goals and the power of masses much more explicitly (Karaömerlioğlu 2002: 148).

[19] Esendal became engaged with parliamentary politics during Mustafa Kemal's presidency but his membership in the parliament spans to the İnönü period, in which he became much of a public political figure. Before becoming a MP, Esendal served in several foreign posts, which made him entertain an enriching experience of diplomacy and adjust to the political doublespeak relatively easier than several other writers. Early in 1920s, he served as the first ambassador of the government of TBMM in Baku. He was called back from duty in 1925 because of his former links to the Committee of Union and Progress. Esendal published a journal called *Meslek* (Profession) in İstanbul with the former Unionists until their dissolution following the İzmir conspiracy, in which he made his literary debut as a short-story writer. While several Unionists were sent to courts and eliminated from their positions, Esendal was appointed to Tehran embassy. The government dismissed him from this post after a short time, for being pro-Kurdish and critical of its Kurdish policy (Çetinsaya 2003: 124). Back in Ankara, Esendal became a deputy (Elaziğ) and served in the parliament between 1930-1932, until he was sent as a diplomat to Kabul with another appointment. Upon his return to Turkey, Esendal became a MP of Bilecik in 1938 and mounted in the hierarchy of the party up to the secretary general position in 1941. The diplomatic skills he developed during his international office made Esendal a successful appeaser in politics and paved the way to the secretary general position under İnönü's leadership.

[20] Fragments of Esendal's political views are scattered in the letters written to his daughter and sons during his service in foreign countries and lonely years in Ankara bureaucracy; these letters, which have been recently issued in two separate volumes titled *Kızıma Mektuplar* (*Letters to my daughter*) and *Oğullarıma Mektuplar* (*Letters to my sons*) prove Esendal's respect for the ideals of the Republic yet also chronicle his frustrations due the exploitation of political privileges for financial interests, and depict the financial and familial struggles of the Esendal family. In his letters, Esendal appears as an intellectual dedicated to education, a man of action who is unselectively at service when needed, and a finicky and candid bureaucrat with a firm belief in İsmet İnönü.

[21] Esendal published most of his literary works under pennames (M. S, M. S. E, Mustafa Yalınkat etc.) and gained mass recognition as a writer in a late period in his life. He differs from

Karaosmanoğlu as a man of letters who more expressly separates his literature from politics, writes in a more personal key and occupies himself with the daily struggles of the ordinary man. Esendal's skills for balancing the different faces of reality introduces a bittersweet accent to his fiction; in Esendal's novels and short stories, political criticism strikes its targets in an indirect, good-humored and constructive manner, which despite the unpretentiousness leaves a sharp taste. In all his three novels *Miras (Inheritance, 1925)*, *Ayaşlı ve Kiracıları (Ayaşlı and His Tenants, 1934)*, *Vassaf Bey (Mr.Vassaf, 1938)* and several short stories, Esendal reflects the monopoly of power between individuals, employing a friendly but challenging criticism against bureaucracy and its ills. In numerous short stories, he vividly and captivatingly portrays the predatory activities of individuals with official sanction in the countryside and questions the links of ordinary people to bureaucrats, intellectuals and local officers, who often celebrate themselves as champions of the common good for their own benefits.

[22] Although they were identified closely with the Kemalist ideology, as loyal political figures that adjust themselves to the will of the ruling authority for the sake of the revolution, both Karaosmanoğlu and Esendal were at the same time writers who attempted to chronicle the ills of the revolution. When compared to the fiction of Karaosmanoğlu, Esendal's literary works were politically modest and less dangerous, but similarly challenging in the single-party atmosphere. As writers they entertained some tolerance for their literary challenges but both had to abandon their influential positions in CHP when they refused or failed to compromise at a certain point in their political career. Following his retirement after fulfilling several posts in foreign countries, Karaosmanoğlu returned to Ankara and became a MP (Manisa) of CHP in 1961. He resigned in 1962, arguing that the party had dissociated itself from Kemalist principles, but remained in the TBMM as an independent deputy until 1965. After leaving the political arena, Karaosmanoğlu was selected to the administrative board of Anatolia Press Agency, which he presided until the end of his life. Esendal on the contrary, kept himself distant to multi-party politics. Resigning from the secretary general position in 1945, he served in the assembly until the heydays of Democrat Party in 1950 and then abandoned the TBMM and concentrated more explicitly on literature.

[23] As the experiences of Karaosmanoğlu and Esendal in parliamentary politics suggest, alternative views were encouraged in a mediocre manner during the presidency of Mustafa Kemal; what was tolerated was not too much, not too explicit, and not too creative criticism. Under

the sovereignty of the single-party and single-leadership atmosphere, writer/MPs utilized the carnivalesque privilege assigned to them within these limits. The restraining accounts of the missionary atmosphere of the period ascribed a dutiful obedience to writer/MPs, which induced the self-neutralization of oppositional and alternative views or their transference to ideas in conformity with the current affairs, with an aim not to force the political vulnerability of the young state in the primary years of the revolution. After the consolidation of the nation-state, different political agendas surfaced more explicitly and following the shift of the leadership title to İsmet İnönü, they gradually accumulated into a multi-party state.

