

“CHAIN” OF POPULISM FROM THE DEMOCRAT PARTY TO THE JUSTICE AND
DEVELOPMENT PARTY IN TURKEY

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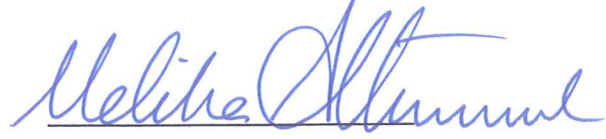
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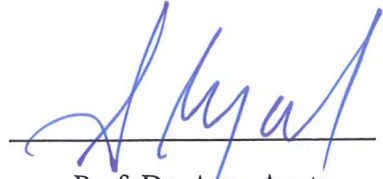
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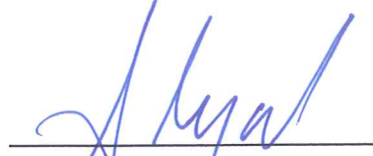
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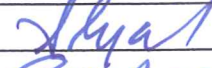
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ABSTRACT

“CHAIN” OF POPULISM FROM THE DEMOCRAT PARTY TO THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY IN TURKEY

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This dissertation analyses the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey from the perspective of Laclau’s theory on populism, focusing on the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party as illustrative cases. As the framework that Laclau developed to the end of studying the phenomenon of populism takes discourse analysis as its methodology, this dissertation addresses the discourse of democracy adopted by the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party. The cases of these two political parties fits Laclau’s theoretical framework perfectly, which provides us with the opportunity to reach key findings on the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey. Populism is believed to contribute to the further development of democracy at times, and is deemed to be a pathological constituent of democratic systems at others. This dissertation demonstrates that the cases of the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party give revealing clues regarding the nature of the relationship between populism and democracy as experienced in Turkey. In this context, while carrying out a discussion on this relationship, this dissertation analyzes the circumstances in which populism contributed to and those in which it impaired democracy in Turkey.

Keywords: Populism, Democracy, Laclau’s Theory of Populism, the Democrat Party, the Justice and Development Party

ÖZ

DEMOKRAT PARTİDEN ADALET VE KALKINMA PARTİSİNE TÜRKİYE’DE POPÜLİZM ZİNCİRİ

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Bu tez, Laclau’nun popülizm teorisi perspektifinden, Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi örneklerine odaklanarak Türkiye’de popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Laclau’nun popülizmi incelerken geliştirdiği çerçeve, metodoloji olarak söylem analizi yöntemini kullanmaktadır, bu doğrultuda bu tez Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partileri tarafından benimsenen demokrasi söyleminin analizine dayanmaktadır. Laclau’nun popülizm teorisinde sunduğu çerçeve bu iki örnek olaya uyum sağlamaktadır ve bu çerçeve Türkiye’de popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişki üzerine temel bulgular ortaya koyma imkanı sunmaktadır.

Demokratik toplumlarda popülizm bazı dönemlerde demokratik sistemlerin gelişimine katkı sağlarken bazı dönemlerde demokratik sistemin patolojik bir ögesi olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Bu tezde Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi örneklerinin bu tartışmayı açmak için uygun örnekler olduğu gösterilmiştir. Bu örnekler üzerinden Türkiye’de popülizm ve demokrasi tartışması yapılırken Türkiye’de hangi durumlarda popülizmin demokratik sistemin gelişimine katkıda bulunduğu, hangi dönemlerde ise demokratik sisteme zarar verdiği analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Popülizm, Demokrasi, Laclau’nun Popülizm Teorisi, Demokrat Parti, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi

In the Memory of My Beloved Mother

Rufiye Kıvrak

(01.07.1950 - 14.06.2015)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation is a major milestone in my life, not only because it is an academic achievement, but also and mainly because it helped me face myself again. I now stand quite far from the point where I started to write this dissertation, and looking back at that point, I see that I have become a new and much stronger person that I had not known before, thanks to this very journey that I undertook.

To begin with, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Ayşe Ayata for her guidance, patience, constructive comments and warm encouragement throughout this study. Not only did she light the way for me with her exceptional scholarship, but she also helped me see that strong woman inside me, waiting long to be discovered.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xiii
CHAPTER	
1.INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	1
1.1. Setting the Problem	1
1.2. Methodology	7
1.3. The Organization of the Chapters.....	10
2.POPULISM.....	12
2.1. What is Populism?.....	12
2.2. The Difficulty of Defining Populism as?	17
2.3. Methodology in Studies of Populism: Reading Populism in Different Ways	21
2.3.1. The Empiricist Approach.....	23
2.3.2. The Historicist Approach.....	24
2.3.3. Sympmtomatic Reading or the Discourse Approach.....	25
2.4. Some Thoughts on the Characteristic Features of Populism.....	26
2.5. Historical Accounts of Populism.....	34
2.5.1 The Birth of Populism: Russian and American Experiences.....	36
2.5.1.1. Contributions of Intellectuals to Populism in Russia: Populism from Cities to Rural Areas.....	37
2.5.1.2. North America: Grassroot Populist Movement	40
2.5.2 An Example from the East of the World: Birth of Populism in China	42
2.5.2.1. The People’s Response to Confucianism.....	43
2.5.2.2. The Three Principles of the People:	44
2.5.3 Latin American Populism	45
2.5.4 Populism in Europe: Conflict between Democracy and Populism.....	47

2.6.	Concluding Remarks.....	52
3	LACLAU AND POPULISM.....	53
3.1.	The Roots of Populism Theory in Laclau	53
3.1.1.	Hegemony and Socialist Strategy	53
3.1.2.	Laclau's Views on the Discussions on Mass Psychology:	56
3.1.2.1.	Gustave Le Bon: Some Ideas on the Mass.....	57
3.1.2.1.1.	What is Mass?	59
3.1.2.1.2.	Main Characteristics of the Individuals Forming a Crowd	59
3.1.2.2.	Contributions of Sigmund Freud.....	63
3.2.	Laclau's Approach to the Theory of Populism	64
3.2.1.	Concepts Important to Laclau's Populism Analysis.....	66
3.2.1.1.	Discourse.....	66
3.2.1.2.	Empty Signifiers and Hegemony	68
3.2.1.2.1.	What is an empty signifier?.....	68
3.2.1.2.2.	What is hegemony?.....	70
3.2.1.3.	Rhetoric.....	71
3.2.1.4.	Demand as a Unit of Analysis.....	72
3.2.1.5.	The Two Preconditions for the Emergence of Populism: Equivalential Chains and Antagonism	73
3.2.1.5.1.	Equivalential Chains	73
3.2.1.5.2.	Antagonism	74
3.2.2.	Populism for Laclau	77
4	THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POPULISM AND DEMOCRACY	81
4.1.	Emergence of Populism in Democratic Systems: Different Approaches	81
4.1.1.	Democratic Principles and Populism: The Test of Liberal Democracy with Populism	82
4.1.1.1.	Can Voting be a Sufficient Condition of Democracy?	83
4.1.2.	Representative Democracy and Populism.....	87
4.1.2.1.	Referendum and Plesbiscites: Tools for Direct Democracy or a Consent for Populism?	88
4.1.3.	Populism and New Poles in Democratic Politics	91
4.1.3.1.	Populism as a Spectre of Democracy.....	94
4.1.4.	Governance and Populism	96
4.1.5.	Populism as a Problem of European Democracy	98
4.2.	Populism as a Part of Democracy	99

4.2.1.	Populism as a Mode of Representation	101
4.3.	Populism as a Pathology of Democracy	102
4.4.	Political Parties, Democracy and Populism.....	104
4.4.1.	Political Parties and Democratic System.....	104
4.4.2.	Political Parties in Turkish Political Life.....	107
4.4.2.1.	The Debates on Transition to Democracy in Turkey: Democratization, Political Society and Political Parties.....	111
4.5.	Populism and Media: Does Media Serve for Populism or the Democracy?	112
4.5.1.	Freedom of Expression and Media Auditing.....	116
4.6.	Concluding Remarks	117
5	POPULISM IN TURKEY TILL 1950	119
5.1.	Populism in the Ottoman Period.....	119
5.2.	From “the People” to “the Nation”	121
5.3.	Populism of the Independence War Period	124
5.4.	Populism of the Six Arrows: The Single-Party Period.....	126
5.5.	Endless Amities of the Populist Rhetoric in Turkey:	127
5.5.1.	Nationalism	128
5.5.2.	Anatolianism	130
5.5.3.	Peasantism:	133
5.6.	Through a Democratic Regime: Chain of Equivalences has Begun to be Formed 135	
5.6.1.	Populism versus “Halkçılık”: A Conceptual Ambiguity.....	136
5.6.2.	A New Kind of Populism on the Rise	138
5.7.	Concluding Remarks	139
6	POPULISM AND DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY: CHAIN OF POPULISM FROM THE DEMOCRAT PARTY TO THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY	141
6.1.	The Democrat Party: The First Confrontation of Populism and Democracy	142
6.1.1.	A Populist Uprising: Why was the Democrat Party founded?	143
6.1.1.1.	Is Democracy Only an Internal Demand?	151
6.1.2.	Brief History of the Democrat Party Government.....	153
6.1.3.	Chain of Equivalences: “Democracy”	159
6.1.4.	Democracy as an Empty Signifier	162
6.1.5.	Anti-communism and Antagonism.....	164
6.1.6.	The Populism of the Democrat Party	170
6.1.7.	The Path to the Justice and Development Party: Scattered Demands	171

6.1.7.1.	The Turkish Right until the AKP: The Tradition of the Center-Right in Turkey	172
6.1.7.2.	The Justice Party: Development As the Main Link in the Chain Of Equivalences	172
6.1.8.	1970's: The Chain of Differences Grows.....	174
6.1.9.	The Motherland Party: A New Union of Demands?	176
6.1.10.	The Islamist Right in Turkey	179
6.2.	The Justice and Development Party: Uphill Battle Between Democracy and Populism	180
6.2.1.	Foundation of the Justice and Development Party: Need To Union Of Demands After Fragmentation:	182
6.2.2.	A Brief History of the Justice and Development Party from the Chain of Equivalences to the Chain of Differences:.....	186
6.2.3.	Understanding of Democracy	194
6.2.4.	Was the Union of Demands Formed? 2010 Constitutional Referendum and Afterwards.....	204
6.2.5.	Antagonism: A Sharp Distinction: "We and Others"	207
6.2.6.	Climax of the Chain of Differences:	210
6.2.7.	Populism of the Justice and Development Party	213
7	CONCLUSION.....	216
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	224
	APPENDICES	238
	APPENDIX 1 TURKISH SUMMARY	238
	APPENDIX 2 CURRICULUM VITAE	255
	APPENDIX 3 TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU	257

LIST OF TABLES

Tables

Table 1	1950 General Election Results.....	153
Table 2	1954 General Election Results.....	156
Table 3	1957 General Election Results.....	158
Table 4	2002 General Election Results.....	187
Table 5	2007 General Election Results.....	188
Table 6	21 October 2007 Constitutional Referendum Results Results	189
Table 7	12 September 2010 Constitutional Referendum Results	190
Table 8	2011 General Election Results.....	192
Table 9	June 2015 General Elections Results.....	194
Table 10	November 2015 General Elections Results	194

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DP	Demokrat Parti (Democrat Party)
AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
TCF	Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Progressive Republican Party)
SCF	Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası (Free Party)
AP	Adalet Partisi (Justice Party)
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (National Movement Party)
MNP	Milli Nizam Partisi (National Order Party)
MSP	Milli Selamet Partisi (National Salvation Party)
ANAP	Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
DYP	Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party)
TBMM	Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (Turkish Grand National Assembly)
USA	United States of America
PRC	People's Republic of China
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
EU	European Union
ISI	Import Substitution Industrialization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Setting the Problem

In their book entitled *Populism*¹, Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner start their discussion by citing Marx and Engel`s following well-known quote: “A spectre is haunting the world-populism” (Ionescu and Gellner, 1969:1). As the former mentioned in 1969, the world politics has been deeplyaffected by populism for many years and this political phenomenon has not failed to engage the attention of scholars. Political movements and issues have, as a consequence, started to be examined from the perspective of populism. Numerous studies on populism have dealt with why and how populism emerged in certain countries or continents. Today, although there is no real consensus on its definition, populism continues to play a prominent role in the realm of politics throughout the world.

From the second half of the 19th century until today, a lot has been said about populism, and the populist rhetoric has become increasingly varied and complex in the hands of different political and ideological bodies. Academics, who therefore adopted different perspectives and approaches in an effort to understand and explain the phenomenon of populism in all its complexity, defined populism at times as an ideology, at times as a strategy and at times as a mentality, at time as a movement depending on what they believed to be the characteristics common to populist movements. Owing to this intense interest in and focus on populism, there emerged numerous methodological approaches, which are crucial to understanding populism.

¹Ionescu G.&Gellner E.(1969) *Populism; Its Meaning and National Characteristics*,London:Mac Millan.

The earliest approach to populism is called the “empiricist”² approach. The empiricist approach focuses on the common characteristics of populist movements, however, this approach fell short of explaining specific economic and populist movements such as those that emerged in Latin America after the economic crisis of 1929, which were therefore assessed using an economic and class-based approach. This approach, named by Francisco Panizza³ as the “historicist approach”, has maintained its influence up to the present day. Its influence can be observed particularly in studies on neoliberal populism.

According to the political scientist Ernesto Laclau, both the empiricist and the historicist approach offer an economic reductionist and narrow framework, and they have thus come to be considered as insufficient for a substantial analysis of populism.⁴ In this context, it has been argued that a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon, and especially its relationship with democracy requires the use of another tool. Laclau, who sought for a third option, opted for discourse analysis, which, he believed, would bring to light the underlying logic of and the mechanisms involved in populism. Populism studies that are based on this third approach are relatively new and they focus predominantly on the relationship between and the dilemmas of democracy and populism.

This being the case, I deemed Laclau’s approach to be highly appropriate for an analysis of the relationship between populism and democracy as it has been experienced in Turkey, based on Turkish political parties’ political discourses. I thought that this study could contribute to the debates about Turkish democracy by evaluating it from the perspective of populism. When I started to delve into the subject, I found out that Laclauian perspective, proved its superiority in terms of analytic power however, notwithstanding the intense attention that it drew throughout the world, it had only recently begun to arouse the interest of Turkish scholars.

²Panizza F. (2005) *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, London: Verso.

³Ibid.

⁴Laclau E. (2005) *On Populist Reason*, London: Verso.

As I had a deeper understanding of Laclau's framework for the analysis of populism, I became fully aware of the fact that the populist movements witnessed in Turkey could be more thoroughly analyzed within this framework that was shaped by Laclau and developed further by the Essex School through numerous studies.

Neither the classical perspective nor the historicist approach sufficed to carry out an exhaustive study on populism in Turkey, as neither of these approaches focused on the subject of democracy as a variable, whereas the approach whose framework was established by Laclau made it possible to make a thorough analysis of the emergence of populism in democratic systems. Hence this framework provided me a brand new perspective for the analysis of the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey after the 1950's, when the transition to a multi-party system took place, because from the 1950's on, democracy was considered as the ultimate objective of political life in Turkey. Therefore, it is imperative to explore the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey if one is to make an exhaustive of analysis of the emergence and development of democracy in Turkey in the post-1950.

Laclau in his theory of populism investigates "the logic behind the nature and logics of the formation of collective identities."⁵ Laclau puts the discourse analysis in the center of his theory of populism because according to Laclau society is constructed in the discursive space. He uses certain concepts peculiar to his framework to analyse populism. These certain concepts are discourse, hegemony, empty signifier and rhetoric. He takes "democratic demands" as a unit of analysis in comparison with the past approaches takes the masses as a unit of analysis. With these concepts and with the help of "this unit of analysis" he defines two preconditions -Equivalential Chains and Antagonism-for the emergence of populism in democratic systems.⁶ I argue that, these key concepts make Laclau's approach available to analyse the emergence and development of democracy in the post-1950 Turkey.

At first, I considered it reasonable to analyze all the Turkish centre right-wing parties

⁵Ibid.

⁶Laclau, E. (2005). *On Populist Reason* London: Verso

from the 1950's on using Laclau's framework. It seemed to me that the Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti, DP), the Justice Party (Adalet Partisi, AP), the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi, ANAP) and the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) had come to power alone by creating a unity of demands and gaining public support. However, as the study progressed, two parties, namely the DP and the AKP came to the fore, as the discourses that best fit Laclau's framework were these two parties' discourses so I have used two illustrative cases to justify my argument on the usefulness of the Laclauian perspective on the relationship between populism and democracy.

When I reinterpreted post-1950's populist movements in Turkey using Laclau's approach, I found out that the emergence of populism was neither rooted in the antagonism between the people and the elites nor dependent on the economic model as was proposed by the historicist approach. When I thus reinterpreted the phenomenon of populism as witnessed in Turkey focusing above all on its discursive aspects, I came to the conclusion that post-1950's populism in Turkey involved a certain continuity and that this continuity was constructed on the basis of the notion of democracy. This premise accounts for the fact that the AKP, which is in power today in Turkey, constantly takes the DP as a reference point. These two parties, which came to power thanks to the unity of demands centred around the notion of democracy and with the full support of the people, were both criticized for becoming increasingly authoritarian and for aggravating social polarization.

However, it did not suffice to claim only that right-wing parties adopted populism in their democracy discourse that involved continuity in post-1950 Turkish politics, as this is a common idea argued by many scholars from different perspectives. Thus, this study had to go beyond this idea, and it indeed could, thanks to the Laclauian approach that it adopted. Unlike its counterparts, this approach makes it possible to go on to ask how a democratic order is affected by populism so this framework allows me to make an analysis on the development of democratic order in Turkey in post-1950 period.

I argue in this dissertation, by referring to Laclau, that the populist discourse was established in Turkey after the 1950's around the notion of democracy by referring to

the people, i.e. the nation. It thus became possible to unify diversity, which was described by Laclau as the heterogeneity of the people, under the name of “nation” and organize it around the demand for democracy. In this manner, the populist discourse makes it possible to see the people, which are actually a heterogeneous community, as a homogeneous whole, and this, in turn, makes the relevant social movement appear as a homogeneous whole beyond social classes. In some instances democratic order affected by this democratic discourse positively. In some other cases democratic order affected negatively by this “narrow” democracy discourse and it becomes pathological constituent of the democratic system.

The DP emerged in 1945 as an expression of the increasing discontent with the Republican People’s Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) in view of the democratic developments around the world and the point reached in the establishment of the democratic system in Turkey. The people’s disapproval of the CHP’s “anti-democratic” practices constituted a heterogeneous unity of demands, and the DP, which emerged at this historical juncture, called this unity of demands, “democracy”. This unity of demands was highly appreciated by the people, earning the DP considerable support. But this party soon created its “other.” This “other” was initially made up of communists only, but in time the press, academicians, intellectuals, students and the opposition party, that is, the CHP, were included in this chain of “others.” I tried to outline the process whereby this chain was established and realized that, by 1957, the chain of differences had expanded to the extent of breaking the chain of equivalences. This polarization, which went as far as to lead to the establishment of the National Front (Vatan Cephesi) is a significant example of how othering is capable of growing beyond measure. The DP which came to power in 1950 with the promise of establishing a new order based on democracy, brought antagonism to the heart of its politics from 1954 on. And towards the end of the 1950’s, democracy had become equivalent to “the rule of the majority.”

When it comes to the emergence of the AKP, the consecutive economic crises of the 1990’s, the shattering of the Turkish central right-wing, and the crisis that the political system faced, sufficed to bring to power alone the political party, which rose to power with the promise to establish “a new order” the 2000’s. The populist discourse centred around the notion of “conservative democracy”, which did not

have a specific content initially, gained public support especially after the objective of being a part of the European Union (EU) came to occupy a prioritized position on the party's agenda.

After 2007, when the party came to think that the army had eventually withdrawn from the political arena, othering and polarization came into prominence in the party's discourse. One of the major polarizations around "democracy" was witnessed during the 2010 Turkish Constitutional Referendum, when the notion was reduced down to voting "yes" or "no" in the referendum. In this context I argue in this dissertation that the 2010 Referendum and the 2013 Gezi Park Protests constitute the climax of the above-described antagonism, for these two events sparked discussions about authoritarianism in Turkey. Especially the Gezi Park Protests, which broke out as I wrote this dissertation, proved that the populist discourse that was established at the beginning of the 2000's, dissolved. It was also a sign of the need for a new unity of the people and a more encompassing understanding of democracy. Today, on the other hand, the Justice and Development Party has begun to unify all the demands around the transition to a presidential system. The changes that have recently taken place within the party account for this shift in the party's populist politics. It will be seen whether this shift will create such a unity of demands in the days to come. If the constituents of "the people" is scaled down in the process, and "the others" is enlarged to the detriment of the former, the democratic system in Turkey, and the liberal democrat circles are destined to contract at an increasing rate.

It was for this very reason that I decided to explore the relationship between populism and democracy from a Laclauian perspective in Turkey. Populism has always been in a tense relationship with liberal democracy. At times, it contributed to democracy through the representation and the participation of the people, and at others it led to the erosion of democracy and its being perceived as limited to "participation."

All in all, I should mention that the framework of analysis, which I used in my dissertation in analysing the DP's and the AKP's discourse of democracy is extremely valuable, notably for studies on populism. I hope that this dissertation will serve as a model for further populism studies centred on discourse, and also that it

will shed some light on the on-going discussions on democracy in Turkey in that it provides an exhaustive coverage of the relationship between populism and democracy. Also, if this thesis can contribute even a little to the building of a more democratic society, then it will have definitely fulfilled its goal.

1.2. Methodology

I began the process of writing this thesis by carrying out a research on populism in broad terms, and tried to determine the place that the method of discourse analysis, which is used in this thesis, occupies in the literature on populism. Having performed these steps, I focused on the special framework developed by Ernesto Laclau for the analysis of populism with a view to having a solid grasp on the details of the method in question. Then, I tried to outline the complex relationship between populism and democracy, referring to the studies in the literature that used this certain methodology developed by Laclau.

Throughout this dissertation, I observed the basic principles of discourse analysis in general, but gave more weight to Laclau and Mouffe's framework for discourse analysis.

"Discourse analysis" focuses on the "written, vocal, or sign language use" to interpret social relations, so it takes an important place in political theory and political studies. According to Dijk; ideologies are preferably produced and reproduced in societies through forms of text and talk of social actors as group members.⁷ Accordingly "discourse analysis" gives social scientists a good opportunity to understand social relations and ideologies.

"The turn to language in political theory is associated with writings emanating from the late 1960s. Nevertheless, it has taken a good decade or so longer for the consequences of a focus on the constitution and reconstitution of reality to become the object of reflection in political and social theory in general, and for the study of

⁷Dijk T.A. 1995. "Discourse Semantics and Ideology", *Discourse & Society*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1995), pp. 243-289.

ideology in particular” (Norval,2000,314). As Aletta Norval⁸ from Essex School expressed, from 1960s, focusing on discourse became prevalent in political theory. As Laclau focusing on the construction of society in general, focusing on the formation of collective identities in particular, adapted discourse analysis successfully into his theory of populism.

As Laclau indicates; “By discursive I do not mean that which refers to ‘text’ narrowly defined, but to the ensemble of the phenomena in and through which social production of meaning takes place, an ensemble which constitutes a society as such. This means that the discursive does not constitute a superstructure ... or more precisely, that all social practice constitutes itself as such insofar as it produces meaning”⁹ (Laclau,1980:87). In Laclau’s terminology, discourse; refers to a network of meaning articulating both linguistic and non-linguistic elements. Discourse is not only words, speech or ideas, but also practices directly connected to the discursive logic that formulates them”¹⁰.

David Howarth from the Essex School looking at these phenomena through the lens of Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse analysis wrote the following on their opinions regarding discourse:¹¹ “Instead, drawing upon post-structuralist conceptions of language, Laclau and Mouffe distinguish between contingent elements in a discursive field and necessary moments articulated into a particular discourse” (Howarth, 2000:103). In this respect, discourse analysis requires giving a brief summary of the conditions under which the discourse being analyzed emerged, because “discourse always requires a discursive outside to constitute itself.” (Howarth, 2000:103). Therefore, I felt the need to address, in my analyses of political parties, the external circumstances and causes that have a bearing on the people’s support for these parties. Thanks to Laclau’s broad understanding of discourse, which does not confine it to texts or speeches, I was able to carry out an analysis that takes into consideration both texts and practices.

⁸ Norval, A. 2000.”The things we do in Words”, Contemporary Approaches to the Analysis of Ideology, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Apr., 2000), pp. 313-346.

⁹ Laclau, E. 1980. Populist Rupture and Discourse. *Screen Education* 34 Spring 1980, 87-93.

¹⁰ Stavrakakis, Y. (2004). Antinomies of Formalism: Laclau’s Theory of Populism and the Lessons from Religious Populism in Greece. In *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol: 9, Issue: 3, 253-267.

¹¹ David H. 2000. Discourse, Open University Press: Buckingham Philadelpha.

Laclau established a special methodology while analyzing populism. I expounded on this methodology and the factors giving rise to populism in the third chapter. In this context, the first thing that I wanted to do was to show how “the unity of demands”, which constituted the populist discourse of the parties that I focus on, came into existence. Then I needed to bring to light these parties’ understanding of democracy and the elements of antagonism by analyzing their discursive choices. While carrying out this task in the last chapter of this dissertation, I did a literature review, which was required by this very task.

While reviewing the relevant literature, which constituted the crux of this dissertation, I focused on cases where the discourse of democracy could be considered “populist” as Laclau defined the word. There was a small number of studies addressing this matter, and the few such studies were short articles. And the rest of the studies on populism penned by scholars who adopted other approaches to populism could contribute to this study only to a certain extent. This is why I chose to focus mainly on primary sources.

On primary sources, I addressed the relationship between populism and democracy, referring to speeches that I chose as examples especially in the light of Laclau’s framework of populism. Especially I focused on the democracy discourse in texts and speeches. Focusing on the democracy discourse of the parties enabled me to make an analysis by using Laclau’s analytical tools such as “unity of demands”, “chain of equivalences” and antagonism.

The online archives of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, TBMM) ¹² contributed greatly to the final chapter of this dissertation, which is devoted to the analysis of the populist discourses of the DP and the AKP.

The discourse adopted by the DP was shaped to a large extent through Menderes’s speeches. Therefore, I tried to reach these speeches as well as newspaper articles instead of secondary sources, drawing mainly on books bringing together Menderes’s speeches. As the then-spoken Turkish was different from today’s Turkish, I included

¹²www.tbmm.gov.tr

in this dissertation the originals of the texts in question.

AKP's open archive¹³ enabled me to reach all the data that I needed concerning the party. I went through all the relevant documents with a view to trace in written texts the party's understanding of democracy. Then I examined parliamentary speeches and meeting speeches, noting down all the striking points. I reached these speeches from the AKP's web archives, and whenever I could not, I used the newspaper archives. Also, I present the data that I gathered in my analyses on the DP and the AKP in a parallel manner so that I could make a comparative analysis of the results.

1.3. The Organization of the Chapters

The first chapter, which provides an overview to the theoretical framework of the study, is also meant to explain in a brief manner why this dissertation focuses on the subject of populism and why this subject is analyzed using discourse analysis.

The second chapter, on the other hand, is devoted to explaining and elaborating on the concept of populism, and to providing a summary of the frameworks and approaches that have been used in relevant studies until today. Moreover, the final part of this chapter is meant to address, by giving examples of populism from around the world, the question of why democracy and populism need to be dealt with together rather than separately insofar as today's democratic regimes are concerned. This part of the chapter underscores, in the light of the above-mentioned historical examples, that it is significant to distinguish the emergence of populism in the democratic regimes of Europe from others and that European examples are crucial to understanding how populism emerges in democratic regimes.

The third chapter is meant to elaborate on the main elements of Laclau's approach to populism. In this chapter, all the studies of Laclau on populism and mass psychology, as well as the essential elements of his analyses are addressed in detail, which has helped determine the certain aspects of Laclau's studies to draw upon within the framework of this study.

¹³www.akparti.org

The fourth chapter addresses the relationship between the concepts of populism and democracy and provides a summary of the main approaches adopted by scholars analysing this relationship. This chapter, drawing upon analyses of the relationship between populism and democracy in different parts of the world, is meant to contribute to my analysis of populism as it is experienced in Turkey. I outlined the major discussions on this relationship in my dissertation, in the last chapter of which I analyzed the discourses adopted by the DP and the AKP in view of the prominent features of the relationship between populism and democracy. The relationship between populism and democracy cannot be examined without taking into account factors such as the political parties' structures, the impact of the media, etc. Likewise, discussions regarding the elections and the referendum, which I addressed in the same chapter, shed some more light on the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey. Also, nearly all the discussions that I covered in this chapter were meant to search an answer to whether populism as a discourse fosters democracy and contributes to its development or is a pathological element of liberal democracy.

The fifth chapter represents the development of the populist movement from 19th century to 1950. This part of the study will help understand the evolution of the populist mind in Turkey. To elaborate this evolution I focused on important historical events and the transformation of the populist mind. I have addressed ideologies like nationalism, peasantism and Anatolianism which can be entitled as the endless amities of populism. Even today they constitute the backbone of the populist mind as part of the democracy discourse. This chapter will thus clarify that continuity is a fundamental feature of the populist discourse in Turkey.

The sixth and final chapter of the study elaborates on the relationship between populism and the rhetoric of democracy in Turkey since 1950. This chapter is devoted to the political discourses of the DP and the AKP, and the analyses made in this last chapter, which constitutes the most vital part of this study, are based on concepts such as the "chain of equivalences", and the "chain of differences", borrowed from Laclau's theories and analyses of populism and democracy.

CHAPTER 2

POPULISM

2.1. What is Populism?

In specific issues the social science literature has great difficulty in drawing a clear framework: one of such issues is “populism.” The concept of “populism” has multiple definitions and is discussed by scholars from all over the world from different perspectives. The meaning of populism varies greatly not only from context to context but also across time and space. Notwithstanding the difficulty of defining populism, it is a must for this study as well as other similar studies on populism to throw some light on the concept. Even though this effort may not result in formulating a clear-cut definition of populism, it might at least contribute to disambiguate the concept to a certain extent.

As it would certainly exceed its limits, this study will not address all the definitions of or all the comments made on the concept. However, it will try to give an overview of the main, if not all, approaches to populism.

Studies on populism typically begin with an emphasis on the difficulty of arriving at a clear definition of the concept. Highlighting this problem is so common in studies that deal with populism that it appears to have become a tradition per se. Following this emphasis, a typical study focusing on populism formulates its own definition of and presents a new approach to populism depending on its particular context, and provides an analysis of its subject matter based on these definitions and approaches. Let us begin our study in a similar fashion by canvassing the different definitions of and approaches to populism.

I can start by tracing the etymology of the word “populism” as etymology is a very useful tool in explaining the meaning of a term. But if I wish to do so, I should initially look up the word “populist” instead of “populism” as the meaning of the latter is to be searched not in dictionaries but in books dealing with political science.

Let us now explore the meanings of these two words in order and try to find out the meaning of “populism.”

“The term populist was initially used in English to describe those who choose to call themselves by this name the members of the US People’s Party formed in the 1890s as the culmination of a decade of agrarian radicalism” (Canovan, 2005:70). In a dictionary of the English language, the word “populist” is defined as “a member or adherent of a political party seeking to represent the interests of ordinary people.”¹⁴ The People’s Party, active in the United States of America (USA) between 1891 and 1908, played an influential role in American political life, especially between 1892 and 1908. David Overmyer was the eponym of the movement. Advocating radical agrarianism, the People’s Party gained the support of cotton farmers in North Carolina, Alabama, and Texas, i.e. the southern states of the USA. It was by reason of this party, which adopted a pro-people and anti-elitist discourse, that the word “populist” came to be used to denote “a person who defends the interests of the people.”¹⁵

If I turn my attention to the history of populism throughout the world, leaving aside the first use of the term in English, the Russian Narodnik movement will be the first instance of populism that everyone will come across. The concept of “narodnism,” denoting the ideology of this movement, bears a striking resemblance to the terms “populism” and “populist”: In Russian, the word “narod” means “the people” and “narodnism” can be translated into English as “peopleism.” The name of the movement, on the other hand, derives from the Russian expression “going to the people.” Drawing on Pyotr Lavrov’s *Historical Letters*, Zafer Toprak writes, in his book entitled *Türkiye’de Popülizm: 1908-1923* (Populism in Turkey: 1908-1923), about how Lavrov, who was one of the major figures of the Russian Narodnik movement, called on young Russian idealists to “go to the people.” According to Toprak, Russian populism came into being when the young people of Russia responded to this call to bridge the ever-growing gap between the people and the elites¹⁶ (Toprak, 2013).

¹⁴ Oxford English Dictionary

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶Toprak, Z. (2013) *Türkiye’de Popülizm: 1908–1923*, İstanbul: Doğan Kitap.

In the same years, i.e. the last years of 19th century, Sun Yat Sen, who was the first president and founding father of the Republic of China, addressed the youth and the common people of China, going counter to elitist values and Confucian thought, which was widespread among the Chinese elites. The movement that he led brought about the fall of the Chinese Empire. The kind of populism, which emerged in China through the exaltation of the values of the people, was to be brought into power by Mao Zedong and to shape the destiny of this great power of Asia.

This idea of “going to the people,” which was prevalent throughout the world, found a fertile ground in the Ottoman Empire as well. In the early 1900’s, the ideology that consisted in prioritizing the values of the people and seeing the people as the source of salvation had a bearing on many Ottoman intellectuals like Ziya Gökalp Ali Canip, Köprülüzade Mehmed Fuad, Rıza Tevfik and Ömer Seyfettin, who gave a lot of weight to folklore and the values of the people (Toprak, 2013:26). The journal entitled *Halka Doğru* (Toward the People), issued by nationalist intellectuals in 1913, can be seen as an important indicator of this intellectual wave. Ottoman intellectuals, who attached great importance to the values and the transformative power of the people, began to lay the foundations of the ideology of the Republican period by promoting populism and nationalism simultaneously.

In Republican Turkey, the populism emerged around the idea of “halkçılık,” which is the counterpart of populism in Turkish. Hence, as far as Turkey is concerned, it is not enough to explore the notion of “populism,” but also “halkçılık.” In the dictionary of Turkish, the latter word is defined as: “The idea and the attitude of not seeing any difference between individuals in terms of rights, and rejecting all kinds of privilege in the society; populism.”¹⁷ The different usages of the two words in Turkish is also worthy of note. In Turkish, the word “populist” is used in a rather pejorative sense. “Populist” is defined as “an abettor of the people.”¹⁸ Despite the pejorative sense, the reference made to the people in the definition is notable.

A short look at the dictionary definitions of “populism” reveals that, in plain

¹⁷ Türk Dil Kurumu Türkçe Sözlük

¹⁸ Ibid.

language, this word says something about the “people”. As Peter Worsley has called attention to it in 1969, which is a relatively early date, populism emerges if there is a conflict between society (the people) and the external world (Worsley, 1969). Paul Taggart also points out that in order to understand populism it is necessary to focus on the concept of the “people” (Taggart, 2003).

According to Edward Shils, one of the early researchers to focus on this subject, populism arises out of the acknowledgment of the absolute superiority of the will of the people:

Wherever there is an ideology of popular resentment against the order imposed upon society of a long-established, differentiated ruling class, which is believed to have a monopoly of power, property, breeding and culture... It is impatient of institutional procedures which impede the direct expression of the popular will and the forceful personalities who assume the responsibility of being vessels of the popular will (Shils, 1956:100).

Alan Ware, a contemporary researcher, defines populism in a similar fashion: “Populism prioritises the opinions of people over anything else; that a policy proves acceptable eventually to most citizens, or promotes their interests, but is not a policy they want, is an insufficient basis for political legitimacy” (Ware, 2002:102).

Margaret Canovan, who penned the so far most comprehensive research on populism, acknowledges the complexity of defining the concept:

One of the reasons for current confusion about the meaning of populism is that besides being used to describe the confrontational politics that mobilizes ordinary people against those inside the establishment, the term also refers to a classical tactic available to political insiders, a kind of catch-all politics that sets out to appeal to the people as a whole (Canovan, 2005:77).

Margaret Canovan defines populism briefly as “an appeal to the people” against both “the established structure of power” and “the dominant ideas and values” (Canovan, 1999:1).

Like Canovan, Albertazzi and McDonnell underline the fact that populism is usually defined by reference to notions such as “demagoguery” and “catch-all politics.” The

latter two researchers, on the other hand, attempt to provide a clearer definition of the concept on the basis of the binary opposition of “elites” and “others”. According to them, populism is “an ideology which pits a virtuous and homogeneous people against a set of elites and dangerous ‘others’ who are together depicted as depriving (or attempting to deprive) the sovereign people of their rights, values, prosperity, identity and voice” (Albertazzi, 2008:3).

Mudde throws the issue into sharp relief: “While conceptual clarity and definitional consensus are not much closer within the academic community, most definitions of populism have at least two points of reference in common: ‘the elite’ and ‘the people’” (Mudde, 2004:541). In other words, populism says something about the relationship between “the elite” and “the people”. This kind of approach to populism requires the clarification of the “people” and the “elites.”

Mudde is not the only researcher who holds that the definition of populism is directly associated with the elite-the non-elite/people relationship. There is a consensus among researchers regarding this matter. For instance, Jack Hayward asserts that populists are those who “pit the non-elite against the elite” and seek to achieve “a fictional unity” that does not allow for any discrimination between people based on their nationality, class, or profession (Hayward, 1996:19).

Despite the fact that many scholars tried to formulate a clear definition of populism, the concept still remains blurred. Francisco Panizza discusses the definitional complexity of the concept and underlines the importance of its analytical core:

Populism is a contested concept and agreements on what it means and who qualifies as a populist are difficult because, unlike other equally contested concepts such as democracy, it has become an analytical attribution rather than a term with which most political actors willingly identify (Panizza, 2005:1).

This study will focus on the relationship between populism and democracy later so as to provide a frame for a better understanding of the former concept through questions posed to the concept itself. As the study progresses, the concept will be viewed from different aspects, which will help remove the ambiguity, and it will become clear, just like Panizza writes, that the significance of populism as an analytical tool is

greater than its meaning as a word or its definition (Panizza,2005:1).

Leaving aside the difficulty of defining populism for the time being and passing on to how the concept is defined will provide us with the opportunity to examine it in a more analytical manner. In this way, I can both consider the different definitions of populism and reconsider these different definitions of and comments made on the concept from a different perspective.

2.2. The Difficulty of Defining Populism as?

In the previous section of this study, I dealt with the different views of populism on the one hand, and on the other, I pointed out the difficulty of defining populism. Besides the definitional problem another issue emerges as well. Even though many academicians have studied the term, it is still hard to determine whether populism should be defined as an ideology, political strategy, a political movement or a political style. Drawing our attention to this issue, Ernesto Laclau writes: “Any definition presupposes a theoretical grid giving sense to what is defined.

This sense –as the very notion of definition asserts– can only be established on the basis of differentiating the defined term from something else that the definition excludes. This, in turn, presupposes a terrain within which those differences as such are thinkable. It is this terrain which is not immediately obvious when we call a movement (?), an ideology (?), a political practice (?), populist” (Laclau, 2005(2):32).

Mudde and Kaltwasser assert that populism can be defined in many different ways, but that there are three dominant approaches to defining it. According to Mudde and Kaltwasser, these three common conceptual approaches are defining populism “as a movement, as a political style, and as a discourse” (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012(1):3). Besides, there are also many authors who define populism as an ideology and a political strategy.

Gino Germani is one of the authors who define populism as a political movement. Germani explores the notion within the context of Latin America and defines it as a multi-class movement organized around a charismatic leader (Germani, 1978). Marcho Tarchi considers populism as a social movement as well. According to Tarchi, who analyzes populism peculiar to Italy, populism is a social movement that

emerged in the Italian society due to the erosion of representative democracy. In his view, Italian political corruption and scandals also had a bearing on the emergence of this movement. The social movement termed populism surfaced in Italy as a reaction to these corruption and scandals (Tarchi, 2002:126).

Writers who define populism as a political movement tend to consider it a movement seen solely in specific countries or regions. Another group of writers, on the other hand, argue that populism is an ideology of political movements or parties. According to these writers populism is not specific to certain countries or regions. On the contrary, it is possible to come across populism anywhere in the world.

The leading writer to define populism as an ideology is Margaret Canovan. According to Canovan, populism is an ideology specific to democracy. In Canovan's view, populism is the ideological reflection of people's sovereignty and majority rule: "Although populist movements are usually sparked off by specific social and economic problems, their common feature is a political appeal to the people and a claim to legitimacy that rests on the democratic ideology of popular sovereignty and majority rule" (Canovan, 2002:25).

Canovan is well aware of the fact that populism can not be considered independently of certain social and economic conditions. However, she asserts that populism can not be explained solely by these economic and social conditions, and that popular sovereignty and majority rule, which are peculiar to democratic systems of rule, bring about populism. According to Canovan, populism turned into an ideology when democratic systems of rule began to dominate.

Mac Rae prefers to portray populism as an ideology in his very early study. In his article entitled "Populism as an Ideology" (1969), published in Ionescu and Gellner's famous book on populism, i.e. *Populism: Its Meaning and National Characteristics*, Mac Rae asserts that populism is an ideology that can be explained in terms of the notion of society:

Populism is not about economics, politics or even, in the last resort society. It is about personality, and about personality in a moral sense. Populism claims that the individual should be a complete man. Complete man, living ideally in independent

agrarian virtue, with agree with one another. Their insights would be sound healthy, bound to appropriate pieties. Their judgements would be free but would coincide. Their society would be essentially consensual and uniform (Mac Rae, 1969:160).