II. Challenges to state power: diversification of the agenda

[24] In the wake of the death of Mustafa Kemal in 1938, the one-party state power concentrated in the leadership of İsmet İnönü, the prime minister during his entire presidency. Under the rule of İnönü, Turkey experienced the sociopolitical upheavals of the WWII. Although she maintained neutrality, despite German pressure throughout the war, Turkey found herself in a deep economical crisis, dominated by a steep rise in expenditures and the emergence of a privileged class profiting from the war. The government introduced a tax on wealth, announcing its will to fight war profiteering in 1942, which dispossessed mainly the properties of non-Muslim businessmen. It was only after the end of the Second World War, that fundamental political changes took place; a greater freedom of speech was gradually permitted in political circles and in 1945, CHP authorities allowed the establishment of opposition parties. The first competitive elections, which were held in 1946, restored the political power of CHP. Yet four years after, in the elections of 1950, DP (Democrat Party), the opposition movement originated from CHP, obtained a massive electoral support and relegated CHP to opposition. DP also won the elections of 1954 and 1957 by popular vote and remained in power until the parliamentary democracy was interrupted by a military intervention in 1960.

[25] The parliament, under the supremacy of İnönü in the early 1940s, was still an institution that legitimized the decisions of the ruling cadres of CHP (Koçak 2001: 122). Criticism and opposition were intolerable behavioral patterns that risk political censure for MPs, since disobedient and rival voices were eliminated by party authorities. İnönü, who proclaimed the title

'the national chief' in the December 1938 congress of CHP, immediately eliminated some MPs who had accessed the parliament with substantial support of Mustafa Kemal, as he became the head of the political power, but he did not discontinue the tradition of initiating close links with literary circles. He followed the path of 'the eternal chief' and motivated writers in CHP's line of thinking for parliamentary politics.

[26] As a circular issued by Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1937 that asks for the adaptation of heroes/heroines of folk stories to 'the spirit of the regime' indicates, fiction kept being appreciated as a collection of exemplary modes of thought and behavior, and retained its importance and prestige in the field of politics as a tool for mass communication, in the outsets of İnönü's presidency (Erdoğan 1998: 118). Political atmosphere was still authoritarian; nevertheless the new leader of political power did not bother himself with the task of recommending themes to writers. It was circulars and party owned literary prizes what stimulated the writers of this period. CHP announced an annual prize for novel and established national competitions in poetry and drama writing, in which some contemporary names of Turkish literature made their first literary appearances.

[27] Among literary figures that were members of the parliament during the transitional period to competitive politics, two renowned novelists come to the fore; Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and Halide Edip Adivar, both of who occupy distinguished places in the history of Turkish literature. The parliamentary experiences of Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar illustrate the complexities caused by the principles of party solidarity in the life of an aesthete and a freethinker. Similarly, Halide Edip Adivar's engagement with politics, both during the turbulent years of the Turkish nation-state and in the premature years of the multi-party period, manifests the intellectual troubles due the monocratic attitudes of party authorities.

[28] Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (İstanbul 1901 – İstanbul 1962), the renowned poet, novelist, essayist, literary scholar and critic of Turkish literature, was an intellectual who believed in the progressive goals of the new regime, just like Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu and Memduh Şevket Esenal. Nevertheless, as a syncretistic thinker, he was doubtful of the political power's hostility at the Ottoman past. The idea of 'synthesis' at the center of his critical thinking, distinguished Tanpınar from his Republican contemporaries as an intellectual dedicated to the project of

civilization and progress, with a specific concern for the reconciliation of the values of the past and present rather than a complete refusal of the past, like Kemalism did prefer.

[29] Tanpınar was the son of a government official; he spent several years in Kerkuk, Mosul and some cities in Anatolia because of his father's duties and could return to his town of birth only by late 1910s for graduate study. After completing his studies at the University of İstanbul Faculty of Letters, he worked as a teacher but soon returned to the university and became a professor in 1939. Tanpınar accessed the parliament in 1942 as a deputy of Kahramanmaraş, with the friendly propaganda of Memduh Şevket Esenal, who was in that period influential in the organization of party lists (Ağaoğlu 1978: 50). Although he published, with a sense of duty, a few critical essays in the journal *Ülkü*, some of which support the actions of the CHP with a sharp-tongued discourse, Tanpınar failed to provide his party with the image of a writer dedicated to the party's line of thinking (Okay 2004: 500). He served until 1946 and left parliamentary politics in a desolate vein in the outsets of the multi-party period. Tanpınar became an inspector in the Ministry of Education after he abandoned the TBMM. He returned to his academic career at the university in 1949 and devoted himself to his literary studies until the end of his life.

[30] In one of his letters to his close friend Cevat Dursunoğlu, Tanpınar specifies his motive for accessing the parliament as 'to initiate stronger links with life and society as a MP'; in the informal atmosphere of a casual friendly conversation, he adds that he also aims to 'discard academic pressure and spare time to work on his literary projects' in the parliament (Okay 2004: 499). Tanpınar's seeing the deputy position as a solution to his financial problems also appears in between the lines of some other letters (Örgen 2004: 539). Although he succeeded in ameliorating his financial position a little and sparing time to write, Tanpınar hardly turned his eager interest for politics to a diligent membership in the parliament. As a political novice, he soon recognized that 'to initiate stronger links with life and society' was nothing but a naïve hope.