Mudde also defines populism as an ideology that “considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite,’ and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people” (Mudde, 2004:543).

Like Muddle, Albertazzi and McDonnell define populism as an ideology of the people who aim to safeguard their identity, voice, and prosperity against the elites (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008).

Contrary to Mudde, Pierre-Andre Taguieff defines populism as a political style, not just as an ideology. According to Taguieff, populism is more of a style than the substance of a political program. Its aim is to please the crowds, to make its audiences feel good even if, or especially when, things are going badly (Taguieff, 1995).

Pasquino shares the same point of view: “To suggest that there exists a precise, widely shared, cogent populist ideology would be an exaggeration. In any case, it seems advisable to use the term in the plural: ‘ideologies.’.....it is preferable in the case of populism to speak of ‘mentalities’ instead of ideologies” (Pasquino, 2008:23).

Weyland, on the other hand, defines populism as a political strategy. According to Weyland;

Populism is best defined as a political strategy. Political strategies are characterized by the power capability that types of rulers use to sustain themselves politically. Under populism the ruler is an individual, a personalistic leader, not a group or organization. Populism rests on the power capability of numbers, not special weight. Populism emerges when personalistic leaders base their rule on massive yet mostly uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of people. This minimal definition encompasses both the classical populists of the 1930s through 1960s and the neopopulists of the 1980s and 1990s (Weyland, 2001:1).

Similarly, Micheal Kazin defines populism as a political strategy by denominating it as a flexible form of persuasion (Kazin, 1995). With a reference to Kazin's work, Alan Ware also identifies populism as a "political strategy" that plays a prominent role in national politics. In analyzing American populism, Alan Ware argues that populism in the USA manifests itself as a strategy adopted by political parties and leaders, rather than a thought with a specific content or a movement. According to Ware, populism changed greatly in time following its emergence in the USA. Populism took various shapes as it was used as a strategy by different political parties and leaders (Ware, 2002). Hence, Ware argues that populism is not an ideology but a political strategy.

Peter Mair, too, defines populism as a political style. According to Mair, populism is "a means of linking an increasingly undifferentiated and depoliticized electorate with a largely neutral and non-partisan system of governance." Thus, leaders integrate their electorate into the system by creating a political style through their discourses and their actions (Mair, 2002:84).

Calling to mind Mudde and Kaltwasser's opinions on the subject, which were referred to at the beginning of this chapter, we can assert that, whereas other writers see populism as a movement or a political style, Laclau defines populism as a discourse. Laclau lays emphasis on the importance of going further than defining populism. He writes that his objective in focusing on populism in this context is not to attain yet another definition of populism, but to understand the nature of and the logic behind the formation of collective identities. So, according to Laclau, one should turn to attention to how collective identities develop or are developed, instead of trying to define populism. In Laclau's view, populism can be addressed not as a strategy, an ideology or a movement but as a logic that forms collective identities. Laclau's above-described approach, therefore, is rather hard to adopt and use when it comes to practical matters. As Laclau's approach to populism takes discourse theory as its point of reference, it is considered to be a discourse-centered approach to populism (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012:3).

The number of writers and academicians who base their analyses on Laclau's theoretical framework is not small either. Followers of the Essex School, such as

Chantal Mouffe, Francisco Panizza, Sebastian Barros, David Howarth, and Yannis Stavrakakis, who lay stress notably on the shortcomings of the reductive economic approach and the classical approach, carry out their analyses of populism using the theoretical framework provided by Laclau and referring to his discourse theory on populism.

2.3. Methodology in Studies of Populism: Reading Populism in Different Ways

The literature on populism, whose creation dates back roughly to mid-20th century, has developed extensively in recent years. In fact this development made it impossible to examine the concept without reference to different methodological approaches. The earliest attempts to explain populism were made in works, now considered classics in the literature, with an aim to catch a glimpse of the then-emerging populist movements, i.e. to trace the roots of Russian Populism or the birth of the People's Party in America, for instance. Later populism studies, on the other hand, did not focus on populism as experienced only in certain countries as populism emerged on a global scale and drew the attention of many academics from around the world. Comparative inter-country studies thus began to be conducted and local examples began to be examined much more thoroughly, making studies on populism, such as those scrutinizing certain leaders' populist approaches through discourse analysis, exceedingly elaborate. Likewise, an increasingly greater number of works were published on a variety of subtopics under the category of populism. In today's literature, studies on populism cover a wide range of topics, varying from Russian Narodism to feminist populism, and from Peronism to Islamic populism.

In brief, studies on populism have been carried out for many decades now by scholars—from Franco Venturi, whose *Il Populismo Russo*¹⁹ was published in the 1950s to the followers of the Essex School in the 2000s—who adopted a variety of approaches and methods that developed over time in parallel with the diversification of populist movements in the world. For instance, the early works on American populism and the Russian Narodnik Movement, constituting the first examples of

¹⁹Venturi F., (1952) *Il Populismo Russo*. Einaudi.

studies on populism, established the classical point of view on the subject, which involves tracing the roots and examining the common characteristics of populist movements in order to have a say on the notion of populism.

However, Latin American populist movements that appeared after the 1930s displayed some markedly different characteristics from their earlier counterparts, as they arose in economic and social circumstances peculiar to the aftermath of the crisis of 1929, and were therefore marked by a novel approach based on economic arguments. In other words, populism as experienced in Latin America after the 1930s, emerged in a specific historical and economic context. The majority of these populist movements developed around a dominant leader and a specific economic development model known as Import Substitution Industrialization. Therefore, the populist tendencies witnessed in Latin America in this period could and indeed had to be analyzed with reference to these components. Naturally enough, the economic approach was more successful than all the other approaches in explaining Latin American populism. From the 1960s on, almost all analyses of Latin American populism were made under the heavy influence of the above-described economic approach. As a corollary to this, these works made their way into the literature as the leading examples of political-economic approach. And it was this very literature on Latin American populism that constituted the founding basis of the historicist approach in political science. Even though the dominance of this approach was challenged in the 1990s, it still exerts its influence on studies dealing with neo-populist tendencies, and remains a valid approach for explaining how populist movements emerged around strong leaders in Latin America, a continent increasingly dominated by neoliberal economies, and also in other developing countries where such regimes gain ground.

Although economic and political orders continued to evolve, the populism phenomenon did not cease to exist, far from it. And as a result of the dominance of post-structuralism over social sciences from the 1970s onwards, this time, populism began to be analyzed using discourse analysis, just like other political phenomena. This new approach acknowledged the contribution made by classical and economic analyses to populism studies, but found them inadequate and incomplete. Scholars who adopted this approach criticized the classical approach for being dependent on

generalizations and asserted that the economic approach was an economic reductionist approach. These criticisms must have been deemed reasonable, as the discourse approach to populism was adopted by an increasing number of scholars working on populism.

Argentinian political scientist Ernesto Laclau and his colleague, the Belgian political scientist Chantal Mouffe, started to emphasize the importance of “discourse” in political studies as early as the 1980s, drawing inspiration from the works of Gramsci who touched upon the significance of discourse in the 1930s. Discourse analysis became the most frequently used tool in political studies thanks also to the prevalence of post-structuralism in academia. At the turn of this century, Laclau focused more on the issue of populism as it was gaining dominance over Latin American politics. His ideas on populism had a profound effect on scholars, notably those from the Essex School. Numerous works that viewed populism from the lens of discourse analysis have been published since the appearance of Laclau’s “On Populist Reason” (2005), which gives an overview of his approach to populism. The literature on populism underwent a dramatic change following the emergence of this new approach.

Studies on populism, the rich historical background of which was outlined above, constitute a vast literature that consists of a myriad of works penned from a variety of perspectives. Therefore, a comprehensive overview of these studies is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, it is possible to determine the main trends that underlie these studies so as to give a broad overview of the existing literature on populism. To this end, I can draw upon the ideas of the Argentinian political scientist Francisco Panizza who divided approaches to populism into the following three categories:

- 1) Empirical Generalisations
- 2) Historicist Accounts
- 3) Symptomatic Readings (Panizza, 2005:2).

2.3.1. The Empiricist Approach

The “Classical Approach” or the “Empiricist Approach”, as put forward by Panizza,

is the first dominant approach in populism studies. This approach “looks at alleged cases of populism in an attempt to extract a set of positive definitional characteristics that could provide a distinctive group of attributes to characterize the phenomenon” (Panizza, 2005:3). In other words, scholars who adopt the empiricist approach search out the defining characteristics of populism by focusing on cases of populism from around the world. “A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine: Some Elementary Theses on Populism” (1969) by Peter Wiles, a pioneer of the empiricist approach in populism studies, is of great import insofar as the empiricist approach to populism is concerned. Wiles identifies twenty four characteristics of populism in this article, which is still frequently cited in the literature today. He argues that these features can be combined in a variety of ways under different conditions and recognizes that no single case will have all of them. I argue that this approach can be useful in comparative populism studies.

2.3.2. The Historicist Approach

The second approach to populism is characterized by **historicism**, which contextualizes populism within its social, political and economic environment in the course of history. However scholars, who adopt this approach, do not call it a historicist approach as they conduct their analyses in this manner under the influence of Marxism. Scholarly works carried out on Latin American populism suggest that it emerged out of certain economic and social circumstances. Di Tella, for instance, suggests that populism is a function of economic development (Di Tella, 1965), and that populist politics goes hand in hand with import-substitution-industrialisation and a class alliance under a leadership of charismatic leader such as Peron, Vargas or Cardenas. In a similar fashion, Gino Germani (1978) asserts that populism in Latin America is closely related to the process of transition from a rural society to an industrial one. He argues that the social classes that emerged in the process, namely the urban, working and middle classes, managed to create a national politics by means of populism. In his view, this political process is directly associated with the economic development model of ISI (Import Substitution Industrialization) and urbanization, which come into the picture in the same process.

Guillermo O'Donnell is yet another scholar who adopted this kind of an approach in

defining “pueblo” or “people” in his comparative study. He suggests that “the identification as pueblo may inhibit the formation of class identity, serving instead to define its members as subordinate actors in processes whose main protagonists are dominant class fractions struggling among themselves” (O’Donnell, 1988:5). The reemergence of populism, referred to as neopopulism, in Latin America after the 1980s is also explained by many scholars in the context of socioeconomic dynamics.

Scholars who adopted the historicist approach occupied an important place in the populism literature between the 1930s and the 1980s. From the 1980s onwards, however, this approach was subjected to severe criticism for its economic reductionism, as it failed to explain the emergence of populist politics in the case of economic models other than the ISI model of economic development and failed to address questions such as the following: How did populism emerge in China, Russia or the USA? How can one explain the existence of other types of populist movements in countries with different economic models? Is it sufficient to focus just on the economic dimension of populism? What is the extent of the impact of the populist discourse on the emergence of populism? The approach in question faded out slowly as a result of its above-described shortcomings.

According to Panizza, such a reading of populism “restricts the term to the golden era of populist politics spanning from the economic crisis of the 1930s to the demise of the import-substitution-industrialisation (ISI) model of development in the late 1960s (Panizza, 2005:3). Panizza criticizes the historicist approach, roughly speaking, of being reductive. According to Panizza, this approach fails to justify its self-imposed narrow geographical and temporal limits and excludes other cases which emerged earlier or later both in Latin America and other parts of the world (Panizza, 2005).

2.3.3. Symptomatic Reading or the Discourse Approach

As a third and alternative approach, Panizza suggests what he calls as a **symptomatic reading** of populism. According to Panizza, “a symptomatic reading of populism incorporates some of the features that characterize populism according to the empiricist and historicist approaches; but justifies their inclusion in terms of the

concept's analytical core, based on the constitution of people as a political actor (Panizza, 2005:3). Dinçşahin finds this approach quite useful in that "it is possible to study populism free from temporal and spatial boundaries through an analysis of the discourse articulated by populist leaders" (Dinçşahin, 2012:624).

This approach draws mainly on Laclau's works. In his works, Laclau formulates three important theoretical propositions on populism:

(1) to think the specificity of populism requires starting the analysis from units smaller than the group (whether at the political or at the ideological level); (2) populism is an ontological and not an ontic category – ie. its meaning is not to be found in any political or ideological content entering into the description of the practices of any particular group, but in a particular mode of articulation of whatever social, political or ideological contents; (3) articulating form, apart from its contents, produces structuring effects which primarily manifest themselves at the level of the modes of representation (Laclau, 2005(2)).

I will focus on the details of this approach in the next chapter. I will deal with the meaning of the populism, central concepts for populism and the preconditions for the emergence of the populism.

2.4. Some Thoughts on the Characteristic Features of Populism

After a brief review of the definitions of populism and the methodologies used in analyzing it, the common features of populism will be outlined in this part as they are crucial to understanding the phenomenon, even though this dissertation is not based on a framework that depends on these common features.

It is almost a tradition start to rank the common features of populism according to Peter Wiles's article entitled "A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine: Some Elementary Theses on Populism" (1969). In this article, deemed to be a classic in this field and still frequently cited in the literature, Peter Wiles lists twenty four characteristic features of populism. Wiles argues that these elements can be combined in a variety of ways under different conditions and recognizes that no single case will involve all of them. However, this approach can be useful in comparative populism studies and in

understanding the basis of the empiricist approach. So what are the characteristic features of populism according to Wiles? Wiles formulates his premises on populism as follows in the following order (Wiles, 1969:168).

1) “Populism is moralistic rather than programmatic.”²⁰ According to Wiles, insofar as populism is concerned, reason remains in the background.

2) “This means that unusually much is demanded of leaders in respect of their dress manner and way of life.”²¹ Wiles argues that populist leaders choose their clothes, manner and lifestyle according to their target groups. Some of them put on rural or local outfits, like Peru’s populist leader Fernando Belaunde Terry who gathered mass support by wearing Inka clothes, while the clothing of certain leaders, like Gandhi for instance, serves to incarnate the humbleness of the leaders who wear them and the simplicity of their lifestyles.

3) “Populism tends to throw up great leaders in mystical contact with the masses”.²² This statement gives the impression that a populist movement is likely to dissolve in the absence of its leader.

4) “Populism is in each case loosely organized and ill disciplined: a movement rather than a party.”²³ This feature gives populism a flexibility. Populism can easily merge with other ideologies such as nationalism, socialism and conservatism.

5) “Its ideology is loose, and attempts to define it exactly arouse derision and hostility.”²⁴ The absence of a clear-cut populist ideology can cause people to overlook populist movements.

²⁰Wiles, P. (1969).A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine.In G. Ionescu & E. Gellner (Eds.), Populism-Its Meaning and National Characteristics. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 166-179.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid

6) “Populism is anti-intellectual.”²⁵ According to Wiles, populist intellectuals pretend to be anti-intellectuals in order to get through to the people. At times, leaders with bourgeois backgrounds claim to be commoners, as is commonly the case with communist leaders.

7) “Populism is strongly opposed to the establishment and to any counter-elite as well.”²⁶ Populism generally emerges in contexts where people awaken to the fact that they feel excluded and alienated from the system on a regional, racial or social basis. Such an awakening brings along conspiracies which may activate their violence producing potential.

8) “But this violence is inefficient and short-winded.”²⁷ According to Wiles, the tendency for violence disappears immediately once some of the basic expectations of the people in question are satisfied.

9) “In particular populism avoids class war in the Marxist sense.”²⁸ The people generally have a class consciousness but display conciliatory behaviors. It follows that populism is not a revolutionary notion. Populist movements generally emerge under post-revolutionary circumstances.

10) “Populism, like all other movements, is corrupted and bourgeoisified by success. Not only power, also responsibility corrupts. Movement is easier than government.”²⁹ Because populism is by definition simple and unsophisticated and because it is frail as an ideology, it begins to disintegrate quickly once it seizes power. According to Wiles, Balkan populism in the pre-war era, as well as Canadian and Peruvian populist movements well exemplify this situation.

11) “Economically, the idealtypus is a small co-operative”³⁰. Economy-wise, populism relies on small craftsmen as a class. This accounts for the fact that

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

corporatist economies are observed in countries where populism prevails. Wiles argues that corporations are social forms that consist of economic units ranging from small family businesses to large enterprises which are neither capitalist nor socialist. It should be noted that Wiles's arguments are valid for the period between the 1930s and 1970s and fail to explain the existence of populist movements in the neoliberal era and in today's Europe.

12) According to Wiles, in cases of such a social and economic form of populism, the latter is accompanied by parallel economic policies. The economic actors of the model based on cooperation, i.e. peasant and craftsmen are need to be indebted all the time This can be achieved through monetary policy.

13) "Financiers, then especially foreign financiers, invariably figure in the populist demonology. Not only are they rich, members of the Establishment and somewhat aristocratic of manner; they stand for deflation. Their reasoning is drawn from a world completely foreign to the populist mental make-up; it seems like so much mumbo-jumbo."³¹

14) Wiles admits that big capitalists are more efficient in economics. However, the creation of a large capitalist class brings along the creation of the proletariat as well, the latter being a drawback to populism. Hence, small capitalists are preferred by politicians for the sake of populism.

15) At first glance, populism does not seem to go together with urbanization because, as an ideology that appeals mainly to small craftsmen and peasants, "urbanization" has the potential to undermine populism. However, populism can actually benefit from urbanization thanks to the migrant masses It should be noted that urban populism is linked particularly with English Populism.

16) According to Wiles, populist governments prefer endorsing agriculture to being purely strong governments. These governments do not hesitate to allocate state resources to agricultural initiatives.

³¹ Ibid

17) “Populism opposes social and economic inequality produced by the institutions it does not like. But it accepts the traditional inequalities due to the way of life of its own constituency.”³² This means that populists generally try to look sympathetic to the poor, and yet do not promote equality among the people.

18) Populism does not oppose only the establishment or the tax system imposed by the government. It stands against the military particularly when it is adopted as a discourse by opposition parties. Also, populists generally adopt an isolationist foreign policy, which can turn into chauvinism from time to time. Yet, their strategies and foreign policy are too often short-sighted.

19) “Being traditional, populism is religious, but it opposes the religious Establishment.”³³ Wiles argues that populism is inclined towards sectarianism, but also that many populist intellectuals are atheists. It should be emphasized that Wiles’s such observations are valid only for limited cases. Religious populism is very common in today’s world (eg. Islamic Populism, Christian populism, Jewish populism). Arguing that such movements are against establishing religious orders would be a faulty generalization. Likewise, Wiles’s argument that almost all populist intellectuals are atheists can be falsified without difficulty.

20) “Populism abhors science and technocracy.”³⁴ This argument by Wiles is yet another over generalization that is far from explaining populist movements. It is hard to argue that all populist movements are against science and technocracy.

21) For Wiles, populism is nostalgic: “Disliking the present and immediate future, it seeks to mould the further future in accordance with its vision of the past”³⁵

22) “Populism shows a strong tendency to mild racialism: the good common people are of different ancestry from the bad establishment. Sometimes this belief is mythical or nearly so.”³⁶

³² Ibid

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Ibid

Populism is usually accompanied by nationalism and racism, in cases where populism is in opposition, populists usually claim that power is concentrated in the hands a power elite, who are related to each other in one way or the other.

23) Wiles acknowledges the presence of various types of populism such as pre/post-industry, peasant, countrymen and craftsmen populism.

24) Wiles also suggests that populism is not that bad of a phenomenon as it appears to be.

It is obvious that Wiles's list displays the characteristics of a classic approach, in that it involves similar generalizations. Wiley leaps to conclusions on populism based on the characteristics of the societies that he focuses on, while populist movements in other parts of the world may have different characteristics than those listed in Wiles's work. So Wiles's efforts do not go beyond drawing a subjective and superficial picture of populism, which is why, despite his valuable conclusions, his works also received considerable criticism for remaining insufficient to thoroughly explain the phenomenon of populism, which I believe requires the use of economic and discourse analysis. However, one can grasp the progress in populism studies by having a look at these premises.

In pursuit of the classical examination of populism made by Wiles, Margaret Canovan penned a comprehensive study on populism, in which she formulated the common features of the societies where populism prevails. Some of her observations on populism are as follows:

- “1. The socialism which emerges in backward peasant countries facing the problems of modernization.
2. Basically the ideology of small rural people threatened by encroaching industrial and financial capital.
3. Basically a rural movement seeking to realize traditional values in a changing society.
4. The belief that the majority opinion of the people is checked by an elitist minority.
5. Any creed or movement based on the following major premise: virtue resides in the simple people, who are the overwhelming majority and in their collective traditions.
6. Populism proclaims that the will of the people as such is supreme over every other standard.

7. A political movement which enjoys the support of the mass of the urban working class and / or peasantry but which does not result from the autonomous organizational power of either of these two sectors.” (Canovan, 1981:4)

As seen in the above-quoted passages, Canovan formulates some of the basic features of populism based on the social conditions in which populism emerges. She suggests that populism appeals mainly to small rural people and is in opposition the elites, meaning that populism is a movement that positions the people, who are in the majority, against an elite minority. According to Canovan, populism, which she believes is a mass movement, glorifies the opinion of the simple people and puts the will of the people before any other power (Canovan, 1981).

Margaret Canovan’s observations are particularly valid for post-war Europe. The impact of problems faced by backward peasants in their encounter with modernity and social and economic hardships inevitably made populism emerge. Looking from today’s perspective, what type of a framework can be used in order to evaluate the populism that emerged in the process of the dissolution of the bipolar world from 1990s onwards? Although Canovan is acknowledged to have accomplished the most comprehensive and integrated work on populism, her approach still requires the reader to ask further significant questions such as the question above.

Albertazzi and Mac Donnell are other thinkers who wrote on populism, drawing attention to points similar to those underscored by Margaret Canovan. According to Albertazzi and Mc Donnell, the populist approach assumes that the people are one and are inherently good, that the people are sovereign, that the people’s culture and way of life are a paramount value and that the leader and his party’s movement are one with the people (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008). Many other thinkers underline similar points, however Taggart points to the huge gap in Canovan’s study, asserting that, although it is an important contribution to the field, it got stuck in European politics. He thus formulates six alternative characteristics of populism to the end of making them universally valid. Taggart also considers populism in relation to democratic systems, which will be examined in detail in the following part of this study. What are these six characteristics which Taggart believed to be more valid than those formulated by Canovan?

According to Taggart, “populism is hostile to representative politics” (Taggart, 2003:6). Secondly, “populists tend to identify themselves with a heartland which represents an idealized conception of the community they serve. It is from this territory of the imagination, that populists construct the ‘people’ as the object of their politics” (Taggart, 2003:6). Thirdly, populism is lack of core values in Taggart’s view (Taggart, 2003:7). Fourthly, he suggests that populism appears as a reaction to a sense of extreme crisis (Taggart, 2003:7). Fifthly, he raises concern over the self-limiting quality of populism. According to Taggart “it becomes very difficult to sustain populist movements in the long-term, because these new forms of politics are often difficult to develop over a long period of time” (Taggart, 2003:8). Lastly, Taggart underlines that “populists tend to be highly chameleonic” (Taggart, 2003:8), meaning that populism is actually contextually-contingent. As is seen in the above-quoted statements, Taggart makes alternative generalizations with regard to populism so as to treat it as a universal phenomenon. However, at the end of his analysis, I come across empirical generalizations once again. It is in this very context that Laclau tries to develop an alternative approach to populism. He criticizes the arguments of both Wiles and Canovan and suggests that “in all the texts considered so far, what is specific about populism- its defining dimension has been systematically avoided. We should start asking ourselves whether the reason for this systemacity does not perhaps lie in some unformulated political prejudices guiding the mind of political analyst” (Laclau,2005(1):18).

“If populism is described merely in terms of ‘vagueness’, ‘imprecision’, ‘intellectual poverty’, and as a ‘purely transient as a phenomenon’, ‘manipulative in its procedures’ and so on, there is no way of determining its differentia specifica in positive terms. The whole exercise seems to aim, on the contrary, at separating what is rational and conceptually apprehensible in political action from its dichotomic opposite: populism conceived as irrational and undefinable. Once this strategic intellectual decision has been taken, it is only natural that the question ‘what is populism?’ should be replaced by a different one: to what social and ideological reality does populism apply?” (Laclau, 2005:17).

As Laclau indicates, in today’s understanding, drawing common characteristics out of existing populist movements and trying to explain the phenomenon of populism is accepted to be a deficient approach. In many contemporary works, Wiles’s approach is deemed to be a classic and outdated approach and yet acknowledged for its realist

observations on populism. Neither can Margaret Canovan's unprecedented contribution to the literature of populism be ignored. Such classifications as Wiles's and Canovan's can still make significant contributions to future comparative studies on populism. However, it should be kept in mind that this classic literature fails to treat populism as a universal and thus multi-faceted, complex phenomenon. So, I have to go beyond the above-described classic approach to populism and explore the phenomenon by taking its many dimensions into account.

2.5. Historical Accounts of Populism

Carrying out a meaningful study on the history of populism is at least as hard as explaining the concept of populism because populism, which appeared in the middle of the 19th century, had quite different characteristics in the various geographies where it was experienced. For example, the Russian Narodnik movement, one of the earliest populist movements, which was led by a group of towners or bourgeoisie intellectuals to raise the awareness of the public, spread from provinces to villages, while what gave birth to American populism was the transference of demands arising from the hardships of rural life to political mechanisms in provinces. American populism had neither a distinguished leader nor an ideologist, it was a mass movement based entirely on agricultural workers. On the other hand, Russian populism, which emerged under the influence of specific ideologists, was embraced firstly by intellectuals with leadership characteristics, and spread later to rural areas.

Latin American Populism, which emerged again in the 1930s due to the Great Depression, was the product of entirely different historical conditions. Born in tandem with the "import substitution development model", which emerged as a hope in Latin America following the Great Depression, Latin American populism brought a new breath of fresh air to populism studies, turning even the methodology used in these studies upside down.

Populism in China, on the other hand, was based on a local philosophy that had its roots in an ancient Confucian tradition. However it exploded suddenly at the beginning of the 20th century. This explosion was so great that the populist mentality that it gave rise to became the principal purpose of the foundation of the "People's"

Republic of China which was transmitted from Sun Yat-sen to Mao Zedong.

Populism, which has a history of almost 150 years, became a phenomenon at a much later period in Europe. Populism gained currency in Europe in the 1970s, but became full-blown some twenty years later, in the 1990s. In Europe, the tension between populism and democracy was at its peak. Eastern European countries witnessed populist movements along with the aftermath of communism as ex-Eastern Bloc countries, because in this region, populist policies were adopted for a smooth transition from communism to capitalism and neoliberalism.

In short, throughout its history, populism was accommodated by different political climates, adapting itself at times to left-wing politics, and at times to left-wing or Marxist movements, and displayed different characteristics in different regions. Zafer Toprak expounded on the dynamic, multifaceted, and therefore elusive nature of populism as follows; Populism was not an ideology perfect in every aspect and it was not formulated by thinkers like Marx and Engels. It was therefore much more ambiguous and loose than its counterparts. There were certain types of populism that leant toward the right and those that were inclined to the left. When it came to populism, choices were almost limitless. What made populism an ideology was that it is the product of common objective problems and affinities and the result of experiences that seemed independent of and irrelevant to each other, and also that its variations had a common content, in spite of the different historical and geographical contexts in which they emerged. So there could exist as many populisms as the number of region names that could be placed before the word “populism”, such as American populism, Russian populism, Latin American populism, African populism, Chinese populism and Turkish populism (Toprak, 2013:29). Thus, it is quite impossible to give a brief summary of the long and complex history of populism. Nevertheless, in order to place this study in a historical context, I will at least have to scrutinize the principle characteristics of certain examples that constitute milestones of the history of populism.

So in this part, I will at first take a look at American and Russian populisms in order to understand the emergence of the phenomenon for the first time in history, and then at the birth of populism in China to see its manifestations in the East. The next step

will be to examine the birth and the sources of Latin American populism as a special example that gave rise to the historicist approach to populism, and finally the emergence of European populism and the conflict between populism and democracy as experienced in Europe, which is on the front burner insofar as the international literature on populism is concerned.

2.5.1 The Birth of Populism: Russian and American Experiences

Populism emerged and came to the fore in the second half of the 19th century, when the world was witnessing a series of dramatic social, economic and political transformations that were triggered both by the Industrial revolution and the French and American revolutions.

Tsarist Russia was the first place where populist movement gained ground while the entire world was under the influence of the above-mentioned massive transformation. A people's movement, which developed autonomously in the provinces of Russia in 1874, had an impact firstly on university students and then on peasants. The motto of this movement was to "go to the people" in the words of Alexander Herzen, who was one of the leaders of the Russian Populist movement. According to Herzen, the failures of the bourgeois revolution in Europe (1848-49) lead Russia to search for revolution in the "undestroyed, natural socialism of the peasant mir" (Berlin, 1960: xviii).

Russian populism is neither the name of single political party, nor a coherent body of doctrine, but a radical movement witnessed in Russia in the middle of nineteenth century. It emerged during the great social and intellectual ferment that followed the death of Tsar Nicholas I and the defeat and humiliation of Russia in the Crimean War, grew in popularity and influence during the sixties and seventies (1860-1870), and reached its culmination with the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, after which it swiftly declined (Berlin, 1960: vii).

2.5.1.1. Contributions of Intellectuals to Populism in Russia: Populism from Cities to Rural Areas

Russian Populism originated mainly as a stream of thought shaped by literate and intellectual figures such as Alexander Herzen, Nikolay Chernyshevsky and Peter Lavrov. Then, it took the form of a political movement by extending to and mobilizing the masses, owing to Marxist revolutionaries like Mikhail Bakunin, Vladimir Lenin, and Nikolai Mikhailovski.

While writing about the intellectuals and leaders who caused Russian populism to gain prominence, Isaiah Berlin states that these figures were men of dissimilar origins, outlooks and capacities. According to him, in the course of the rise of populism, small independent groups of conspirators or their sympathizers were formed, these groups being sometimes united for common action, and at other times operating in isolation (Berlin, 1960:8).

How did the populist movement originate in Russia? It can be traced back to Alexander Herzen's call to "go to the people", which constitutes the first of the many such calls around the world. According to Venturi, the writer of the famous book entitled *Russian Populism*, the founder of populism, thus, was Herzen. Herzen was an intellectual who committed himself to the idea of sacrificing oneself for the people. In Herzen's opinion, "The wish to establish a bridge between the enlightened elite and the peasantry by means of sacrifice was to prove full of promise for the future. This connection was designed to take place outside the authority of the absolutist state, and, indeed, was aimed against it" (Venturi, 1960:4).

But the movement was not based only on the ideas of Herzen. Russian populism drew upon the ideas of many different thinkers, and drew the attention of various social groups simultaneously. Even though the founder of the movement was Herzen, who stepped forward with his romantic ideas, the movement fed also off the revolutionist ideas of thinkers like Mikhail Bakunin, Mikhailovski and Peter Lavrov.

"It was deeply influenced by Bakunin's violent diatribes, against all forms of authority, and in particular to state, and by his vision of men as being by nature

peaceful and productive and rendered violent when they are perverted from their proper ends, forced to be either gaolers and or convicts” (Berlin, 1960:xviii).

But it was actually the individualism and rationalism of Lavrov and Mikhailovsky that lied at the core of the populist thought. Like Herzen, the former believed that history followed no predetermined pattern, that it possessed “no libretto”, and that neither violent conflicts between cultures, nations, and classes (which for Hegelians constituted the essence of human progress) nor class struggles (claimed by Marxists to be the motive force of history) were inevitable (Berlin, 1960: xix). Hence, Russian populism was by definition in conflict with class struggle, which is one of the basic principles of Marxism.

In other respects, Chernyshevski made a significant contribution to the ripening of this idea. “Like all populists, Chernyshevski believed in the need to preserve the peasant commune and to spread its principles to industrial production. He believed that Russia could profit directly by learning from the scientific advances of the West, without going through the agonies of Industrial revolution” (Berlin, 1960 xx).

This idea promoted the establishment of a new economic system by benefiting from the technical superiority of the West without spoiling the social structure of the country.

All of the aforementioned Russian intellectuals led to the rise of a populist understanding particularly among people of rural origin and those who advocated the peasantist cause movements called “Zemlya Volya (Land& Freedom)” and “Narodnaya Volya (People’s Will)”, which emerged in this context, can be considered a reaction “to the problems of romantic socialism and the rise and inner conflicts of the First International” (Venturi, 1960: xxxiii). This movement, which advocated that Russian peasants rule themselves and own lands collectively on the basis of equality, led to the birth of an ideology called “narodnichestvo”, whose followers were called ‘narodniki’.

The words “populism” and “populist” came to be used around the world following the emergence of narodnichestvo in Russia as “Populism is the translation of the

Russian word narodnichestvo. This is derived from narod (people) and was first used around 1870. At about the same time the word narodnik (populist) first came into being” (Venturi, 1960:xxxiii).

“Populism often raises the theme of the simple people being corrupted by the outside and sinister forces. The Russian peasantry and the romanticization of their values by the narodniki were therefore easily viewed in this way.” (Taggart 2000:50). Having been affected by this idea, intellectuals, university students in particular, went to peasants to the end of raising their awareness and persuading them. Populists believed that “it was possible to improve life by scientific techniques without necessarily destroying the natural life of the peasant village, or creating a vast, pauperized, faceless city proletariat” (Berlin, 1960:ix).

Insofar as the social status of peasants in Russia in this period is concerned, Tsar Alexander II had abolished serfdom and emancipated peasants. However, the “Redemption Payment”, which was invented as the transfer of lands to peasants, put the latter in an awkward position in economic terms. Narodniks thus believed that a new governance paradigm was imperative and proposed shifting to a type of communal village life called “obshchina,” i.e. “an idealized egalitarian peasant community” (Taggart, 2000:47). Such communities would organize under a more collective structure called “mir”.³⁷

However, there occurred certain problems that disappointed the advocates of populism. Despite being idealized by narodniks as the oppressed and considered to be ready for revolution, peasants were conservatives rather than idealists, and the former, who tried to reach out to them, were met with suspicion, resentment and resistance.

The movement as such did not last long due to these reasons and evolved into a terrorist organization after some time. “The populists moved their attention away

³⁷The (mir) was a free association of peasants which periodically redistributed the agricultural land to be tilled; its decisions bound all its members, and constituted the corner stone on which, so populists maintained a federation of socialized, self-governing units conceived along lines popularized by the French socialist Proudhon, could be erected” (Berlin, 1960:ix). Russian populism created some unique concepts such as the above-mentioned ones, which came to constitute the basic concepts of populist movements throughout the world.

from the peasantry and turned violently towards the state” (Taggart, 2000: 52), which brought the movement to an end. This movement did not grow strong enough to overthrow the Tsarist regime, but paved the way for and inspired the Russian revolution which would take place in 1917.

2.5.1.2. North America: Grassroot Populist Movement

Although populism was originated by Russian intellectuals, it was another movement that would shape modern populism, a movement that formed in North America during the very same years. In contrast to Russian populism, American populism emerged from among the people, especially among those working in the agricultural sector. In this respect, it is often referred also as “agrarian radicalism” and is assessed within a separate category. During the formation process of this movement, the concept of "people" moved gradually to the center of American politics, owing especially to the foundation of the People’s Party.

This party claimed that it was defending the people both against the democrats and the republicans, who constitute the traditional poles of American politics. It began to receive a lot of attention once it was founded. The foundation of this party, which formed the base of the populist idea in the USA, was the product of a series of social transformations that took place in the second half of the 19th century in the USA. So what were the social dynamics that gave rise to this movement and its party?

Following 1865, the industrial revolution and the material wealth that it created led to a marked disparity in wealth between the Northern and Southern states, as the former became industrialized, while the economy of Southern states remained largely dependent on cotton agriculture and the workforce of slaves. Accordingly, the Northern states became increasingly modernized and urbanized, whereas the Southern states remained the symbol of rurality.

According to Paul Taggart, the American party system contributed also to the division between the North and the South in this period. While Republicans represented the North and development, Democrats dealt with issues such as human rights and slavery in the South (Taggart, 2000:30). However, the situation took a

different tack after a while: “By the 1890s, on a key issue of politics, the division was not between the Democrats and Republicans but between these parties and populist sentiment, the movement and even anti-monopolist factions within the Democratic Party” (Taggart, 2000:31). This paved the way for the foundation of a new populist party, as there emerged new social and political phenomena which did not fit into the classic American Two-Party System. Called "agrarian response" by Norman Pollack (Pollack, 1967), the response to this new situation evolved gradually into a populist movement.

First, The Farmers’s Alliance, founded in Lampasas, Texas in 1876, gained a lot of popularity among farmers. It defended that economic measures in favor of farmers be taken. In the 1880’s this alliance started voicing political demands as well, and it was during this period that its fame spread to states such as Dakota, Minnesota and Kansas.

In 1890s, the support for the alliance was strong enough to challenge both major parties. So its supporters, who gathered in Omaha, Nebraska, founded the Omaha platform in 1892. James B. Weaver, the candidate supported by the platform, ran for president of the USA in 1892 and won over 1 million votes (the then total population of the USA was around 63 million). Even though he could not win the presidency, the movement was represented by seats gained in the senate.

The People’s Party (also known as the **Populist Party**) or was an agrarian-populistpolitical partyin the US was of great import for Northern American populism in that it made the basic populist themes part of the policy making process, bridging the gap between the demands of ordinary American peasants and politics. For a few years, 1892–96, it played an important role in American politics as being the representation of populist movement.

The North American populist movement was a mass movement par excellence. There was never a prominent charismatic leader in this movement, which makes it significantly different than many of its counterparts around the world. It was economic crises and the demands of American agricultural workers, who were affected by the crisis, and not those intellectual or political figures, that led to the birth and growth of the movement. (Taggart, 2000:37). Thus, like many other

populist movements, American populism featured anti-elitist themes.

According to Taggart, this party has left two important legacies to today's politics. Firstly, as a challenge against the classic two-party American system, it altered the agenda of the American politics significantly, forcing both major parties to include the demands of this populist movement in their agendas. Secondly, populists shaped the basic elements of America's political culture, which is defined today as Americanism. Populism remains a vital constituent of Americanism, and plays a major role in election campaigns. (Taggart, 2000)

The journey of populism in the USA shows how a grassroots populist movement made it to the center of politics in time in the absence of a leader cult. Margaret Canovan interpreted this phenomenon as follows:

“The special features of the American society that Tocqueville later called democracy (Tocqueville, 1862) –the absence of an aristocracy and the extraordinary mobility of the social and economic structure (Boorstin 1988)- made for a conflation of sovereign people and (male white) common people that emerged in the 1830's in the form of Jacksonian ‘democracy’” (Canovan, 2005:29).

2.5.2 An Example from the East of the World: Birth of Populism in China

While the realm of politics in Russia and America underwent a major transformation triggered by populism, a people's movement was born in China under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen³⁸, who called particularly the Chinese youth to “create the values of the people” against the “elitist values of Confucianism”. This call by Sun Yat-sen served as a departure point for both Chinese nationalism and the Chinese populist movement.

Scholars studying Chinese populism usually trace the roots of the populist, i.e. nationalistic idea to ancient times. The roots of the fight for equality among the

³⁸**Sun Yat-Sen**, mastermind of the Chinese populist revolution, had in fact received medical training. He went to Japan, America and London after he fled the country. Based on the observations that he made during this period, he concluded that bourgeois revolutions could not reach the people, who, hence, were not any more content after revolutions, and started to defend that the humanist aspect of socialism coincided completely with the ideas of Confucius and Mencius who laid the foundations for the Chinese nation's way of thinking

people, which gave birth to populism in China, has thus been traced back to the ideas of Me-Ti and Lao Tse (Yat-Sen (haz.Usta): 2011).

2.5.2.1. The People's Response to Confucianism

The foundations of Confucianism, which has not ceased to influence Eastern Asia from its emergence till today, were laid in the 4th century A.C. Confucianism is, in a nutshell, a system of thought that prioritizes personal and administrative morals, emphasizing the need to teach to the people ethical values such as justice and sincerity, and traditional values like commitment to the family and deep respect to family elders and ancestors.³⁹

Even though it created dissatisfaction in China, Confucian elitism was to continue its existence until a very late period, i.e. until the narodnik movement, witnessed in Tsarist Russia in particular, triggered the transformation of the political thought in China. At the very beginning of the 20th century, Sun Yat-sen, who was deeply influenced by the populist movement in Russia, and came to the conclusion that peasantism could be adapted well into China, where a major social transformation was taking place.

In China, the trend towards populism soon went beyond being a philosophical trend, and was extended to the realm of politics through the uprisings of Chinese peasants, who had been fighting with dynasties since the 3rd century.

Sun Yat-Sen described his dream of the ideal society in China as follows, referring to the “Datong community where class conflict has ended by including unity and harmony” He argued that populist revolutionism had to take place to avoid the

³⁹**Confucianism**, which started out as a system of thought that appealed to the elite and the common people alike, began in time to be adopted mainly by the upper classes. Advocating the then elitist values such as being virtuous and educated, Confucianist thinking influenced the governing class the most, as it represented mainly their values. Especially during the reign of the Tang Dynasty (A.C. 601-907), Confucianism became the absolute governing doctrine in China. Confucianism, which took a new form due mainly to Taoist and Buddhist influence, turned into a semi-religion in this period. Confucianism, notably the Confucianist governing doctrine of China had a great bearing on countries like Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, which are close to China.

unhappiness created by the bourgeois revolution in Europe

“Now is the day of democracy. If socialism happens one day, everyone will be granted the right to education and the elderly will be taken good care of. Everyone will have a job that best matches their will and talent, and the Republic of China will transform into a socialist state. People won’t care about classes in a socialist state, because there will be no classes. Thus the great unity, that is to say Datong, will be realized” (Yat-Sen, (Haz: Usta) 2011:22).