[31] After completing his first year in Ankara, Tanpınar was already in a less enthusiastic mode for politics. The way he explains his struggles in the parliament to a friend in a private conversation in 1943, expounds his aversion; Tanpınar illustrates the hierarchical atmosphere of the TBMM and emphasizes his helplessness in there, describing the parliament to one of his former students as a 'dervish lounge' where 'there is a leading sheik, around him there are sheiks

of various ranks and around them there are apostles of various ranks. The sheik and his accompanies wander in the corridors with their head up and eyes monitoring around. The apostles are lined next to the walls in terms of their ranks'. Newcomers like him, Tanpınar adds, 'almost crawl along the walls looking down and trying to communicate by means of gestures' (Ağaoğlu 1978: 50).

[32] It is against the backdrop of this imposed pantomime that Tanpınar transformed himself into a sole observer of the activities in the single-party parliament. He did not become politically at odds with the party authorities explicitly but the absence of his name in the records indicates that Tanpınar kept himself distant to delivering speeches and getting engaged with commission activities during his tenure (Okay 2004: 500). When he realized that parliamentary politics has its own indigenous rules and little can be done to change the monocratic attitudes of his party in a limited interval of time, Tanpınar chose to invest his energy solely to literary projects. In four years, he translated four books, wrote a short story and four poems, and serialized his first novel *Mahur Beste* (*The Mahur Mode*, 1944) in *Ülkü* (Okay 2004: 501). After he left the political arena in 1946, Tanpınar published novels that question, as a subtext, the prospects of reformist attempts from above with an exquisite irony. In his novels *Huzur* (*Peace of Mind*, 1949), *Sahnenin Dışındakiler* (*Those Outside the Scene*, 1950) and *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü* (*Time Setting Institute*, 1951) he transformed the Westernization of Turkey to an arresting theme and illustrated the 'psychological effects of the Kemalist cultural revolution' (Göknar 2003: 647).

[33] As a writer who participated in parliamentary politics in the last years of the single-party era, Tanpınar suffered from CHP's attempts to keep full control of the political dynamics in the transition to a multi-party system with authoritarian attitudes. When this transition took place in 1946, Turkish politics encountered a challenge both in terms of parliamentary democracy and in terms of the political mobilization of masses. Unlike CHP, which had the image of an elite-dominated cadre party, DP was acclaimed to be a party mobilizing masses which made an opening for various sections of society to access contemporary politics. The substantial decrease in the number of official and military group of deputies from 38% in 1920 to 13% in 1954 clearly illustrates the shift in the political mobilization (Frey 1965: 197). This transition in political elites changed the prominent actors of politics; in DP's governance, local notables and businessmen became more visible in parliamentary politics.

[34] The dualistic political structure opened little room for the development of democratic values and principles although it initiated fractures in the politics of Turkey. DP appealed to masses with manners against the centralist and bureaucratic CHP rule. However, as former CHP deputies, who practiced parliamentary politics under an authoritarian atmosphere, MPs of the DP had a lot in common with their contenders in terms of the single-party political culture. After 1950, when it obtained the majority in the parliament with a landslide victory, the residual single-party political culture intervened to the policies and acts of the DP more visibly, introducing a very powerful polarization between the two parties which, with its increasing degree, influenced the contemporary politics of Turkey in various contexts in the following years.

[35] Writing did not become a liberated occupation overnight by the transition to a multi-party political system; ruling cadres of both camps kept a close concern in literature and attempted to establish control over it. In the conditions of a bipolar political universe, the burden of writer/MPs intensified, as literature became a more evident locus in the monopoly of power, in the domains of which both camps fought for domination and control. Some of the norms inherited from the non-competitive period kept influencing the literary and political activities of writer/MPs in these years. The literary patronage system, which granted privileges to writers in line with the present state of affairs, gradually got divided into two opposite poles. One camp popularized writers who shed a critical eye on issues disturbing the other. Although this polarization introduced a massive tension to literary circles, it also provided the necessary support for some writers to defend themselves against the ruling power; Mahmut Makal, a graduate of Village Institutes, who was arrested in 1950 after the publication of his candid observations of an isolated Anatolian village arranged in a form of novella titled *Bizim Köy* (*Our Village*, 1950) was immediately released as DP started publicizing his work as a proof of the failure of elitist CHP policies in the outset of the 1950 elections (Tonguç 1997: 410).

[36] Tolerance to opposition kept being a problematic issue and constituted the most important continuity in the period of competitive politics that affected the agenda of writer/MPs. In the premature years of the multi-party period, the writer/MPs experienced the difficulties of this limiting political legacy in different contexts. Halide Edip Adivar, who is one of the rare female novelists of the Republican period that published sagas of the War of Independence and the

following reformist endeavors, experienced such an intolerance in the parliament and just like Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, left parliamentary politics in despair at the end of her term of office.