However, the social infrastructure of China was behind the political developments that occurred in the period when Sun Yat-Sen defended these ideas. Therefore, the awareness of the public had to be raised and the principles of revolution had to be spread among the public. Since the majority of the people lived in villages, populism in China started to verge on villagism.

The main pillars of Sun Yat Sen’s populist project were “the three principles of the people”, which will be dealt with in the following section.

2.5.2.2. The Three Principles of the People:

The main characteristics of the Chinese populism were closely related to the three principles determined by Sun Yat-sen, i.e. "Nationalism", "Republicanism" (or Democracy), and "Populist Life Style".

Should I take a closer look at these principles, Sun Yat-sen’s nationalism was anti-imperialist in character, in that it rejected the hegemony of the West in China. Sun Yat-sen’s aim was to build a Chinese nation who felt itself as a whole. When it comes to Republicanism (or Democracy), "popular sovereignty", "parties and parliamentary system", and "the right to elect and be elected" were its the key elements according to Sun Yat-sen.

In Sun Yat-sen’s view, populist life style or “Minshengzhuyi” as it is called in Chinese, on the other hand, was the most important of the three principles of the people. It is hence possible to trace the birth of Populism in China by focusing solely on this principle. Although the concept is translated into western languages as

"populist life style", "socialism" or "protection of public prosperity", its most correct translation into English is "populist life style".

The above-summarized Three Principles of the People became the official program of the Communist Party of China, in accordance with Sun Yat-sen's claim that Revolutionist Struggle could only be achieved with the support of the masses. (Yat-Sen, 2011:11)

Thus populism became one of the founding principles of the People's Republic of China. It became a leading force in the establishment of a new politic system in China based on the democratic sovereignty of the people instead of a dynasty.

2.5.3 Latin American Populism

Latin American Populism occupies a special place in the populist literature. It wouldn't be wrong to claim that more than half of the studies carried out on populism in the world today are on populism as experienced in Latin American countries. The historicist approach to populism, for instance, was developed to explain Latin American populism (Panizza, 2005). So it is crucial to look at the historical journey of Latin American populism.

Latin America met first wave of populism after the 1929 economic crisis. The region, which faced a major economic crisis, tended towards an inward oriented industrialization strategy in order to cope with this crisis. For that reason, the most important claim of Latin American populists was that import substitution industrialization and populism were bound to go hand in hand.⁴⁰

Therefore, studies on the Latin American populism were written mainly from an economic perspective. The Import Substitution Industrialization model is an industrialization strategy adopted as a rule by under-developed countries. It is meant to lead to the production of imported commodities within the country, and thus to protect the national or domestic market, which requires a special nationalist and protective mentality. Economic structures have always influenced social structures

⁴⁰ For a comprehensive discussion, see also Dornbusch R& Edwards S.(1991) *The Macroeconomics of Populism in Latin America*, Chicago:Chicago University Press

and have even served as guides in the creation of social structures. In the example of Latin America, populist policies were utilized for the adoption of the above-described new economic mentality.

After the 1930's, a populist wave swept Latin American countries, which in the process began to adopt the import substitution industrialization model following the impact of the Great Depression of 1929 in particular. However, insofar as Latin America is concerned, populism cannot be limited to this certain period.

Along with the Import Substitution Industrialization model, another characteristic of Latin American Populism is leader populism, to the extent that Latin American countries serve as a laboratory for the examination of populist leadership⁴¹ (Taggart, 2000). While we do not face such phenomena -except in the case of ideologists- insofar as American and Russian populisms are concerned, the names of a great many Latin American populist leaders easily come to mind. And due to the ambiguous nature of the populist mentality, both leftist leaders and neoliberal and rightist leaders in Latin America have used populism in their discourse.

Carlos De La Torre argues that besides the 1930s and 1940s classical Latin American populism also today Latin America is affected by neo-populism of the 1990s (De La Torre, 2013). Populist politics was put into the service of adopting neoliberal politics after the 1990's, and the neoliberal populist wave, which has been sweeping Latin America ever since, is also likely to be explained by scholars using the tools of economic analysis.

Kurt Weyland is one of the leading researchers describing Latin American populism as neopopulism. Weyland addresses the new wave of populism starting in the 1990s in Latin America with historicist approach. However, he proposes a political definition for populism in this context⁴². On the contrary, Roberts argues that the

⁴¹ For a discussion of the Latin American Populism in the framework of Populist Leadership see Taggart, Paul(2000) "The Populist Politics of Leadership in Latin America" in Populism, Open University Press

⁴² To extend this discussion see also Weyland, Kurt.(1996) Neopopulism and Neoliberalism in Latin America: Unexpected affinities" Studies in Comparative International Development, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 3-31

neoliberal economic wave provides a radical change to Latin American populism⁴³ (Roberts, 1995).

The origin of this new populist wave goes long way back to 1980s. However Panizza and Miorelli state that this democratic wave beginning in the 1980s has not ensured the establishment of democratic systems in Latin America yet. Therefore, populism has been an integral part of Latin American populism. They states that there are two reasons behind this fact.

Institutional fragility of the democratic order, evident in the weakness of the rule of law, the politicized nature of the state the lack of political accountability, and the discrediting of parliaments, political parties and and other representative institutions. The second reason is historically high level of socioeconomic exclusion, aggravated by free market reforms of the 1990s (Panizza and Miorelli, 2009:42).

Today rightist movements in Latin America intertwined with populism as well as leftists ones⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵. Democratic and human rights advocacy movements have the populist references as well as radical ones. Panizza and Miorelli argue that the debates on populism and democracy are intensely on the agenda in Latin America today.

Therefore, today, the discourse approach has also become gradually prominent in populism studies in Latin America. Populism is also likely to maintain its place in the agenda for a long time in Latin America⁴⁶.

2.5.4 Populism in Europe: Conflict between Democracy and Populism

Even though populism emerged at a later period in Europe than in Russia and the

⁴³ For a study which analyses this transformation see also Roberts, Kenneth (1995) “Neoliberalism and the Transformation of Populism in Latin America: The Peruvian Case” World Politics ol. 48, no. 1, pp. 82-116.

⁴⁴ Juan Domingo Peron in Argentina, Fernando Collor in Brazil, Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, and Aprismo in Peru have become the center of populist movements, which are remembered by the names of their leaders. These movements have common aspects as well as unique ones.

⁴⁵ To expand this dicussion on modern populism in Latin America see also Roniger, Luis (2013) “Modern Populism in Latin America”, in Ben Vinson, ed. Oxford Bibliographies Online. New York: Oxford University Press,

⁴⁶For a comprehensive and actual analysis for t e Future of Latin American Populism see also Arnson&De La Torre”, (2013) The Meaning and Future of Latin American Populism” in Latin American Populism in the Twenty First Century, John Hopkins University Press.

USA, the former is a laboratory, where populist movements and experiences emerging in consolidated democracies can be duly observed. So, as is stated by Margaret Canovan, European democracies lie at the heart of debates on populism and democracy as there has always been an ongoing tension between the populist tradition and liberal constitutionalism in European democracies (Canovan, 2002:25).

As Europe is not a single entity, but consists of many different countries with different kinds of political experiences, it is highly difficult to analyze Europe as a whole in terms of populism. Therefore, the populism prevailing in Western European countries, which as a rule have consolidated democracies, and that of Eastern European countries, which proclaimed their independence after 1990's, are addressed separately in populism studies. Because Western European countries are usually regarded as the cradle of democracy, the emergence of populism in those democratic systems are considered a pathology, whereas populist movements emerging in Eastern Europe are regarded as a natural byproduct of the process of transition to democracy.

In the early 20th century, the influence of the bourgeois revolutions were felt strongly in European democracies, but peasantist or an agrarian populist movements did not transform into political movements as they did in Russia or in the USA. At the beginning of the century, and especially during the interwar period, populist movements that emerged under the influence of economic crises turned into fascist movements, which reinforced the already-existing belief that populism in Europe was pathological by nature. At the beginning, populism went almost hand in hand with nationalism in Europe. But although Nazism in Germany and the Mussolini regime in Italy bore certain characteristics of populism when they first emerged, they soon became radicalized and turned into fascism. Taggart states that Germany is thus quite sensitive about radical right wing populist movements, which makes it rather difficult for populism to reemerge in this country. However the same doesn't hold true for Italy where a strong populist movement emerged, even though this country had an experience similar to that of Germany. In Europe, populism, which was observed primarily in radical right wing movements, has started to be incorporated into popular leftist movements in countries like Greece (with Syriza) and Spain (with Podemos) after the 2000's.

Now we should look new populism in Europe. Hans George Betz states that when compared to other political experiences in the world, Western Europe is seen to have had political stability since World War II. This political stability has brought about both economic and social stability in Western European countries where liberal democracy is functioning in all institutions. The continual expansion of the welfare state in the region has moderated both right-wing and left-wing extremisms and prevented radical movements. (Betz, 1993:413). However, this stability did not last very long, and in the 1960's Europe faced political turmoil once again, which gave rise to new political movements.

Although these new political movements initially strengthened the left-wing movement, in time, they caused significant changes in the structure of political parties in Western Europe and contributed to the emergence of new radical right-wing populist parties (Betz, 1993:413). These movements, which surfaced in the 1960's, matured gradually and reached their peak in the 1990's. For example, the Poujadism movement, which formed in France in the 1950's around the populist leader Pierre Poujade, constitutes the ideological basis of the National Front party of France whose first leader was Le Pen. Roger Eatwell, Rovira Kaltwasser and Cas Mudde state that populism has been on rise in Europe since the 1990's, especially insofar as the radical right-wing is concerned (Eatwell, 2002 and Mudde, 2012, Kaltwasser, 2012).

Paul Taggart calls this phenomenon "new populism", in order to distinguish this new form of populism, which emerged particularly in Western European democracies, from the former populisms. New populism emerged as a criticism against the bureaucratized welfare state, which then turned into a political demand. According to Taggart, new populist movements are characterized by their critical discourse against Europe's institutional structure, bureaucracy, and mixed economic structure (Taggart, 2000:75).

In the new populist discourse, we generally come across familiar themes such as "the need for a change of politics" and "moving away from the cozy and corrupt consensus of the major parties". Placing themselves ideologically outside the center of the existing party system, new populists lay stress on their high opinion of the

common sense of the common people and see themselves as having a special connection to the positive aspects of the way politics was previously constituted (Taggart, 2000:75).

Hans George Betz thinks similar to Taggart; “Radical right-wing populist parties are radical in their rejection of the established sociocultural and sociopolitical system and their advocacy of individual achievement, a free marketplace, and a drastic reduction of the role of the state. They are right-wing in their rejection of individual and social equality, in their opposition to the social integration of marginalized groups, and in their appeal to xenophobia, if not overt racism. They are populist in their instrumentalization of sentiments of anxiety and disenchantment and their appeal to the common man and his allegedly superior common sense” (Betz, 1993:413).

As is stated by Taggart, the new populist movements that emerge in the different countries of Europe bear different characteristics depending on the political conditions that vary from one country to the next. For example, the new populist movements of the wealthy Scandinavian countries, where the main objective is maintaining the welfare state, criticize issues such as heavy taxation and accept free migrants in particular. On the other hand, it is ethnic identity that informs populist policies in countries like Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland, which are ethnically diverse. In countries such as Germany, France, Austria, where there are many migrant workers, this paves the way for racist and nationalist populist policies. When Europe is considered as a whole, it becomes clear that its new populist movements have the characteristics of classical populism.

Today, leaders become prominent in European populist movements, just like their counterparts in Latin America. It is common for these leaders to establish a new discourse by referring to the populist parties and leaders of the past.

The populist movement in Italy emerged as a reaction to the economic gap between Northern Italy and Southern Italy. Tarchi states that it is mainly the economic transition process during the 1990’s that accounts for the populist boom in Italy (Tarchi, 2002) The emergence of Italian Lega Nord ve Forza Italy parties, which had a major influence on Italian politics, can thus be explained by economic factors and

the social reactions caused by economic transformations.

In Belgium, Vlaams Bloc owes its success to his populist policy informed by ethnic differences. The pillars of Vlaams Bloc, which got more than 10percent of the votes with its “Eigen volk eerst” (own people first) slogan, are stated by the party to be “Flemish Nationalism”, “nativism” and “populism”.⁴⁷ The fact that this party became this successful in Europe despite adopting an openly racist discourse is unbelievably baffling in terms of European democracy. Such radical right-wing populist movements, formed in 1950’s, had significant success in Europe in the 1990’s.⁴⁸

On the other hand, the electoral success of Podemos⁴⁹ in Spain and Syriza in Greece⁵⁰ —the two members of the EU facing major economic problems— must be underlined. These movements, which fall into the category of left-wing populism, emerged as a reaction to neo-liberalization and the economic policies of the EU in this regard. However, they are strengthening their political discourses by drawing on populist themes.

Due to a wide range of reasons, today’s Europe is faced with a crucial populist challenge. This has a bearing on the structures of political parties, democratic systems and liberal democratic objectives in Europe. In particular right-wing, exclusivist, and radical populist movements lead to the emergence of radicalized political parties. Radical right-wing movements appear to have reinforced themes such as “racism”, “xenophobia”, “enmity towards migrants” and “enmity towards different sexual orientations,” etc. Such trends have led to the deterioration of the strong democratic tradition in Europe and of her ideal of constructing a pluralist democracy.

⁴⁷ For more information Lucardie&Akkerman&Pauwels: “It is still a Long way from Madou Square to Law Street: The Evolution of the Flemish Bloc in eds. Tjitske Akkerman, Sarah L. de Lange, Matthijs Rooduijn *Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Into the Mainstream*. UK: Routledge.

⁴⁸For a current discussion on populist parties in Europe see also Stjin Van Kessel (2015)“Populist Parties in Europe: Agents of Discontent, UK: Palgrave MacMillan

⁴⁹To discuss the populism of Podemos from Laclauian perspective see also Alexandros Kioupkiolis (2016), Podemos: the ambiguous promises of left-wing populism in cintemporary Spain, *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21 (2), 99-120.

⁵⁰ To discuss the populism of the Syriza from Laclauian perspective also see Yannis Stavrakakis & Giorgos Katsambekis (2014) Left-wing populism in the European periphery: the case of SYRIZA, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 19:2, 119-142.

2.6. Concluding Remarks

This section of the dissertation has been devoted to the attempts to define populism in spite of its evident difficulty, so as to place and address the rich populism literature within an analytical framework. To this end, the different approaches to populism have been classified, drawing on the classification made by Francisco Panizza. Following and based on this classification attempt, a thorough discussion on the Empiricist Historicist and the Symptomatic Approaches has been carried out. In this manner, the place of the Symptomatic Approach, a current discursive approach employed in the examination of the relationship between populism and democracy, has been identified among the different approaches to populism. Then, the reason why this certain approach to populism was employed in this thesis has been explained. The end of the chapter, on the other hand, has been devoted to addressing the different manifestations of populism throughout the world, to the end of showing how and which historical events had a bearing on the definitions of and approaches to populism.

It should be noted, however, that the analysis made on the Symptomatic Approach in this chapter is not thorough, as this approach shaped by Laclau will be addressed in great detail in the following chapter, where the roots of the discursive theory of populism will be traced in Laclau's studies, the theoretical framework of Laclau's approach to populism will be outlined, and then, that this approach is superior to its counterparts will be argued based on the practicability of its "analytical tools." Finally, these analytical tools will be described in detail in that they will be employed in examining the cases that this study focuses on.

CHAPTER 3

LACLAU AND POPULISM

3.1. The Roots of Populism Theory in Laclau

3.1.1. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy

Hegemony and Socialist Strategy by Laclau and Mouffe was published first in 1985. These years marked the eve of the 1990's, which witnessed dramatic changes throughout the world. The book provided very important clues for the understanding of the great political transformation that was about to take place around the globe after the collapse of the Soviet Socialist Union in 1989. Hence, the book gained recognition in a short period of time and became a major cornerstone in social and political theory.

Hegemony and Socialist Strategy is not only significant for social theory but also for this thesis, as this book is considered to have generated Laclau's approach to populism. The concepts central to Laclau's approach to populism were defined and developed for the first time in this book. I will examine in detail these concepts central to populism and how they were treated in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. But beforehand, let's have a look at how this book came into existence.

As thinkers focusing on Marxist theory, Laclau and Mouffe became aware of the vicious circle that stalled this theory from the late 1960's on. Even though the 1960's were quite fruitful in terms of Marxist theory studies, come the 1970's, there was not much left to be said about the theory, which was bogged down in certain fruitless discussions. However, Laclau and Mouffe had deviated from this kind of analysis, which they realized was going through a serious crisis, and steered the course of Gramsci. Laclau and Mouffe felt the need to reinterpret the Marxist tradition from the Gramscian perspective in order to break the vicious circle that this tradition found itself in and to expand its horizons. Years later, when they reviewed this attempt, Laclau and Mouffe considered it a "reactivation." They chose not to use the categories of social theory as they were, because these categories were going through

the process of sedimentation, but to look afresh, through reactivation, at the actions that formed these categories, all of which they did in reference to Husserl. The attempt to look afresh at these categories turned out well. Thanks to Laclau and Mouffe's contributions, the domain of Marxist theory, which was bogged down temporarily, turned into a whole new theoretical domain. A new theory that bore little resemblance to traditional Marxism was thus established.

According to Laclau and Mouffe, the logic behind Marxist theories from that of Marx to those of Gramsci and Althusser was reductionist both in terms of theory and practice. Therefore these theories failed to explain the differential and pluralist structure of societies, the way different oppressed groups act, and the open and contingent coming together of political identities. In their words, classical Marxism or Marxist theory lagged behind "an avalanche of historical mutations."⁵¹ Classical Marxism was no longer capable of offering solutions to the problems of the societies that had internalized capitalism. A solely class-based way of thinking and the assumption that the economic structure has a direct bearing on all the other structures did not suffice to analyze the political and social structures of contemporary societies. The theory had to expand its horizons.

As a matter of fact, the idea behind *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, penned by Laclau and Mouffe in this very period to contribute to the fulfilling of this need, had its roots in the past. According to Laclau and Mouffe, the seeds of all the problems that Marxist theory encountered when capitalism put it to the test had actually emerged in the interwar period. However, in this period of crisis, only Gramsci attempted to develop a new conceptual framework for Marxism. Based on Gramsci's concepts such as "war of position," "historical bloc," "collective will," "hegemony," and "intellectual and moral leadership," Laclau and Mouffe claimed that Marxist theory was being reinterpreted and described this reinterpretation process as a process of deconstruction because, according to them, the only way to resolve contemporary problems was to reinterpret Marxist theory by reconstructing it.

This new approach broke the vicious circle that stalled Marxism and offered a new

⁵¹ *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*

solution under the name of “radical democracy.” The book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, on the other hand, became the reference point for a school of thought, which was to be called “post-Marxism” by its adherents, and for the theory of “radical democracy,” which has since then maintained its importance insofar as contemporary disputes are concerned. Best and Kellner maintain that, in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe applied post-structuralist theory to Marxism and that political theory and practice was reestablished in a pluralist and democratic manner thanks to this book (Best and Kellner, 1991:192). Laclau and Mouffe thus began to shape a new tool for political analysis, which had the potential to shed light on how political phenomena, like “populism” for instance, were socially constructed.

In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe first deal with the historical crisis that Marxism encountered, and trace the origins of this crisis. Then, they explain in detail the emergence and development of the notion of “hegemony.” Afterwards, they address the matters of hegemony and antagonism together. And finally they offer a recipe for a political solution, which can be considered an introduction to the theory of radical democracy. But the crisis of Marxism, treated by Laclau and Mouffe at the beginning of the book, and the theory of Radical Democracy, put forward at the end of the book are of secondary importance for this thesis, which focuses on the relationship between populism and democracy. Within the limited scope of this study, we will deal mainly with the notions of “discourse”, “hegemony”, and “antagonism” as defined and elaborated by Laclau and Mouffe.

The notion “discourse,” which is of methodological importance for addressing the other two above-mentioned notions, will not only provide us with guidance in understanding Laclau and Mouffe’s theory, but also contribute methodologically to the applied section of this study, which will deal with the discourses of populism and democracy in Turkey. At this point, let us have another look at these notions, trying to understand how Laclau paved the way for the theory of populism.

3.1.2. Laclau's Views on the Discussions on Mass Psychology:

Laclau's arguments about populism draw heavily on the 19th-century debate over mass psychology. Thus any study that focuses on Laclau's approach to populism is certain to be hampered by shortcomings if it does not take into consideration the debate over mass psychology. Laclau begins to discuss populism by examining Le Bon's book entitled *The Crowd*. According to Laclau, Le Bon pointed to two important phenomena, the first one being **the instability of the relationship between the signifier and the signified**. According to Le Bon, the key to the influence that words exercise in the formation of a crowd is to be found in the images that those words evoke quite independently of their signification (Laclau, 2005:22). Laclau built his term "empty signifier" on the basis of this phenomenon.

The second major phenomenon to which Le Bon draws our attention is the process of overdetermination by which a particular word condenses around itself a plurality of meanings. Laclau's theory of hegemony was largely inspired by these two phenomena. Hence, Le Bon's contribution to the debate over mass psychology is central to the way Laclau approaches the concept of populism.

Let us now return to the relationship between the signifier and the signified. "The power of words is bound up with the images they evoke, and is quite independent of their real significance. Words whose sense is the most ill-defined are sometimes those that possess the most influence. Such for example are the terms democracy, socialism, equality, liberty, etc., whose meaning is so vague that bulky volumes do not suffice to fix it precisely. Yes it is certain that a truly magical power is attached to those short syllables, as if they contained the solution of all problems. They synthesise the most diverse unconscious aspirations and the hope of their realization" (Le Bon, 1995:124–125) (Laclau, 2005:22).

The real significations of words and the images that they evoke can be distinguished from one another using certain rhetorical tools. Le Bon mentions three such rhetorical tools: affirmation, repetition, and contagion (Rhetoric is also one of the three categories that Laclau employs in his analyses of populism.). But while explaining these three categories, Le Bon refers to the irrationality of mass

psychology, especially during the stages of repetition and contagion. A shift from the individual to the mass is at the same time a shift from rationality to irrationality. In Le Bon's view, explaining mass psychology is not the same thing as explaining individual psychology.

It is at this very point that Laclau dissociates himself from Le Bon's theory, because he refuses the assumption that masses are certain to behave irrationally. According to him, the firm belief that the individual behaves rationally and that the mass behaves irrationally, is but a common fallacy peculiar to early writers working on mass psychology, like Le Bon. Laclau has a higher opinion of Freud's works on mass psychology, which he also finds more explanatory.

This new perspective, which Laclau calls "The Freudian Breakthrough" is based in brief on the assumption that individual psychology is no different from mass psychology. This assumption represents the sharpest break in the history of mass psychology theories as mass psychology studies took on a new dimension following the declaration that individual psychology and mass psychology cannot be considered as an opposition. This new assumption that Freud contributed to the theory shed light on notions such as masses' attachment to leaders, identification with leaders, and leaders' charisma, which studies on populism, and notably those of Laclau try to analyze:

It is on the difference between social and narcissistic drives that Freud establishes that the distinction between social and individual psychology. This as we shall see, has important consequences, for he concludes that the two psychologies have evolved in a parallel way, and apply to different aspects of the social bond: while regular members of the group would fall, as far as their mutual link is concerned, under the label of social psychology, narcissism (as the terrain of individual psychology) would fully apply only to the leader of group (Laclau, 2005:53).

3.1.2.1. Gustave Le Bon: Some Ideas on the Mass

"Just before appeared to all Crusaders on the city walls of Jerusalem, Saint George, undoubtedly at the first glance was perceived by one person there. By means of suggestion and

contagion, the miracle heralded by a single person was accepted by all of them immediately” (Le Bon 2015:38).

Gustave Le Bon (1841–1931), who is well known for his studies on the psychology of mass, made important contributions to the literature on populism, which is closely related to mass psychology. Le Bon, who studied medicine to become a psychiatrist, later conducted studies on social sciences and made significant contributions to political psychology with his book “La psychologie des foules (The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind)”, published in 1895.

The rhetorical approach that Le Bon used in analyzing populism had a great bearing on Laclau’s works. Therefore, in this section I will discuss how Gustave Le Bon addresses the concept of mass psychology and what kind of impact this has on populism in terms of rhetorical approach.

Gustave Le Bon is against the idea that the changes witnessed by a civilization are to be explained only by political changes, wars or changes in dynasties. According to Le Bon, the real cause of changes taking place in a civilization are actually changes in “ideas”, “habits” and “beliefs”. By referring to the 20th century, Le Bon states that we are in the period where changes occur most intensely; since all religious, political and social beliefs that used to be valid in the past have been destroyed and the conditions of living and thinking have underwent a complete transformation due to the scientific and technical developments. The sovereign force in the formation of societies will be “the Power of the Crowds”. Le Bon predicted that in the future this mass will destroy all the other powers: “[T]he era we started to live in will be “the era of the crowds.” (Le Bon, 2015:8). So what is the starting point of this era? The **participation of the people in political life**. However, this participation was not realized immediately and simply. To understand the psychology of the crowds is a great capital for politicians. In this respect, Le Bon sees the politicians as the owners of this important capital.

3.1.2.1.1. What is Mass?

As a word, “mass” means a crowded agglomeration and in its ordinary context as a term it represents **a random group of individuals** regardless of race, occupation, gender, i.e. any factor that brings them together. From the psychological point of view, however, the term “mass (or crowd)” assumes a quite different meaning: an agglomeration of individuals who gather under certain given circumstances and who are presenting new characteristics different from the characteristics of the individuals who are forming this agglomeration (Le Bon, 2015:19). The latter definition is of great import for populism, as in Laclau’s view, the formation of collective consciousness is possible when a mass transforms itself into a **“psychological mass”** rather than being an agglomeration in its general sense. There must be some stimuli for a mass to become a psychological mass in that sense. Sometimes thousands of people cannot form a psychological mass whereas a few people can, owing to those stimuli.

3.1.2.1.2. Main Characteristics of the Individuals Forming a Crowd

It is not an easy task to determine the main characteristics of a crowd. The psychologies of individuals and that of the crowds that they form are different as a mass is not the sum of the elements that it comprises, and as there is no average character that can stand for the crowd and help explain its psychology. The workings of the collective mind of a crowd are highly peculiar with their own characteristics, and an the mind of an individual becomes part of this collective mind once it becomes a part of a crowd. According to Le Bon, the main characteristics of the mind of the individual who becomes part of the collective mind are as follows:

- I- Disappearance of personality
- II- Dominance of the unconscious
- III- Turn of thoughts and feelings in the same definite direction
- IV- A desire for thoughts which are easily transformed into action

Whoever be the individuals composing the crowd; whether or not their mode of life, occupations, characters or intelligence are alike each other, the fact that they have

transformed themselves into a crowd leads them to possess a kind of collective mind (Le Bon, 2015:23).

According to Le Bon, the characteristics of a crowd with such a collective mind are as follows:

1. To be easily provoked, mobility and anger: the crowd is provoked quickly than an individual.
2. To be convinced quickly by suggestions: the crowd is more open to suggestions and it believes them more quickly than individuals.
3. To exaggerate simple feelings: the crowd reacts to simple feelings with exaggeration and huge enthusiasm.
4. To be influenced easily by fanaticism, tyranny and conservatism: the easiest way to influence a crowd is to advocate conservative and religious ideas.
5. To be sensitive to ethical issues: crowds have more enthusiastic attitudes towards ethical issues and are more open to suggestions in that sense (Le Bon, 2015: 23–24).

***Opinions and Beliefs of the Masses**

To know the art of impressing the imagination of crowds is to know the art of governing them (Le Bon, 2015:69)

Gustave Le Bon divides the factors that determine the opinions and feelings of the masses into two as the **remote and immediate factors**. Remote factors can be defined as the psychological factors that prepare a crowd to accept or reject an idea. In other words, the psychology of a crowd is shaped by these remote factors, which are the general conditions in which people live, such as race, traditions, time, political and social issues, instruction and education. The immediate factors, on the other hand, are a series of events that determine the acts of a crowd.

According to Le Bon; the main factors that should be studied in order to understand the phenomenon of populism, are the **immediate factors** which determine the

opinions of crowds These are the factors establishing the foundations of Laclau's rhetorical approach. Laclau's studies on rhetoric aim to identify these immediate factors.

*** Images, Words, Formulas.**

Gustave Le Bon states that words are like magicians in that they hold crowds under their spell. They are capable of causing a hurricane in the spirit of the crowd and also of calming it (Laclau, 2015:103).

According to Le Bon; the words whose meaning are the most problematic and fuzzy, can sometimes have the most impact. For example, the meanings of certain words like democracy, socialism, equality, liberty etc. are so vague that volumes of books are not enough to explain them (Le Bon, 2015:103). And it is this very uncertainty that empowers these words over others.

Reason cannot combat some words and formulas, since they are expressed with solemnity against the crowds, and when they are expressed, an expression of respect becomes visible on faces while all heads are bowed (Le Bon, 2015:104).

According to Le Bon; when we are young, we learn some words and these words relieve us from the obligation of thinking. On the other hand, some words lose their power after being used for some time and cease to evoke any image in the mind since they become vain sounds. It was in this context that Le Bon inspired Laclu to coin the the concept of the **empty signifier**.

*** Illusions and Imaginations:**

It is very important in terms of populism to give the people the impression that they cannot live without imagination and ideals. In other words, populists have to trigger the collective imagination and create illusions if they want to mobilize the masses.

***Experience**

According to Gustave Le Bon, our century is the era of various experiences. These experiences, particularly historical events and experiences, need to be retold to the masses in order to ensure that they are not forgotten.

***Reason:**

The masses do not have the ability to do mental evaluations. Therefore, populists need to appeal to the feelings of the crowds rather than their minds, and notably to sentiments relating to honor, self-sacrifice, religious faiths, superstitions, glory, and patriotism.

The dominance of feelings over the reason results in the coexistence of opposite and even contradictory ideas in the mind of the masses, and also in the difficulty of recognizing these contradictions. This is why those who want to influence the masses generally believe that it is easy to influence people through their religious beliefs.

***Means of Persuasion Used by the Leaders of Crowds:**

If masses lose their own will, it is because they turn towards a stronger will than theirs. Hence, the most prominent characteristic of great leaders is to create a belief by using their will. And this objective of theirs is facilitated by the fact that the need for commitment dominates the mind of the masses. In this regard, that a leader has a firm will matters much more than his/her intelligence.

Persuasion of the masses is realized in in three steps. The first of these steps is to make an **affirmation**. Then, this is **repeated** constantly. The last step is to transmit it to the masses by **contagion**.

When it comes to the characteristics of leaders persuading the masses, Le Bon states that those leaders boast two kinds of prestige: personal prestige and prestige that is acquired later. Personal prestige stems from personal characteristics and personality traits peculiar to an individual, whereas acquired prestige takes its source from characteristics acquired later, like name, fortune, and reputation. These two kinds of

prestige have a great bearing on the extent to which a leader can influence and mobilize the masses, and according to Le Bon, influence is the most powerful tool of any leader.

There is yet another and even more important factor that determines a leader's influence on the masses. The people who exert influence on the masses are capable of convincing the masses, and notably of a dream, a vision or a common collective goal. As people are ephemeral, whereas beliefs are immortal, it is often more difficult to destroy a belief than to kill a person or a tyrant. And the voices of the dead are much harder to muffle than voices of the living. Le Bon states that the reason behind the lasting influence of leaders such as religious leaders, prophets is the strong beliefs that they draw their strength from (Le Bon, 2015).

3.1.2.2. Contributions of Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud addresses crowd psychology in a similar fashion to the psychology of the individual. As with the psychology of the individual, he argues that emotional attachment is the foundation of crowd psychology. This is the “Freudian Breakthrough” according to Laclau, who bases his study on populism on the presumption that the individual's spiritual life undergoes a dramatic change when he/she becomes a part of the crowd, due to the very influence of the crowd (Le Bon, 2015).

Every sentiment and act that emerges in a mass has a contagious character, as a result of which personal interests are generally sacrificed. Therefore, suggestibility increases when an individual becomes a part of the mass. Insofar as crowd psychology is concerned, reason is put into the back burner whereas emotions came more into prominence than ever before because unlike ideas, feelings such as excitement and fear are contagious.

Freud asserts that, when they are part of a crowd, individuals can lose their conscious personality entirely and obey suggestions. In this regard, Freud asserts that crowd psychology bears great resemblance to **the psychology of an individual in the state of hypnosis**. In both states, individuals believe entirely in the hypnotizer as their

conscious personalities vanish, and some of his/her abilities die down whereas others grow stronger than ever. When they become part of a mass, individuals tend to prioritize the interests of the mass over their own lives. According to Freud, this psychological states account for phenomena such as “martyrdom” and “self-sacrifice”. In such a state, some slogans and statements become unquestionable. Some statements even gain a sacred nature like taboos in primitive societies.

Sigmund Freud underlines the importance of masses regardless of whether they constitute an organization or not. Insofar as a group is concerned, the main condition for being defined as a special mass is being organized.

The dissolution of religious groups is less likely than other groups because a group united to the end of serving a religious cause does not disintegrate upon the death of a person, and the beliefs of the dead are harder to wipe out than those of the living. So the individuals making up a group that unite around beliefs develop stronger ties to one another and to the group than others.

Laclau attaches utmost importance to Freud’s conceptualization of “leadership” and “charismatic leadership”. According to Freud, who finds the characteristics of leaders as discussed by Le Bon quite insufficient, the characteristic of the leader should not be that important if the mass is already ready to be led by someone, and if the characteristics of leaders are indeed that important, then they should be discussed much more thoroughly than Le Bon did.

In Freud’s view, the mass is sustained by a power, this power being the love felt by an individual towards the leader of the mass and towards the others in the mass (Freud, 2015:36). Hence he asserts that the frequent use of emotive words like “love” and “fellow” strengthen the ties between individuals, the leader, and the mass as a whole.

3.2. Laclau’s Approach to the Theory of Populism

“Our central problem is to identify the discursive conditions for the emergence of a collective action, directed towards struggling against inequalities and changing relations of

subordination” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:153).

Laclau’s main motivation for focusing on populism, in his own words, was to understand “the nature and logics of the formation of collective identities.” According to Laclau, the majority of the previous studies on populism attempted to explain this phenomenon by referring to the main characteristics of populism or from the perspective of political economy. However, these studies in question added to the already-existing ambiguities in the literature on populism, which limited their explanatory character. It thus became imperative to develop an alternative approach to populism.

But it was not Laclau’s intention to overcome these ambiguities that one encounters while handling populism. According to Laclau, the ambiguity of the notion of populism remains despite his efforts as well, meaning that it is impossible to reach a specific definition of populism as a result his studies. Moreover, no matter how much effort is put into defining populism, the notion is destined to remain insufficient. Therefore, it is useless to lose time trying to define populism. Laclau’s purpose, as we have underscored at the beginning of this chapter, was to understand the nature of the social logic behind populism, which he believed would make it easier to analyze political phenomena constructed through this social logic:

My attempt has not been to find the true referent of populism but to do, the opposite: to show that populism has no referential unity because it is ascribed not to a delimitable phenomenon but to a social logic whose effects cut across many phenomena. Populism is quite simply, a way of constructing the political (Laclau, 2005: xi).

According to Stavrakakis, “Laclau’s theory is anti-descriptivist in that it does not seek to ‘define’ populism (at least not in an essentialist, reductive way), but rather to study political movements that have already defined themselves as populist by their common reference to ‘the people’” (Stavrakakis, 2004: 255).

Laclau claims that the predicaments in the literature on populism and the problem of defining the concept stem from the limitation of the ontological tools currently available to political analysis. In treating the notion of populism, Laclau thus seeks mainly to contribute to the development of a new tool for understanding populism.

So how can we address the theoretical approach that we need to adopt in order to develop this tool? For Laclau three categories are central to his theoretical approach: 1) Discourse 2) Empty Signifiers and Hegemony 3) Rhetoric (Laclau, 2005:68). Laclau states that these three categories have to be well-understood before proceeding to the discussion of populism. Therefore, it is crucial to look at how Laclau explains these categories in terms of populism in order to comprehend the way Laclau treats this concept. In the following section, where these categories central to Laclau's approach to populism will be addressed, we will refer to Laclau's opinions and also to the opinions of academicians who used his theory as a framework for their analyses. Let me begin by clarifying the above-mentioned central notions. Then we will readdress Laclau's analysis of populism in the light of these notions.

3.2.1. Concepts Important to Laclau's Populism Analysis

3.2.1.1. Discourse

The word "discourse" brings immediately to mind the words "speech," "language," or "text." In the Cambridge Dictionary of English, "discourse" is defined as "a speech or piece of writing about a particular, usually serious, subject."⁵² But Laclau, whose views on "discourse" will be treated in this section, refuses the claim that discourse is limited to language and text. According to his theory, discourse is a much more comprehensive notion that extends beyond speech and text. In Laclau's view, not only language and text but also relations play a constituent role in the construction of discourse.

In order to comprehend Laclau's understanding of the notion, we should direct our attention first to *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, which he co-authored with Chantal Mouffe, as Laclau's views on discourse grew substantially to maturity in this book.

Laclau explains what he means by the word "discursive" as follows: By discursive I do not mean that which refers to 'text' narrowly defined, but to the ensemble of the

⁵² Cambridge Dictionary of English

phenomena in and through which social production of meaning takes place, an ensemble which constitutes a society as such. This means that the discursive does not constitute a superstructure ... or more precisely, that all social practice constitutes itself as such insofar as it produces meaning (Laclau, 1980:87).

As Stavrakakis has also noted, in Laclau's theoretical approach "[d]iscourse is not identical with language or text, discourse in Laclau's terminology refers to a network of meaning articulating both linguistic and non-linguistic elements. Discourse is not only words, speech or ideas, but also practices directly connected to the discursive logic that formulates them" (Stavrakakis, 2004:232).

The concept "discourse" is central to Laclau's theory because society is constructed in the discursive space. In other words, without a discourse, it is impossible to construct a society. It is thanks to discourse that society becomes an entity subject to constant change and reconstruction. The existence of populism, just like that of society, depends on its being constructed in the discursive space. If the concept "the people" is missing in the discursive space, it is impossible to talk about the existence of populism.

Laclau and Mouffe argue that society is discursively constituted as an unstable system of differences. Sociopolitical identities and the social field in general are never closed and finalized structures; rather they are open, unstable, disunified and contingent, always in a process of being articulated in one form or another and always negotiable (Best and Kellner, 1991:194).

This is because discourse theory perspective is also important for the need for struggle over the meaning of terms such as democracy and rights in order to articulate new political identities" (Best and Kellner, 1991:200). The growing literature on populism and democracy in Europe, especially since the 2000's, takes the theory of discourse as its main reference.

3.2.1.2. Empty Signifiers and Hegemony

3.2.1.2.1. What is an empty signifier?

According to Oxford English Dictionary signifier is the sign's physical form (such as a sound, printed word, or image) as distinct from its meaning.⁵³ Signifier is an important term in the field of linguistics primarily developed by Ferdinand de Saussure.

According to Laclau, "the empty signifier is the signifier without a signified." Laclau's views on empty signifiers are embodied mainly in his article entitled "Why do empty signifiers matter to Politics?" (1996). Laclau begins this article with the afore-mentioned simple description of the empty signifier. But one has to elaborate on this simple description and go beyond it, as the empty signifier without a signified consists solely of a sound sequence. So a destruction process takes place while the signifier is being constructed and this process renders the signifier "empty".

The empty signifier has to be distinguished from equivocal signifiers that stand for different signified in different contexts. On the other hand, the term "floating signifier," which refers to the overdetermination or underdetermination of signified" is also different from the empty signifier. "Floating signifiers" are signifiers with a vague meaning. The term floating signifier is nevertheless closer in meaning to the empty signifier, but the latter is different from the former in that it is constructed in the discursive space. "An empty signifier can, consequently, only emerge if there is a structural impossibility in signification as such, and only if this impossibility can signify itself as an interruption (subversion, distortion etcetera) of the structure of the sign" (Laclau, 1996:37).

Laclau asserts that this is due to the existence of a Saussurean lingual system. Language itself constitutes a system. And like all other systems, the lingual system has its limits. Empty signifiers come to exist due mainly to these limits. According to Laclau, "there can be empty signifiers within the field of signification because any system of signification is structured around an empty place resulting from the impossibility of producing an object which, none the less, is required by the

⁵³Oxford English Dictionary

systemicity of the system. So we are not dealing with an impossibility without location as in the case of a logical contradiction, but a positive impossibility, with a real one to which the x of the empty signifier points” (Laclau, 1996:40).

Let me return to the relationship that the empty signifier bears to the theory of discourse and to populism studies. In this context, Laclau declares the people to be an empty signifier. In his view, the construction of a people takes place in the discursive space and its content can always change, meaning that the content of the word “people” can change entirely in different societies and in different discourses. The word can have different meanings in different discourses.