[37] Halide Edip Adivar (İstanbul 1884 – İstanbul 1964) was one of the most controversial figures elected as an independent deputy of İzmir from the lists of DP in 1950. She was the first Muslim girl to graduate from American College for Girls in 1901, who later worked as a teacher at the Teacher Training College and Girls Secondary School, and went to Syria to found schools and orphanages for girls. Following the occupation of İstanbul, Adivar fled to Ankara to join the resistance and served as a nurse, interpreter, press advisor and secretary to Mustafa Kemal during the war. In the aftermath of the war, she became a political opponent of Mustafa Kemal and her links with the Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Progressive Republican Party), the oppositional accumulation that had developed within the Kemalist chamber, forced Adivar to leave as the party was abolished in 1925. At that time, she was already chosen as a candidate for membership in the parliament by women's organizations that were advocating women's political suffrage (Adak 2003: 511). Adivar then found herself in a self-imposed exile in the United Kingdom. After her return to Turkey in 1939, she became a professor at the Department of English Language and Literature at İstanbul University.

[38] As a victim of lack of tolerance to opposition who had to spend several years abroad in an involuntary exile, Adivar was a deliberate choice for DP to symbolize the beginning of a new era in Turkish politics. She was a figure dedicated to the modernization of the country and the progress of women in the society; yet, she was at the same time an individual influenced by the mysticism of the Islamic faith. With the intellectual synthesis of Adivar, DP found the chance to appeal both to the modernist and the traditionalist minds. Recalling her involuntary exile, Democrat Party not only gave the message that the new political power positioned itself against Kemalist type of authoritarianism and distaste for Islam, but it also asserted with Adivar's feminist intellect in its display, that the party will stand for a progressive politics that subsume the equality of women in its goals. Adivar was a symbol for DP but DP was a symbol for Adivar as well; for her, DP was an original and promising symbol of democracy and freedom. In her first years as a MP, Adivar was so enthusiastic about this first genuine experience of democracy in Turkey that she proposed in the TBMM to celebrate 14 May, the day DP relegated RPP to opposition, as the Democracy Day (*Ayın Tarihi* 1950).

[39] Since 1934, when they were granted suffrage for the national elections, there have been several women in the parliament. In 1950, Adivar was among the three of them, in a total number of 491 deputies (Keskin-Kozat 1997). During her membership in the parliament, she exposed herself more as an academic figure and gave several talks that focus on issues mostly related to 'educational reforms' (Yücebaş 1964: 11). Although her involvement in nationalist politics during the War of Liberation provided her with an inspiration in literary domains, her DP adventure did not have a direct impulse on Adivar's literature. She pulled herself back from literary projects during her appointment; in the interval of her tenure, Adivar published only a single novel titled *Döner Ayna (Revolving Mirror, 1954)*.

[40] As an intellectual known for her obstinate and oppositional personality, Adivar quickly lost the sympathy of the party officials. In the polemical atmosphere of the first years of the DP rule, the informative speeches of Adivar attracted scarce attention but as the tone of her remarks became critical of the government, she caught some angry eyes. Adivar became marginalized within the party ironically on the grounds of her former disagreement with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk; she resigned in 1954, blaming the party as an institution tending towards dictatorship and abandoned the political arena by publishing a 'Farewell to Politics' (Koloğlu 1998: 182). Adivar returned to her academic career and confined herself to writing and translating some of her previous works, written during her exile and first published in English, after leaving the TBMM.

[41] Adivar's experience in the TBMM indicates that opposition was interpreted more as a sign of crossing from one side to the other rather than a critical contribution, in the early years of the multi-party experience. Until the polarized atmosphere of this transitional period was replaced by a more pluralistic atmosphere in 1960s, the notion of democracy was often recalled as the distribution of power and policy making privileges via competitive elections rather than a wide scale development of certain values that appreciate individual political perspectives. Assuming itself as the genuine representative of 'the people', DP increased its authoritarian measures after Adivar's resignation; it imposed 'restrictions on the campaign activities of the opposition parties and leaders' in 1954, forbid 'opposition parties from mounting a unified campaign against the majority party' in 1957, and established 'a parliamentary investigation commission equipped with some judicial powers to investigate subversive activities of the opposition' in 1960 (Turan 1998: 75). These measures initiated a decrease in the popular support to the party and as DP attempted

to compensate this loss by appealing to the religious sentiments of the public, the military assumed the role of a political actor and intervened.

III. Pluralism and polarization: new horizons

[42] In 1960, antidemocratic measures of DP against the oppositional voices, increasing economic constraints, and the tense links between the government and the public bureaucracy gave way to the first military interruption of parliamentary politics (Özbudun 1988: 201). DP was outlawed and the Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Fatih Rüştü Zorlu and the Minister of Financial Affairs Hasan Polatkan were executed on 16-17 September 1961, for their 'misuse of power and abrogation to the constitution' (Zürcher 1993: 261). In the aftermath of the coup, Turkey found itself in the midst of a cycle of political reforms. With the introduction of the new constitution, political freedoms were enhanced, and socialists, Turkists, and Islamists accumulated into political parties. As political parties that access the TBMM became diversified in their interests and priorities, a much more fertile environment was established on the road to work out a fruitful parliamentary democracy. The new constitution imposed changes to the election process; local authorities of the parties were assigned powers in the selection of the candidates for membership in the parliament and the role of the central cadres was limited (Alkan 1999: 56). The elections in 1961 gave the majority back to CHP and notified the AP (Adalet Partisi, Justice Party) as the major heir to DP.

[43] The equality of the ruling party to the image of the state was an easily constructed formula in 1960s as well, which with the legacy of a superior-holy state that depends on an individualistic leadership style in Turkish culture, kept political opposition in a controversial position. Forced into a limited space, the borders of which were defined self-reflexively by the ruling power that makes immediate connections between oppositional thought and unpatriotic activity, legitimate political opposition remained a troublesome task. Alternative views, which were assumed to subsume partitive interests, kept being considered as a threat to the intraparty dynamics. Still, in parallel to the increase in the multiplicity of voices, some oppositional views are mentioned in the TBMM despite all the pressure and maltreatment. MPs defended their prerogatives more effectively in this period.

[44] Literature in 1960s entertained a relatively tolerant political atmosphere, and dealt explicitly with class issues, injustice and poverty. Mainstream literary interest concentrated on social themes that illustrated the widening gap between the segments of the society; writers shed a critical eye on the conflicts of the urban persona and the little bourgeois individual. The internal migration to big cities and the problem of cultural compatibility became popular themes in literature. The rise of interest in socialism ushered in a politically engaged literature, more conscious of the class struggles and of its distinctive critical voice.

[45] Writers were among the foremost political actors of these turbulent years; they appeared as prominent figures in anti-American riots that were intensified in 1960s and in the establishment of civil organizations and political parties. In the aftermath of the 1960 military intervention, several recognized writers associated around the rising leftist political accumulations and contributed to the establishment of political parties like Türkiye İşçi Partisi (Worker's Party of Turkey). As a consequence of the changes made in the Political Parties Law in 1965, which allowed the access of small parties to the TBMM, TİP accessed the parliament and made a remarkable opposition despite the limited number of seats it obtained in the elections. It ran on a platform of land reform, industrialization, abolishment of death penalty and social equality for workers and peasants and opening politics in Turkey to new horizons (Landau 1974: 126).

[46] Çetin Altan (b.1926 İstanbul) was one of the most important figures of the TBMM in the period 1965-1969, whose experience as a writer/MP draws a stark image of the lack of tolerance in Turkish politics despite the liberalizing features of the new constitution. He is an acknowledged essayist, journalist, drama writer and novelist of contemporary Turkish literature, who graduated from the Faculty of Law of Ankara University but shifted to a career in journalism, starting as a reporter for the daily *Ulus*. Engaged with the left wing of politics, Altan became a popular writer in parallel to the rise of socialism in Turkey in 1960s. He was elected as an independent deputy of İstanbul from the lists of TİP in 1965 and later joined the TİP group as a sharp-tongued, witty politician that spoke his mind.

[47] In the forewords to his political memoirs, Altan states that the main reason for his accepting to be a MP was to obtain a legal protection against the charges he had been facing for his socialist orientation (Altan 1999: 13). He however did not content himself with the legal privileges of being a MP. During his appointment, Altan tried to encourage the freedom of thought

and speech on the account of the socialist left both as a MP and a writer. He was an active member of the TİP group, who in legislative activities and parliamentary speeches made the ideas of his party visible. He delivered several speeches in the assembly, which challenged the economic program, foreign policy, and vulgar nationalism of the government, most of which initiated angry quarrels among the deputies. Yet, these challenges were recessed with demagogical speeches and his oppositional attempts were neutralized by the collective acts of the AP deputies.

[48] Altan also published fierce articles that critically explore the current situation of the country during his tenure. Due to the increasing degree of criticism he employed in his writings and speeches, he soon became a target; the government attempted to cancel his parliamentary privileges and in 1968, Altan encountered a physical attack of AP deputies in the assembly when the discussion of the budget of the Ministry of Internal Affairs turned into a fierce discussion on his referring to the dedicated communist Nazım Hikmet as 'the foremost poet' (Altan 1999: 421). This attack left one of his eyes with a permanent injury. Altan narrates the accounts of the unfriendly treatment he encountered in the TBMM with a delicate irony in his memoirs (Altan 1999: 411).

[49] During Altan's appointment, it was not only the MPs who were stuck in a tense political polarization; the society likewise was extremely polarized in terms of political engagements. This atmosphere increased the political instability during 1970s. Following the defeat of the TİP in the 1969 election, which led into the victory of the AP, this polarization reached a new level of intensity as revolution with the help of a military intervention became a more popular choice for a certain group of the leftist opposition. Some groups switched to an armed struggle under the influence of Latin American and Vietnamese experiences. They got involved in a fierce street clash with the ultra-nationalist youth squads, in which districts became partitioned into camps and lives of inhabitants and by-passers were also put in jeopardy.

[50] The creative and vibrant intellectual thinking Altan and his contemporaries set in motion was cut short when the military intervened to politics once again and decimated the intelligentsia in 12 March 1971. After a military court dissolved the TİP, Altan was prosecuted along many names including the leaders and supporters of the party. His fight in the parliament for freedom and right to speak out for oneself evolved into a philosophical search on literary grounds by the 1970s; Altan returned to his writing career as a novelist and published political allegories

like *Büyük Gözaltı* (*Extreme Surveillance*, 1972), *Bir Avuç Gökyüzü* (*A Handful Sky*, 1974), *Viski* (*Whisky*, 1975) and *Küçük Bahçe* (*Little Garden*, 1978) all of which illustrated the life-long adventure of human struggle with power. Altan still runs a column in the daily *Milliyet* in which he satirically deals with politics.