But in order to take on a meaning, an empty signifier needs an entity outside itself, as a thing can only be defined if it is distinguished and differentiated from another thing outside it. So an empty signifier, **“the people” for instance, can only take on a meaning when it is distinguished from what is outside it.** “The people” can be defined, for instance, through the demonization of a part of the population. Laclau points out;

The argument I have developed is that, at this point there is the possibility that one difference, without ceasing to be a particular difference, assumes the representation of an incommensurable totality. In that way, its body is split between the particularity which it still is and the more universal signification of which is the bearer. This operation of taking up, by a particularity, of an incommensurable universal signification is what I have called hegemony. And given that this embodied totality or universality is, as we have seen, an impossible object, the hegemonic identity becomes something of the order of an empty signifier (Laclau, 2005:71).

According to Laclau, it is through this naming process that the empty signifier, i.e. **“the people” can turn into a hegemonic identity.** It is through this process that the empty signifier constructs its “other,” which makes it possible for hegemony to become the people itself. If I return to the subject of “hegemony,” according to Laclau, hegemony emerges when this universal signification is embraced.

3.2.1.2.2. What is hegemony?

“Hegemony,” a word of Greek origin, denotes an element of a system that is more dominant than its counterparts. The concept of “hegemony” was used in the Marxist literature for the first time in the 1880’s by Plekhanov. Lenin used the concept right after Plekhanov to refer to the leadership of the proletariat in class struggle. In Lenin’s works, hegemony was treated as a matter regarding “class alliance” (Laclau, 2008:115). When the concept of hegemony was finally brought to maturity by Gramsci, it exceeded its previous limits: It was no longer only an element of the political realm but also of the intellectual and moral realms.

So how did Gramsci treat hegemony in his works? As we know, until the 1970’s, Marxist theory assumed that the base determined the superstructure, i.e., that the economic structure determined all other social structures. But from the 1970’s on, thanks to Laclau and Mouffe, this dominant view was challenged and an attempt to reread Gramsci brought about a new interpretation of Marxism. Mouffe asserts that Gramsci’s political theory caused the reinversion of Marxist theory and brought up two new and important issues:

1. The primacy of the ideological superstructures over the economic structure;
2. The primacy of civil society (consensus) over political society (force) (Mouffe, 1979:3).

This transformation, put in a nutshell by Mouffe, resulted in the reinterpretation of the basic terms of Marxism, such as “hegemony.” “Hegemony, therefore, becomes, in its typically gramscian formulation, political, intellectual and moral leadership over allied groups” (Mouffe, 1979:10). Mouffe explains the construction of a hegemonic identity as follows:

“A class is hegemonic when it has managed to articulate to its discourse the overwhelming majority of ideological elements characteristics a given social formation, in particular the national popular elements which allow it to become the class expressing the national interest. A class’ hegemony is, therefore, a more complex phenomenon than simple political leadership: the latter in effect is the

consequence of another aspect which is itself of prime importance” (Mouffe, 1979:195).

So how does Laclau relate the concept of hegemony to populism? In examining the concept of populism, Laclau tries to comprehend the “logic of collective identities.” So one has to pursue the ideology or hegemony that shapes these collective identities. According to Laclau, ideology can shape a “collective will” by unifying a historical block thanks to “intellectual and moral leadership.

Laclau and Mouffe see hegemony as the crucial category whereby, once freed from an essentialist logic, one can comprehend the nature of social reality as plural, complex and overdetermined, grasp the new social movements as autonomous from class struggles, and appropriate their historical possibilities for constructing the conditions of radical democracy (Best and Kellner, 1991:195).

3.2.1.3. Rhetoric:

“Rhetoric” is another key concept in Laclau’s approach to populism. Laclau frequently underlines the crucial role that **rhetoric plays in the construction of the term “the people.”** He believes that rhetoric refers to the substitution of a figurative term for a literal term. So rhetoric emerges when an empty signifier begins to designate an object.

“In classical rhetoric, a figurative term which can not be substituted by a literal one was called a catachresis.” (Laclau, 2005:72) For instance, the construction of a people or a nation depends from the very beginning on an incorrect usage (catachresis). The term has never been used in a literal sense. It is always figurative and it corresponds to a larger totality that always surpasses the term itself.

“If the empty signifier arises from the need to name an object which is both impossible and necessary, from that zero point of signification which is nevertheless the precondition for any signifying process, the hegemonic operation will be catachrestical through and through. As we shall see, the political construction of “the people is, for that reason essentially catachrestical” (Laclau, 2005:72).

3.2.1.4. Demand as a Unit of Analysis

At first glance, explaining these three key concepts appear to make it possible to understand Laclau's approach to populism. However, at this point, we need a unit of analysis for studying populism. Laclau deems it "vital" to determine the smallest unit of analysis for populism. As a rule, previous studies on populism take the group as their unit of analysis. These studies (such as those penned by Gustave Le Bon), which focus on how a group moves, and how its opinions are manipulated, are inclined to define populism as an ideology, a political movement, or a political practice. Even though this seems to be an important step in defining populism, defining it in this manner can easily prevent us from explaining the different kinds of populism that emerge under different circumstances. Laclau sees populism as an attempt to maintain the unity of the group. This being the case, specifying the smallest unit of analysis as the group or the mass can limit the scope of analyses. Laclau gives the example of relatively poor masses living in slums with the purpose of proving that his method of analysis is more convenient. Schooling, access to clean water and the other needs of the neighborhood can constitute the main bond that holds the masses together, meaning that considering these needs and demands can actually help understand populism. Taking the group as our unit of analysis, on the other hand, does not give us a clue about the origins of populism.

This being the case, we have to determine a unit of analysis that is smaller than groups. This smallest unit of analysis should be "**demand.**" Laclau prefers to call all such demands "**democratic demands.**" The coalescence of these democratic demands is the fundamental process that initiates the formation of a people. "A plurality of demands which, through their equivalential articulation, constitute a broader social subjectivity we will call popular demands- they start, at a very incipient level, to constitute the people as a potential historical actor" (Laclau, 2005:74). This is how we attain the simplest form of a populist configuration.

The concept "**demand**" is also crucial to understanding the relationship between **populism and democracy.** The clustering together of the different democratic demands made by different social groups entails the construction of a discourse

serving to consolidate these demands. This understanding also laid the foundations of the theory of radical democracy.

3.2.1.5. The Two Preconditions for the Emergence of Populism: Equivalential Chains and Antagonism

Laclau asserts that two preconditions should be fulfilled simultaneously for populism to emerge: The first one is the dichotomization of the social space through the creation of an internal frontier (antagonism), and the second one is “the construction of an equivalential chain between unfulfilled demands.” The former one requires a logic of difference, whereas the latter requires a logic of equivalences. The construction of the people is not possible in their absence. These two preconditions formulated by Laclau will provide insight into the large part of our study. Let us now elaborate on these two concepts.

3.2.1.5.1. Equivalential Chains:

According to Laclau’s theory, the first precondition that needs to be met for the emergence of populism is the equivalential chain. In his view, a society that cannot differentiate itself from anything can never attain unity. So initially the logic of difference is constructed. Then the logic of equivalences is constructed within the community, which is declared to be “us.” (Because the common demands and sufferings of the mass, declared to be “us” are many. And it is the existence of these common demands that bring them together. These demands are not met. If they are, there will be no bond left to keep the group together. And even if some of these demands are met, the group will demand more.) Again according to Laclau, once equivalences are established, the group does not try to eliminate the differences within. The emphasis of “us against others” makes it possible for the group to maintain its differences.

Differences and equivalences are not compatible with each other, but the co-existence of differences and equivalences is the main characteristics of any society. But what do differences and equivalences mean insofar as the debate over populism is concerned?

One can only discover this meaning if we approach the matter through the concepts of “unification,” “hegemony,” and the “empty signifier.” First of all, all social (that is, discursive) identities are constructed at the intersection of these differences and equivalences. In time, an equivalence, removed from the sphere of differences, begins to stand for the whole.

The same holds true for institutional unification. So how can we distinguish populist unification from institutional unification? Insofar as populism is concerned, there is an exclusionary line that polarizes the society. In this situation, the people becomes fewer in number than the populus, meaning that the society is polarized into “the people” and “the others.” In this manner, “the people” begins to stand for something different than it literally does, and yet it claims to stand for the whole. This is one of the fundamental components of populism: a part that claims to be the whole.

At this point, Laclau returns to the debate over mass psychology, because understanding this claim requires that the debate over group be also brought up. Freud writes about the love felt for the leader, which he considers to be one of the factors that unify a group. This constitutes one of the cases whereby Freud explains mass psychology through individual psychology. This view alone is incomplete. But according to Laclau, it becomes truly explanatory when it is considered together with the logic of equivalence and the logic of difference, as this the way populist identities are constructed.

So how can we explain the discursive exclusion that leads to the above-described polarization? In order to explain it, we have to elaborate on the concept of “antagonism” in Laclau’s theory. We can only comprehend the emergence of popular identities and populism by looking at how the exclusionary line is drawn.

3.2.1.5.2. Antagonism

Laclau asserts that the second precondition for the emergence of populism is the existence of antagonism, as the only way to construct a whole in the world of equivalences is to draw an exclusionary line. As is stated by Stavrakakis, “the presence of popular elements in a discourse is not sufficient to transform it into a

populist one. Populism starts at the point where popular democratic elements are presented as an antagonistic option against the ideology of the dominant bloc” (Stavrakakis, 2004:254). The issue of antagonism is not only central to Laclau’s approach to populism. Together with hegemony, it is also one of the fundamental elements of his post-Marxist theory.

In an interview about populism, Laclau explained the centrality of antagonism as follows: “When Chantal Mouffe and I wrote *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, we were still arguing that the moment of dislocation of the social relations, the moment which constitutes the limit of the objectivity of social relations, is given by antagonism. Later on I came to think that this was not enough because constructing a social dislocation –an antagonism- is already a discursive response. You construct the ‘Other’ who dislocates your identity as an enemy but there are alternative forms. For instance, people can say that this is the expression of the wrath of God, that this is an expression of our sins and that we have to prepare for the day of atonement. So there is already a discursive organization in constructing somebody as an enemy which involves a whole technology of power in the mobilization of the oppressed.” (Laclau, as cited in Critchley&Marchart,2004)⁵⁴

Let us now focus on how Laclau and Mouffe explain the concept “antagonism,” the workings of which they explain using the terms “logic of equivalence” and “logic of difference.”. “Logic of equivalence” finds different identities and puts them in the same equation against the same threat. In other respects, Laclau and Mouffe suggest the “logic of difference” for the expansion of a discursive order by the breaking of the existing chains of equivalence and the incorporation of the “disarticulated” elements into the expanding formation. Chains of equivalence link different identity groups to each other against the same threat. Chains of equivalence create a totalization and every totalization excludes something. As Laclau indicates, “We can go back to our discussion of discursive totalization. We saw that there is no totalization without exclusion, and that such an exclusion presupposes the split of all identity between its differential nature, which links/ separates it from other identities,

⁵⁴Also see in Critchley and Marchart, 2004, Laclau A Critical Reader, London:Routledge.

and its equivalential bond with all the others vis-a-vis the excluded element” (Laclau, 2005:78).

Howarth sheds light on Laclau and Mouffe’s views on antagonism and history as follows:

The mere existence of antagonisms confirms their view that there are no necessary laws of history and no universal political agents motivated by preconstituted interests and identities. Instead, antagonisms introduce social experiences, such as ‘failure’, ‘negativity’ or ‘lack’, which cannot be accounted for by any positive or essentialist logic of society (Howarth, 2000: 106).

In Laclau and Mouffe’s theory, while constructing an antagonism, agents first find a purely negative identity which cannot be represented positively in a given discursive formation. This external identity should be presented as a threat. Critchley and Marchart write that (Critchley and Marchart, 2004: 4). So when a social group finds an “other” for itself, it begins to behave as if no differences exist among its members. Laclau and Mouffe identify hegemony from this point of view. Hegemony is constructed discursively in a terrain of differences. Constructing a hegemony depends on antagonism and this antagonism has to be constructed in the discursive field. Establishing a hegemonic discourse requires finding an opposition and attacking it persistently.

[S]ome of the stark oppositions that have dominated social and political theory for a long while are simply the result of making a choice for one extreme of opposition and presenting the ‘other’ as its strict ‘antithesis.’ We have maintained, on the contrary that in most cases the two extreme opposites, far from rejecting each other, contaminate each other, so that is only by focusing on their processes of mutual subversion that new language games can be designed which take into account the historical possibilities for democratic theory and practice that those apparent blind alleys actually open (Critchley and Marchart, 2004: 4).

Jacob Torfing’s categorization is of great benefit to anyone who wishes to treat the issue of antagonism in Laclau’s theory in a more analytical manner. Torfing gives a

fine summary of the five key arguments in Laclau and Mouffe's post-structuralist discourse theory and underlines its analytical potential.

Firstly, Torfing points out that in Laclau and Mouffe's theory "all forms of social practice take place against a background of historically specific discourses, which can be broadly defined as relational systems of signification" (Torfing, 2005:14). Social practice takes place within a system of signs, and thus, it should be understood within this system. Secondly, discourse is constructed in hegemonic struggles that intend to constitute "political and moral-intellectual leadership through the articulation of meaning and identity" (Torfing, 2005:15). Thirdly, "the hegemonic articulation of meaning and identity is intrinsically linked to the construction of social antagonism, which involves the exclusion of a threatening Otherness that stabilizes the discursive system while, at the same time, preventing its ultimate closure" (Torfing, 2005:15). Fourthly, a "stable hegemonic discourse becomes dislocated when it is confronted by new events that it cannot explain, represent or in other ways domesticate. Most discourses are flexible and capable of integrating a lot of new events into their symbolic order." Fifthly, the "dislocation of the discursive structure means that the subject always emerges as a split subject that might attempt to reconstruct a full identity through acts of identification" (Torfing, 2005:15).

To conclude, Laclau's "thesis is that populism consists in the representation of popular-democratic interpellations as a synthetic antagonistic complex with respect to the dominant ideology" (Stavrakakis, 2004:255).

3.2.2. Populism for Laclau

Now that we have addressed the key concepts (hegemony, rhetoric, discourse) regarding and the preconditions (equivalential chains, antagonism) for populism, we can return to the subject of populism and begin to analyze it. Laclau does not object to populism's being defined ideologically and different ideological tendencies' leading to different definitions of populism. According to him, the essential thing is to focus on the political logic behind populism. While analyzing this logic, he follows the below-described order and draws attention to the following three aspects:

- 1- The political logic behind populism is based on a system

of rules that include certain elements of the society and excludes some others: While social logics consist in rule following, political logics are related to the institution of the social. Such an institution, however, as we already know, is not an arbitrary fiat but proceeds out of social demands and is, in that sense, inherent to any process of social change (Laclau, 2005:117).

2- This logic needs to be named. The reality that we name is a heterogeneous one. While explaining the issue of naming, Laclau refers to psychoanalytic theory: “In psychoanalytic terms: while desire knows no satisfaction, and lives only by reproducing itself through a succession of objects, the drive can find satisfaction, but this is achievable only by sublimating an object, raising it to dignity of the Thing” (Laclau: 2005:120). If we apply this psychoanalytic approach to the field of politics, a concept or a word comes to have central importance in a rather unexpected manner. The concept begins to stand for more than its literal sense. As a rule, this word in question is a demand that stands out among other demands. A democratic demand thus turns into a popular demand. During this transformation process, the signifier is separated from the signified. Populism is not possible without this separation.

3- Laclau frequently repeats that equivalences and differences need each other. An important question is how the differences will be represented in the chain of equivalence once this chain is established. At this point, Laclau gives the example of civil unrest. Once the unrest begins, the differences quickly dissolve and animosity is directed toward the common enemy. As the status quo is challenged, a discourse against it is immediately developed. From then on, the thing that will keep this group on its feet is its coming together against the order that actually exists or is claimed to exist.

The unrest is a clear call to the losers and the weak. A figure addressing the losers and the weak and challenging the system appears on the scene. This figure promises change. And a certain segment of the society is long ready to lend an ear to this call, towards which it is clearly sympathetic.

“According to Laclau, there are two consequences:

(1) The moment of unity of popular subjects is given at the

nominal, not at the conceptual level, that is popular subjects are always singularities; (2) precisely because that name is not conceptually (sectorially) grounded, the limits between the demands it is going to embrace and those it is going to exclude will be blurred, and subjected to permanent contestation (Laclau, 2005: 118).

Laclau does not see the creation of an instability in discourse in pejorative terms. To the contrary, it is one of the musts of populism.

The emergence of the people depends on three variables I have isolated: equivalential relations hegemonically represented through empty signifiers; displacements of the internal frontiers through the production of floating signifiers and a constitutive heterogeneity which makes dialectical retrievals impossible and gives its true centrality to political articulation (Laclau, 2005:156).

3.3.Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, Laclau's populism theory and its evolution has been discussed in detail. To begin with, the book entitled *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* by Laclau and Mouffe, where this theory originated, has been analyzed. Followingly I also dealt with the concept of "crowd psychology" in reference to Le Bon and Freud, because Laclau draws on Le Bon and Freud's ideas on this phenomenon while constructing his populist discourse theory, and because this phenomenon accounts for the transformation of the word democracy into a magical word.

Then, the concepts central to this book and to Laclau's theory of populism, such as "discourse", "the empty signifier," "hegemony" and "rhetoric" have been defined, as these concepts are the very concepts used in analyzing the relationship between populism and democracy.

Once these concepts have been defined, the two major analytical tools, which Laclau developed and incorporated into his populism theory as it evolved, will be examined in detail: "chains of equivalence" and "antagonism." These two analytical tools are of great import for this dissertation in that they will be employed in the case chapter of this study, which is devoted to analyzing the case of Turkish populism. This chapter will focus on how the populist discourse was established and how it evolved

in Turkey, i.e. on the processes whereby the union of demands and thus the chain of equivalences were established, and whereby, paradoxically, the chain of differences was created from the chain of equivalences through the discourse of democracy.

The analytical tools in question will also provide this study with the opportunity to address the relationship between democracy and populism. However, making an analysis by using only these tools would limit the scope of the analysis. Therefore, the following chapter will address the debates in the world on the relationship between populism and democracy so as to provide a general context to this relationship and to see how the case of Turkey resembles and differs from its counterparts.

CHAPTER 4

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POPULISM AND DEMOCRACY

4.1. Emergence of Populism in Democratic Systems: Different Approaches

Today almost all scholars who write on populism are prone to say that there is a close connection between populism and democracy. Populism and democracy, which are concepts central to political theory, are seen as strictly intermingled concepts. How can we explain this inextricable relation between the two concepts? To put it simply, “participation of the people” is not only a key principle of democracy but also of populism. As such, it has been referred to frequently and by many scholars in the literature on populism. According to Gianfranco Pasquino, “the strong connection between democracy and populism is easily established since (a) both have firm and solid roots in the people and (b) both indicate the paramount importance of the people (Pasquino, 2008:15).

Until this point, we have elaborated on populism and confirmed that it is a complex concept. Like populism, democracy is also a contested concept, there being no agreement among scholars on its meaning. The majority of the studies on democracy, however, start with Abraham Lincoln’s simple definition: “government of the people, by the people, for the people”. This simple assertion became a source of inspiration for many studies on democracy and populism. Yet today, the definition of democracy must go beyond the simple reference to the “power or sovereignty of the people”, even though it is rather unfeasible to say there may exist a democracy without the support of the people.

As Panizza points out, some questions such as the following need to be answered in order to understand the complex relationship between democracy and populism and the conditions under which populism emerges in democratic societies: “Who are the people?”, “Who speaks for the people?”, “How does populist identification take place? (Panizza, 2005:1) The relationship between democracy and populism can be problematized through these questions, as the concerns of the people needs to be traced in order to have a deeper understanding of this relationship.

Starting from this premise, this part will include a theoretical framework to explain the relationship between democracy and populism. This framework will begin with a discussion on how populism emerges in democracies. The studies of different scholars on the emergence of populism in democratic systems will be examined from a critical perspective. Then the theories dealing with this relationship will be classified into two categories. The first of these categories includes the theories built upon the assumption that populism is an element of democracy; the second theoretical category, however, takes populism as a problem of it. An accurate remark before starting would be that many theoreticians of populism discussed the concept from a perspective that is close to both approaches. For this reason, they are not seen as clearly separated categories but as the two constituents of a framework intended to facilitate the comprehension of the concept of populism.

4.1.1. Democratic Principles and Populism: The Test of Liberal Democracy with Populism

Liberal democracy relies on democratic principles and following these principles are generally seen as compulsory for the survival of the democratic system. While the French Revolution in 1789 simply equated the principles of freedom, equality and brotherhood to democracy, today's understanding of democracy involves more principles to protect these basic principles. Besides the principles of freedom and equality, people's sovereignty, participation, separation of powers, freedom of press, freedom of expression, majoritarianism, pluralism, tolerance, rule of law are seen as the main constituents of a sound democracy. However populism is sometimes seen to equate democracy with the people's right to vote.

William Riker tries to explain the relationship between populism and democracy by referring to the interpretation of democratic principles. Drawing on William Riker's views would be beneficial in tracing the origins of the emergence of populism in democratic systems.

4.1.1.1. Can Voting be a Sufficient Condition of Democracy?

William Riker defines democracy through its three distinct characteristics. Riker's approach appears to be helpful to and essential in understanding the studies on the concepts of democracy and populism, as almost all academics refer to these particular traits or principals of democracy in their discussions on the emergence of populism in democracies. It is an insufficient comprehension of these principals or their abuse in practice that leads to the emergence of populism. According to Riker, the misinterpretation of these principals by liberal and populist democracies complicated the relationship between populism and democracy. What are these sine qua non principals of democracy? They are participation, liberty, and equality. Like Riker, many other theoreticians of democracy refer to these principals in defining democracy and explaining the workings of democracy.

The people's participation is one of the most commonly mentioned principle of democracy. Democracy, by definition, is mass participation. Participation as a political concept, which may be referred to voting in the narrow sense of democracy, has gained a broader and more encompassing meaning in today's democracies. Today, democratic participation, or voting, does not necessarily lead to the realization of liberal democracy or mean that the principle of democratic participation is put into practice. As Riker puts it, "democracy implies voting but voting does not imply democracy (Riker, 1982:5)." This is because the right to vote does not necessarily result in democracy in all cases. It is possible for an authoritarian rule to emerge out of election results. In other words, "voting is a necessary, but not sufficient condition of democracy (Riker, 1982:5). Voting can be deemed a practice that leads to democracy only when it is accompanied by many other democratic institutions and procedures. Under conditions where political parties cannot be freely established, freedom of speech and freedom of press are violated; popular participation by itself is not an indicator of democratic preferences. For instance, voting turnouts does not necessarily lead to fair representation in countries with considerable election thresholds (Turkey constitutes an example for this case with its 10 % threshold). Such practices lead to ignoring the participation of certain constituents of society. However, populist movements find voting turnouts sufficient for democracy by overlooking such complicated obligations. As long as people show up at ballots and a

government is formed out of election results, it is assumed that democracy functions perfectly well. Riker warns us against the misinterpretation of the principle of participation (Riker, 1982).

The second principle of democracy according to Riker's framework is liberty. The principle of liberty refers to the protection of the basic human rights, namely, freedom of expression, freedom of faith, equality before law, economic impunity, and freedom of property. For instance, parliamentary immunity is a form of these principles put into practice. Similarly, protection of the freedom of speech is one of the basic democratic requirements. However, in populist interpretations of democracy, it is often observed that the principle of liberty is violated. Freedom of speech is a protected only when it reflects the opinions of the populist front. Populist rules generally protect the rights and liberties of the majority while they tend to overlook those of minorities.

The last principle, which is heavily emphasized by Riker, is equality. Although it refers to "one person – one vote principle" in the narrow interpretation of democracy, it is actually meant to refer to a condition where individuals are treated equally in many fields on their way to self-realization in democratic regimes. It is plausible to suggest that broader ideals such as equality before law, the equality of opportunity in education and an equal distribution of economic resources can be deemed as the components of the principle of equality. No societal class can claim privileged treatment again according to this rule. However, populism by nature is rooted not in equality but in what is called the supremacy of national will over any other thing (Riker, 1982).

One needs to add two further principles to the above mentioned in order to explain the emergence of populism in democracies according to Riker: majority and pluralism. This is because populism arises mainly due to the tension between these two principles. The majority principle means that the one who receives the majority of the votes attains the power to rule. However this, by no means, should give the majority the right to oppress the minorities. The majority should protect the rights of minorities, but since this is rarely possible, populism claims power due to the majority principle. The party or the leader that holds the support of the majority in a

society tends to realize the will of majority and accuse and alienate the minorities in this process. For instance, antagonism as a fundamental component of populism can be deemed, according to Laclau, an extreme interpretation of the majority principle in democratic societies. The government, after gaining the majority, attains the ability to alienate the minority in order to utilize it to consolidate its power. In a similar way, the concept of the national will, which is deemed an empty signifier in the Laclauian terminology, is attributed the meaning of the “declaration of popular will”. Those who do not adhere to this view are ignored or not counted as an element of the “national will”. In other words, national will is equalled to the majority’s will. This democratic paradox should be scrutinized in its relations to the above-mentioned democratic principles.

The principle of pluralism should also be examined, which is in contradiction with majority principle, while delving into the relationship between populism and democracy. Democracy is a regime where all the views and beliefs in the society should be recognized and harboured with respect, and also represented in the democratic system. In pluralist societies, all kinds of faith, life style and culture can co-exist without dominating each other. The foundation of political parties is based on the representation of all the views held by people in a society. In a democratic society, the civil society’s opinions are listened to and their demands and voice are taken into consideration. However populism relies on mass politics which tries to melt all opinions in a single pot, meaning that the pluralism principle of democracy is almost trivialized in populist politics.

A further principle, which needs to be elaborated in the context of populism, is the “separation of powers” as an essential element of democracy since Montesquieu. It is not uncommon that the separation of powers is violated when populism is on the political agenda. The executive power occasionally interferes with the doings of the legislative and the judiciary powers, after securing mass support with the help of populism. In cases of strong leaders and parliamentary majority, the regime inevitably evolves into a form, in which legislative, judicial and executive powers are concentrated in one hand. Once the executive power violates the legislative domain, it is inclined to intervene into the judicial sphere, as well. In cases where appointments in the higher judiciary are made by the executive organ, by law, this

may eventually lead to an intervention into the domain of the judiciary organ. This is exactly the reason why an “independent judiciary” should be a *sine qua non* requirement of democracy. However in populist democracies, the violation of the principle of separation of powers is a frequently encountered problem that the populist discourse attempts to conceal referring to the people’s will.

While having a deep look into the democratic principles according to Riker, one needs to go through his views on the topic as well. Riker highlights a significant point while examining the link between populism and democracy. According to Riker, democratic systems can lead to populist regimes over time. The main reason for this tendency is that democracy can be defined both as a method and an ideal (Riker, 1982:8). Democracy as a method involves many procedures, however, the implementation of these procedures does not necessarily pave the way for a democratic ideal. Besides, democratic principles can easily be interpreted in a populist manner. Although democracy as an ideal and democracy as a method do look in harmony with each other, it is open to dispute whether these two phenomena are always in a harmony.

According to Riker, this lack of harmony is rooted in the difference between the liberal and populist interpretations of democracy. For example, elections as a compulsory element for the functioning of democracy can be interpreted from a liberal as well as a populist perspective. This difference in interpretation is the basic reason for the emergence of populism. Riker suggests that the liberal interpretation of democracy is Madisonian, whereas the populist interpretation is Rousseauan.

The Rousseauan interpretation is worth attention with respect to the populism discussions in Turkey. The notion of the “national will,” particularly, constitutes the very heart of right-wing populism in the country, which demonstrates that the “general will” in Rousseau is embodied in the debates in Turkey in the phrase “national will”. This principle has occupied a strong place in the debates on populism since the 1950’s. In this interpretation, voting is the only requirement of a well-functioning democracy.

On the other hand, “[i]n the liberal view, the function of voting is to control officials, and no more (Riker, 1982:9). There are principles and procedures that need to be put in practice in addition to this. The power of the ruler is limited to time and certain domains. The ruler can only remain in power so long as the “ruled” are content and receive good treatment. The liberty of every single individual is accorded utmost importance in the liberal interpretation.

This is the reason why Riker refers to the “tyranny of the majority.”⁵⁵ Being elected by the people is not a sufficient condition for a leader’s legitimacy and the realization of the liberal democratic ideal. Such a notion might lead to the oppression of the minorities who stand against the elected power. This constitutes a serious threat to democracy. “According to the populist interpretation of voting participation in rule-making is necessary for liberty. The rules thus made must be respected as right and proper because they embody that liberty. Were they not so respected, liberty itself may be vanish (Riker, 1982:12)”.

In order to differentiate the populist from the liberal interpretation of democracy, Riker resorts to the difference between positive and negative liberty, put forward by Isaiah Berlin. According to Berlin, “negative liberty” refers to the principle that no entity, particularly the state, has the right to intervene into the actions and behaviours of the individual. Positive liberty, however, means that the individual acts on his own and free will. Between these two, negative liberty is akin to evolving into a populist democratic understanding.

In the populist interpretation of voting, the opinions of the majority must be right and must be respected because the will of the people is the liberty of the people. In the liberal interpretation, there is no such magical identification. The outcome of voting is just a decision and has no special moral character (Riker, 1982:14).

4.1.2. Representative Democracy and Populism

Today, populism is seen as a problem or a part of representative democracies. While claiming this, what do we mean by representative democracy? Is there a link between

⁵⁵**Tyranny of the Majority** is a term first used in 1835 in “*Democracy in America*” in 18 by Alexis de Tocqueville then the term is popularised by John Stuart Mill with reference to Tocqueville.

the “representativeness” of the people and populism in democratic regimes? This link can help us shed light on the relationship between populism and democracy. Yves Meny and Yves Surel explain the issue simply by saying that “representation has helped to make democracy workable, constitutionalism has guaranteed its survival” (Meny and Surel, 2002:7). Representative democracy can be defined as a variety of democracy founded on the principle of elected representatives representing a group of people, as opposed to direct democracy. All modern democracies are types of representative democracies (except certain particular examples) because the functioning of a direct democracy seems impossible for various reasons. Therefore it appears that we should deal with populism with an eye towards the “representative” democracy.

Jack Hayward is an important academic who wrote on the emergence of populism in representative democratic regimes. Hayward draws his conclusions from his analyses of European representative democracies. Hayward attempts to explain the emergence and rise of populism with reference to the crisis experienced in representative democracies. Hayward argues that liberal democracy can function successfully only in pluralist societies; while the only possible form of rule in societies dominated by mass politics is populist democracy (Hayward, 1995). While governments are balanced by various institutional procedures, these check-balance institutions are disabled in populist democracies. Hence, governments maintain rule without being held accountable to these institutions and the democratic system turns into a populist regime. In addition to his contribution to the literature on the emergence of populism in European democracies, Hayward also draws attention to the role of the tools of direct democracy in representative democracies.

4.1.2.1. Referendum and Plesbiscites: Tools for Direct Democracy or a Consent for Populism?

Referendum and plesbiscites are a kind of direct vote in which an entire electorate is asked to either accept or reject a particular submission. Referendum and plesbiscites are seen as a natural part of modern democracies, which give the electorates an opportunity to participate directly politics. At first glance, these practices seem to be more democratic than actions taken without asking the people who are the real owner

of the power, and who should ideally take part in decisions taken about their future and in so doing, take responsibility for their future experiences.⁵⁶

However, at a very early date, an American academic and diplomat David Jayne Hill warned us against the danger of the referendum or plebiscites, which can easily evolve into a cover for an autocratic regime. How does this happen? In his article entitled “Autocracy by Plebiscite” (1920), Hill refers to the reestablishment of the 1848 French Constitution through plebiscite as follows: “Under the cover of an appeal to ‘the will of the people’ an irresponsible power evoked, stimulated by private interests and guided by personal control. The people knew nothing of the effect of the constitution that would be framed for them. Wholly without knowledge they were called upon to build upon faith. No doubt the faith was genuine, but it proved to be ill-founded. They surrendered blindly to a leader only to discover that they had created a master” (Hill, 1920:458). Similarly, Albertazzi argued that the tools of direct democracy created “populist paradises” in Europe, one of them being Switzerland, which uses the referendum and plebiscites very often in its democratic system (Albertazzi, 2008).

Hayward also voices his concern regarding the relationship between the tools of direct democracy and populism. One of the most emphasized points in Hayward’s theory on populist democracies is his interpretation of referendum and plebiscites. Hayward argues that referendum and plebiscites are important tools for populist democracies because the society is a manipulable community rather than a reasoning public (Hayward, 1995). And the manipulability of a society increases the chance of turning opinion enquiries into votes of confidence. Some questions such as the following need to be addressed, according to Hayward, in order to evaluate referendum and plebiscites: “Who initiates the proposal on which the people vote and who phrases the question? What is the issue to be settled?” (Hayward, 1995:15). The way these tools are utilised in the populist democracies can be determined in accordance with the answers to these questions. If the referendum request comes from the society (from the bottom), one can argue that it is a referendum that serves its purpose, as a referendum requires mass support to be meaningful. On the other

⁵⁶One should focus on these arguments if s/he is interested in explaining populism as it is experienced in the Turkish case since they are frequently-witnessed practices in Turkish politics.

hand, there are other referendums where the request comes from the people in power. These referendums are conducted to the end of mobilizing the masses in accordance with these people's interests. Hayward exemplifies these cases by referring to the referenda held under the rule of De Gaulle in France.⁵⁷

Hayward pays particular attention to the characteristics of the questions included in the referendum in his analysis. In his view, a referendum should seek to receive genuine answers to specific questions from the voters. It should not aim to provide the government with public consent or to manipulate voters through rhetorical questions. The organizer may hide its own intention behind the questions included in the referendum. In such cases, the referendum turns into a survey that solely measures whether the people approve of the government or not.

Taking Europe as a base for his analysis, Hayward identifies four different types of referendum (Hayward, 1995). The first category includes the referenda which question whether a certain change in a law or constitution or a legal amendment is approved of. In the second category, the fate of a region (or regions) is determined. In these cases, a region's decision to join another country or remain autonomous are presented to the public vote. The referenda, which are held in order to decide whether to join the EU or not, fall into this category. In the third type of referenda, supra-party topics are opened to debate for reaching a societal consensus. In such referenda, controversial questions such as divorce or abortion are presented to public decision. The fourth and final category of referenda regards certain private topics that are insistently brought to public debate by voters. Their content may vary. From time to time, certain religious or moral questions are voted. Such referenda are generally observed in Italy and Switzerland. Hayward suggests that some measures be taken in order for the the institution of referendum to function properly in democracies. According to Hayward, referenda, whatever their type is, should consist of simple questions that deal with whether a certain thing should happen or not, such as, whether a party programme should be followed or withdrawn. The people should be

⁵⁷According to Hayward's categorization, the constitutional referendum organized in Turkey in 2010 falls into the second type and can be deemed as a populist action. In this referendum, changes to the twenty-seven articles of the constitution were presented to public vote. The content of these changes, however, were not thoroughly discussed, and the referendum was presented as a vote of confidence for the government in power.

educated or their awareness on the topic should be raised. If not, voters can become confused about the topic in question. Referenda should provide the citizens with a right to direct democracy. Citizens should feel that they influence public policies. A referendum should render the citizen powerful vis-à-vis the representatives. If not, referenda may become the tools of sheer populism.

There are certain obstacles to organizing referenda to the end of empowering democracy. First of all, political issues are rather complex and intermingled with each other, and single issues are not possible to question separately. The referendum is an initiative that aims to awaken the public opinion; however, the public might get desensitized in time. People are often incompetent on the given subject and are open to demagogic propaganda. In general, they are inclined to wait till the end and criticise the results of a given policy. One final note concerning the topic in question could be that the leader's character is also voted in direct democracies. People's prejudices are very hard to break in this regard. They might actually confirm a decision, which they would oppose in other circumstances, only for the sake of the leader behind it. And this is indeed a very difficult problem to overcome.

Jack Hayward gives a clear presentation of the dilemmas of populism, which he connects with the problems of representative democracies. Democracy is a vision of the modern world. Populism emerges in democratic systems, and yet is marked by a traditional perspective as it is inclined towards mass politics: "Its (populism's) emergence may correspond particularly to the intermediate phase between the decline of established elites and before the emergence of new institutionalized elites. (Hayward, 1995:20) As a result, representative democracy survives in the tension between elitism and populism. In other words, according to Hayward, populism is an indispensable element of representative democracies, i.e. democratic regimes are doomed to give rise to populism.

4.1.3. Populism and New Poles in Democratic Politics

While explaining the relationship between populism and democracy, many scholars refer to tensions such as the tension between liberal democracy and populist democracy, and the tension between pluralist democracy and personal dictatorship,

etc. Margaret Canovan is yet another scholar of populism who examines its link with democracy by referring to the tension between the two poles of politics. After presenting a thorough definition of populism, Canovan analyses the relationship between populism and democracy. In the beginning of her analysis, Canovan attempts to clarify how and why populism emerges in democratic systems.

Canovan argues that in today's world, politics is defined through two poles, namely the redemptive and pragmatic poles, and the gap between these poles provides the opportunity for the emanation of populism. To put it simply, according to Canovan's thesis, populism becomes more salient as this gap widens, and populism has little space to manoeuvre where the above-mentioned gap is smaller: "When too great a gap opens up between haloed democracy and the grubby business of politics, populists tend to move on to the vacant territory, promising in the place of the dirty world of party manoeuvring the shining ideal of democracy renewed" (Canovan, 1999:12).

To understand Canovan and her schema on populism and democracy, we'd better elaborate on the concepts of redemptive vis-à-vis pragmatic politics and delve deeper into what this gap means, in its further details. What renders these gaps more visible? Canovan argues that these gaps draw their strength from a tension inside.

One of these tensions is the one that emerges between the old and the new. If the gap widens between the old, in other words, dirty politics and the new, clean politics that idealize a better world, populists emerge with the "new politics" motto and may rise in politics by promising "a better democracy." "New politics" may be brought to the agenda by focusing on a broad issue which suffers the society. Any economic, cultural, social or political problem may constitute the core of the promise of "recreation" put forward by populists (Canovan, 1999).

The second tension originates from the gap between the people oriented power vis-à-vis the issue of participation in current democracies and ruler sensitivity. Populism constantly highlights the rule of people, while in fact the citizens have very little influence on actual politics. Even participation, which is the most important element of democracy, is occasionally ignored. The promise that the shortcomings in the

current system will be solved and the participation of the people in political decisions will increase are examples of rhetorics that reinforce populist movements (Canovan, 1999).

The third tension highlighted by Canovan is the one between the democratic institutions and the alienation which they inevitably give rise to. There is people's will on one hand, and on the other there is the need for expertise in legislation. Resorting to the people's will in matters regarding energy, health or security, etc. is destined to yield insufficient results, as they require expert knowledge. For instance, the people may have a demand for health and medicine provision, but this demand cannot always be satisfied in accordance with the people's will, as there arises a need for medical or academic expertise in such matters. Populism makes use of this tension and the alienation between the two and takes advantage of siding with the people in this context. Particularly this type of tension provides a fertile ground for the emergence of charismatic leaderships. Such a leader might turn politics into a personal experience and explain politics with reference to his personal characteristics (Canovan, 1999).

Canovan explains the emergence of populism with reference to these three tensions. Benjamin Arditi, on the other hand, attempts to improve Canovan's thesis on the emergence of populism by adding further details to it. Arditi focuses on the compatibility of the above-mentioned two poles, and asks whether it is possible that an ideal mix of these poles abolishes populism? In other words, he asks whether populism, which emerges as a pathology of this tension, can be eradicated and replaced by democracy if this tension between the poles is removed. Arditi starts by asking this question but his answer is negative, because according to him, the incompatibility between these poles is an essential element of democracy (Arditi, 2007). However it is hard to say that Arditi is pessimistic about the future of democracy, because in his view, another point that needs to be emphasized is that this gap does not only host populism. These sorts of gaps can create a suitable environment for other societal phenomena in addition to populism, such as participatory democracy. The theory of participatory democracy is a result of the above-mentioned sort of tensions witnessed in the 1960's.

Canovan labels the political movements coming about in this way as radicalism. Populism is only one version of radicalism. However, according to Arditì, one can reach other sorts of radicalisms as well. For example, the radical democracy theory of Laclau and Mouffe arose in such an environment. In this regard, the tension between redemptive and pragmatic politics may turn to the advantage of the redemptive side. However, there is always the possibility that it may turn to populism's advantage, as well.

4.1.3.1. Populism as a Spectre of Democracy

Arditi, who analyses Canovan's arguments in depth in order to present a clear picture of the relationship between populism and democracy, poses the following important questions: Is populism a mistake of modern democracy? Is the link between populism and democracy random (coincidental)? Or, is it an attachment of democracy? To answer these questions, Arditì refers to Canovan's "shadow" analogy. He points out that, according to Canovan, populism is an inseparable constituent of democracy. However, instead of the "shadow analogy" Arditì prefers using the term "spectre," which was firstly introduced to the literature by Marx and then re-brought to use and popularized by Derrida. According to this view, populism is neither an inseparable element of democracy nor an attachment thereof. Paying close attention to Canovan's analysis of the topic, Arditì re-evaluates the emergence of populism in democratic governments in the form of a spectre. According to him, populism appears in three modes (Arditi, 2007).