[51] Political violence and street terror could only be terminated in the expense of two military interventions that interrupted the political scene in March 12, 1971 and September 12, 1980 both of which left bruises in the collective consciousness. Both interventions demobilized the working class, the university youth etc. and they also forced a depoliticisation to the society by outlawing political parties, publications and civil organizations. While the March 12 regime forced only for an above-parties government, September 12 regime went as far as dissolving the parliament and outlawing all the existing parties. A new constitution with limited political freedoms was accepted by a referendum in 1982 and the military rule ended in 1983, with the victory of the ANAP (Motherland Party).

IV. Restoration and individualization: frictions of coexistence

[52] Parliamentary politics in post-80s developed under the shadows of the forcible political polarization that dominated the recent past. The actors of parliamentary politics changed entirely after the last military coup. 90% of the members of the parliament were newcomers in the 1983 TBMM; when the law banning political activity of leaders and members of the pre-1980 parties expired, this percentage decreased to 65% in the 1987 parliament (Kalaycıoğlu 1998: 163). Post-1980s mark a process of democratization in Turkey as well as a loss of interest in and a retreat from oppositional politics in the societal level. Limiting the freedoms granted by the previous constitution, 1982 constitution paved the way for this social depoliticisation. As the World Values Survey shows, in the early 1990s the majority of the people were in an intensified hesitance against 'radical forms of political protest' as a consequence of the violent memories of the successive coups (Toprak 1995: 90). Politics became more a professional occupation by post 1980s and gradually forming its separate castes, it changed into an expertise less attractive for the intellectual elite. Many people, including some of the writers who had been active in various

left-wing movements in the past, became civic activists, and chose to contribute to a protest politics outside the parliament.

[53] Private sector assumed a greater role in Turkish economy after 1980 and a pluralistic atmosphere was formed in several sectors. In this avenue of autonomisation from state, the media sector also entertained private capital. By 90s, several private TV channels were established which became effective instruments of political propaganda especially in the outsets of the elections; the broadening in media appeals made actors, singers and publicly more visible intellectuals popular figures of parliamentary politics. Writing turned into a more professional and self-supporting occupation as autonomisation from state was also entertained intensely in the publishing sector. Writers, who once used to write and just await the public verdict on their work, gradually transformed themselves into businessmen who have to adopt marketing strategies to promote their work.

[54] Literary expertise in this period had a troublesome recovery from the horrors of the military interventions; many writers had already moved away from a political literature after the last coup. Post-80s in Turkey witnessed the rise of a post-modernist literature that privileged fragmented discourse, discontinuity, fantasy, and multiplicity. Texts that violate linear narrative logic and favour formal elements over plot became more visible and illustrating reality in fiction became a phenomenon publicized as only a variety of story telling. This new perspective deprived literature of its privileged messianism, decreased its potential for political challenge and relegated writers to artists playing with words.

[55] Turkish politics encountered turmoil in 1990s, a period marked by financial corruption scandals, the emergence of Tansu Çiller as the first female prime minister, rise of political Islam and the eruption of state-mafia connections. 1995 elections placed an Islamist party in power for the first time in Turkey's seventy-two year history as a republic. Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the Refah Partisi (Welfare Party), became the prime minister after an unsuccessful trial of a coalition government of two right of centre parties Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party) and Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party) and the failure of other coalition possibilities. He ruled a coalition government until a 'postmodern coup' in February 28, 1997 imposed a government with secular tendencies. It is in the upheavals of these years that Yılmaz Karakoyunlu became a MP.

His experiences in the parliament provide a contemporaneous view of the writer/MP position in the political matrix shaped by the conditions of 1990s.

[56] Karakoyunlu (b.1936 İstanbul) is a contemporary writer whose novels have been among bestsellers in Turkey. He is a figure engaged with secular centre-right politics who steeped in a political party atmosphere at a young age because of his father's engagement with DP. Karakoyunlu graduated from Ankara University's Department of Economy and worked for many years in governmental institutes and private companies before becoming a deputy. He started publishing his literary works in early 1990s and was awarded prestigious literary prizes but received a widespread recognition only after his debut in parliamentary politics. When he accessed the TBMM, Karakoyunlu adopted the MP role easily and became one of the eye-catching figures of his party. With a wide spectrum of personal interests, from literature to traditional Turkish Art Music, he achieved the immediate attention of the mass media and often appeared in the front pages of national newspapers.

[57] Karakoyunlu accessed the parliament in 1995 as a MP (İstanbul) of ANAP when the corruption scandals of 1990s have led to a crisis of confidence that manifested itself in a decrease of popular vote to mainstream parties and the elections provided the Islamist RP with the greatest number the parliamentary seats for the first time in its history. The intervention of the armed forces via the MGK (National Security Council) in February 28, 1997 however forced RP out of the government and Mesut Yılmaz, the leader of the ANAP, formed a new government. Becoming one of the close associates of Yılmaz, Karakoyunlu climbed up in the party hierarchy in this period; he became the deputy chairman of the ANAP in 2000 and also served as the state minister in charge of privatization and broadcasting in 2001. Karakoyunlu was the favourite candidate of Mesut Yılmaz for presidency of the parliament and also for the presidency of Turkey in 2000, but the majority vote accumulated on some other names ('Meclis'te Sıcak Yarış', *Radikal* 14/11/2005).