In the first mode, there is an interiority relationship between representation and populism: "By this I mean that populism may be seen as a particular mode of representation that is compatible with, but not identical to the liberal democratic understanding of representative government in today's media-enhanced political performances" (Arditi, 2007:54). The evolution that representation undergoes as a concept is central to this mode. At a certain point, the democratic participation tool that is called old party democracy was replaced by the concept "audience democracy" (with a reference to Bernard Manin). In this process, mass communication tools eroded the importance of party activists as well as bureaucrats insofar as this new style democracy is concerned. Party leaders started making direct

contact with the masses through the frequent use of media such as television and radio. In this way, the leader can advance rapidly and rise above other party mechanisms. Thus, the rest of the party remains in the background, like it never did before in the past. This possibility of securing immediacy between the voters and the candidates is compatible with the ideal of directly appealing to the people and hence it is suitable for the rise of populism. In addition to this, the leader of the party spontaneously achieves supra-partisan legitimacy.

In this sort of democracies, voters do not generally expect that all the promises made during the election campaign are delivered. On the contrary, they are mainly concerned with the ability of their leader to adapt to the conditions of rapidly changing world. Therefore, the self confidence of the leader becomes the most important criterion for being elected. According to both Arditì and Manin, the voter in today's world prefers selecting the leaders who have the "ability to make decisions": "Once again I see here a fertile ground for the populist tradition of strong leaders, only that these no longer appear as exceptions in the institutional framework of representative government but instead become a functional component of audience democracy. In this scenario, populism becomes a spectral companion of liberal-democratic politics" (Arditi, 2007:52).

The second mode, according to Arditì, is a brash and bad mannered participation in politics. To make his point clear, Arditì draws an analogy between populists and football fanatics: "The archetypical image of populists is that of football fans who respond to victories and defeats of their teams without paying much attention to the ritualized table manners of public life (Arditi, 2007:52). Arditì argues that this type of populism might be a response to the elitist interpretation of democracy. Its adherents generally do not possess good manners. They may glorify banal life styles and daily life speech forms and turn them into the symbol of a political movement. Arditì assumes that this mode is harmless as long as it remains within limits.

The third and last mode is relatively similar to the shadow metaphor introduced by Canovan. In this case, populism renders the democracy inefficient. In addition, the populist group creates a tension between the judiciary, legislative and the executive powers. When it is in opposition, it blurs the line separating the multitude in action

from the mob rule (Arditi, 2007:53). Arditi highlights that the populist movement generally maintains its popular support despite its contradictions with democratic principles and the rule of law: “With their penchant of demagogic claims, they often invoke the trope of corrupt or self-serving elites that have lost touch with the people, or prey on people’s fears by claiming that stricter policing and immigration controls will solve economic and social problems” (Arditi, 2007:53). According to Arditi, this attitude is often accompanied by an authoritarian leadership. The leaders are generally emotionally attached with their followers. As a rule, the leader’s decision is not questioned or criticised, just because it is the decision of the leader. And the political rule depends on the manipulation of the people’s fears.

This is the most dangerous mode of populism because it threatens the very existence of democratic politics. Arditi defines this mode as a “misfire” which could easily turn into authoritarianism (Arditi, 2007).

Arditi admits Canovan’s scholarly contribution to the relationship between populism and democracy. He also claims that he took Canovan’s arguments and that two of them made an analysis of how and in which forms populism emerges in democratic systems. Arditi suggests that populism is an internal periphery of democratic politics and is a dimension of democratic representation. Arditi’s argument can be further elaborated together with other approaches which see populism as a part of democracy.

4.1.4. Governance and Populism

Governance is one of the most salient discussion topics of today’s democratic societies. This is the reason that it is obligatory to examine the concept of governance while analysing the link between populism and democracy. Papadopoulos analyses democracy and populism in the framework of governance. Papadopoulos assumes that the tension between populism and democracy is actually a tension between populism and constitutional democracy. However, as we dig deeper into the discussion, this analysis remains insufficient because discussions on governance have become more and more important in many of today’s democratic regimes.

Therefore, the link between populism and democracy should be dealt with from the perspective of “governance”.

Papadopoulos argues that populism originates from the necessities of democratic representation and legitimacy. However this argument includes a paradoxical condition. Obtaining people’s approval and promoting people’s participation are supposed to strengthen democracy. However, in contradiction, gaining popularity and receiving massive support generally results in moving away from democracy. Papadopoulos thinks that this paradox could be solved through some sort of balance. “Institutional designers must resolve puzzles regarding the adequate mix of the elitist and the populist principle, the limits to successive stages of power delegation, and the degree of extension of citizenship rights; in short the degree of inclusiveness and correlatively, the acceptable (and inescapable) exclusivist component of democratic systems” (Papadopoulos, 2002:58). In short, there should be an attempt to solve the problems of inclusiveness and exclusiveness.

For Papadopoulos, it is modern democracy’s social complexity that paves the way for populism. Although in democracy all citizens are supposed to participate in government on equal basis, this is prevented by the complexity of modern world. Many duties undertaken by the state mechanism and politics are complicated and time-consuming. In addition, they require a certain level of expertise. These duties are generally numerous and more complicated than an average citizen can handle. To give an example, subjects and duties in economy, health, academic research, arts, educational and legal system are too complicated for those not having an expertise. While democracy highlights the importance of these experts; populist politics pictures these professions to be easier and challenges them publicly. Populist politician appears in the form of a lay man and pretends that these jobs are simple to handle with. For a populist politician, they come from the same background; they follow same ethics and preferences with the lay men. Not being confined at this level, they attempt to include the citizens in administration by asking their opinions on these topics using the tools of democracy. Papadopoulos defines this as “immediate democracy”. The tools of immediate democracy can be listed as referenda, recall and, limited mandates and others. It is possible to exemplify this argument through the referendum held in Turkey in 2010. Making a legal change in

the structure of the Higher Council of Judges and Prosecutors and making an assessment of what advantages or problems this new structure is likely to bring requires legal expertise. However, the mentioned referendum offered such approval in a package to the will of the voter in an environment where they were not sufficiently informed. The bill was approved eventually.

Even though they require technical know-how and expertise, Papadopoulos argues that this sort of decisions must still be made by obtaining adequate support from the public. This, in other words, means that many decisions require participation in accordance with the principle of democratic governance. The real question arises about how such majority can be achieved in a fragmented society. The democratic society should seek an answer to this question.

4.1.5. Populism as a Problem of European Democracy

In recent years, European politics witnessed an increase in the popularity of right-wing parties and their leaders who occasionally came to power by taking advantage of populist methods. This phenomenon brought a rise in research on populism in Europe. Yves Meny and Yves Surel argues that the European populism has a “crucial specificity” (Meny and Surel: 2002) waiting for analysing.

Not only Meny and Surel but also Paul Taggart draws attention to this specificity. For Paul Taggart, populism emerged as an important social phenomenon that needs to be examined through its link with European democracy. There exists four distinct reasons as to why populism needs to be discussed in the current context. Firstly, linked with right-wing parties, a new form of populism came into the picture in liberal democracies. Yves Meny and Yves Surel adhere to this view, as well. The second reason is the transition regimes in the Eastern Europe since 1990s. The changing regimes in the Eastern Europe dispersed a populist mode of mobilization to other European countries, as well. Thirdly, the liberal democratic regimes have gone through a legitimacy crisis. The weakening of party politics shook citizens’ trust in politicians and élite. Corruption scandals and party cartelization did also play a role in this process. For Taggart, the last reason is the integration pressure imposed by the

European Union. This integration is a minor European model of globalization process. (Taggart, 2002)

Meny and Surel focuses on the conditions as well. According to them the emergence of contemporary populism in Europe has specific reasons such as, “the crisis of the structures of political intermediation, the personalization of political power and the increasing role of the media in political life” (Meny and Surel: 2002).

Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McDonnell also suggest that established European democracy has suffered from sustained populist growth since the 1990’s. According to them this uptrend of populism depends on “a reaction to the failure of traditional parties to respond adequately in the eyes of the electorate to a series of phenomena such as economic and cultural globalization, the speed and direction of European integration, immigration the decline of ideologies and class politics, exposure of elite corruption etc.” (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008:1). Whatever the reason for emergence is, Albertazzi and Mc Donnell evoke that, populists promise to make democracy work. They present themselves as the “saviours of democracy” instead of threats. Accordingly, we should focus on the relationship between populism and democracy, particularly in Europe, to understand what flourishes this contemporary populism.

4.2. Populism as a Part of Democracy

The pejorative connotation of the term “populism” in daily language sounds associated with that in the literature it has often been analysed from a negative point of view. However, there are many other thinkers who have argued that populism is an element of democracy.

The pioneer of the authors who take populism as a part of democracy is Margaret Canovan. According to Canovan, although it can be seen a result of certain social and economic problems, populism, in fact, derives its legitimacy from “popular sovereignty” and “majority rule”, the two basic principles of democracy. This constitutes a paradox in itself.

“The paradox is this: democracy is the most inclusive and popular form of politics, taking politics to ordinary people, giving them political rights and access to multiple channels of influence. But it is for that very reason by far the most complex form of politics, so bafflingly tangled and opaque that the vast majority of its supposed participants can form no clear picture to help them make sense of it. The fundamental paradox of democracy is, in other words that empowerment undermines transparency” (Canovan, 2002:28).

For Canovan, this paradox originates from the following; Democracy is based on inclusion of people in to the political sphere and this requires an individual persuasion process. This process tends to bring a leader or a person forward. In case, this person forces his legitimate limits it may lead to a dictatorial and authoritarian rule. The link between populism and democracy can be defined on the continuum from this democratic demand to personal dictatorship. In order to simplify her point, Canovan puts democracy and dictatorship on opposite ends of a spectrum. As soon as the political system is captured by a dictator, masses remain excluded from the power. However, the ruler still pretends that the power relies on the people; yet democracy does not only include majority but all sections of the society. A considerable exclusion is observed in populism.

Democratic ideology is occupied by the political leaders and mass media at the same time in a context which should originally be embracing and inclusive. In short, the inclusiveness of democracy turns into an exclusive form together with the emergence of populism. The ways that the people can be included in politics should be carefully examined.

Under these conditions, is it possible to think a democratic system without populism? Canovan's answer is negative. According to Canovan this is an insoluble issue. Even in the political culture of most established democracies, there is populism. Taking populism as an element of democratic politics and representation, it can be evaluated as a critical stance against the academics that study Latin American populist movements with a classical approach on populism and examine the economic interpretation of it.

4.2.1. Populism as a Mode of Representation

Another scholar who reflects on the relationship between populism and democracy and affirms is Benjamin Arditi. Arditi attempts to demonstrate that democracy and populism are compatible. Why they are compatible? Because populism appears as a mode of representation in democratic societies which are suffering from a representation crisis. Contrary to other scholars, who take populism as a pathology or problem of democracy such as Meny&Surel, Paul Taggart etc. Arditi tries to prove that populism is a part of democracy and we should admit it as an “internal periphery of democratic politics” (Arditi, 2005).

According to Arditi, similar to Canovan, the issue between democracy and populism is insoluble. However dissimilarly to Canovan, who sees the relation incompatible Arditi tries to prove that populism is the “fellow traveller of contemporary, media-enhanced modes of representation” at work in both emerging and well established democracies (Arditi, 2005:77).

Representation is an important concept for explaining populism in Arditi’s framework. According to Arditi; many populist movements came about as a result of a representation crisis, (also see Jack Hayward). So in these societies, populism appears as a mode of representation. According to Arditi in these societies, with the confrontational mentality, personalism and mobilization, representation is replaced by populism. How do populists achieve this? Arditi puts forward that “populist persuasion built on the strength of a simple and direct language, which entails a reduction of the complexity of the issues presented to the electorate also seems to be characteristic of contemporary politics generally (Arditi, 2002:79). While defining this “simple language” Arditi uses the statement of “verbal smoke”. According to Arditi this verbal smoke surrounds populism and makes it a liquid concept. Accordingly Arditi highlights the futility of drawing strict borders to populism while defining. One must, first of all, admit its ambiguity and inexact nature and should admit that populism is the internal periphery of democratic politics as playing the role of the representation.

4.3. Populism as a Pathology of Democracy

In addition to the authors who believe that populism is a “natural element”, an “attachment”, a “shadow” or a “spectre” of democracy, there are those who argue that it is a problem of democracy.

According to Yves Meny and Yves Surel, Taking populism as a pathology is related to the political conditions in which populism finds the opportunity to flourish. First of all, populism is deemed to be related to extreme right politics. This is because Nazism and fascist movements in other countries consist of extreme versions of populism. It is possible to witness pathologic cases where populist movements side with nationalism. In addition, populism is generally accepted to be pathology particularly when it is examined by elitist political theorists (Meny and Surel, 2002).

Yves Meny and Yves Surel argue that this evaluation may vary by time and context because today both democratic regimes and authoritarian – dictatorial regimes claim to speak on behalf of the people. It is not easy to differentiate between which uses are democratic and which of them pathologic. According to Meny and Surel, pathology becomes meaningful only by comparison with a situation defined as normal. So the normal democratic system should be both carry the fundamental values of democracy and should follow institutional or procedural mechanisms.

Paul Taggart is the pioneer of thinkers who suggest that populism is the pathology of democracy. Paul Taggart, while defining populism, points out its six characteristics and tries to connect them with representative democracy. His conclusions are mainly concerned with European democracies. Taggart is openly pessimistic about the link between populism and democracy. Owing to these important factors, populism needs to be carefully examined.

Taggart analyses populism through its six characteristics, as previously mentioned, and these characteristics are valid for democracy, as well. Taggart is pessimistic about the link between populism and democracy. According to Taggart, the first characteristic of populism is that it is an “enemy” of representative democracy. This does not necessarily mean that it does not appear in regimes other than democracy.

However, it means that representative democracies are more prone to create suitable environment for populism to emerge. Taggart thinks parallel with Meny and Surel in this regard. In other words, representative democracy and constitutionalism are the main origins of populism. They generally evolve into centralised political structures subordinated to a charismatic leader. Notable examples in Europe are Berlusconi, Haider, Le Pen and Bossi. By time, they call for better governance instead of a stronger democracy. They think similar to Papadopoulos in terms of the references to governance for understanding today's populism.

The second basic characteristic of populism, according to Taggart, is that it creates an imagined norm what is called "people". "It is a diffuse vision, blurred around the edges and clearly romanticised and profoundly ahistorical conception, but is no less powerful for that" (Taggart, 2002:67).

The third basic characteristic is the lack of core values. As a result of this, populism can integrate itself to many different political positions from extreme left to extreme right. Populists can be revolutionaries or can be from left-wing as well as they can be libertarians or right-wing authoritarians. This is an indicator of populism's flexibility and inherent incompleteness. Despite this conclusion that could be valid in the world, populism is peculiar to right wing politics in Europe, according to Taggart (for instance, it is possible to claim that the opposite is the case in Latin America). For Taggart, the populism's opposition to elitism is accommodated in right wing politics in Europe. While liberals and leftists are the "elites", right wing politicians who position themselves against the elite resort to populism. This can particularly be observed in the radical right wing's new populist rhetoric.

According to the fourth principle, populism emerges as a reaction against political crises. For Taggart, populism cannot be the result of stable politics. Populism is a systematic movement but generally accompanies challenges directed against change and crises. It appears as an alternative solution to crises originating from moral decay or situations which cannot be solved by usual politics. In fact, populism emerges in times of grand socio-political upheavals. For example, the rise of populism in pre-revolution Russia or in the aftermath of Civil War in the USA can be linked to these reasons. Responding or reacting extraordinarily towards such extraordinary

circumstances can exemplify the sort of populism that emerges in crises. The democratic regime apparently survives however voters seek different solutions assuming that political corruption creates an extraordinary condition. “What is perhaps most important is that populism tends to emerge when there is a strong sense of crisis and populists use this to inject a sense of urgency and importance into their message” (Taggart, 2002:69). Populists generally try to keep the discussion of crises alive even after they are over in order to survive in the post-crises conditions.

4.4. Political Parties, Democracy and Populism

Political parties are indispensable elements of “political society” and of parliamentary democratic systems in particular. Even when defining the democracy, Alain Touraine addresses political parties as “the legitimate way contrary to the elitist policy” while positioning it against elitist politics; “The organization of parties made it possible to go beyond the elitist politics” (Touraine, 95). Hence, it is possible to say that the representation of the people in political arena is realized most distinctly through political parties and therefore naturally populist policies can find itself a role in party and discourse politics. Duverger in his book named “Political Parties” states that the development of political parties goes hand in hand with the development of democracy (Duverger, 1954). In this context one of the most important elements when analyzing the relationship between populism and democracy is the political parties. In this part I will try to examine the relationship between political parties and populism by drawing from the political party literature. Following this I will deal with the Turkish political party adventure. Lastly I will finish with a democratization discussion and I will try to express the role of political parties in democratization and their responsibility on constituting a democracy discourse rather than populist discourse.

4.4.1. Political Parties and Democratic System

In democratic systems the political parties are not the only means of political participation of people, and as Linz and Stepan state that political parties are not the only element of “political society”. However they are the most important elements. There are also some other important issues such as how elections are conducted in

accordance with which laws and regulations, the relationship between the party leadership and parties. However, it is impossible to mention them without political parties.

Peter Mair also states that the main instrument of the relationship between the ruling and ruled are the parties. “Throughout twentieth century Europe, the linkage between voters and governments under conditions of mass democracy has been organized primarily by party” (Mair, 2002: 84). It is possible to say that this is also the case for Turkey.

According to Mair, while today the identity and functions of a party have greatly changed, party politics are still important. However, the democratization efforts that can be described as “party democracy”, yielded to populist solutions today. Peter Mair describes this as Party Democracy versus Populist Democracy (Mair, 2002:88). “At a very general level, therefore, populist democracy may be understood as popular democracy without parties. When parties play a central role in structuring collective electoral preferences and political identities, we can anticipate a vibrant and meaningful popular democracy” (Mair, 2002:91).

Larry Diamond and Richard Günther sees parties as the core institutions of democracies. They define seven important functions of political parties (Günther and Diamond, 2001:7). These functions of political parties first purpose creating a democratic system besides this important purpose we can suggest that political parties uses populism to realize these functions. First we can mention candidate nomination and electoral mobilization. Both functions, in particular, electoral mobilization, can benefit from populist discourse. “issue structuring” can be counted as the third important function. The strategies of parties determine how the voters will be appealed to the party by focusing main issues (at that point we should recall that Laclau has declared the issue of democratic demands as the most basic unit of analysis of populism.). Fourth function is the social representation. It is also possible to say that Populism is one of the most important elements of this matter of social representation. The fifth function is “interest aggregation”, as Diamond and Gunther’s pointed out. “Common demands” is an important factor describing the main logic behind the emergence of populism in Laclauian sense. Because in

populist discourse “to meet the demands” is the cornerstone of populist discourse. Sixth one is “forming and sustaining governments”. A party should lean on the democracy discourse in order to form the government and to rule the country.

Finally parties are institutions ensuring “social integration”, and in this context, the discourse is highly significant (Günther and Diamond, 2001:8). Günther and Diamond list these characteristics and functions of the parties, but on the other hand they state that party politics are increasingly losing its significance universally. This fact is accepted universally. Although its shape has changed, it is still worth to recall that especially in Turkey party politics are still the most leading engines of the democratic system. However, it is possible to say that the fact that these functions are expressed together with the populist discourse has resulted today in the weakening of party democracy.

There are also examples in different democratic models in which the democratic participation undertook by civil society in particular rather than parties. However, the most important mean and actors of the political participation has always become the political parties in Turkey. Huri Türsan strongly underlined that the only legitimate factor in the political struggle is political parties (Türsan, 2004). From this standpoint, the most important institutions should be focused on in terms of democratization are political parties. This is also the most important reason why this thesis discusses the democracy discourse of political parties.

Despite the existence of diverse contenders for power, especially in the case of Turkey, the military, the only organized legitimate contenders for power (especially governmental) are political parties and as long as they keep their legitimacy, no other groups can be legitimate power contenders. Furthermore, by their successful or unsuccessful operation for institutionalization, political parties have contributed both the legitimation and or delegitimation of democratic institutions and practices (Türsan, 2004:17).

Frederick Frey, in his book titled as “*Turkish Political Elite*” where has examined in detail the impact of political parties on the Turkish political, briefly summarizes Turkish politics as “Turkish politics are party politics” (Frey, 1965). According to

him, with a few exceptions, in Turkish political life since the declaration of the second constitutional period the political parties have continued their dominance on political life. Frey states that in very early periods, political parties is the most important link in the relationship between people and the government, following that the legal framework is also formed, and he states that the structure of the authority in Turkey will be determined through political parties: “Within the power structure of Turkish Society, the political party is the main unofficial link between the government and the larger extragovernmental groups of people on whose support the government depends and whose activities must mobilize –voters, interest groups, local communities, social strata and the like. Furthermore, the normal structure of power adopted by the Turks from Western models and which had sufficiently broad legitimacy to make it a conditioning force, invested power in a legislature” (Frey, 1965:301). According to Dodd; the struggle for power and leadership is usually functions best in a system of competing political parties. In Europe discussions of democracy, a competitive political party system emerges as one of the important factors in determining whether a country is truly democratic or not (Dodd, 1991:26).

4.4.2. Political Parties in Turkish Political Life

In Turkish political life, since the establishment of the Union and Progress Party, it has become evident that political parties became the most important element of the political society and the political fight. Özbudun emphasizes that party system in Turkey is highly institutionalized compared with other new democracies (Özbudun, 2000:73).

Sayarı states that since the beginning, a dualism has been observed in Turkish political life. “Historically dating back to the initial phase of political party formations in the Ottoman Empire, there had been a trend toward political dualism, as two groups of rival elites, claiming to represent the interest and aspirations of the political “center” and the “periphery”, competed for power. The traditional center-periphery or elite-mass cleavage that the Turkish Republic inherited from the Ottoman Empire proved to be important in shaping the party system following the transition to democracy (Sayarı, 2007:11).

This dissolution in the party system is discussed firstly in Şerif Mardin's article published in 1973 named as "Center Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics". Mardin, who put forwards the argument that there is a conflict between the political elites and the rest of the society. Also this article explains that how populist politics have dominated increasingly the Turkish politics since 1950 without encountering any dissolution.

Therefore, parties representing peripheral demand have also used the populism as the discourse in which the elite-people distinction has been used most frequently. However, this discourse has increased its influence, especially since 1950.

Since the establishment of the CHP in 1923, until 1946 where the transition to the multi-party system, other parties established could not taken part in Turkish political life for so long. The Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası (TCF) (Progressive Republican Party/PRP), which emerged as a result of an attempt to transition to multi party system in 1923 and 1924, was closed following Shaikh Said rebellion and there is no attempt seen to establish a new party until 1930. According to Feroz Ahmad, there are no important differences between the programs of The CHP and the TCF on the date of their establishments. Those were considered as a tool for transition to which multi-party life in that period, however TCF has become later a political tool for expressing the conservative opinions (Ahmad, 1991:65). Considering this, in fact, it can be said that there was a community, which objected to the practices of the CHP since the establishment of republic. It is possible to say that the opposition wing, which could not find the opportunity to organize as a party after 1929 crisis and II. World War, has turned into a "populist movement took off" after 1950. After the unsuccessful attempt of TCF, the first attempt was realized by Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası (SCF) (Free Party) established in 1930. In the process followed by 1929 economic crisis, the party has appealed many supporters since it was founded to criticize the politics of the CHP. Also, it appealed supporters not only for its economical critisms but also it appealed many people from conservatives and reactionists. But the party has survived only for 99 days since it could not organized well (Weike, 1991:85).

As of 1945, the populist discourse in Turkey no longer aimed to transform the people and yet it kept on constantly referring to the people. After this year, the field which populism most easily adheres to became the democracy discourse. Again after 1945, it is possible to say that the ideology of the CHP was reformed with the transition to multi-party life and it repositioned itself against the other party. As Tachau stated, Turkey transformed to a relatively free multi party system from a strict authoritarian one-party regime and it encountered the democracy (Tachau, 1991:21).

One can be argued that Turkey had the characteristics of the two party system between 1950 and 1960 that and met these criteria (Tachau, 1991, Özbudun, 2000, Sayarı, 2007, Türsan, 2004). However, in those years where the two-party regime was ruling the country, populism has become the most important weapon of DP on the grounds that it will represent the “people” against the former politics of elites. Ilkay Sunar underlines that this situation, i.e. “elite-people conflict”, was dominated by “patronage” relationships that emerged due to the lack of institutionalization.

Between 1960 and 1980, the party system where ideological polarization at the highest level dominated the country. The democratic system was suspended twice, once with a coup and once with a memorandum. In the first elections after the 1960 coup, although the base votes of Democratic Party were divided into three different parties, in 1965 and 1969 elections the Justice Party was able to secure the majority of the seats in the parliament.

Within the period which started by 1971 memorandum (1971 Muhtırası) until the closure of all political parties following 1980 Coup, the majority of votes shared between the AP and CHP but neither of them became the ruling party alone and 1970s were called as the period of coalition governments. “...parties and party system in Turkey have been experiencing a protracted process of institutional decay since 1970’s, with growing fragmentation, ideological polarization, and electoral volatility in the party system and declining organizational capacity of public support for, and identification with individual parties” (Özbudun,2000:73).

In this period, in the second half of the 1970s in particular, Ecevit’s CHP was following a different more attractive populism. Populism was embraced by the left

wing in this period. After 1970s CHP's populism has started to have a resemblance with DP's populism in 1950s. In the beginning of the 1970s CHP has started to emphasize the points similar to populism's classical interpretation (Güneş Ayata, 2010:88). So the first time a leftist party got the majority of the seats in 1977 elections. However, the polarization in the country has paved the way to the 1980 coup.

After 1980 Coup with the new electoral law enforced in 1983 which requires 10 percent national threshold, the fragmentation in the political parties were tried to be resolved by disqualifying the small parties from parliament. Turgut Özal's ANAP which came to power in 1983 elections became the precursor of a new kind of populism.⁵⁸

When it comes to 1990s, the Turkish party structure was so fragmented than ever before. After the 1980s, new Islamist parties became the new parts of the system with the rise of political Islam.⁵⁹ Center right wing was fragmented also in 1990s. ANAP and DYP (Doğru Yol Partisi) which can be seen as successor of the AP took part separately in the parliament. Besides, CHP and DSP (Demokratik Sol Parti)⁶⁰ were in the parliament as representatives of center left wing. On the other hand there were also representatives of the nationalist politics. Nationalist Movement Party itself has found many nationalist supporters since the 1990s by the influence of rising terror events in Southeast. On the other hand, Kurdish parties which appeals many supporters from the Southeast began to be represented increasingly in parliament. Firstly, Peace and Democracy Party (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi) which got the seats in parliament by independent candidates and later HDP got seats in the parliament in 2015 elections by passing the ten percent threshold.

⁵⁸This populism which was referred in world literature as neoliberal populism had a new unique style for the people in Turkey who was accustomed to economic promises. Mine Tafolar states that Özal period has completely neopopulist structure in terms of institution, economics and discourse (Tafolar, 2013).

⁵⁹Erbakan's National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi) which existed since the 1970s was on the rise after 1990s and with new names like Welfare Party (WP, Refah PArtisi RP) and Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi) , it began to be represented in the parliament.

⁶⁰The Democratic Left Party

4.4.2.1. The Debates on Transition to Democracy in Turkey: Democratization, Political Society and Political Parties

When addressing democratic transition, Morlino states that the most important items are the political parties. Parties, Party leaders, politically relevant elites and including those political movements must always be in the center of the democratization analysis. Political parties in a country as the facilitators and the engines of democratization can also be the most important reason for the political crisis that could block the democratization (Morlino, 1995:315).

Alfred Stepan and Juan Linz identified the 5 significant arenas of consolidated democracies as follows: The conditions must exist for the development of a free and lively civil society. Second there must be a relatively autonomous and valued political society. Third there must be a rule of law to ensure legal guarantees for citizen' freedoms and independent associational life. Fourth there must be a state bureaucracy that is usable by the new democratic government. Fifth there must be and institutionalized economic society (Linz and Stepan, 1996:7).

By political society in a democratizing setting we mean that arena in which the polity specifically arranges itself to contest the legitimate right to exercise control over public power and the state apparatus... the composition and consolidation of a democratic polity must entail serious thought and action concerning the development of a normatively positive appreciation of those core institutions of a democratic political society –political parties, elections, electoral rules political leadership, interparty alliance sand legislatures (Linz and Stepan, 1996:7).

So do the political parties serve to democratization or do they become the coordinator of populist politics rather than becoming important institutions of democracy by stuck in “participation of the people” in the narrow area of populism from time to time? The most important point here is to look at the democracy discourse of the political parties. The democratic discourse focused only on participation of the people does not contribute to the establishment of a democratic society rather it leads democracies to have a majoritarian understanding.

Political parties can both contribute to democratization and slow the process down when they adopt a populist discourse instead of a democratic discourse. When political parties give weight to concepts such as “civil society,” “institutionalized economic society,” and “human rights” instead of the principle of general suffrage alone, the “political society” thrives and contributes to democracy.

4.5. Populism and Media: Does Media Serve for Populism or the Democracy?

“In any space where social conditions are equal, public opinion dictates people’s consciousness. It staggers, directs and repress their consciousness” (Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, 1947, p. 443).

Today politicians make their contact with the masses and “people” mostly through the media. Due to the fact that media is the main tool for ensuring this contact, it has a great significance for both democracy and populism studies. The relationship between politics and the media has been so effective today; therefore Thomas Meyer argues that; this century can be considered as a step towards media democracy rather than party democracy (Meyer, 2014). Herbert Gans states in his book named *“Democracy and the News”* media and journalists have the greatest responsibility for the formation of a democratic system. Not only Gans but also almost all communication and political scientists underlines that free media is the indispensable element of a democratic system. There is an ultimate link between the existence of the democratic system in a country and the media.

“Public opinion has utmost importance in democracy, where sovereignty stems from the people which relate the power to the people as a form of regime. Public opinion has arisen during the mutual relationship and interaction process between rulers and the people ruled. The main tool of this mutual relationship and interaction is media” (Gezgin, 2006:172). Günther and Mughan describe media briefly as unifying cells of the democratic systems. A link and communication is established between the rulers and people ruled through media (Günther and Mughan, 2000).

Public opinion is highly significant in the democratic systems. It is very difficult to define the public opinion phenomenon, such as populism and democracy. Childs defines the public opinion as “sum of the all people’s opinions”. In this case, it is unrefutably evident that media has a certain influence in the formation of populist mind, hence the formation of the discourse in Laclauian sense. It can be said in brief that, media is inarguably significant for “discursive construction of the people”. On the other hand, Doob defines it as “common opinion being had towards an event.” Regardless how it is defined, it is clear that there is a close relation between formation and quality of the public opinion and political system and environment in which it is formed “Laclau himself gives a clue to the centrality of media institutions in constituting the people’s political subjectivity.”⁶¹ Such cohesion rests on “the joint action of three inventions interacting with each other, the printing press, railways, telegraph” (Simons, 2011:19).

Simons underlines that there is a close connection between Laclau’s conceptualization of people and the emergence of populism. “Conceptualizing the people also as a mediated public highlights some key barriers to the construction of the people as a political subject and the success of populism” (Simons, 2011: 21).

However, a distinction should be made between the public opinion which is freely formed usually in democratic regimes and the public opinion which is formed in non-democratic (authoritarian and totalitarian) regimes (Bektaş, 1996:9). Following this, media has an undeniable importance both in the establishment of a democratic system and in the emergence of populist politics in democratic systems. A democratic culture can be formed through the mass media through which the people are easily accessed and democracy can be strengthened, and also media can become the most important tool of populist politics.

While highlighting the importance of public opinion and media in the democratic systems, Arsev Bektaş makes reference to Juan Linz’s definitions on democratic systems. According to Linz, “the systems allowing the free political expressions based on the fundamental freedoms of information and communications are

⁶¹In his discussion of Gabriel Tarde, who introduces a distinction between the pre-modern crowd and the modern public whose cohesion is mental rather than physical.

democratic systems. In this context, it is impossible to have a democratic system without the media. However, there are also authoritarian and totalitarian systems having media. So as the media is an indispensable element of democracy it can also be the founder of the totalitarian or authoritarian systems (Bektaş, 1996:241). In this context it is very important to look in what way the media is shaped by the regime. As there can be a system formed which will oppress media by a strict auditing, there can also be a system formed, which will create a free atmosphere for media serving for its independent and democratic character.

The rapid developments taking place all over the world in the field of printed media since 17th century later press has caused it to be considered as the 4th power in democracies. Media as having significant tasks like expression and formation of public opinion, monitoring and criticizing the activities of state organizations and institutions on behalf of the people, while considering the width of the field where it is effective, deserves this description completely (Gezgin, 2006:165). Meyer and modern democracy theories define the democracy as a “institutionalized system, a series of discussions and decision-making procedures and a path leading to the result in some cases. These definitions tell us that it is necessary to have a communication style appropriate for the democracy” (Meyer, 2014:25).

Since the mass media being brought to the agenda of the societies, it transformed “public sphere” dramatically and this transformation of public sphere made significant changes in the structure of the democratic systems (Meyer, 2014:9). Peter Dahlgren also states media radically transformed “civic engagement” in political life. According to Dahlgren, media has contributed to formation of a new kind of a political involvement. At the same time, thanks to media it has also pioneered the formation of a new understanding about what is political (Dahlgren, 2009).

Participatory democracy model is highly institutionalized and simulated democracy which placed emphasis on continuous and meaningful participation of many active citizens in decision-making processes both in intermediate level which includes political parties, associations and community initiatives originated from civil society in particular and in all levels of the institutions of political systems (Meyer, 2014:28).

However Meyer is incredulously about how these developments effects democratization process. Is the expansion of the public opinion a gain for the expansion of democracy or a lost? (Meyer, 2014:16). As all these developments will increase the democratic participation, it can lead an illusion in perception in the formation of public opinion, which will hinder the establishment of a democratic culture. As it is argued in this thesis, a media, which engaged much in the political authority, could advocate for populism more rather than for democracy.

If the mission the media undertook in democratic systems is not discussed enough, media can harm the establishment of a democratic system instead of contribute to it."The importance of communication systems in Western democracies is increasing. In terms of representation and leading opinion and thinking, they have taken the place of the church, political parties and trade unions partially. However, it does not result in the discussion of freedom of the media enough" (Meyer, 2014).

Democracy is a system that allows for free opinion and freedom of expression and ensures the human rights and freedoms to be widely enjoyed. As a requirement of this, people should be able to criticize, manage and control the representatives they chose as the leaders. They should be able to alert them so that they will not be disappointed in the next elections by them. If they believe that they do not enjoy their civil rights enough they should be able to announce this to the authority and to request for restitution of those rights. It is clear that they can ensure this communication through the media to a great extent (Gezgin, 2006:174-175).

John Keane, who is the author of "*Media and Democracy*", also states that the greatest virtue of democracy in not its ability to ensure only right decisions to be made, but its ability to correct the mistakes have been made and this opportunity can be enjoyed only through the media.

Today, due to the fact that social media is added to the means of communication as well, the relation between media, democracy and populism has become more complex than as it is in the past. John Keane states in his book named "*Media and Democracy*" that the opportunities the new communication realm offers the

democracy and the dangers it poses for democracy. As media can feed the democracy, it can have paralyzing effects on the democracy.

What kind of a path can be followed while assessing the relation between democracy and the media in a country? While assessing this, Günther and Mughan argue that there are two major macro variables evaluating the relation between democracy and media. We can also use these two variables while assessing it. “Two important macro-level variables substantially affect the nature of the relationship between the media and the politics of democracy and democratization: the structure of the media system in each country and the pattern of government regulation” (Günther and Mughan, 2000:9).

4.5.1. Freedom of Expression and Media Auditing

One of the key conditions for the existence of democracy is freedom of expression and freedom of press. Only in this way the culture of democracy can be reproduced in society. “Freedom of press is not only the freedom of expression for journalists, but also the freedom of getting information for people. The press is the assurance and the main source of modern democracy in the sense that as being the eyes, ears and voice of people” (Gezgin, 2006:166). People who can not get enough and objective information are not likely to make healthy choices in their political preferences.

However, the tension between freedom of press and media ethics has always been a matter. Should all kinds of opinions and ideas be expressed publicly due to the freedom of press or should anything formed on demand to be protected in the name of freedom of press? Or should they be got under control? How can the limits of this control be protected? How effective the relation between the capital and media is in guiding the political preferences? How can the “partisan media” which is an important debate of today be addressed in conjunction with democracy and populism? Could an institutionalized media ethics put an end to this debate? Is an “objective and ethical” media able to serve to the establishment of democratic culture or would it turn into a mean in reproduction of populism?

On the other hand, auditing of media in democratic systems is also a debate as important as freedom of expression. As one of the most important sources of the democratic system, the American constitution; urges that congress can not enforce a law to restrict freedom of expression and the press. This indicates that the issue of media auditing has always been one of the most important debates of the democratic system since it emerges. What the criterion for media auditing will be has always been a matter for the debates. Does the level of the regulation feed the democratic culture of the country or support the totalitarian character of the authority?

For example Brian Mc Nair states in his article named “Journalism and Democracy” that tolerance shown to journalists shows the level of the democratic culture within a country. On the other hand, while assessing the tension between freedom of expression and media auditing Günther and Mughan concluded that the reduction of state regulation is not a precondition in order to have a proper functioning democracy.⁶²

4.6. Concluding Remarks

This chapter has been devoted to the main axes of the discussions on the relationship between populism and democracy. To put it simply, this chapter has maintained that there are two opposing views regarding this relationship: the view that sees populism as an essential constituent of democracy and the view that characterizes it as a pathology of democracy.

The former view underscores that populist politics can reinforce democratic systems by increasing voter turnout. And yet, populist politics can also harm democracy. In this context, I have argued in this chapter that while the referendum, for instance, is a tool of direct democracy, it can also become a populist tool in the hands of a populist government. Likewise, certain problems pertaining to representative democracy can also reinforce populism rather than democracy, which will be maintained in the case of Turkish populism in the last chapter of this dissertation. I have also argued in this chapter that populism tends to harm democratic systems due to the fact that it

⁶² Media system in Turkey has been influenced by the tension between state regulation and freedom of expression.

provides a narrow definition of democracy, by prioritizing only the principle of universal suffrage general over the many principles of liberal democracy.

In addition to these general discussions on the relationship between populism and democracy, the last part of this chapter also includes sections on political parties and the media, as the characteristics and functions of these two entities are crucial to a deeper understanding populism in democracies.

In the following chapter, the relationship between populism and democracy in the case of Turkey will be presented and elaborated based on the above-described discussions made in this chapter. The following chapter, however, will not begin examining the case of Turkish populism from the transition to multiparty period in 1946, as the discursive sources of Turkish populism go further back in time. Hence, the next chapter will focus on the Turkish case, tracing the roots of populist discourse in the Ottoman era.

CHAPTER 5

POPULISM IN TURKEY TILL 1950

This chapter of the dissertation is devoted to outlining the evolution of populism in the Ottoman period and in the early period of the Turkish Republic so as to provide a background to the populist discourses adopted by the DP and the AKP, which will be treated in detail in the following chapter.

As I focused mainly on the relationship between populism and democracy in this study, I chose my cases as the populist discourses adopted by Turkish political parties emerged following the transition to the multi-party regime in 1946. However this does not necessarily mean that these discourses were entirely new. As a matter of fact, the populist discourses of both the DP and the AKP bear striking resemblances to the political discourses of the past.

The DP, for instance, established a unity of demands around the notion of democracy and used the terms populism and democracy for the first time in Turkish politics. However, the DP frequently referred to long-established concepts such as “the people,” and “the nation” as it shaped its discourse of democracy. Similarly, the nationalist discourse continued to be used by the DP, which gave considerable weight to the theme of *Anadoluculuk* (Anatolianism) in its discourse.

Let me now take a look at to the evolution and the basic constituents of Turkish populism(I should say *halkçılık* for this period. I will also expound the differences between “*halkçılık*” and “populism” both of which are rendered in English as “populism”. These differences are central to the debates on Turkish populism and *halkçılık*, and also because they account for my choice to use the term “populism” and not of “*halkçılık*” throughout this dissertation.

5.1. Populism in the Ottoman Period

The strong influence of populism on American and Russian politics was discerned as early as the mid-19th century when populism had already begun to make its way into

the heart of political life. The Ottoman Empire, which was one of the greatest powers of the period, was naturally influenced by those changes taking place in the world, including the phenomenon of populism, which soon became one of the most significant components of Ottoman politics. So how did populism gain prominence in and transformed Ottoman political life?

While the rise of populism in the Ottoman Empire is examined, it is necessary to look at the Ottomans as a society that encountered and experienced capitalism in second half of 19th century, and dealt with a crisis stemming from its experience of capitalism later than its counterparts: “Populism must be traced in the specific objective conditions created by the late encounter with capitalism. The intellectuals have a specific social role in these countries. In relatively underdeveloped countries that lack of strong bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia usually has a stronger social authority, playing an increasingly important role in the shaping of the nation” (Toprak, 2013:40). In accordance with Toprak’s claims, one can argue that the populism as experienced in the Ottoman Empire emerged under the leadership of the intelligentsia which was deeply influenced by the modern thought.⁶³

According to Karaömerlioğlu (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006), it is not a coincidence that the populist ideology went hand in hand with modernization in the Ottoman Empire. While the world as a whole was becoming modernized, it created its own intelligentsia. So a significant conflict arose between the modernized world, which had a tendency to maintain its old characteristics in terms of political rule, and this new intellectual social class which was willing to shape a new governmental structure. This new class wanted to replace the monarchical regime with the “people’s sovereignty.” In this social context, the expanding intellectual bourgeoisie brought the “sovereignty of the people” on the people’s agenda.

So, towards the end of the 19th century, there was a growing dissatisfaction about the Abdulhamid regime in the Ottoman Empire. During this period, like their counterparts throughout the world, a group led by intellectuals argued for the first time in Ottoman history that “**a politics leaning on the people**” was possible. Also a

⁶³See also Toprak, Zafer. (1984) Osmanlı Narodnikleri: Halka Doğru Gidenler, Toplum ve Bilim, Sayı 24. Kış 1984, 69-81

radical transformation of outdated regimes was necessary. Yet, for this transformation to take place, “the intellectuals of this period had to gain public support against the Abdulhamid regime”. (Karaömerlioğlu, 2001 (1), 273). As Toprak, Özden and Karaömerlioğlu stated, the first wave of populism in the Ottomans was sparked by the newly-emerging intellectual class who were discontent with the Abdulhamid regime and needed the support of the people to overthrow the sultan. In this respect, the emergence and spread of Ottoman populism is reminiscent of the Russian experience of populism, i.e. Narodnism, which emerged among the intellectuals and then spread to the people.

5.2. From “the People” to “the Nation”

Ottoman intellectuals who were dissatisfied with the regime believed that a new type of government could be established with the support of the “people” (*halk*). Yet, these intellectuals needed “an ideological glue” in order to bring the people together around the common cause of replacing the sultan’s sovereignty with that of the people. Ottoman intellectuals first thought that, this glue can be the nationalist ideology. Then they embraced newly-emerging populist (*halkçılık*) ideology.

Zafer Toprak asserts that the Ottoman *halkçılık* has its origins in Thessaloniki, and that it was during the period when young Ottoman Intellectuals from Thessaloniki began to pen articles for journals such as “*Genç Kalemler*” and “*Yeni Felsefe Mecmuası*,” that idea of “**the people**” started to blossom in Ottoman lands (Toprak, 2013).

In the following period, “*Halka Doğru*,” a publication issued by the Türk Yurdu Cemiyeti (Turkish Homeland Society), contributed to the establishment of the ideological foundations of in the Ottoman Empire. Mehmet Özden (Özden, 2011:1) provides a brief summary of how this journal led Ottoman people to embrace of the idea of *halkçılık*: The Ottoman society was split into two, i.e. into the refined and the unrefined classes (“*avam-havas*” or “*halk-güzide*”). According to “*Halka Doğru*,” the gap between these two social classes could be overcome if the elites reached out to the people and vice versa. The journal urged these two classes to join forces and establish a new state based on the principle of the sovereignty of the people. This was

the path to salvation offered by the journal to the “long-forgotten, humiliated and underdeveloped Turkish nation”⁶⁴ (Özden, 2011:118)

Some scholars argue that Ottoman intellectuals, such as the ones that issued the above-mentioned journal, put their efforts into spreading the idea of populism in the Ottoman Empire under the influence of their Russian counterparts. Intellectuals like Yusuf Akçura, and Ahmed Ağaoğlu who pursued their studies in Russia or who immigrated to the Ottoman Empire from Russia⁶⁵ are believed to have had a significant influence on the wide-acceptance of this idea in the Ottoman Empire (Toprak, 2013, Özden 2011, Karaömerlioğlu, 2001 and 2006). However, this influence was most certainly limited. While the Russian Narodnics had an apparent bearing on Ottoman populists, populism was embraced by the Ottoman people owing not to its socialist character as was in the case of Russian populism, but to its "Turkist" and "Anatolianist," character that went hand in hand with nationalism.

According to Toprak, the Ottoman people met idea of the “nation” with great enthusiasm due to the influences of both Russian Narodnism and the French Revolution. In the 19th century, when non-Muslim communities living in the Ottoman Empire re-shaped their identities, a new understanding of the concept of “nation” began to prevail in empire, and accordingly, the influence of Narodnism on populism as experienced in the Ottoman Empire gave way to the influence of French solidarism (Toprak, 2013).⁶⁶

The new “nation” concept, which was thus shaped under the influence of nationalism, was to play a major role in the development of the understanding of populism particular to Turkey. And yet, the intertwining of nationalism and populism was not limited to the case of Turkey. In his famous book entitled “*Populism: It's Meaning and National Characteristics*,” Angus Stewart argues that populism is a kind of nationalism. According to Stewart, populism associates the people with nation, which was certainly the case in Turkey.

⁶⁴“Türk olan, unutulmuş ve tahkir edilmiş ve geri kalmış bu halk”

⁶⁵Especially from Crimea Region

⁶⁶See also Toprak, Z. (1977) “İkinci Meşrutiyette Solidarist Düşünce: Halkçılık” Toplum ve Bilim, sayı:1. Bahar 1977, pp 92-123.

At this point, it should be noted that Narodnism and solidarism were not the only factors that had a bearing on the newly-emerging Turkish populism. Ziya Gökalp's contribution to the formation of "halkçılık" in Turkey should not be ignored. Gökalp defined "the people" as a social category consisting of people from all walks of life, apart from the *güzide*, i.e. the educated elites (Toprak, 2013 and Karaömerlioğlu, 2001). According to this definition, which is based on the dichotomy of the uneducated people vs. the educated elites, an illiterate landholder and a poor peasant were both to be counted among the people, because, according to Gökalp, no social classes with conflicting interests existed. If the constituents of the people differed from one another, they should complement each other. This solidarist idea, which brings to mind the views of Durkheim, was a major factor that helped shape populism in Turkey, and this certain understanding of populism is known to have survived into the Kemalist rule (Karaömerlioğlu, 2001:274).

According to Niyazi Berkes, Ziya Gökalp thus managed to protect Turkish "halkçılık" from Marxism, which was a major constituent of Russian Narodnism, and integrate into it the ideology of solidarism and representation (Berkes, 1975:237).⁶⁷ "Halkçılık", which was actually developed in the Abdulhamid period and which became one of the major intellectual sources of the İkinci Meşrutiyet (Second Constitutional Monarchy), was faced with a bigger challenge in the 1920s. Halkçılık, which had emerged in the Ottoman Empire as a reaction against the monarchical regime, was now given the task of making the people the very "owner of the regime." However, this task required mobilizing the masses around a common cause, i.e. the national struggle of Independence War.

⁶⁷Durkheim's principal of the division of labor in societies was a unique source for Ziya Gökalp, who believed that preventing the clash between social classes was of utmost importance. The social classes, which are in constant, unpreventable conflict according to the Marxist though, could be reconciled by a populist idea specific to the case of Turkey. The economic manifestation of this idea would be corporatism. The bridge, which connected the populism of the Republican period with the interest of Ottoman and Constitutionalist intellectuals in Narodnism, was laid by Ziya Gökalp. And now the people was nearly ready to be "a classless, non-privileged, fusedmass".

5.3. Populism of the Independence War Period

“Is this government a democratic government or a socialist government? That is, which of the types of government mentioned in the books that we have read until now best defines this government? Our government is neither a democratic government, nor a socialist government, they declared. As a matter of fact, it resembles none of the types of government described scientifically in the books. Nevertheless, it is a government that lets manifest the sovereignty and the will of the people. It is a government of such nature.” From the speech delivered by Gazi Mustafa Kemal on 1 December 1921 in the parliament. (As cited in Zafer Toprak, 2013).⁶⁸

It was during the National Struggle and the Independence War Period that the concepts of “hakimiyet-i milliye (*national sovereignty*)” and “irade-i milliye (*the national will*)” emerged as terms relating to Halkçılık. According to Toprak and Karaömerlioğlu, “public sovereignty,” which characterizes the spirit of this period, was inspired largely by Jean Jacques Rousseau. Mustafa Kemal, who came to the fore as a leader of the Independence War, believed that only the **people (halk)** could be the new sovereigns of Anatolia after the Ottoman Empire. As of 1920, the ideas of “national sovereignty”, “halkçılık”, and “the people’s government” had become so prevalent that, by the year 1921, “halkçılık” constituted the fundamental principle of the internal politics.

According to Toprak; this was a different understanding of democracy. A minimum level of literacy was needed for democracy to be implemented. However the rural structure was still dominated by traditional local power relations. The human capital

⁶⁸“Bu hükümet demokrat bir hükümet midir, sosyalist bir hükümet midir, yani şimdiye kadar okuduğumuz kitaplarda ismi zikredilen hükümetlerden hangisidir? Buyurdular! Efendim bizim hükümetimiz demokratik bir hükümet değildir, sosyalist bir hükümet değildir. Ve hakikaten kitaplarda mevcut olan hükümetlerin mahiyeti ilmiyesi itibarıyla hiçbirine benzemeyen bir hükümettir. Fakat hakimiyet-i milliyeyi, irade-i milliyeyi tecelli ettiren bir hükümettir. Bu mahiyette bir hükümettir.” 1 Aralık 1921 TBBM Konuşması, Gazi Mustafa Kemal” (As cited in Zafer Toprak).

was inherited from the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the country was not yet ready for political democracy. The priority was thus to be given to the national sovereignty, or “*hakimiyet-i milliye*”, which would bring the whole country together” (Toprak, 2013: 385). It was in this period that the principle of Cumhuriyetçilik emerged out of populism. It was not until 1950 that populism was mentioned together with democracy.

Insofar as the populism of newly established Republic was concerned, the idea of the people consisting of members from the different segments of society was rejected. Instead, the people were defined as a whole, standing in solidarity, based on the idea of solidarism. (As cited in Toprak, 2013:412).

National Struggle and the independence war Period from the populism perspective; has become the period where the concepts of “*hakimiyet-i milliye (national sovereignty)*” and “*irade-i milliye (the national will)*” arose in terms of “*halkçılık*”. According to Toprak and Karaömerlioğlu, “public sovereignty” idea of this period was created as being inspired largely by Jean Jack Rousseau. Mustafa Kemal believed that only the **people (halk)** could found a new sovereignty in Anatolia after the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, it was not a coincidence that the name of the first political party of the Republic became “People’s Party”. “Public sovereignty”, “*halkçılık*”, “people’s government” ideas has increasingly strengthened as of 1920. By the year 1921, populism constitutes the fundamental principle of the internal politics.

In the *halkçılık* of newly established Republic, a public opinion with classes, consisting of different segments of society was rejected, but the one based on solidarism consisting of a unique public in solidarity was adopted (As cited in Toprak, 2013:412).

When the Independence war ended, the republican period started in Turkey in 1923. In the same year, the first political party of the new Turkey has founded with the name of “People’s Party” (Halk Fırkası). This choice reflects the importance of the “*halkçılık*” in the agenda of the new country.

Karaömerlioğlu states that in such countries, which adopt a “public sovereignty” principle inspired from Rousseau, it is inevitable that “the dominant political power to become intolerant to all other differences because it totally monopolized the populist rhetoric and declared that it is the only one representing the people solely” (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:45). It is the same case for the direction of the political developments in Turkey.

Murat Sevinç also states that during the national struggle, the founders of the Republic of Turkey suddenly adopted a Rousseauian opinion from a Montesquieu-Lockean understanding. This understanding considered national sovereignty and national will as equal and united with each other (Sevinç, 2012:114). Such a model combined with the external political developments and it resulted with the birth of a single-party regime in Turkey. This regime generated a distinctive populism to the single party-period.

5.4. Populism of the Six Arrows: The Single-Party Period

Liberal regimes have yielded increasingly to authoritarian regimes all over the world in the 1930s. The effects of the economic crisis of 1929 gave rise to a reaction to liberal economy, statist economic models were started to be adopted. Political regimes moved parallel to these developments in the economy. Fascist and authoritarian ideas have been gradually rising in Germany and Italy, the rising fascism has paved the way for a “politics of mass”. The most important political goal of the period has become to be a nation. So nationalism has been becoming increasingly important. In terms of Turkey, the public has started to be identified as “a classless, mixed mass”⁶⁹ (Toprak, 2013:420).

In order to combine this “fused mass”, some kind of ideological orientations and programs became prominent in the agenda of the new republic, and the party. “Nationalism”, “Köycülük” (Peasantism) and “Anadoluculuk” (Anatolianism) became the prominent themes of this period. These attitudes played an important role in reinforcing Turkish nationalism and halkçılık. Although the authoritarianism of the

⁶⁹Sınıfsız, kaynaşmış bir kütle.

1930s has started to dissolve, those themes continued to be maintained as important themes in the post-1950 populism.

There was an endeavor to form a national state which adopts harmony and consistence rather than conflict. State and the People's Party began to be described as almost identical. In this process "Halkçılık", with "Cumhuriyetçilik" (Republicanism), *İnkılapçılık* (Revolutionism), *Laiklik* (Laicite) *Devletçilik* (Statism), *Milliyetçilik* (Nationalism), has entered first to party program in 1931 then to constitution in 1937. In 1940s with *Halkevleri* (Community Centers or People's House), *Köy Enstitüleri* (Village Institutes), the party reinforced *halkçılık* and nationalism more.⁷⁰ These endeavors resulted with birth of new and distinctive kind of populism. This new kind of populism– I should say Kemalist populism- supported the transformation of the people and created new values for them rather than glorifying their traditional values. So that's why Laclau finds Kemalizm as unsuccessful populist project (Laclau, 2005).

So if the moment of anti-status-quo, which is an essential component of any populist rupture, was so present in Kemalism, why was Kemalizm unable to follow a populist route? The reason is clear: because its homogenization of the "nation" proceeded not through the construction of equivalential chains between actual democratic demands, but through authoritarian imposition. (Laclau, 2005:2012)

So I prefer to call pre-1950 populism as "halkçılık" to express the differences between the two. Let me focus on pre-1950 populist discourse and try to understand the discursive resources of post 1950 populism in Turkey.

5.5. Endless Amities of the Populist Rhetoric in Turkey:

I should mention that in a broad sense in Turkey "nationalism" and in a narrow sense "anatolianism" and "peasantism" support the populist rhetoric in terms of discourse while intertwined with it.

⁷⁰Also see Aytemur, Nuran (2007) The populism of the village institutes: a contradictory expression of Kemalist populism PhD Thesis METU.

Populist initiatives formed during the single-party regime have provided the populism developed in the DP Period with some indispensable institutions and ideological elements. When firstly İttihat ve Terakki (Committee of Union and Progress) then the Halk Fırkası (People's Party) inherited such a traditional society having a mosaic like structure consisting diverse elements in the Ottoman empire. They began to embrace a populist ideology within a discourse being gradually secular in order the society to be integrated by a contemporary manner (Sunar, 2010:48). As stated by Ilkay Sunar's, the literature formed by those attitudes became a significant source for a populist democratic discourse to emerge after 1950.

5.5.1. Nationalism

Nationalism and populism are two currents intertwined with each other since the emergence of populism. As it is observed all over the world; a part of the populist rhetoric in Turkey has always been the nationalism. By taking this further, Angus Stewart argues that populism is a kind of nationalism (Stewart, 1969).

Especially with the help of the concepts like "nation", "national will", "national sovereignty" nationalist spirit inside the populism has always been fed and kept alive. Today, the concepts commonly used in Turkish politics having a uncertain meaning such as Milli Demokrasi (National Democracy) shows how important nationalism in Turkey in terms of populism while the relation between democracy and populism is considered.

"Even though in typification of nationalist populism in Turkey, first the Democrat Party heritage then nationalist wing found by the leadership of Justice Party constitute the classic examples of the nationalist authority, content history of nationalism populism symbiosis should not be limited to that" (Bora, Canefe, 2003:636). As stated by Bora and Canefe, when it comes to the relation between populist rhetoric and nationalism in Turkey, it is possible to lay a bridge between 1. Meşrutiyet (First Constitutional) Period and present times.

Because the nation is impossible without the people, nationalism was directed firstly to the people in newly established republic in Turkey. Due to the fact that populism

named the people as “nation”, it requires a common language, history and culture to sustain this “nation”. Therefore, it would be easier to sustain the desired nation state. “Dil ve Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi (Faculty of “Language, History and Geography”) founded in 1935 named personally by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk⁷¹ clearly indicated three most important factors valued in creating this identity.

In order to establish a national identity and to ensure that, society redefines itself as the nation, a range of thoughts should join the modernization movement. Establishing a national identity necessitates the definition of a common language, a common history and a common geography. Modernization adventures of the countries always need to be addressed together with its economic, social and political dimensions. So what were economic, political and social conditions accelerate and shape the emergence of this social thought?

When economically considered, the newly established Republic of Turkey was faced with the biggest world crisis within a short period of time. Liberal economy idea which was clearly adopted by the state in Izmir Economy Congress in 1925, became impossible to implement in just four years. Liberalism idea, which was not grown yet within the country, was forced to leave its place for a unique statist idea. Industrialization idea was found suspicious and not welcomed since from the very beginning and rather, solutions for transformation of rural structure were sought.

The sections in the society, many of whom are still illiterate, deprived of education for many years seemed ready to gain a national identity that is added into a new modern educational system. “In this period where the legal and institutional structure of Kemalist modernization were formed and political integration was ensured, it was now the time for nation/people/peasants to be integrated in the regime” (Çınar, 2013:14).

From the political perspective, the new political opposition movement, which could be born in the country, did not conform to newly established country’s democratic political institutions and so it was ignored. Instead, different sections of society and

⁷¹<http://www.dtcf.ankara.edu.tr/kurumsal/fakulte-hakkinda/>

their political views are tried to integrate with the regime for modernization and state was mobilized to achieve this.

In this context, the formation of several ideas was on the agenda. Anatolianism and Peasantism are the important ideas emerged in this context. The new language became the first phase to consider the people's opinion. Abandoning the use of Ottoman Turkish, to use the new language, more precisely starting to use Pure Turkish used by ordinary people became the most important step here. The adoption of a new language would improve the literacy level of the people and it would be so easy to get close to their opinion.

On the one hand Anatolianism strengthened people's geographical commitment on the other hand peasantism strengthened the sense of cultural belonging of the people whose majority are peasants and poor. After many years have passed, although the geographic threat is not yet eliminated and very few of the people continued to live in the villages, those two discourses continued to be an important element of populist rhetoric in Turkey.

5.5.2. Anatolianism

Immediately after the emergence of the nation-state idea, the concept of "hometown romanticization"⁷² has been brought to the agenda. When the people can establish a romantic bond with the region they are living in, their loyalty increases; thus nationalist and populist ideologies are redefined by the commitment to a specific geography. The concepts like "homeland" and "hometown" has always been the most important concepts of nationalist ideology and populism. The concepts like "Anatolian people", "Anatolian peasants", "Anatolian women" and especially the "Anatolian child" has become the indispensable elements not only of nationalism, but also of populism. This romanticization, which came to the agenda by different ways in different regions, has manifested itself by the opinion of Anatolianism in Turkey.

⁷²Anayurt romantisizmi

It is possible to say that Anatolianist thought has emerged in early 20th century. This is the period in which Ottoman Empire has lost its territories to its fullest extent and the idea of establishing a new nation state instead of an emperorship has emerged. The ideologues with the Turkism or Nationalism thought that emerged in this period introduced the idea of Turanism while searching for a solution to the recent situation of Ottoman Empire. However, due to the geographical territory of the empire are later reduced, it has been noticed that the realization of the Great Turan idea is impossible and Anatolianist thought superseded this idea. Thus Turkish Nationalism had found a smaller but more secure territory for itself.

According to Zafer Toprak, Ottoman Empire has lost its European identity especially after the Balkan Wars. Therefore, the attention was paid to Anatolia. What was expected from Anatolianism was to construct the pillars of Turkish Nationalism (Toprak, 2013:116).

Anatolianism has emerged as a cultural movement aiming to develop a historical awareness as the key for the imaginary concept of homeland to be transformed into a real homeland in an environment where nationalism started to replace the religion. In an environment where the results of the national struggle could not be predicted yet and the concern for future became prominent, it was inevitable that Anatolianism to gain political and ideological context gradually. This ideology to be formulated as Anadolu Anadolulularındır (Anatolia is of Anatolians) was originated in the period of Misak-ı Milli (National Pact). Nationalism and populism concepts which National Pact is based on are the basic concepts which Anatolianism is based on. In Anatolianists, populism compromised with a romantic peasantry (Atabay, 2002:34).

The Republican regime, which is structured on a new geography after the imperial borders are narrowed and defined by the National Pact and thus isolated from the traditional trade areas and their cultural integrity, is needed to reach information in order to make this geography “meaningful” (Öztürkmen, 1998:97).

Especially since 1920, when the National Pact borders to become apparent, the intellectual basis of Anatolianism attitude began to diversify and multiply. In this context, rapidly, the resources, which can provide information about the history and

geography of the Anatolian languages, began to be investigated. The researches on folklore, ethnology and turcology have gained a momentum. The holy image of Anatolia began to gain an important place in people's minds.

The story of Anatolianist idea began by the sense of embracing and protecting the homeland to be prominent after the reduction occurred in the geographical territories of Ottoman Empire. Anatolianist thought is an opportunity to reestablish the nationalism on the basis of the territory in the reduced territories of the homeland. "Anatolianism has emerged as a form of nationalism, as the product of and a reaction against Turanism which caused unforgettable pain and experiences for Turkish society" (Atabay, 2002: 517).

Although Kemalism and Anatolianism congregated on the same platform in terms of gaining the independence in 1920s, they became dissident in terms of the path to follow after the armed struggle period of War of Independence was over; Kemalism followed modernism whereas Anatolianism followed a traditionalist and conservative path. Anatolianism divided into two branches in itself as Secularist Kemalist Anatolianism and Conservative Anatolianism⁷³ (Atabay, 2002:518).

Especially Conservative Anatolianism is an integral part of right wing parties' populist rhetoric in Turkey which will be mentioned in the next chapter of this study.

⁷³With the contribution of the intellectuals who are conservative nationalists such as Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Remzi Oğuz Arık, Mükrimin Halil Yinanç, Nurettin Topçu, significant Anatolianist resources have been produced and an Anatolianist line was established in perception of Turkish Culture and History. "From Geography to the Homeland" written by Remzi Oğuz Arık who became one of the pioneers of Anatolianism and Peasantism by establishing the "Turkish Peasants Party" after being left from the Democratic Party solely summarizes the mission of Anatolianism in the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Anatolianism is briefly the ideology of a country, which transformed into a homeland from a plain geographic region.

On the other hand, not at all representative of the conservative movement has the Anatolianist line. Cevat Sakir Kabağaçlı being known as Halikarnas Balıkcısı, Azra Erhat and Sebahattin Eyüboğlu have contributed greatly to the Anatolia by glorifying it with their artworks. This attitude is called as more of Blue Anatolianism. (Mavi Anadoluçuluk) However, the fact that Anatolianism intertwined with populist discourse has been more of a characteristic of the right-wing politics.

5.5.3. Peasantism:

Since the very beginning, peasants had been one of the most important target groups for the populist rhetoric. Therefore peasantist rhetoric became one of the most important sources of populist rhetoric. In this study, which analyses populism and democracy in Turkey by method of discourse analysis, therefore, it is needed to examine peasantist rhetoric and to explain in which points this rhetoric contributes the populist discourse.

The New Republic's populist policy was intertwined with peasantism as much as with Anatolianism. Everyone who would like to face people should face the peasants, because almost eighty percent of the new country's population was peasants.

There has been a rise in peasantism all over the world as of 1930s. The most important reason of it was that the effects of industrialization to be questioned with the 1929 economic crisis. The fact that the agricultural structures have been disorganized due to the impacts of the Industrial Revolution all over the world brought about a large dilemma between peasantry-urbanity. In order to meet the labor need brought about by the industrialization, the rural people had to move to the cities and be urbanized. In case of this, wide range of migration to the cities from the villages has been observed all over the world and the political order started a restructuring process against the migration. An alternative one to this option was a life model in which peasants stay in their villages while their transition to modernity was ensured. However, in this way the adaptation to the new regime by villagers could be ensured. It is possible to name all the policies and rhetorics emerged in this process followed in order for peasants to be adapted to the new regime as peasantism.

What caused the peasants to become such an effective element in the new modern social and political system? Asım Karaömerlioğlu states that the greatest social impact of modernity was observed on peasants. The most challenging process underwent by 1917 Russian revolution was the demobilization of peasantry for a purification process. The most important problem of the Balkans after the 1st World War was the riots of peasants. In China, the origin of the 1949 Revolution was the

peasants. While researching the origins of populism, Canovan addresses how peasants caused the beginning of the populist movement in America. Not only in the major specific parts of the world, but also in other places the radical changes of the peasants while encountering with modernity could be felt.

Feroz Ahmad states that peasantism has arrived in Turkey by virtue of Ottoman intellectuals influenced by the Russian Narodnic movement. Populism has the romantic overtones owing to peasantism. During the period of Ottoman Empire, the peasants constituted the majority of the population. That is to say, the large part of mass that we can call as “the public” (the people) consisted of peasants. When proceed to Republic period, this fact has maintained in the rural/urban population ratio. Young Republic needed a comprehensive peasantism policy for managing this demographic structure, the vast majority of which was composed of the peasants. Kemalist policies had to put peasantism in the very center of populism. As Anatolianism ensured the nationalism of that period to be based upon a geographical reason; Peasantism should ensure to catch the point of view of a group of people in which peasants are the majority.

It can be said that populist rhetoric of the Republic period would make sense by its emphasis on the issue of peasantism. The assets of the village and the peasants would be dignified by populist rhetoric (Karaömerlioğlu 2014: 14).⁷⁴

⁷⁴Karaömerlioğlu points out that the peasantist rhetoric in Turkey has four important characteristics as follows.

- 1) Its bias about urbanization and industrialization; There was the fear lies behind this character of the riots of labor force increased in the cities as a result of urbanization. Instead of this, it could be possible to overcome these problems with a kind of industrialization, which centralized the villages in order to prevent migration to cities.
- 2) It dignifies the village and peasants; The opposition to urbanization was forming a basis for the dignification of the village life and peasantry. Peasants are represented as the original pure Turkish people and considered as intelligent and noble people who are open to change (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:69). With those characteristics, the peasants can be the carriers of a desired national culture and nationalism. Karaömerlioğlu indicates that this rhetoric is supported by the fact that there are more non-Muslims in the cities.
- 3) Its opposition to Westernization; This is an important starting point for the rise of peasantist rhetoric. The idea that Westernization will collapse nationalism by pulling it apart from the national values and culture is the dominant theme in peasantism.
- 4) It considers education as significant for the transformation of the villages; In order to reach their aims, Peasantists believed that the sympathy for villages should be represented in the education system. Today, in Turkey, the fact that there is still a sympathetic approach in the education system towards the village and the peasantry can be explained in this way.

Hasan Bülent Kahraman also states that while considering the populism in Turkey, peasants have a significant place in. However until the period of Democrat Party, he states that peasantism is based on transforming the peasants, in other words, to discipline them. Thus, it will be able to reintegrate the children of the peasants in regime whom it transformed in terms of the regime (Kahraman, 2010:168). However, as of 1950, the political authorities have tried to reinforce their populist discourses by exalting the peasants and their values rather than undertaken a duty like transforming the peasants.⁷⁵

5.6. Through a Democratic Regime: Chain of Equivalences has Begun to be Formed

The year of crisis started with 1929 has reached the peak with the start of the Second World War in 1939. Authoritarian and statist tendencies that had emerged with 1929 Economic Crisis became sharper during the process towards Second World War. In the years of Second World War, there was a single party regime in Turkey Towards the end of the war, reactions to the regime were increased to such a level, which can form a new opposition wing.

In 1945, after the Second World War, it was understood that authoritarian regimes has come to an end all over the world. The entire world had entered a new democratic era. It is inevitable that democratic and liberal regimes and **starting from this point the populism as well to be discussed with the concept of democracy.** The establishment of a pluralistic party system, and then to have a democratic government form has become the main political objectives of Turkey after 1950.

When we evaluated Karaömerlioğlu's assertions, it is possible to say that peasantism is intermingled with the populist rhetoric and because of the social conditions of the period peasantism maintained its dominant influence from the 1930s to the 1950s. Since the proclamation of the Republic until today, we can say that peasantist rhetoric has been gradually pulled in the populist rhetoric and then it was superseded by a more dominant Anatolianist rhetoric. The economic instability in the period where proclamation of the Republic occurs no longer exists today but to dignify peasants and ordinary citizens maintains an important theme in the choice of words used when addressing a society of peasant origins.

⁷⁵When evaluated in terms of populism, particularly for the profile of a right wing leader, peasantry or being a child of a peasant always played an important role. The rising children of peasants like Süleyman Demirel, Turgut Özal or a child of a peasant who migrated into Kasımpaşa district of Istanbul like R. Tayyip Erdoğan has been more successful to produce populist rhetoric compared to the well-educated politicians of bourgeois origin.

When Turkey was fighting for changing to a “democratic” order at the end of the Second World War, the foremost conflict –not the only one but the foremost conflict– was the conflict between the ruling class and the people. (Güneş, 2009:8). That was the time for a new kind of populism, not like the one in Kemalist era, to gain power. In the words of Zafer Toprak, a transformation was happening from a sort of “intellectual populism” to “political populism”, which is a part of real and democratic system (Toprak, 2014, Kaynar, 2015).

5.6.1. Populism versus “Halkçılık”: A Conceptual Ambiguity

In this part, I will summarize how “Halkçılık” in Turkey slowly turned into “populism” during the process of establishment of multi-party system since 1946 and how populism as an intellectual idea started to dominate political life.

One of the most important points when addressing the populism in Turkey is to use which term: populism or halkçılık. Although Halkçılık and populism was translated to English often as populism, we need to note that these two are corresponding to two different meanings in Turkish. Halkçılık comes from the Arabic word – Halk (public) whereas populism comes from Latin word popula. But the difference between the two is not only the differences in their origin. In dictionary of Turkish Language Association (TDK), people are defined as “the term refers to the people who live in the same country with the same cultural characteristics of the same nationality”. Whereas Halkçılık is defined as “the term refers to the opinion and behavior which do not presume any difference between individuals and do not accept any privileges within the community, a populism”. On the other hand, if we look at the definition of populism, populism is defined as “the policy done by dramatizing the political situation with the purpose of raising public interest” and as “abetment of the people”. The contradictions in practice of use reflected also in the dictionary of Turkish Language Association and in the main texts addressing this issue.

Although in general use a positive meaning is attributed to the Halkçılık in Turkey, populism in Turkish is used as a contemptuous statement. Populism is also defined from time to time as something undesirable and not tolerated policy even by parties that have- populist policies and seen almost as a crime.

As addressed widely in this study, it should not be ignored that there are positive and negative meanings attributed to this concept. For example, when Taggart discusses on populism, he points out the existence of a pathological condition whereas Margaret Canovan argues that populism is undeniable element of democracy.

For example Ilkay Sunar states that using the Halkçılık term in Turkish history in the period up to 1950s is more appropriate and for the period after 1950 to use populism word is more appropriate. On the other hand Halkçılık term is preferred, especially in the studies made on Kemalism whereas populism word is preferred in the other genres comes after Kemalism.

Zafer Toprak has named his study in which he examined the Halkçılık from the Ottoman period in Turkey as ‘Populism in Turkey’. Necmi Erdogan prefers to use populism word, whereas Çağlar Keyder named to the Turkish History after 1950s as populist democracy. Recently, when the number of studies made on populism is increased and increasingly are intertwined with world literature, it is seen this trend to be reduced and gradually word populism began to dominate the discourse.

For example, Çağlar Keyder addresses the difference with a striking example. In Turkish history since 1950, he states that “populism of the Democratic Party” is a genre that arose against “State’s Populism”. From this perspective, he argues that halkçılık is specific to the one party period whereas he argues that populism is the emphasis made by the regime of multi-party to the people.

Unlike this, Zafer Toprak does not make such a distinction from the beginning. These words are used by him interchangeably. But historically, especially in his studies where he examines the period until 1923, with the influence the resources he took advantage of, he talks about halkçılık. Rustow defines the Halkçılık, which was effective from the republican period in Turkey, as “populism: from above downwards”.

While Gunes Ayata emphasizes that the word Halkçılık was significant in the Republican People’s Party of republican period, she highlights that internal debates in started when the party took the name of People’s Party (Güneş Ayata, 2010:64).

After a war of independence where ‘People’ word referred to a leftist opinion, it was proposed to have such a name like “National Party” would be more convenient. Ataturk himself denied that the party did not bear a leftist opinion. He did not believe that there are different classes or social groups in the country; the party combined the interests of everyone. Ataturk insisted that the party represents all society. The idea of “halkçılık” meant a government based on popular sovereignty; which was another expression of “people’s power” which was newly adopted from the West. Party leaders rejected the idea of any class or social group. Instead, they believed that the labor classes like businessmen, civil servants, farmers, artisans were living in solidarity with each other, without having any conflicting economic interests. When there was any conflicting interest, one party was enough. Halkçılık was a way of uniting the entire country and of hindering the different interests of classes (Güneş Ayata, 2010: 64).

In this section, the difference between the two will be examined and clarified. It has been preferred to use the word populism in this study. The word Halkçılık is used to make a more periodic definition as it is done by Zafer Toprak and Ilkay Sunar.

5.6.2. A New Kind of Populism on the Rise

Laclau underlines that Kemalism couldn’t be a fully populist movement at any time. Principle of populism represented in the six arrows of Kemalism went through a different path than the populist movements in the world. In this respect, Kemalist populism was an unsuccessful project according to Laclau. In Turkey, a new democratic period was about to start with this unsuccessful project.

“The failure of the Kemalist experiment in constituting a **“people”** was evident whenever there was an opening in the political system. When president İnönü decided to hold democratic elections in 1950, the oppositional Democratic Party won 408 seats Parliament against 69 for the official Republican Party. Equivalences spread wildly, but in directions which had little to do with Atatürk’s six arrows: first the neopopulism of Adnan Menderes, later the renaissance of Islamism. The result was tortuous process, in which periods of democratic opening were interrupted by successive military interventions” (Laclau, 2005:214).

Hasan Bülent Kahraman also emphasizes a similar point with Laclau. Success factor of Democratic Party is able to transform the principle of populism, which Kemalism couldn't transform to a real populism, into practice with a sui generis understanding. (Kahraman, 2007) Laclau interprets this reality within his own words as the “growth and expansion of chain of equivalences”. According to this thesis, this chain of equivalences named itself as ‘democracy’ and existed together with different chains of differences until today and succeeded dominating Turkish right wing.

The most significant element of the establishment of Democratic Party is being an extension of the policies of an opposition wing originated from the Republican People's Party. However, this movement didn't stop and improved a new understanding. When we analyze this understanding, we face with Populism (Kahraman, 2007:13).

According to İlkey Sunar, Democratic Party started its political life in a condition, which had had its roots at populist ideology but excluded public politically, centralist in the political area and had different structures in the cultural, social and economic areas. Weak civil society, absence of a pluralist structure which orders state-society relations and centralist structure all together created an environment suitable for populism. In Laclauian sense, it can be said that a suitable environment was created for demands to be expressed in articulated way.

5.7. Concluding Remarks

In this part of the study I examined the emergence of Populism in Turkey and its until 1950, the DP power. I mentioned the emergence of populism in the Ottoman Empire and I summarized the development of the idea as “halkçılık”until 1950s. I mentioned the main constituent of the “halkçılık” such as nationalism, peasantism and Anatolianism and I indicated their role on the “construction of the people” in Turkish politics.

With 1946, a new variable-democracy- come into the “halkçılık”discussions and this variable changed the context of the concept. Since then, the populism notion in Turkey should be discussed in relation with the democracy. In the next chapter, I will

analyze the relationship between populism and democracy by using two illustrative cases DP and AKP.

CHAPTER 6
POPULISM AND DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY: CHAIN OF POPULISM
FROM THE DEMOCRAT PARTY TO THE JUSTICE AND
DEVELOPMENT PARTY

This chapter is devoted to two illustrative cases, that of the Democrat Party (DP) and that of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), which serve as proof that Laclau's populism theory can be employed to explore the populist discourse in Turkey. My analysis of these two cases centers around two key concepts borrowed from Laclau's theory of populism: "the chain of equivalences" and "the chain of differences." The former concept, used to refer to the establishment of the unity of demands and the naming of this chain of equivalences as "democracy," fits well with the two cases in question, as both political parties established the unity of demands within the context of the democracy of discourse. The latter concept, which denotes the emergence of the chain of differences from within this chain of equivalences and antagonism's being directed towards the chain of differences, also fits well with the two cases, as both political parties are devised a chain of differences against the chain of equivalences, and directed all their negative elements of their discourses towards the chain of differences.

In this context, I traced the development of and the changes in the chain of equivalences and the chain of differences in the two parties' discourses of democracy, and analyzed this process based on Laclauian concepts. This analysis revealed how the concept of democracy and the definition of the people turned into empty signifiers in the process. I also discussed the relationship between populism and democracy in the discourses of both parties, focusing on how the chain of equivalences contributed to the tradition of democracy, and how the chain of differences impaired the democratic system. In short, I made a thorough analysis of the relationship of populism and democracy in the two parties' discourses employing Laclauian concepts.

6.1. The Democrat Party: The First Confrontation of Populism and Democracy

In this chapter, I will examine the populist elements of the democracy discourse of the DP on the basis of the concepts that Laclau offers in his theory of populism. In this part of my study, I will firstly deal with how the DP established a “unity of demands” around the ideal of democracy, and how people from all walks of life gathered around a common demand thanks to the magical word “democracy.” Secondly, I will focus on the DP’s understanding of democracy, through which it tried to sustain this chain of equivalences established under the name of democracy. In this manner, I will analyze the relationship between democracy and populism as witnessed during the rule of the DP. I will try to demonstrate how the meanings attributed to the word democracy changed, and how the word thus turned into an empty signifier over time, giving as examples the different manifestations of the populist discourse that the DP adopted. Finally, I will try to show how the DP reinforced its populist discourse through antagonism, and analyze how “othering” and the putting of all the “others” in the same pot as enemies, which is common in populist discourse, came into existence under DP rule. I will then discuss to what extent the populist discourse of democracy, which is further reinforced by these two discursive elements, is compatible with the liberal democracy.

I will also raise the question of whether populism is an essential or a pathological element of the democratic order and how the media contributes to democracy or populism given the structure of political parties in Turkey. These are the main foci of chapter four.

In this part of the study, I argue that the DP began to establish the chain of equivalences in 1946 and that it won a great victory in 1950. I also argue that the anti-communist othering discourse emerged once the chain of equivalences was built. I underscore, however, that when the chain of differences grew over time, and when all the groups that did not support the DP were integrated in this chain, the understanding of democracy was dramatically narrowed. I argue that the antagonist discourse of the DP reached its peak especially after losing votes in the 1957 elections, which did great damage to Turkish democracy.

6.1.1. A Populist Uprising: Why was the Democrat Party founded?

In the previous chapter, I addressed the debates on the transition to democracy in Turkey and what role populism had in this process. The contemporary change in the international arena as well as the developments in Turkey led to the birth of social groups who were deeply dissatisfied by some practices that Kemalist populism implemented. As of 1945, the dissatisfaction felt towards the CHP and its populism reached such a high level that it led to an opposition movement. This opposition that arose during the budget discussions at the beginning of 1945 became all the more apparent during the discussions on the Law on Land Reform⁷⁶. Following this law, which was enacted on 11 June 1945, Celal Bayar, Refik Koraltan, Adnan Menderes and Fuad Köprülü from the CHP submitted on 12 June 1945 a memorandum to be discussed openly in the parliament. This memorandum, known as the “Memorandum of the Four”⁷⁷ actually emerged as a response to Kemalist populism.

With that memorandum, these four deputy demanded “that a proper control mechanism be ensured in the TBMM⁷⁸, the only place where national sovereignty was manifested par excellence; that certain laws, which prevented the emergence and maintenance of democratic institutions and restrained the populist spirit of the Constitution, be amended; and that all relevant amendments, required by these objectives, be made immediately in the Constitution of the CHP”⁷⁹ (Koraltan, as cited in Cem Eroğul, 1998:30). This statement which prescribed the amendment of the laws that restrained the populist spirit⁸⁰ was indicating that the DP would be close to the idea of populism right from its emergence. This memorandum was rejected, but it did not hinder the establishment and rise of the DP.

⁷⁶Çiftçi Topraklandırma Kanunu

⁷⁷Dörtlü Takrir

⁷⁸Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi-Turkish Grand National Assembly

⁷⁹“Milli hâkimiyetin tek tecelli yeri olan büyük Millet Meclisinde, hakiki bir murakabenin sağlanmasını, demokratik müesseselerin serbestçe doğup yaşamasına engel olan ve anayasanın halkçı ruhunu takyit eden bazı kanunlarda değişiklik yapılmasını ve parti tüzüğünde de yine bu maksatların icap ettirdiği tadillerin hemen icrasını” (Koraltan as cited in Cem Eroğul 1998: 30).

⁸⁰“Anayasanın halkçı ruhunu takyit eden”

Following the “Memorandum of the Four,” Refik Koraltan was expelled from the party. The other three deputies left the CHP upon Refik Koraltan’s expulsion. On 7 January 1946, the DP was founded officially. This was the first step in the transition to the multi-party system in Turkey, and the foremost objective of this system was democracy.