[58] Karakoyunlu is a figure acquainted with the so-called 'party culture' because of his early links to the youth organizations of the ANAP. He participated in a more multi-vocal and liberal version of parliamentary politics compared to the abovementioned writers, who had limited space to express their ideas within the rules and temporal conditions of parliamentary politics. He was an active deputy in the TBMM, who headed and participated in numerous commissions,

delivered speeches and proposed bills etc. The activities of Karakoyunlu in the parliament focused on the privatization process and the revision of the laws concerning the RTÜK (Supreme Council of Radio and Television) and broadcasting. In the interim, Karakoyunlu also kept writing.

[59] During his term of office, Karakoyunlu published two novels, *Güz Sancısı* (*Autumn Stitch*, 1998) and *Çiçekli Mumlar Sokağı* (*Flowered Candles Street*, 2000), both of which concentrate on turbulent periods of Turkish history like the 6-7 September events and the National Struggle. Nevertheless, he could win a mass readership only after *Salkım Hanımın Taneleri* (*Mrs. Salkım's Diamonds*, 1990), Karakoyunlu's first novel concentrated on the sufferings of the minorities in 1940s Turkey due to the introduction of wealth tax, was filmed in 1999 and broadcasted by the state television. *Salkım Hanımın Taneleri* caused a friction in the coalition government, putting ANAP and the MHP (Nationalist Action Party) in conflict and gave rise to a motion questioning the 'hidden agenda' of the novel and the film. To resolve the tension, Karakoyunlu emphasized the disunity of his literary and political activities in several reportages, but his emphasizing the fictive accounts of his work in a tone overriding the content, made little contribution to the settlement of the skirmish ('Önce Milletvekiliyim', *Radikal* 15/01/00).

[60] Although it was a carefully crafted illustration of the wealth tax tragedy, without explicit political nuances, *Salkım Hanımın Taneleri* put Karakoyunlu in a struggle, which unveiled the most important legacy of Turkish literary and political culture within a fierce atmosphere. It is recognized once again, that literature disturbs and frightens the political powers with its oppositional and thought-provoking capacity even when it is practiced in a relatively less threatening manner by a writer who himself is a domesticated agent of the political monopoly. Karakoyunlu overcame the accusations of disloyalty to national values due to his prestigious position in his party but his attempts to assure the diversification of his literary and political interests illuminated vividly that even in the postmodern times, when the relation between truth and fiction is not what it used to be, the intersection of literature and politics in the role of a MP has tiresome consequences.

[61] In 2002, the elections left ANAP and Karakoyunlu out of the TBMM. After he left parliamentary politics, Karakoyunlu focused more extensively on his career as a novelist and an essayist. He recently runs a column in a journal concentrated on politics and economy titled *Gözlem* (*Observation*) and keeps publishing novels. Similar to his earlier works, history pervades

his recent narrations as a backdrop and catches dramatic climaxes at some arresting points of the history of Turkey. In 2004, Karakoyunlu published *Yorgun Mayıs Kısrakları (Exhausted May Mares)* a novel that chronicles an eloquent period of Turkish political history from the single-party years to the end of the DP rule, which was finalized by the execution of the Prime Minister Menderes and his two ministers.

[62] In 2005, *Perize: Ezan Vakti Beethoven (Perize: Beethoven During Call for Prayer)* followed, which dwells into the 1970s and depicts the fierce political polarization between the left and right. Karakoyunlu announced his next novel as a piece of fiction settled on 'how post-1983 ANAP governments destroyed the institutions of Turkey in the name of liberalization' ('12 Eylül'de Budanan Dallar Meyve Veremedi', *Radikal* 14/10/05). As the course of his novels indicates, Karakoyunlu gradually approaches to contemporary times, and now more extensively deals with the conflicts of the periods, which he was also an agent of. One cannot escape wondering how much of a sharp critic Karakoyunlu will become of the politics that made him who he is.

[63] Turkey's political landscape underwent a seismic shift in the elections that left Karakoyunlu out of parliamentary politics in 2002; the elections brought out only two parties to receive enough votes to pass the 10% threshold, and made Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP - Justice and Development Party), the party of former Islamists, rise to capture the majority of the seats. For the first time in many decades, the TBMM became once again, a two-party establishment. Although the new government often acknowledges respecting freedom of expression, it is not unusual for the politically powerful to hound writers, journalists and cartoonists who dare to satirize their policies. Turkey still struggles with the same lack of sense of humour and the allergy to opposition of the single-party ethos and this dangerous temper depicts plainly the impasse of Turkish political culture in the long road from parliamentary politics to parliamentary democracy.