It is of utmost importance to mention that all the founding members of the DP were former members of the CHP, the previous party in power, and that the discontent of the people thus did not lead to the emergence of a new leader from among the members of the latter party. Rather, this movement was initiated by the ruling elites of Turkey, who adhered originally to the CHP, and then spread to the people. To put it in a different way, the populism of the DP spread from elites to the common people in its historical evolution in Turkey, not the other way around.

Up until that time, the material development of the country as well as the foundation of new political parties and the debates between them had always been a matter that the ruling elites (both civil and military) had to tackle. Common people had almost nothing to do with any of these. The DP emerged as a result of some of the ruling cadres’ joining forces with the common people. (Ağaoğlu, 1993)

For all these reasons, it is understandable that democracy was utilized as a key concept by the founding members of the DP, who were well-educated and who knew well what democracy meant. It will suffice to look at their articles that appeared in major newspapers such as *Vatan*, *Kuvvet*, *Demokrat İzmir* etc. to grasp their sense of democracy.⁸¹ In these articles, they acknowledged the success of the transition to the Republican political regime and the rule of Atatürk while expressing openly their discontent with İnönü’s policies. (Koçak, 2010:758) According to the founders of the DP, the İnönü period was marked by grave political errors.⁸²

⁸¹See Samet Ağaoğlu’s “Siyasi Günlük: Demokrat Partinin Kuruluşu” (1992) İstanbul: İletişim for more information about the founders of the political party and their newspaper writings.

⁸²See Cemil Koçak “Türkiye’de Milli Şef Dönemi 1938-1945” (2015) İstanbul İletişim Yayınları for a detailed discussion about this.

According to Cemil Koçak, the Dörtlü Tahrir had severe political consequences. The DP, “first distinguished Atatürk and İnönü from each other and then took side with Atatürk against İnönü” (Koçak, 2010:758). So they adopted a discourse against the CHP as its dissidents. Koçak thinks of this as the first step towards the foundation of “Vesayetçi Tek Parti Dönemi”⁸³ He can indeed be right, as this attitude contributed to the development of a populist discourse and of dissidence against the union of demands. It was now time to name this political group in question.

The first four articles of the Constitution of the Democrat Party, issued in 1946 indicated that the party would name the chain of equivalence that was formalized in the constitution as democracy. As seen below, this fact was clearly emphasized in the document entitled “General Principles of the Democrat Party Program”⁸⁴, which made it clear that the party intended mainly to contribute to the establishment of a democratic order in Turkey.

Article 1 underscored that the main objective of the foundation of the Democrat Party was to ensure the expansion and progress of democracy in Turkey,⁸⁵ while Article 2 suggested that the republican form of government existed mainly to guarantee that democracy lives on.⁸⁶ Article 3, on the other hand, emphasized, with reference to the Turkish nation, the importance that it attached to populist spirit.⁸⁷ In short, whoever read the Party Constitution would encounter above all the word and the discourse of “democracy,” as well as the idea that the Republic existed mainly to pave the way for democracy. Article 4 provided a more exhaustive definition of

⁸³The phrase of “Vesayetçi Tek Parti Dönemi” is still used in the populist discourse of the AKP and it finds an echo on the side of the voters.

⁸⁴“Demokrat Parti Programı Umumi Prensipler” document, www.tbmm.gov.tr

⁸⁵Madde 1 — Siyasî hayatımızın, birbirine karşılıklı saygı gösteren partilerle idaresi lüzumuna inanan Demokrat Parti, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde demokrasinin geniş ve ileri bir anlayışla gerçekleşmesine ve umumî siyasetin demokratik bir görüş ve zihniyetle yürütülmesine hizmet maksadile kurulmuştur. (Demokrat Parti Tüzüğü 1946 www.tbmm.gov.tr)

⁸⁶Madde 2 — Partimiz demokrasi esaslarına en uygun devlet şeklinin Cumhuriyet olduğuna kanidir. (Demokrat Parti Tüzüğü 1946 www.tbmm.gov.tr)

⁸⁷Madde 3 — Partimiz, demokrasiyi, millî menfaata ve insanlık haysiyetine en uygun bir prensip olarak tanır ve Türk milletinin siyasî olgunluğuna inanır. (Demokrat Parti Tüzüğü 1946 www.tbmm.gov.tr)

democracy, emphasizing not only the notion of national will but also that of rights and freedoms as constituents of democracy.⁸⁸

The demand for democracy was clearly seen to predominate in not only the party constitution but also the articles penned by the leading names of the party. Soon after the foundation of the DP, its deputies began to write articles for the newspaper *Vatan*, expressing their discontent with and opposition to the policies adopted and implemented by the CHP. These articles usually focused on how liberalism and democracy could be built. In the four years between this early period and the beginning its rule on 14 May 1950, the DP advocated a highly liberal and pluralist democratic model.

It is important to note that the debates on democracy in the Turkish press became all the more intense after the transition to the multi-party regime in 1946. In the meantime, between 1946 to 1950, debates over democracy in the press and the spread of the opposition party's opinions about daily affairs to the broader public through the press had a positive impact on the development of democracy in Turkey. However, through the last years of their government, the DP attempted to manipulate the press, which had become more all the more effective and which was thus seen by the DP as a convenient propaganda tool. However, given democracy and populism, it is possible to say for the period between 1946 and 1950, the press can be defined as the fourth power of democracy.⁸⁹ From this perspective, Nuran Yıldız claims that this period can be considered as liberal given the relations between the press and the government (Yıldız, 1997). Nilgün Gürkan argues that the press had a multi-functional role in the transition to democracy during the period between 1946-1950 (Gürkan, 1998).⁹⁰

⁸⁸Madde 4 — Geniş ve ileri manasile demokrasi, bütün millet faaliyetlerine millî iradeyi ve halkın menfaatini hâkim kılmak, yurddaşın ferdî ve içtimaî bütün hak ve hürriyetlerine sahip olmasını gerçekleştirmek, yurddaşlar arasında hukuk eşitliğini, menfaatlerde ahengi sağlamaktır. (Demokrat Parti Tüzüğü 1946 www.tbmm.gov.tr)

⁸⁹For a detailed evaluation of this issue, see Nuran Yıldız 1997 *Demokrat Parti İktidarı ve Basın 1950-1960 A.Ü.SBF Dergisi (Yıllık)*, C.51, 481-505

⁹⁰For a detailed account of this issue, see Nilgün Gürkan (1998) “Türkiye’de Demokrasi’ye Geçişte Basın” İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Adnan Menderes states in his article entitled “A Situation Causing Grief”⁹¹ that appeared in the *Vatan* newspaper on 19 May 1946 that

History is full of the struggles of nations for limiting the dominance and power of absolute authorities to the greatest extent possible and for transforming authoritarian institutions into institutions serving the people. The objective of all the efforts that nations put into these struggles is to guarantee, through a principal law called the Constitutional Law, and once and for all, the political rights and freedoms that every individual must have before those who are in power and who have the executive authority, solely for being a human being and a citizen (Adnan Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:14).⁹²

As illustrated by the quotation above, Adnan Menderes formulates the objective of the Democratic Party as a much wider constitutional democracy. Furthermore, he states that the Republican People’s Party has an antagonist discourse against him and does not have the necessary political maturity, as can be observed in the same article:

Ruling parties, which do not have an adequate political maturity and which do not consider the country’s higher interests above all their own political interests, have a weapon against the opposition which became blunt since it was used a lot against the opposition: to accuse the opposition whenever possible of making agreements and collaborating with whatever country, and even with the enemy, and of informing public opinion and the world against the opposition.” (Adnan Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:18).⁹³

Moreover, in 1946, for the first time in Turkish politics where no civil society tradition then existed, the Democratic Party underlined that political elements outside

⁹¹Teessür verici bir manzara

⁹²Adnan Menderes, 19 Mayıs 1946 tarihli *Vatan* Gazatesinde yazdığı “Teessür Verici Bir Manzara” başlıklı yazısında şöyle diyordu. “Tarih mutlak iktidarın hakimiyet ve kudretini mümkün olduğu kadar hudutlamak ve hakimiyet makamlarını hizmet mevkileri haline getirmek yolunda milletlerin yaptıkları mücadelelerle doludur. Bu mücadelelerde millet olarak sarfolunan bütün gayretlerin hedefi icra ve iktidarı elinde tutanlara karşı ferdin insan olmak sıfatiyle haiz olması tabii bulunan hak ve masuniyetleriyle vatandaş olmak sıfatiyle sahip olması lazım gelen siyasi hak ve hürriyetlerin Anayasa denilen bir temel kanun ile kat’i teminat altına alınabilmesidir.” (Adnan Menderes, as cited in Esirci, 1967: 14)

⁹³“Siyasi olgunluğu kafi olmayan ve memleketin yüksek menfaatlerine particilik endişelerinin üstünde yer vermiyen iktidar partilerinin muhalefete karşı çok kullanılmakla körleşmiş bir silahı vardır. Karşılarındakini her fırsatta falan veya filan ecnebi devletle, hatta düşmanla söz birliği işbirliği yapmış olmakla suçlandırmak ve umumi efkara ve dünyaya bu suretle jurnal etmek.” (Adnan Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967: 18)

the political parties were also the constituents of democracy. Even though this was a great ideal in terms of democracy, this ideal would never come true.

The Democrat Party did not consider the existence of political parties as sufficient for the establishment of a truly democratic regime, which required the establishment of civil organizations founded by workers, farmers, and traders, as well as the self-employed, civil servants, teachers, and university students.⁹⁴ This political realm, consisting of civil organizations, however, were always suppressed by the Democrat Party, due to the so-called communist threat.

In Article 9, it is underlined that the first precondition for the manifestation of the people's will (national will) is the freedom to vote and free elections, and that any attempt to hinder free elections would be deemed a crime committed against the sovereignty of the people.⁹⁵

As we have seen up to this point, the emergence of the Democrat Party has its roots in the discontent with the populism of the CHP, and that it came to power by promoting a new sense of populism.

It is clear that the party adopted a pluralist democracy discourse when it was established. However, it did not take long before this pluralist understanding of democracy gave way to a populist discourse. The DP, which overtly criticized the populist understanding of the Kemalist regime, wanted to establish a new populist understanding, whereby it could underscore the “appeal to the people.”

Until the elections of 21 July 1946, the party was organized rapidly especially in rural areas. The party was able to hold 62 seats in the parliament following the

⁹⁴MADDE 7 — Umumî hayata her bakımından muvazeneli ve ahenkli bir gelişmenin sağlanması için, yalnız siyasî partiler kurulmasını, yani sadece Siyasî sahada teşkilâtlanmış olmâyi kâfi görmüyoruz; milletimizin iktisadî ve içtimâî sahalarda da suretle teşkilâtlanması ve daha şuurlu bir birlik tecellisi için işçilerin, çiftçilerin, tüccar ve sanayicilerin, serbest meslekler mensuplarının, memur ve muallimlerin, yüksek öğretim talebesinin içtimâî ve iktisadî maksatlarla, cemiyetler, kooperatifler ve sendikalar kurmalarını gerekli buluyoruz. (Demokrat Parti Tüzüğü 1946, www.tbmm.gov.tr)

⁹⁵MADDE 9 — Millî iradenin tam tecellisi, seçimlerin her türlü müdahaleden ve serbest olarak gizli rey ile yapılmasına ve siyasî partilerin eşit haklara sahip bulunmalarına bağlıdır. Seçimlerin serbestliğini bozacak hareketleri, millî hakimiyete karşı işlenmiş bir suç addederiz. (Demokrat Parti Tüzüğü 1946 www.tbmm.gov.tr)

elections of 21 July 1946, which was not the success that they deserved according the DP. So it claimed that the elections were rigged by the ruling party, advocating once again the necessity of the freedom to vote and free elections for building a true democracy. No longer did the DP reach the people only through its constitution and through articles penned by its members for mainstream newspapers. The DP was now closer than ever before to the people thanks to the meetings that it held. Let us thus explore, in this context, how the DP brought its populist discourse to maturity, in the light of the discourses delivered in the meetings in question

Following the elections, Adnan Menderes expressed the following opinion in his speech on 21 March 1947 in Kütahya as the Kütahya deputy of the party:

The People's Party is deprived of the quality of being populist, whose first condition is to value the people, as well as their vote and their opinions. However, their practice runs counter to this condition. The People's Party is a party founded by and a sub-organization of the government, which sicked the party on the people (Adnan Menderes, as cited in Esirci, 1964).⁹⁶

In the opposition period between 1946 and 1950, the DP advocated populism from such a perspective. It frequently stated that the CHP was not a populist party, and that the DP was the only party in Turkey that served the populist cause.

The DP attached great importance to direct communication with the people as it built a new understanding of populism. The DP representatives often visited rural areas, trying to reach individual voters. They told the people that the CHP was and acted against the nation and that the only representative of the nation was the DP. They also accused the CHP of oppressing them. The Democratic Party has thus managed to establish a simple populist discourse.

Adnan Menderes uttered the following words in the Democratic Party meeting held on 17 July 1946 in Aydın:

My dear friends!

⁹⁶“Halk Partisi halkçılık vasfından da mahrumdur. Halkçı olabilmek için herşeyden önce halka, halk reyine, efkarına kıymet vermek icap eder. Halbuki tatbikat bunun tamamilen aksinedir. Halk Partisi, hükümetin kurduğu bir parti, hükümetin halk içine saldırdığı bir teşkilat kolu olmak mahiyetindedir.” (Adnan Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1964).

The reason I came here is to give an account to you.
We have struggled so far to bring freedom to our country, but they took no heed of us. They interrogated us and cursed us for seven hours.
If they are mad at us, it is only because we do not act the way that they want us to.” (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:28)⁹⁷.

Menderes had, in this fashion, integrated the victimization discourse, which is an indispensable element of populist discourse, into his discourse. This uprising was embraced by the people. In the period from 1946 up to 1950, the DP it gained the ever-increasing support of the people thanks primarily to this populist discourse, as exemplified by the speech that he made at the DP Meeting on 8 April 1947 in Balıkesir:

“We do not classify the people as first class, second class or third class citizens. We are simply people who draw their strength from you, that is, the people, the masses.” (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:75).⁹⁸

On 19 May 1948 in Nazilli, Adnan Menderes used a similar discourse when speaking in front of the public:

“The Turkish nation is well aware that they and their interests are best represented by the Democratic Party, and not by the official authority and the government” (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:145)⁹⁹

While in opposition, The DP had gained the support of the people through its populist discourse, and when it came to power, it reinforced this populist discourse through the antagonistic discourse that it directed to the opposition.

⁹⁷ “Sevgili Arkadaşlarım! Ben size hesap vermeğe geldim.

Bugüne kadar bu memlekete hürriyet gelsin diye çırpındık, dinlemediler. Bizi sorguya çektiler. 7 saat küfrettiler.

Bize kızmalarının yegâne sebebi, istedikleri yolda yürümeyişimizdir. (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:28)

⁹⁸ Biz halkı birinci sınıf, ikinci sınıf üçüncü sınıf halk diye tezyif edenlerden değiliz. Biz bütün kuvvetini siz halk kütlesinden alan insanlarız. (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:75)

⁹⁹ “Türk Milleti biliyor ki resmi devletin, resmi hükümetin ötesinde kendisini ve bütün emellerini Demokrat Parti temsil etmektedir.” (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967:145)

The ongoing problematic relations with the CHP were completely ruptured in 1949, when their relations with the authorities reached deadlock. Hence, in the second congress of the Democrat Party, the party was seen to have adopted a more antagonistic discourse. In the document issued in this congress, called the “National Assurance Oath”¹⁰⁰ and referred to also as the “Oath of National Enmity”¹⁰¹ by the CHP due to its aggressiveness, it was stated that freedom to vote should be ensured for the construction of democracy in Turkey, and that otherwise the ruling party would taste “the nation’s enmity” as the expression of national conscience, and be weighed down under the heavy burden of a historical responsibility (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1964: 208).¹⁰² This antagonism was to affect the success of the DP in Laclauian sense. In this manner, the law of election was amended in 1949, putting the elections under the judicial control.

This section of the chapter was devoted to shedding some light on how the DP succeeded in influencing the masses through the word “democracy” between 1946 and 1950.

6.1.1.1. Is Democracy Only an Internal Demand?

It would be misleading to say that only inner factors strengthened (?) the foundation of the DP and its discourse of democracy. One should also take external factors into consideration if one wishes to understand why the DP preferred to call the union of demands democracy. Following World War II, the discourse of democracy had begun to gain prominence throughout the world. The period between 1946, when the DP was founded, and 1950, when it came to power, was a time when the whole world welcomed the concept of democracy with great excitement.

¹⁰⁰ Milli Teminat Andı

¹⁰¹ Milli Husumet Andı

¹⁰² “Bu itibarla vatandaş siyasi hak ve hürriyetlerinin kullanılmasına ve milli hakimiyet esaslarının tahakkukuna herhangi bir surette engel olacak kanun dışı hareketlerden tevakkı okunması lüzumunu memleketin en yüksek menfaatleri hesabına belirtmek isteriz. Aksi yolda harekete teşebbüs edenlerin ise milli vicdanın ifadesi olan millet husumetine maruz kalmak gibi ağır ve tarihi bir mesuliyete mahkum olacakları muhakkaktır.” (Menderes as cited in Esirci, 1967: 207)

The post-World War II bipolar order that took over the entire world necessitated a choice between the American-style democracy and the Soviet-style socialism. The CHP did not take a clear stance in this context of political polarization. Taner Timur argues that this was the main reason for the foundation of the DP: “The DP is the product of the development that our societal order, which gained some stability during the period of Atatürk, has gone through as a result of the policies followed during World War II.” (Timur, 1991:23)¹⁰³ According to Timur, it was also during this process that the CHP failed to gain the support of the liberals, which was yet another reason why those in favor of democracy were attracted to the Democrat Party (Timur, 1991).

Hüseyin Bağcı gives an account of the tremendous impact of the Democrat Party’s proximity with the American policies on the internal politics of Turkey and significantly on the politics of the DP during this period that the DP would think as “Turkey’s Entrance to the Western Alliance” in his book called “Turkish Foreign Affairs in 1950s.” (Bağcı, 2014)

The DP’s pro-American stance accounts both for the establishment of the union of demands under the name of democracy and the reinforcement of the populist discourse by othering communism and the communists. The Democrat Party’s transition to a democratic regime with the impact of the outer factors can be understood together with the debates on the Transition to Democracy

Between 1946 and 1950, the DP gained utmost popularity and support from the people thanks both to internal and external factors. To put it differently, the DP succeeded in developing a certain discourse that gained wide popularity by incorporating the demand for democracy, which was then being voiced throughout the world, into internal demands.

Towards the 1950 elections, the phrase “Enough, the Nation speaks!”¹⁰⁴ began to be identified with the Democrat Party. Accordingly, on 5 March 1950 in Adana, in the

¹⁰³Taner Timur offers a thorough discussion about this issue in his book “Çok Partili Hayata Geçiş (1991) Ankara: İmge Kitabevi)

¹⁰⁴ “Yeter, Söz Milletin!”

Provincial Congress of the Democrat Party, Adnan Menderes uttered the following words:

“The citizens who constitute the great masses will turn their backs on the regime that does not lend an ear to their troubles and will surely find a way to bring to power those that will listen to them. Freedom, free elections, and national sovereignty works wonders.” (Esirci, 1967:223).¹⁰⁵

In the elections held on 14 May 1950, the DP won an overwhelming victory over the CHP. The DP won 53,5% of the votes and earned a great success thanks to its ability to ensure a balanced chain of equivalences and chain of differences. The populist discourse centered around the notion of democracy had thus won its first victory ever. This clearly showed, in the Laclauian sense, that a unity of demands was established around a party’s demand for democracy.

Table 1 1950 General Election Results¹⁰⁶

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Democrat Party (DP)	55,2	416
Republican People’s Party (CHP)	39,6	69
Nation Party (MP)	4,6	1
Independents (Bağımsızlar)	0,6	1

6.1.2. Brief History of the Democrat Party Government

The DP’s discourse against the policies of the CHP (or more specifically to İnönü) and the DP’s stress on democracy was welcomed with great interest by the public, and the DP succeeded in receiving appreciation in return for its strong discourse and the unity of demands during its opposition period.

¹⁰⁵ “Büyük kitleler teşkil eden vatandaşlar, dertlerini dinlemiyen bir idareye karşı sırtlarını çevirerek kendi dertlerini dinliyecek olanları işbaşına getirmenin yolunu muhakkak bulacaklardır. Keramet hürriyettir, Keramet serbest reydedir, keramet milli hakimiyettir (Menderes as cited in Esirci,1967:223).

¹⁰⁶ www.tuik.gov.tr

The Democrat Party gained a great victory and came to power in 1950, but this did not mean that this party gained dominion over the military and civil bureaucracy. (Eroğul, 1998:98). The Democrat Party had to maintain the delicate balance between the government and the bureaucracy through its discourse of democracy

Cem Eroğul describes this process as a “scary path to power”¹⁰⁷. According to Eroğul, despite the fact that the DP was in power, and that the CHP was in opposition, in practice, the DP could not yet exercise control over the state mechanisms. But it was only a matter of time before the DP seized the state mechanisms as well. To this end, the Democrat Party knew to use the populist discourse once again (Eroğul, 1998:98).

Tanel Demirel argues that the Democrat Party’s authoritarian leanings became mostly visible during this period. The DP, which aimed to exert absolute authority over the bureaucracy and the army, believed that it could only accomplish this with its ever-growing authoritarian politics (Demirel, 2011:136).

In order to gain control over state mechanisms, the Democrat Party first made changes in the army by replacing the high-ranking officers. In the second month of the DP government, the Arabic version of the “azan” (call to prayer) was put back into practice, which is still recited in Arabic today. This was a very important step that appealed beyond measure to the people. All this had a great impact on the mayoral elections held in September 1950, where the DP gained power in almost all municipalities. This achievement, gained mainly by means of a populist discourse, put enormous pressure on the CHP.

However, during this period, the DP began to abandon the idea of democracy that it had constructed and maintained between 1946 and 1950 and reduced it to the “national will”.¹⁰⁸ This change is well-exemplified by a speech made by Menderes in a meeting held on 20 June 1952 at the end of the legislative session:

¹⁰⁷ “Korkulu Geçit”

¹⁰⁸ Millet iradesi

Our democracy is not liable to the slightest danger. After having brought it to this point, we now have a bridge before us: we have to live through this period. The new election will pave the way for an absolutely normal period. Let's join our forces and work together. We are almost there anyway. We don't need to rush. Everyone has to obey the will of the nation. [...] We have to obey what happens. We have to submit to the will of the nation, since we all are the servants of that will (Menderes as cited in Sükan, 1991: 156).¹⁰⁹

After coming into power, the DP began reforming the military and the bureaucracy and everything else that they believed was under the influence of the CHP in domestic politics, as they have initiated a politically more active¹¹⁰ phase in the international arena. The most opposition that the DP had to tackle arose because of the above-mentioned shift in foreign policy.

Bağcı classifies the changes and the important developments in the foreign policy of the Democrat Party under three headings, the first being Turkey's entrance to the Western alliance, the second being the new path in Middle Eastern politics, and the third being the Cyprus policy (Bağcı, 2014).

The DP first followed a strong pro-American policy, which led to Turkey's entrance to NATO in 1952, and its joining the Korean War. The DP portrayed this latter decision as being in accordance with its aim to be a part of the new "democratic" bloc.

The DP's new leaning was not only towards the US. Because of the friendly relations with the US, Menderes wanted to realize new breakthroughs in his Middle Eastern policy. "Although Turkey's Middle Eastern policy, which concerned mainly Arabic countries, gave the signs of a "new tendency" after World War II, and a complete shift was under way right after the Menderes government came into power on May

¹⁰⁹Demokrasimiz en küçük bir tehlikeye maruz değildir..Buraya kadar getirdikten sonra bir köprümüz vardır, bu devreyi aşmak. Yeni seçimlere girdikten sonra yüzdeyüz normal bir devir açılacaktır, buna elbirliği ile çalışalım. Şunun şurasında ne kaldı? Telaşımız nedir? Millet iradesine boyun eğmek lazımdır " ne nizam eyleyelim ol ne senindir ne benim" Kazaya rıza göstermek lazımdır. Milletin iradesine boyun eğmek lazımdır. Hepimiz onun fermanberiyiz. (Fermanber: boyun eğen, itaat eden) (Menderes as cited in Faruk Sükan, 1991:156)

¹¹⁰"Active foreign politics" is a term coined by Hüseyin Bağcı, which is used to express that Atatürk's policy of neutrality was changed by the DP.

14th, 1950. The reason why this new policy was considered to be active or dynamic was the fact that the new power holders abolished Atatürk's neutral policy in the international arena (Bağcı, 2014: 37). Menderes believed that the Western interests in the Middle East were identical with his own interests and he wanted Turkey to play the role of a "key" country in the Middle East. In the same vein, the urge for leading the Muslim countries in the Middle East was an important motive for this policy.¹¹¹

Feridun Cemil Özcan establishes that the DP wanted to use international policy for the sake of a working domestic politics. This style of politics, which Özcan refers to as "internalization – externalization," strengthened the populist discourse.

Finally, the problem of Cyprus becoming an international issue led to Turkish – Greek enmity at home, which in turn led to the infamous September 6th – 7th incidents. While having attracted critiques from the opposition party because of its failure in preventing the September 6th – 7th incidents, the DP attempted to create a new field of antagonism by putting the blame on "foreign powers" and their communist supporters at home.

In the general elections of 1954, the DP won 58% of the votes, and 503 seats in the parliament, earning it a great victory.

Table 2 1954 General Election Results

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Democrat Party (DP)	58,4	503
Republican People's Party (CHP)	35,1	31
Republican Nation Party (CMP)	5,3	5
Independents (Bağımsızlar)	0,6	2

However, this victory led the DP to narrow its understanding of freedom as well. Adnan Menderes now held dramatically different views compared to ten years ago, as manifested in the budget discussions of 1955, held on 20 February 1955:

¹¹¹ Again, when we look over the JDP period, we can see the emergence of a similar and active foreign policy, and a rebuilding of the Middle Eastern policy.

“One not only has to want freedom, but also know to utilize it. And like any other thing, freedom is bestowed to one to the extent that he/she can utilize it. Freedom comes as a disaster to those who do not how to utilize it.” (Menderes as cited in Faruk Sükan, 1991)¹¹²

The DP, which had an understanding of democracy that attached utmost importance to freedom and that made room even for civil society, had begun to emphasize solely the importance of free elections for democracy. Now Menderes considered dissident demonstrations as acts of disrespect towards the national will.

From 1954 onwards, Menderes targeted the universities and the press opposing his policies. In the following years, some journalists would be detained for writing critical articles, and the general discourse against the universities would get even more outrageous.

In the process, Menderes started to perceive democracy solely as free elections and the manifestation of the national will, as is seen in his speech on 21 May 1955, where he criticized the CHP deputy Hulusi Köymen and his friends after they submitted a memorandum to the parliament:

In other countries, one comes across neither meetings from morning to evening, nor campaign-like struggles from morning to evening. Once the election is over and the will of the nation is manifested, gathering the masses occasionally to manipulate them into making demonstrations that is said to reflect the will of nation is equal to denying the significance and the influence of the recently-held elections (Menderes as cited in Faruk Sükan, 1991: 246).¹¹³

¹¹²“Hürriyeti yalnız istemek değil, onu kullanmayı bilmek lazımgelir. Ve herşeyden olduğu gibi hürriyet de kullanılabileceği ölçü ve derecede verilir. Hürriyet onu başına bir mürekkep kovası geçirir gibi geçirip palyaço gibi ortaya çıkacaklar için bir felaket teşkil eder.” (Menderes as cited in Faruk Sükan, 1991)

¹¹³“Sabahtan akşama mitingler, sabahtan akşama miting kampanyası havası içinde karşılıklı mücadeleler, bu başka memleketlerde yoktur. Bir defa seçim olup bittikten, milletin iradesi taayyüm ettikten sonra vatanadaş kitlelerini yer yer toplayıp arzuyu millinin ifadesidir şeklinde tezahürlere sevk etmek biraz evvel yapılmış seçimlerin mana ve tesirini inkar etmek olur.” (Menderes as cited in Faruk Sükan, 1991:246)

Menderes, who in the past advocated an understanding of democracy in a much broader sense, had now reduced it to the people's right to vote from election to election.

Parallel to the developments in foreign affairs, the September 6th – 7th incidents that took place in Istanbul while Menderes was negotiating the situation of Cyprus in London could be seen as an indicator of the rising polarization in the society. The opposition accused the party in power while the party in power put the blame on the opposition for these incidents. This, eventually, increased the tension between the party in power and the opposition and led to a much more authoritarian DP. Thus, we can consider this together with the rise of the chain of differences that DP had created. Because the DP increased the dosage of the anti-communist discourse following all these.¹¹⁴

Because of all these policies and the rising opposition to them, the Democrat Party faced a remarkable loss of votes in the 1957 elections. DP's votes fell down to 48% but due to the system, they could have fewer seats than the CHP.

Table 3 1957 General Election Results

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Democrat Party (DP)	48,6	424
Republican People's Party (CHP)	41,4	178
Republican Nation Party (CMP-Osman Bölükbaşı)	6,5	4
Liberty Party (HP)	3,5	4

As the economy came to a deadlock because of the external debts, the DP tried to stay in power by implementing even more authoritarian policies.

The DP attempted to suppress the opposition and the reactions against the government by oppressive policies. This not only sharpened the tension between the opposition and the government, but also let to a political and societal

¹¹⁴For a detailed account of September 6th-7th incidents, see Dilek Güven (2006) "Cumhuriyet Dönemi Azınlık Politikaları ve Stratejileri Bağlamında 6-7 Eylül Olayları" İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

polarization. According to the DP, people should side with them against the destructive and troublesome opposition (Uyar, 2001:35).¹¹⁵

This process placed the press as well as the oppositional political movements under great pressure.

The most important finding of this study is that even this polarization was sugar-coated with the discourse of democracy. For example, as a response to İnönü's criticism about bidding farewell to democracy Menderes said "We are not aiming to abolish democracy but we are trying to wipe away instigation" (Uyar, 2001:38).

In this chapter, I have given an account of the transformation of the Democrat Party administration. Now, let us focus on the chain of equivalences constructed around the concept of democracy, and then on the chain of differences that emerged from this chain of equivalences.

6.1.3. Chain of Equivalences: "Democracy"

Laclau states that the most important factor in the formation of a group is **"the articulation of all the demands of the group."** When the DP was founded in 1946, large groups were disillusioned by the practices of the single party regime. Also, the conjecture was convenient for **the formation of new political group.** The party that succeeded in the articulation of demands happened to be the DP from 1950 on. In Laclau's words, the logic of equivalences was constructed around the discourse of democracy. Thanks to Laclau's theory, we can explore the discursive conditions that resulted in the emergence of the above-mentioned collective action. According to Laclau and Mouffe "[the] central problem is to identify the discursive conditions for the emergence of a collective action, directed towards struggling against inequalities and changing relations of subordination" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:153).

¹¹⁵For a detailed study on this issue, see Hakkı Uyar (2001) *Vatan Cephesi: Türk Siyasal Yaşamında Cepheleşmelere Bir Örnek*. İstanbul:Büke Yayınları

Especially the developments that took place in the the Middle East in 1958 (The Iraqi coup d'état) and the dire financial straits had led the government to feel under threat. Adnan Menderes and his ministers thus went on an overseas trip, delivering a series of speeches where they accused the opposition. Later on, the DP used the tools of the media to the end of gaining the support of the people.

In Article 16 of the Party Constitution **populism** is described as follows: “We define populism as granting no privilege to any individual or group and protecting the interests of the people in the laws and in governing the state. The government should be from the people, for the sake of people and together with the people”.¹¹⁶

At this point, the DP replaced the Kemalist understanding of populism. The Kemalist populism’s emphasis on serving the people “in spite of the people” was no longer an element of the DP’s populist discourse. The DP thus constituted a new chain of equivalences according to the demands coming from the people.

Laclau asserts that a crisis occurs in a political system before the emergence of a populist movement, which, in turn, offers a new approach for the solution of this crisis. This new approach paves the way for the construction of a new chain of equivalences.

A leading figures of the party, Samet Ağaoğlu, voiced his opinion on how this chain of equivalences was formed. As is seen in the quotation below, he stated that the masses didn’t trust the CHP government while the transition to multi-party regime began to take place in 1945: “Hundreds of thousands of people who had joined the DP like me, and the majority of the people who assumed responsibility in both political parties like me didn’t believe that İsmet Paşa honestly wanted democracy to be established.” (Ağaoğlu, 1972)

In short, when the DP became the ruling party in 1950, a new populist movement was formed by the people who gathered together with a collective will due to their discontent with the Kemalist Regime. The articulation of demands by this collective will was called democracy, and this was why this new political movement was named the Democrat Party. The primary condition for the emergence of populism, i.e. “the construction of an equivalential chain between unfulfilled demands” was thus met.

¹¹⁶Madde 16 Halkçılığı, hiç bir şahsa veya zümreye imtiyaz tanımamak, kanunlarda ve memleket idaresinde halkın menfaatlerini korumak manasında anlıyoruz. Hükümet ve idare, halktan, halkla beraber ve halk için olmalıdır (Demokrat Parti Tüzüğü 1946 www.tbmm.gov.tr).

Cem Eroğul states that it was the people's weariness and the authority's increasing desire for power that led to the success of the DP in 1950. The DP was able to embrace people from all walks of life, from poor peasants to non-Muslim minorities, and from religious people to civil servants, who had a common discontent with the regime (Eroğul, 1998:86). Eroğul identified the constituents of the newly-created unity of demands in this manner.

Likewise, according to Nuray Mert, "The right-wing still considers the DP's coming to power in 1950 as a revolution of the people. From this perspective, DP is seen to represent a rebellion against all cultural, social, political and economic pressures. The left-wing evaluates the DP's success as the ability of the newly-emerging bourgeoisie to gain the support of people from all walks of life" (Mert, 2007:43). Here, Nuray Mert actually underscores the articulation of demands in the Laclauian sense.

Feridun Cemil Özcan also verifies Laclau's observations on social coalitions' giving rise to populism. According to Özcan, "The large social coalition that the DP mobilized with a strong populist discourse was composed of people who had perceived the threat of war or suffered especially from the war-time policies rather than from the statist practices of the 1930's" (Özcan, 2015: 39).

Tanel Demirel, on the other hand, underlines that this social coalition reunited many different requests under the name of democracy. According to Demirel, the DP tried to gather people from all walks of life and who were discontented with the government for a variety of reasons, against the CHP by using the same slogan all the time: "National will should prevail." (Demirel, 2011:52).

Demirel also stated that the basis of especially right-wing parties' populist discourses was established in opposition to the State-CHP-Party union witnessed from 1923 to 1945. This union was leader-centered, and had a low institutionalization level. And the reactionary movements, which tried to bring different groups together on the basis of their common opposition to the State-CHP-Party union, attempted to establish their own ideologies and party identities while standing on this slippery ground (Demirel, 2011:53).

The chain of equivalences that was created by different reactions/demands that came together was equated with democracy. If we used the mass that voted for the DP as our unit of analysis unlike Laclau, our analysis would be limited to the behaviors and reactions of the group. But instead we have taken the articulation of demands as our unit of analysis. Now that we have identified our unit of analysis, we can continue our analysis of the discourse of democracy that was adopted by the DP.

6.1.4. Democracy as an Empty Signifier

During the rule of the DP, democracy was seen as the magic formula that had the potential to meet all demands. Both the economic demands and the social demands (including religious freedom) of the masses were melted in the democracy pot. However, the DP's discourse of democracy had underwent a dramatic change after 1950 when it had the majority of votes, and accordingly, the DP's definition of democracy had become too narrow to meet the above-mentioned demands. For instance, former Deputy Prime Minister Samet Ağaoğlu reduced the concept of democracy into a simple procedure by saying that democracy was "a regime of numbers." (Özkan, 2004:33).¹¹⁷ In other words, the word "democracy" had turned into an empty signifier in the Laclauian sense. Laclau asserted that certain empty signifiers referred to the chain of equivalences (Laclau, 2005). And in the case of the DP, this empty signifier was "democracy."

The DP had an understanding of a single national will, assuming that the society was a homogenous whole. An inevitable consequence of such an understanding was to leave no room and need for opposition, because the interest of the whole society was represented by the national will. Therefore, Adnan Menderes could say after the municipal elections held on 3 September 1950 that "the Turkish nation effaced the People's Party (CHP) as an authority on May 14 and as an opposition on September 3" (Özkan, 2004:34).¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷For a detailed analysis see also Özkan Fulya, "1950lerin Popülizm Açısından Bir İncelemesi" *Journal of Historical Studies*, 2 (2004), 32-47.

¹¹⁸Türk Milleti Halk partisini 14 Mayıs'ta iktidardan sildi, 3 Eylül'de ise muhalefetten sildi.

At the beginning of the DP rule, the chain of equivalences had already been established around the concept of democracy. However, this democracy was no longer an ideal to be attained but an empty signifier as the DP's understanding of democracy had undergone such a dramatic change that it even excluded the idea of opposition, as is seen in quotation above.

The other example, which shows the extent to which the understanding of democracy was distorted by DP, concerns the DP's attitude towards the freedom of the press, and the use of the newspapers and radio, in particular. When the CHP pointed to the unfair use of the newspapers, and radio for propaganda before the elections, Menderes argued that this was perfectly normal. According to him, it was normal for newspapers to have different political views and for the radio to announce the actions taken by the government, as is manifested by his speech in which addressed the opposition on 4 March 1954 in the parliament:

Dear friends, there are at most 10 days left to the elections. If the nation disapproves of us, claiming that we use the radio as a means for our propaganda, they (the CHP) should come today and they keep their promises. However, let me express that by no means has the radio been put in the service of partisan mentality. The radio can rightfully announce the actions of the government to the whole country (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957:299).¹¹⁹

However, the press had already begun to serve the interests of the DP, and the radio had become a propaganda tool employed in the establishment of the National Front, which constituted the climax of the ever-increasing antagonism.

On the very same day Menderes also said: "The matter regarding the use of the radio does not exemplify or represent the order as a whole, and the claim that the ruling party has appeared more on the radio is no evidence for the non-existence of democracy in Turkey".¹²⁰ In this part of the study, we went through the construction

¹¹⁹"Muhterem arkadaşlar şurada beş on gün kaldı. Eğer biz radyoyu partizan hareketlerimize vasıta kılmış telakki ederek millet bize teveccühsüzlük gösterirse gelirler bugün söylediklerini yerine getirirler.Yalnız şunu ifade edeyim ki, radyo katiyyen ve katiyyen partizan bir zihniyetle kullanılmamıştır.Hükümetin icraatını memlekete yayması onun hakkıdır." (Doğan, 1957: 299).

¹²⁰"Radyo meselesi bütün bir nizamı temsil ve örnek teşkil etmez, Radyoda iktidarın daha fazla konuşmuş olması iddiası Türkiye'de demokrasinin adem-i mevcudiyetini ispat eden br delil olamaz." (Doğan, 1957:299)

of the chain of equivalences and the turning of democracy into an empty signifier. Now let us have a closer look at how antagonism, which is an indispensable element of any populist discourse, was constructed in the discourse of the DP.

6.1.5. Anti-communism and Antagonism

In Laclau's view, a chain of equivalences and a chain of differences (antagonism) are necessary for the formation of even a simple populist configuration, as the construction of the people as a homogenous whole requires the creation of an "other." Thus, the DP, which, like its counterparts, needed to create such an antagonist relation while shaping its populist discourse, established a dichotomy between democracy (chain of equivalences) and communism (chain of differences).

Article 12 of the Party Constitution of the Democratic Party has a quite broad definition of this "other": "We believe that the political groups or parties, which intend to ruin our independence or our territorial integrity and to restrict the fundamental rights of our citizens, and which depend on foreign political groups, should be declared illegal." This broad definition of the other, was to include the communists soon, serving as the axis of the party's anti-communist discourse.¹²¹ I therefore argue that this anti-communist discourse was adopted by the DP to the end of delimiting its populist discourse.

Likewise, Tanıl Bora and Kerem Ünüvar state that anti-communism was used in this period by the DP to define democracy:

After the Second World War, during the process of transition to a multi-party regime, as required by the international conjuncture, the scope of democracy was deliberately restricted. [...] The limits of democracy were specified with reference to the specter of communism. Democracy and freedom were being legitimized against the danger of communism, as a value that would serve as a protective barrier against it. In the period between 1946 and 50, the discourse of the construction of democracy was intertwined

¹²¹Demokrat Partinin kuruluş tüzüğünün 12.Maddesi geniş bir öteki tanımı yapmıştır. "Memleketimizin istiklâlini veya toprak bütünlüğünü bozmayı, yurddaş ana haklarını kayıtlamayı gaye edinen, veya memleket dışındaki siyasî teşekküllere bağlı olan siyasî cemiyet ve partilerin kanton dışı sayılmasını isteriz." Bu geniş öteki tanımlamasının içi zamanla komünisterce doldurulacak bu ise partinin antikomünizm mücadelesinin anahattını oluşturacaktır (www.tbmm.gov.tr).

with an excessive anti-communism.” (Bora ve Ünüvar, 2015:159).