V. Taking up the gauntlet

[64] The distance to political power has always been a controversial issue for intellectuals. Although it is true that one can fail to provide the image of an independent critic while distant to it as well, it is often their proximity to political power, which puts the intellectuals in the danger of

becoming sycophants. The contemporary pattern of state-intellectual relations in Turkey took its elementary shape during the presidency of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The majority of the late Ottoman period intellectuals served the young Republic of Turkey in early 1920s, either making parliamentary politics their full-time career or performing duties as bureaucrats in a vast program of cultural incentives. In their capacity as writers, these intellectuals played influential roles in the 'political' and the 'sentimental' education of masses, as figures dedicated to the enlightenment of the nation and the creation of the new individual. They provided the political powers with cultural legitimacy, and obtained tutelage in return. Although the single-party atmosphere was of a repressive nature, not all writers occupied a perfectly partisan political position. Practising doublespeak just like politicians, some of them made the conflicts of their times the engine of their intellectual creativity and challenged the ruling power taking the risk of falling victim to it.

[65] The single-party state issued political criticism as a challenge that only a number of privileged names accepted. Those who took the gauntlet up, practiced their challenge modestly and within some particular limits. However, in the changing sociopolitical climate of the country, the relationship of writers to the political power got divorced from this missionary character and assumed a more libertarian atmosphere. As diverse political ideologies found the chance to accumulate into political parties and an autonomisation from state took place in several sectors, writers adopted different agendas and settled more explicitly in a complicated network of positions against the political power. The elitist idea of moral superiority of writers, their duty to educate people and determine the future of the society also gradually left its place to the sovereignty of the idea of writing as an individualistic manner of artistic creativity. Politics turned into a profession that leaves the intellectual elite in the fringes.

[66] Writers enamoured of politics somehow kept taking place in the monopoly of power. The writer/MPs mentioned in this essay were already important figures of the political cauldron of their periods as politically conscious intellectuals. Their getting involved in parliamentary politics however occurred in different circumstances and had diverse consequences. Those who could integrate their discursive skills with politics and subscribe to the rules of the parliament fairly enough like Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Memduh Şevket Esenal and Yılmaz Karakoyunlu achieved a more remarkable success as MPs and contributed to the development of the policies of their parties in key positions. Others who attempted to make challenging criticism within their

parties like Halide Edip Adivar, tried to make a radical and remarkable opposition in the GNA like Çetin Altan or failed to subscribe to the rules of the game like Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, were marginalized as 'scapegoats'. Apart from the ones who lost the chance of further access to the TBMM as a result of a decline in the electoral support to their party, like Altan and Karakoyunlu, the most apparent reason for the abandonment of the deputy position is intra-party disputes. Karaosmanoğlu was seen as a threat by the ruling power and distanced from Ankara with an appointment in a foreign embassy, Esendal resigned due a deadlock in land reform, Tanpınar failed to provide a writer/MP image that satisfies party interests and Adivar resigned as a result of similar authoritarian tendencies of her party.

[67] This essay isolates only a few prominent fiction writers from numerous names that accessed the parliament. Although the names mentioned here represent only a small part of a populated group of writers that served in the TBMM, their experiences provide interesting insights to the political culture of Turkey. The political dynamics as a consequence of which Karaosmanoğlu, Esendal, Tanpınar, and Adivar lost their interest in parliamentary politics, Altan encountered an extraordinary alienation and Karakoyunlu felt the ultimate need to emphasize his first and foremost position as a MP to express a benevolent loyalty to state interests, have the rivalrous and hierarchical aspects of the political culture of Turkey in their very core. The experiences of these names in parliamentary politics make it clear that despite the time gap between their terms of office and the diversity in their socio-political backgrounds and interests, the archetypal features of the political culture of Turkey provide a continuity that allocate several writers as a group of individuals that experienced struggles in parliamentary politics, albeit within different circumstances.

[68] From those co-opted to the parliament as prestigious intellectuals to the ones that became ordinary competitors in the election process, the fictionists mentioned here disturbed the political power either as MPs in their parliamentary activities or as writers in their literary work and sometimes as both. Initially collaborating with the politically powerful, a few of them subsequently became its sharpest critics. By writing, they attempted to create an insubordinate space within the administered space that people are all subjected to. For the ones who chose to silently ride on the back of the political winners of the day, the writer/MP position was of course less strenuous and without thorns. Those more hesitant in assuming a critical role and more modest in their political

aspirations can be said to subscribe to the political atmosphere easily at all times. Yet, it is the labour and legacy of those who challenged the political powers that informs the political and cultural transformations in Turkey.

[69] In periods when image building with the help of professional public relations experts was not yet a common practice in the political domains, the political contribution of writers was essential for public appeal. Today, politics is a complicated industry in itself and literature too is a commercial activity. Contemporary writers of Turkey are hesitant to contribute to parliamentary politics although they, for the most part, are compelled to be political as intellectuals. After all the fractional fights and the military interventions, many people feel a collective fatigue with politics and several writers choose to shun contemporaneous issues, and distance themselves from themes like injustice, poverty, corruption etc. which may, at a certain point, bring them into confrontation with the state and governmental policies. Politics as a vocation raises bitter feelings because of this traumatic past and also because of the discouraging slowness of its being transformed into an inherently social arena where multiple viewpoints are welcomed into discussion and dialogue is encouraged. Turkey has been practicing a multi-party parliamentary politics for a considerably long time now, but the political matrix in the country is still disturbingly susceptible to criticism and alternative voices. This watchful state causes the role of the writer and the MP to keep having a tense relation in the course of contemporary parliamentary politics.

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