Actually, this anti-communist attitude already existed before the DP came to power. Cem Eroğul states that this anti-communist discourse has indeed existed since the CHP period. According to Eroğul, the CHP took advantage of the secularist and especially anti-communist discourse of the commercial bourgeoisie during the single-party period, and when the DP came to power, it chose to continue this opposition (Eroğul, 1998:90). Similarly, before the DP came to power, the discourse of the national will was combined with an anticommunist discourse by Celal Bayar as well. According to Tanıl Bora, Celal Bayar’s understanding of authoritarian national will was reinforced by this anti-communist discourse (Bora, 2015:156).¹²²

But during the rule of the DP, the situation was different: while the CHP kept its distance from both communism and bigotry, the DP put all its efforts into fighting communism and claimed bigotry to be a communist strategy (Eroğul, 1998:99). In this context, the party program of the DP included the following statement: “We shall not hesitate to take any legal measure against extremist left-wing movements, which use separatist movements such as bigotry and racism as a tool.” (Eroğul, 1998:99)

The main factor that had a bearing on the reinforcement of the DP’s anti-communist discourse was that the party pursued a pro-American policy. The DP adopted a strong pro-American policy due to the conjuncture of the Cold War Era. The fact that the USA, which wished to form an anti-communist block against the Soviet Union, had started to look for allies after the Second World War, lied behind this pro-American policy. Based on the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan for Economic Recovery, the USA wanted countries like Greece and Turkey in particular to join this anti-communist block.

As a supporter of the USA, which it considered the leader of “free” world, the DP shaped its domestic policies in accordance with the above-mentioned American

¹²²To expand Celal Bayar’s discourse on anti-communism see also Bayar Celal, (1968) “Başvekilim Adnan Menderes” İstanbul: Tercüman Yayınları.

strategies. One of the first decisions that DP took when it came to power was to send soldiers to Korea, which it saw as an opportunity that could earn Turkey membership in NATO. This decision was to constitute one of the major problems between the opposition and the DP for a long time.

It was in such a context that antagonism between the DP and the communists was established. Accordingly, the DP also shaped its foreign policies in accordance with the strategies of the USA, as a result of which it was granted certain privileges. The cooperation between Turkey and the USA started with Turkey's becoming a NATO member in 1952. As many well-off European countries were being devastated during the Second World War, the DP chose to approach the USA, which happened to be the new world power.

Erden Eren Erdem, who focuses on Celal Bayar's trip to the USA during the 1950's and the USA-Turkey relations in one of his studies, points to the articles that appeared in the Turkish media during this trip as useful tools to understand the period. According to Erdem, Turkey was considered the closest Middle Eastern ally of the American people against the threat of communism as it was a country which struggled against it not only inside its borders, but also abroad: It was the first country that raised its voice against the communist uprising in Korea.

In addition to its close contacts with the USA, another factor that reinforced the DP's anti-communist discourse was the party's decision to reconcile the regime with religion. When the DP came into power, it became a strong advocate of the protection of religious values, as it saw religion as an antidote to communism.

Also, the welcoming and farewell ceremonies organized for Bayar's trip to the USA were turned into political shows in which public support was exhibited like in an election campaign (Erdem, 2015:147). This strategy was used as a "tour de force" (feat of strength) throughout the rules of populist parties in Turkish political history.

The anti-communist discourse, which emerged in the Turkish parliament while the DP was in opposition, continued when it came to power. Yet, the severe criticisms that were initially directed against extremist left-wing movements and the

communists began to include the opposition party, as well as university students, academicians, and reactionists. The anti-communist discourse would, over time, target all the people and groups that opposed the DP's policies.

On 29 May 1950, in the first speech that he made in the parliament after his party came to power, Menderes said the following:

The issue that we should particularly emphasize is the need to take legal measures to eliminate extremist leftist movements, who try to devastate the country from the inside. We will never hesitate to take the necessary legal measures against these extremist leftist movements, which are using separatist means like bigotry and racism while often concealing itself under these means that they use as a mask¹²³ (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957:15).

It is apparent that Menderes not only considered communism as the other, but also he lumped all the racist and reactionary actions together. He then made the following statement:

“We believe that it is necessary to take and impose all the measures precisely and definitely to bring to justice the spies, who aim only to destroy all the freedoms under the pretext of protecting the freedom of thought and conscience, by armed conflict and shedding blood” (Doğan, 1957:15).¹²⁴ It is apparent that Menderes resorted to accusing his opponents of espionage, which is actually a method that is used frequently by populist movements. In time, these accusations would also be directed against the CHP deputies, as it was the easiest way to knock the opposition out. This method is indeed a much used shortcut to creating antagonism in the Laclauian sense.

¹²³“bu konuda bilhassa üzerinde duracağımız mesele memleketi içinden yıkıcı aşırı sol cereyanları kökünden temizlemek için icabeden kanuni tedbirleri almaktır. İrticai ve ırkçılık gibi ayırıcı cereyanları vasıta olarak kullanan ve çok defa kendisini bu maskeler altında gizliyen aşırı solcu hareketlere karşı gereken bütün kanuni tedbirleri almakta asla tereddüt etmeyeceğiz” (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957:15).

¹²⁴Fikir ve vicdan hürriyeti perdesi altında bütün hürriyetleri kan ve ateşle yok etmekten başka maksat gütmeyen bu ajanları adalet pençesine çarptırmak için icabeden kıstasları vuzuh ve katiyetle tecbit etmek zaruretine inanıyoruz. (Doğan, 1957:15)

The antagonism towards communism was at its peak under DP rule. Menderes often expressed that even as a way of thought, communism should be considered a crime and be punished.

On 21 November 1951, Menderes made a speech in the parliament during the discussions on the draft law for the amendment of some provisions in the Turkish Penal Code and on the bills submitted by some MPs for the amendment of various provisions in the penal code. In this speech, Menderes made the following statements:

Dearest friends; the communist incidents that have happened until now cannot be said to have involved violence or to be based on violence. This being the case, I wish to pose the following question now: What if a citizen, without any duress or coercion, holds a meeting at Ulus Square and declares that Turkey should be divided into three provinces, and does not resort to violence but to propaganda just by holding a meeting, should this act be regarded as a crime or not? (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957:97).¹²⁵

In this manner, Adnan Menderes clearly stated that any act linked with communism would be considered as treason even if it did not involve any violence.

On 21 July 1953, during the discussions made in the parliament on the bills for protecting the freedom of conscience, peaceful assembly and association, Adnan Menderes made the following statement: “There’s a raft of all kinds of enemies within the country, such as religion imposters, communists, and enemies of nationalism...” (Menderes as cited in Doğan 1957:219).¹²⁶

Menderes often identified the CHP as the “other” just like the communists, accusing them of collaborating with the communists. On 18 November 1953, for instance, by

¹²⁵“Muhterem arkadaşlar bugüne kadar tertiplenmiş olan komünistlik vakaları cebre istinat ederek cebirle meydana getirilmiş vakalar dğildir. Şimdi şurasını sormak istiyorum: hiçbir cebir unsuru bulunmadan bir vatandaş Ulus meydanında bir miting tertip etse ve orada dese ki Türkiye üç parçaya bölünmelidir, cebirle değil bunun propagandasını yapsa, bunun mitingini tertip etse, bu hareketi suç mu telakki etmek lazım gelir, suç telakki etmemek mi? Adnan Menderes böylece hiçbir şiddet içermese dahi komünizmle bağlantısı olan herşeyin vatana ihanet sayılacağını açıkça belli ediyordu.” (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957:97)

¹²⁶ “Memlekette türlü türlü bir yığın düşman var. Din sahtekarları, komünistler, milliyetçilik düşmanları...” (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957:219)

addressing İnönü, he said: “Starting with our decision to send soldiers to Korea, they have made too many endeavors to provoke separatist actions in this country. Are they not aware of that?”¹²⁷

Again in 1953, when the DP confiscated the goods of the CHP, the DP encouraged the enmity between the nation and the others, by stating that they did this on behalf of the nation.

Menderes accused the CHP of collaborating with the communists once again during the budget discussions made in the parliament on 28 February 1954:

Destructive movements and separatist provocations had actually manipulated young university students, who are our hope for the future and the apple of our eye, into committing illegal acts as large groups by pouring into the streets at night. The world had eventually given in to total chaos and the hot war in Korea, where we were to fight, had already begun. And the saddest of all was that the opposition saw this complicated situation as an opportunity for itself and stepped into action by considering the short-term political struggle to be in the best interest of their party (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957: 278).¹²⁸

When it won a great victory in the 1950 elections thanks mainly to its populist discourse, the DP intensified its antagonist discourse. While expressing his views regarding the events that took place on 6-7 September, he claimed that these events were organized by the communists and foreign forces, who, according to him, had cooperated: “Paying attention to the beginning, the fast development, methods and efforts of the event in İstanbul are enough for understanding that it is a communist movement (Özcan, 2015:120).¹²⁹

¹²⁷“Kore kararından başlamak suretiyle bu memlekette parçalayıcı cereyanları körüklemek babında sarfettikleri yekun teşkil etti. Bundan haberleri yok mu?”

¹²⁸“Zararlı cereyanlar ve ayırıcı tahrikler, istikbalimizin ümidi olan genç üniversitelilerimizi de şıkar edinerek bu gözbebeğimiz gençleri büyük kabileler halinde gece yarısı caddelere, sokaklara dökülmek suretiyle kanuna uymıyan hareketlere teşebbüs tecrübesine fiilen girişilmiş bulunuyordu. Nihayet dünyanın vaziyeti de büsbütün karışmış bizim de katıldığımız sıcak harb Kore’de fiilen başlamıştı. En hazini ise muhalefetin bu karışık manzarayı kendisi için müsait fırsat bilmesi ve kısa vadeli siyasi mücadeleyi partilerinin menafaatine uygun sayarak harekete geçmesi idi.” (Menderes as cited in Doğan, 1957: 278)

¹²⁹Bu komünizm propagandası Türkiye gibi bir memlekette esas mahiyetiyle tecelli etmez. Vatanperverlik, müfrit vatanperverlik kisvesine bürünür, dindarlık mutaassıplık kisvesine bürünür. Hürriyetperverlik kisvesine bürünür, her türlü kisveye bürünür. Hürriyetperverlik kisvesine bürünür, demokrasi gidiyor, mahvoluyor diye onu içten vurur. Bu suretle memleketi mahvüperişan

6.1.6. The Populism of the Democrat Party

Throughout this part of the study, the populist discourse of the DP was examined from a Laclauian perspective based on two presumptions: The first presumption is that democracy constitutes the chain of equivalences, and the second one is that anti-communism constitutes the chain of differences in the DP's populist discourse. Hence, the disintegration of the party began when the chain of differences grew stronger than the chain of equivalences.

The populist discourse of the DP can be addressed using both the empiricist and the historicist approaches to populism. As a matter of fact, fulfilling conclusions can be drawn regarding the populist discourse of the DP using approaches, as this discourse constitutes an important example of empiricist populism in that it is based on the dichotomy of the people vs. the elites. Likewise, a study carried out from an economic perspective can also allow us to draw important conclusions by addressing the economic growth witnessed during the DP period. And even though in such a study it would not be possible to talk about a populism that emerged in parallel with the inward oriented industrialization model, it would be possible to identify a kind of populism that emerges in countries that are newly-acquainted with capitalism.

However, in the end, such studies would remain inadequate to explain the disintegration of the DP. On the other hand, they could not shed enough light on how the populist discourse of the DP has been revived by the AKP in the 2000's Turkey in that the latter constructed a similar chain of equivalences and a similar chain of differences, and how the AKP was able to make the DP its reference point some forty years later. This study is especially significant when considered from this certain perspective.

eder. Memleket efkârı umumiyesi üzerinde asap bozucu hareketler yaratır., onun nüfuzunu kırmaya çalışır.... İstanbul'a hadisenin başlangıcına, suratle inkişafına takibettiği usullere ve gayretlere dikkat etmek dahi bunun bir komünist hareket olduğunu anlamaya kafidir.(Menderes, Özcan,2015:120)

6.1.7. The Path to the Justice and Development Party: Scattered Demands

Neither political processes nor societal transformations are shaped by sudden political developments or the short-term successes of political actors. It is hence imperative to relate the emergence of a political movement to preceding political and social circumstances and read into the lines of transition. In the case of the AKP, it is thus essential to examine its history and trace its roots, in the same way that the roots of the DP populism was traced above in a political heritage that was carried from the Ottoman era into the Republican period. Before going into the details of my Laclauian analysis of the AKP's discourse of democracy, I will review the transformation of the groups gathered under the roof of the AKP.

These groups can be better understood in the light of the center-right debates in Turkey. In his analysis of the JDP populism, Şakir Dinçşahin traces the roots of the JDP back to the 1970s and the Islamist parties. (Dinçşahin, 2012) Hasan Bülent Kahraman takes this claim one step further, arguing that the 1950s elections constitute the first source of the JDP (Kahraman, 2007:1). Ayata states that the religious leanings of the right-wing parties became gradually more liberal since the 1950s: "From the early 1950s onwards, center-right governments relaxed the state's control over religious activity and allowed the use of religious symbols, idioms, and practices as part of a new style of political communication and propaganda." (Ayata, 1996) On this basis, the JDP, which utilizes these symbols the most in politics compared to its previous counterparts, can be seen as the last ring of this chain.

In other respects, when we look at the founding and current cadres of the AKP, we can see that almost all came from Islamist parties. The center-right debates in Turkey were also initiated with the rise of the Islamist parties in the 1970s (Mert, 2007:18) because center-right wing parties and Islamist parties diverged from each other with respect to some policies. One the essential differences between center-right parties and Islamist parties was that the former were more interested in liberal policies in accordance with right-wing economic policies, while the latter offered other models for economic growth. Likewise, while center-right wing parties prioritized "national and moral values" and democracy over other criteria in their discourse, Islamist parties fell far from it.

In order to evaluate these phenomena within their proper context, let us now take a look at the tradition of center-right wing politics in Turkey and the history of the Islamist parties that gained an important social support from 1970s up until the foundation of the AKP.

6.1.7.1. The Turkish Right until the AKP: The Tradition of the Center-Right in Turkey

What was the most important factor that defined the center in Turkish politics? As opposed to this, the center-right took the position of the advocate of “national and moral values.”¹³⁰ For this reason, the Turkish center-right has always been eager to adopt a populist discourse in the framework of democracy. In this chapter, I will analyze the parties that preceded the AKP in this respect. The first of these is the Adalet Partisi (AP) (Justice Party/JP), which was founded after the break-up of the DP and the implementation of the 1961 Constitution. The other is the ANAP, which was founded with the aim of establishing a unity of demands after the 1980 coup d'état.

6.1.7.2. The Justice Party: Development As the Main Link in the Chain Of Equivalences

The AP was established in the year of 1961 right after 1960 coup. Because the DP dissipated after the coup, there were many DP supporters among the members of the party. In this respect, the AP was very similar to the DP in terms of its target audience. In this context, the Justice Party was a new potential candidate to continue the already established “chain of equivalences.” However the name of chain of equivalences didn't remain the same because, from the perspective of the AP there were innovations for the DP's discourse. This time, demands were to be organized under a different name. The discourse of the Justice Party was going to involve both the democracy and development ideals since 1961.¹³¹

¹³⁰For a detailed debate on the center-right see Kurt, Ümit (2009) *AKP Yeni Merkez Sağ mı?* Ankara: Dipnot Kitabevi, and Kahraman, Hasan Bülent (2007) *Türk Sağı ve AKP*, İstanbul Agora Kitaplığı.

¹³¹ The AP was organized completely in 61 provinces quickly within a year when the organization was established. Party participated in the 1961 elections and had 34,8% of the votes. In this way, it was able to take part in a coalition with the CHP. Although it was founded in 1961, AP became a ruling

The formation of the AP government and its actions have similarities with those of the DP. The AP government was indeed merely evoking the DP governments due to factors such as the following: modernism, which the AP believed to enhance development and welfare; populist economic policies like government promotions and the stimulation of industry, which appealed to people from all walks of life from peasants to industrialists; the party's nationwide organization based on a patronage network; its sectarianism, which flattered the religious sentiments of the masses; and its westernism, which followed the USA's lead instead of a European model (Aydin and Taşkın, 2014:141). However, it was very difficult for the AP to unify the people, due to this ideological decomposition and from the pot which brought these different opinions together.

The AP represented "the demands of a democratic movement that aimed mainly for development." "The most important component of the party in eyes of the members was it was a democratic movement that stood against a minority that claimed the right to rule the people even though this minority made up the opposition party in accordance with the consent of the people." (Demirel, 2004:219)The word "democracy" still maintained its significance and magic. Expressions of this development came more into prominence after 1960 coup.

The word "development" has a variety of meanings just like democracy. In this context, it is close to being an empty signifier in a Laclauian sense. In the AP period, the chain of equivalences that resulted from the articulation of economic and socio-economic demands was called development.

As Laclau states, "any popular identity needs to be condensed around some signifiers (words, images) which refer to the equivalential chain as a totality. The more extended the chain, the less these signifiers will be attached to their original particularistic demands" (Laclau, 2005:96). According to this view, as far as many meanings attributed to the word development, particular demands it referred would rise to prominence at that level. So, the more ambiguous the words development and

party only in 1965 with the formation of government named as "1st Demirel Government". On 10 October 1965, in elections, Süleyman Demirel's Justice Party got 52,9 percent of the votes and came to power alone.

justice are, the greater their capacity to unite the people, which is why these kinds of empty signifiers are commonly left ambiguous in populist discourses.) Development is a multi-dimensional concept with economic, social and political dimensions. However, according to the AP, economic development was the most substantial of all these dimensions.

It is thus common to consider the 1961 Constitution as a good brake mechanism.¹³² And it was thanks to the functioning of this brake mechanism that anti-communism was not as harsh as it had been during the period of the DP.

As a matter of fact, throughout the 1970s, the right had gone into a process of fragmentation and thus given birth to Islamist and Nationalist parties. When this fragmentation was coupled with the balancing system of the 1961 Constitution, the AP could no longer sustain an antagonist discourse as strict as that of the DP. So, in the 1970s, both nationalists and Islamists began to leave the party, and the already existing social polarization re-occurred between the supporters of the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) and the leftist groups that had on the rise notably since 1968. Although Süleyman Demirel tended to exacerbate this antagonism from time to time, he generally showed a more reconciling attitude. So it would be reasonable to consider Demirel's discourse of populism from the perspective of the historicist approach and in accordance with the model of import substitution development.

6.1.8. 1970's: The Chain of Differences Grows

The social alliance that the AP tried to establish was about to disintegrate by the 1970's. Keyder argues that its populist discourse which placed democracy and development in its center had lost its capacity to expand as including outsider groups with 1970's (Keyder, 245). At the end of the 60s, the conflict between the left-wing

¹³²“The 1961 constitution was aiming to act as a brake on the spread of the national will understanding limitlessly. Members of the AP, who had been transferred from the Democratic Party, were in need of reconsider their opinions regarding both the limits of national will and the power capacity of the military and civil bureaucracies. The changes in the institutional and legal structures of politics was yet another factor giving the AP room for maneuver insofar as legitimate ways of politics were concerned.” (Demirel, 2004:336).

and the right-wing, student movements, and labor rallies had increased in Turkey, like in the other countries of the world.

The Demirel government lost power when 41 people left the party and founded the Democratic Party with Ferruh Bozbeyli as its leader.¹³³ The Islamist wing withdrew from the party as well. This wing would later found the Milli Selamet Partisi (National Salvation Party) because opinions held by Turkish nationalists were closer to the ideas particular to the Turk-Islam Synthesis. On 12 March 1971, a memorandum by the Turkish Armed Forces was announced. And the AP's rise ended on 14 October 1973, as a result of the elections. The CHP came out as the ruling party in this election, where the AP's votes decreased to 29,76%, which showed that the government was about to collapse. But the electoral defeat was not the only reason for its collapse, the economic crisis of the 1970s had almost paralyzed the system.

The discourse focusing on industrialization and the unification of demands thus started not to correspond to the social structure, which had undergone major transformations in the 1960's. To Keyder, the state was no longer able to meet the increasing needs of the society with its pro-industrialization policies. So the social alliance constructed at the beginning of the 1960's dissolved.

The voter base of the AP was wide but the public had begun to be radicalized against industrialization because the AP, which had to advocate the people's interests, had united around the aim of development instead of democracy. One of the structural reasons of the ISI strategy and the accompanying populist distribution policies to experience a crisis was pushing the limits of promoted populist demand, interest and representation types (Özkazanç, 2012: 85).

The combination of a persistent balance of payments deficit and an industry that depended on foreign inputs, and thus on the availability of foreign reserves, made the Turkish economy extremely vulnerable. The oil crisis of 1973–74 led to a quadrupling of the price of oil in the international market. For Turkey, which had

¹³³See also Ateş, Gülbin Aysı. Representing Centre-Right or Conservative Right? The Case of the Democratic Party in Turkey, 1970–1980. Msc Thesis in Metu

become increasingly dependent on oil as a source of energy since the 1950s, this meant a steeply rising import bill, which had to be paid in dollars. By the end of the 1970s, and after a second oil price shock in 1979–80, two-thirds of Turkey’s foreign currency earnings went to meeting the oil bill (Zürcher, 1994:267).

Thus the chain of differences grew against the chain of equivalences. Özkazanç describes this as a hegemonic crisis as suitable to Laclauist conceptualization. “Hegemonic crisis refers to a period when a national developmentalist project dissolves and leaves its place to polarization and conflicting discourses.” (Özkazanç, 2014:85).

From that year, after the Justice party, there was only a crisis of hegemony since no one was able to come to power without the support of a coalition partner for a long time. This unstable environment would continue until 1980, when a harsh military coup took place. Zürcher states that during this process, due to the emergence of a Kurdish separatism, the gradual increase in general security problems, the political system became unable to settle all these problems and the economic crisis, and became vulnerable for a coup. The hegemonic crisis had serious consequences in this regard: the democratic government disappeared completely. In this period, there was no ground even to discuss the relation between democracy and populism.

6.1.9. The Motherland Party: A New Union of Demands?

As of 1971, the social coalition set up by the AP dissolved. Until 1980, National Front governments and coalitions were in power. The polarization between the right and the left gradually increased and this caused a wander away in politics from a social coalition thought. The oil crisis witnessed in the 1970s was also added to this political fragmentation. Then, a military coup took place in September 1980. This time the coup period lasted longer than the one on 27 May. The military government continued from 1980 until 1983 (Aydın and Taşkın, 2013, Mert, 2007).

With the coup, the TBMM was closed down and sovereignty of the people, which is one of the most fundamental principles of democracy, was suspended for a long time. Political party leaders, heads of trade unions and professional organizations were

taken into custody, meaning that all the elements of a democratic government had come to a halt. The major political actors of the period, i.e. the AP's leader Süleyman Demirel, the CHP's leader Bülent Ecevit, the Milli Selamet Partisi (MSP)'s leader Necmettin Erbakan and the MHP's leader Alpaslan Türkeş were taken into custody. They were also prohibited from taking part in politics.

Democratic politics returned back with the elections held on 6 November 1983. However, traces of the military government were still being felt intensely. Because politicians were subjected to long-term prohibitions, new political actors, i.e. parties and leaders, were needed.

It was a must for any new political formation to ensure economic success. On the other hand, it was not possible for it to gain the support of people without a political discourse and without referring to democracy which was suspended for a long time. In short, a chain of equivalences as well as a chain of inequalities had to be formed through a discourse. The support of the people could only be gained if these conditions were met.

Only three parties were allowed to go to the polls in the elections held in 1983. From these parties, the Nationalist Democracy Party (Milliyetçi Demokrasi Partisi) was inclined to continue the style of the military government. The Populist Party (Halkçı Parti), on the other hand, advocated social democracy, attracting mainly the leftists. Turgut Özal's Motherland Party (ANAP), which was founded on 20 May 1983 and which was the third party in the elections, promised to combine various trends (Zürcher, 1994).

“The ANAP, on which the new government depended for support, was a strange coalition of ideological currents and interest groups that had joined the party partly because they had nowhere else to go under the military's restrictive policies. The party attracted the support of the old Justice Party, which itself had been a coalition of the modern industrialized bourgeoisie, farmers and the small-time businessmen of Anatolia, and that of the fundamentalist MHP and of the fascist Nationalist Action Party. Turgut Özal's personality was crucial to the party” (Zürcher, 1994:283).

Ozal asserted that his party combined very different ideological trends in itself. In this respect the party seemed as the populist catch-all party. In the Laclauian sense, it is possible to mention a chain of equivalence. According to Özal, his party combined four different trends: conservatism, nationalism, economic liberalism and social justice. However, it should be underlined that not only this ideological combination but also the party's neo-liberal policies, which would soon be put into practice, contributed to the emergence of the unity of demands.¹³⁴

Güneş Ayata and Ayata state that the strategy of ensuring consolidation between the four trends in Turkish political life was the "ideologic novelty" but later this ideological unity was destroyed and transformed into a kind of politics consisting of economic liberalism and social conservatism:

“Later however, the liberal, conservative and nationalist wings, if not necessarily the weaker social democrats, squabbled among themselves to get the upper hand in the party. The liberal imprint with a single-minded emphasis on the virtues of the market economy and conservative stress on the significance of the family, religion and the national community have always remained powerful. The combination of economic liberalism with social conservatism in the neo-right fashion was the cornerstone of Özal's politics who was personally close to both the globally oriented economic elite as well as the Islamic tarikat networks.” (Güneş Ayata and Ayata, 2001:94)

The conflict between these four visions, which lasted for two decades, caused a kind of a political culture, which was based on ignoring and opposing each other by maintaining prejudices and discrimination between the representatives. Özal was largely successful in this project (Acar, 2002:203).

Since the beginning, central right-wing politics has synthesized liberal economic politics with religiously conservative and nationalist ideologies. The MP's discourse evoked and reaffirmed this synthesis and equation. In that context, the emphasis on state in the right-wing discourse was replaced quickly by an emphasis on the market. The following statements epitomize Ozal's message to the right-wing, especially to the conservatives: “Haven't you been complaining of a formal ideology for a long

¹³⁴See also Yetkin, B. (2010). *Popülizm ve Özal-Erdoğan*. Antalya: Yeniden Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafa-i Hukuk Yayınları. For an expanded discussion of the populist discourse adopted by Özal.

time? If we reduce the economic power of the state by reducing it, the ideological pressure will automatically decrease.” This was a more effective formula for the conservatives of the right-wing than it seems (Mert, 2007).

The fragmentation process starting from 1960 caused significant economic and political instability especially in 1990s. Turkey, which could not ensure the economic and political stability in the period of coalition governments for many years faced an important gap in terms of center-right in particular.

From the mid 90s onwards, the center-right was divided into two. While the ANAP and the DYP were in agreement about their economic policies, the CHP advocated nationalism and material and moral values more. Without Özal, the MP turned into a liberal party.

It is important to note at this point that from the success that the DP gained in 1950 until the AKP government, no center-right wing political party could succeed in establishing a persistent unity of demands and organize this around the discourse of democracy. As they all focused on economic development, the democracy discourse fell behind.

6.1.10. The Islamist Right in Turkey

The Islamist wing, which had been represented by the DP and then by the AP with leanings towards the center-right since the 1950s, started to be represented by a new party in the 1970s Turkey.

These parties, which adopted a developmentalist approach, were in favor of state intervention in economy and a national model of development as they opposed free market economy and making profit with interest. This would continue until the 2000s but the AKP, that their own cadres founded, would support free market economy and take steps towards strengthening neo-liberal policies. They refused the idea of joining the EU from this date onwards.

When the Milli Nizam Partisi (MNP/Nationalist Order Party/NOP), (founder. Erbakan) was shut down in 1970, the Milli Selamet Partisi (MSP/National Salvation Party/NSP) was founded in 1972. The Islamist view was represented by this party until the coup d'état of 1980. It was re-founded in 1983, under the name of the Refah Partisi. Their votes were in constant rise until the closure in 1998. After the 1980s, with the impact of the Islamic State in Iran, Islamist movements awakened in the whole world.

In parallel with the developments taking place throughout the world, the National View was re-established in 1983 under the name of the Welfare Party and it gained the increasing support of the people. When it was shut down by the Constitutional Court in 1988, this time, the Fazilet Partisi (FP/Virtue Party/VP) was founded. However, in this process, the AKP left its Islamist identity as well as the identity that it had inherited from the National View chose to follow the path of previous center-right parties that had come to power.

6.2. The Justice and Development Party: Uphill Battle Between Democracy and Populism

In this chapter, I will examine the populist elements in the AKP through the concepts of Laclau's theory of populism. With this, I will try to define the important stations of the link between populism and democracy during the AKP period. Like I did in the DP chapter, I will use Laclau's concepts of the establishment of the union of demand, equivaential chains, the emergence of the chain of differences from the equivaential chains, antagonism, and empty signifiers.

For this purpose, my focus in the previous chapter was on what kind of a transformation of discourse Turkish right wing parties had been through up until the period of the AKP. After closely understanding the important dynamics of the route to the AKP, in this chapter I will expand on how the AKP gathered the otherwise scattered center-right wing parties around its own orbit with the "democracy discourse", "conservative democracy" and "advanced democracy," and how they have succeeded to continue this union of demands in the following elections. In other

words, I will elucidate how the hegemony of the party spread out so as to cover various points.

It is possible to highlight the articulation of the increasing voting rate with the demands through the democracy discourse from when the AKP came into power in 2002 onwards. In the later phases of the AKP rule, we came across some important turnouts. In this dissertation, I argue that the first of these turnouts is the 2010 constitutional referendum. In other words, 2010 had an important role in showing that the AKP was confident in establishing the union of demands. In relation to the “referendums and democracy” discussion mentioned in the third chapter of this dissertation, it is obvious that the 2010 referendum enabled the party to confirm the union of demands instead of being a tool for direct democracy. In this respect, the discourse before the 2010 referendum and afterwards is put under the scope in detail.

The second important turnout that I take into consideration in this dissertation is the discourse of democracy that the AKP utilized during the Gezi Parkı demonstrations. We can see the emergence of a sense of majoritarian democracy as opposed to the concept of pluralistic democracy that the AKP had utilized during its foundation. Moreover, it is obvious that the masses were brought together with an antagonistic discourse instead of the reconciliatory attitude that emerged as a result of the formation of the union of demands from the Gezi Parkı incidents onwards. It is also possible to see the peak of the classic populist discourse during Gezi, and that the AKP embraced the nationalist and Anatolian discourse again. The polarization of “us and them” evolved into a populist understanding rather than democracy.

Briefly, in this chapter, I aim to make a Laclauian analysis of the AKP’s democracy discourse by taking these important turnouts into consideration. By doing so, we are able to have a summary of the populism and democracy relations in Turkey in the past ten years.

Furthermore, in this chapter I will also reconsider the discussions about whether populism is an essential or a pathological element of the democratic order, and how media contributes to democracy or populism given the structure of political parties in Turkey, which was addressed in the second chapter of this dissertation.

6.2.1. Foundation of the Justice and Development Party: Need To Union Of Demands After Fragmentation:

As a result of the 2001 economic crisis and the political fragmentation of the parties and the center-right, Turkey entered the new century with a devastating economic and political crisis. Because of this, it was necessary for newly formed political movements to prioritize the economic rehabilitation. Nevertheless, they also needed support from the public and develop a political discourse to gain this support. In order to better understand this historical period, we can utilize Gramscian concepts that Laclau had also frequently used, like “organic crisis,” “the crisis of dominant political discourse.”(Yıldırım, 2009:72)¹³⁵ We can see that the political movements might bring various demands together with “political articulation” and create a hegemonic bloc after crises. (Leon, Desai and Tuğal, 2009)¹³⁶

Despite seeing neoliberal policies as a way out in economy, in politics the AKP chose a reconstruction of politics along the EU line. Voters viewed these economic and political preferences as an alternative during the period of crisis. The public get in search for a something new after losing faith in already existing political parties during the 2001 economic crisis. “Within this context the AKP seemed to be an alternative for many people who had not previously voted for an Islamist party (Dinçşahin, 2012:620). As different from its predecessors, the AKP did not seek to dethrone the ruling secularist elites. Responding to its conciliatory tone, a vast number of “center-rightist” (mildly secular, neoliberal) politicians, intellectuals, and voters soon joined its ranks (Leon, Desai and Tuğal, 2009:210).

The previous center-right wing governments abstained from offering serious democratization by providing economic development discourses. The AKP, though, took action by taking into consideration the fact that an EU style democratization process would be functional in dealing with the problems that they would get to face

¹³⁵For a detailed discussion on this issue, See also, Deniz Yıldırım. AKP ve Neoliberal Popülizm in AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün Bilançosu eds. İlhan Uzgöl Bülent Duru Ankara Phoenix Yayınları. pp. 66-107

¹³⁶For a more comprehensive discussion, including Laclau’s theory, about the Political Articulation and political parties see Cedric De Leon, Manali Desai and Cihan Tuğal (2009) “Political Articulation: Parties and the Constitution of Cleavages in the United States, India, and Turkey Source: Sociological Theory, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Sep., 2009), pp. 193-219

in domestic affairs frequently (Aydın ve Taşkın, 2014:472). “The AKP thus (re)constituted the social by disarticulating several sectors from the center-right and rearticulating them to an Islamic project. Without the AKP’s move to expand its hegemonic bloc, it is unlikely that these widely divided forces would have reorganized out of the familiar opposition of Islamism and the center-right” (Leon, Desai and Tuğal, 2009:210) It was a suitable moment to establish a new unity of demands. Let’s examine closely how this union of demands was founded.

The Justice and Development Party was established in 14th of August 2001 only a year before 2002 general elections. In this respect, it is possible to view the date when the party was founded as a response to the economic and political crises that the country had been through. The AKP’s establishment has corresponds with the separation in FP which was obviously adopts political Islam as a follower of the RP. While the “traditionalists” formed the Saadet Partisi Felicity Party-SP, the “reformists” formed the AKP. The AKP was established with the cadres of banned political Party, Fazilet Partisi-FP (Virtue Party -VP) and by an imprisoned leader in 2001. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the leader, was a member of Welfare Party and Virtue Party which are banned by the Constitutional Court. These two parties have obvious Islamic identity. However, despite the Islamist background of the cadres and the leader, the JDP has always introduced itself being in the center of the political spectrum from its foundation onwards (Coşar and Özman: 2004:62).

The JDP was trying to fill in the gap in the Turkish center-right and in the meantime, they were attempting to redefine the center-right wing tradition in Turkish by combining it with an Islamist identity. We can call it an obvious “attempt for forming a union of demands” in Laclauian sense. Coşar and Özman argues that the JDP introduced themselves as “conservative, reformist and modern” during the foundation process (Coşar and Özman: 2004:63).

According to the AKP, the issue is to have the political tone and set up that would accommodate various identities without offending any of them. “A remarkable portion of the society wants the kind of modernity that would not exclude the tradition, the kind of universalism that would accept of localness, the kind of

rationalism that would not deny the spirit, and the kind of change that would not be radical” (Erdoğan, 2004).¹³⁷

But it is hard to express all these demands in the framework of a systematical thinking and ideology. In other words, it is obviously difficult to gather all these different ideologies under the roof of a union of demands. The AKP’s aim was to bring voters coming from different backgrounds together by gathering these different ideologies under the concept of “party of services” (Dinç, 2008:4). The AKP was ready to establish itself as a populist party in the center-right through the union of demands.

“In his public statements the party chairperson R. Tayyip Erdoğan insistently emphasized the conciliatory stance of the party. Briefly in his words, the AKP aims to “rebuild the fragmented identity of the centre-right in Turkey” (Coşar and Özman: 2004:62).

Ahmet Çiğdem argues that the AKP could articulate conservatism, Islamism, nationalism, a populist democratic project and the integration to the EU successfully. According to Çiğdem, it is the success of the AKP as a party (Çiğdem, 2014).

But how did the AKP interpret this will for change and transformation in its own discourse and the crisis that the country was going through? Like all other populist movements, the AKP relied on the crisis of the environment that it was born into for its existence and considered itself as the remedy for this state of lack of solutions. At the time it was established the AKP stated that there is a significant need for political regeneration and transformation in Turkey and that it will perform this transformation by itself. The introduction of party program of the AKP reflected their desire to ensure this transformation.

Turkey has a huge desire for major transformations in a painful period. The serious problems in politics, economy and social life was affecting the daily lives and the future of our citizens negatively. Turkey is now in search of a dynamic

¹³⁷ Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s opening speech, The International Symposium of Conservatism and Democracy. Published by the political and legal affairs bureau of the AKP.

and visionary ‘political entity’ which will overcome these problems, will ensure the peace, security and welfare for its citizens and which will ensure them to be confident about the future. In such a period where all the concepts are emptied by decreasing their value and where the words are failed, Turkey is in need of a new and fresh approach; a political movement which is stable and can see the future by having an honorable fight; a well versed modern staff which is native and straightforward; programs and projects which are stimulating and realistic (Party Program of AKP, p.1).¹³⁸

“In Erdoğan’s words, AKP is a party which abandoned its “Milli Görüş İdeology” and its Islamic view tries to build its new line by underlining that it is a Conservative Democratic party. This showed that AKP aims to continue the center-right political tradition began with the DP” (Aydın and Taşkın, 2014:472).

Recep Tayyip Erdogan was explaining with a populist expression how they were able to establish unity of demands, by stating at the meeting of provincial heads held in Antalya on 16 May 2003 as follows:

As AKP, we will never stop keeping an eye on our nation and its demands. I would like you to know that fact. Our nation and its demand will always be our guide. The main axis of our politics is the nation itself, the people itself. For this, we take into consideration the social pattern and social peace more than anything (AKP Party Programme:11).¹³⁹

In AKP’s electoral success two important transformations came into prominence. These are the party’s redefined relation with religion and democracy and the emphasis on the importance of economic development. So the voters of party have changed due to the new aims of the party. AKP could achieve the being catch-all Party and it run party to the power. However, the ‘**advanced democracy**’ discourse it

¹³⁸“Türkiye sancılı bir zaman diliminde büyük bir değişim arzusu yaşıyor. Siyaset, ekonomi ve toplumsal yaşamdaki ciddi problemler vatandaşlarımızın gündelik hayatını ve geleceğini olumsuz yönde etkiliyor. Türkiye bu sorunların üstesinden gelecek, vatandaşlarına huzur, güven ve refah sağlayacak, geleceklerine güvenle bakmalarına öncülük edecek, dinamik ve vizyon sahibi bir “siyasi oluşum” bekliyor. Kavramların içinin boşaltıldığı, değerlerin eskitildiği, sözün anlamını yitirdiği bu dönemde Türkiye yeni ve taze bir anlayışa; kararlı, önünü ve geleceğini görebilen bir harekete, onurlu bir mücadeleye, ayakları yere basan, yerli ancak çağdaş bilgilerle donanmış kadrolara, ufuk açıcı, gerçekçi program ve projelere şiddetle ihtiyaç duymaktadır.” (AKP Parti Programı s.1)

¹³⁹“Milletimizden ve onun taleplerinden hiçbir zaman AK Parti olarak gözümüzü ayırmayacağız. Bunu böyle bilmenizi istiyorum. Milletimiz ve onun talepleri her zaman bizim yol göstericimiz olacaktır. Siyasetimizin ana eksenini millettir. Halktır. Bunun için sosyal dokuya, sosyal barışa her şeyden çok önem veriyoruz (AKP Party Programme S. 11).

generated when achieving these targets has contributed significantly to the formation of the party's chain of equivalence.

The previous center-right governments confined themselves to just economic development discourse while avoiding to promise a serious democratization, whereas, AKP believed that an EU compatible democratization effort can be functional in overcoming some problems appear in internal politics (Aydın and Taşkın, 2014:472).

The economic approach of the AKP does not show an important difference from the economic approach of previous conservative parties. AKP, as previous conservative parties, attributes an importance to priority of neoliberal economics on the other hand it supports its political stance by using conservative values via populist discourse. The most important component of this populist discourse is the word and plight of 'democracy'. With this populist discourse, from its foundation until now, AKP was able to come to power in Turkey. In a similar manner with DP, AKP succeeded in gaining the support of the masses for a long time.

It can be said that the underlying causes of this success, in a Laclauian sense, are the antagonism which sometimes became apparent when needed and the **chain of equivalence** which was successfully established by AKP through the democracy discourse.

6.2.2. A Brief History of the Justice and Development Party from the Chain of Equivalences to the Chain of Differences:

In 2002 general elections the AKP could gain over 34 per cent of the votes and 363 seats (total 550 seats) in parliament. However it is represented by more than the vote it gets due to the ten percent electoral threshold in Turkey. In that process, AKP was able to make important legal changes in Turkey while making prominent its EU accession target and its democracy discourse. The enactment of EU accession packages quickly till 2003 has the largest influence in the strengthening of the democracy discourse of the AKP.

Table 4 2002 General Election Results¹⁴⁰

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	34,3	363
Republican People's Party (CHP)	19,4	178
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)	8,4	0
True Path Party (DYP)	9,5	0
Youth Party (GP)	7,2	0

In this period, although the AKP has formed the union of demands, there was a delay in the executive process owing much to the fact that Ahmet Sezer was the president during the coalition period. For this reason, legal changes were mostly conducted along the lines of the EU. We can see that the main opposition party the CHP supported this process and big steps were taken towards democratization in Turkey.¹⁴¹ The Harmonization Packages that were enacted one after another, stood for important democratizing steps taken for the relations among the law, jurisdiction, politics and the army circles. These positive developments were appreciated in the EU report on November 5th, 2003. The AKP government had good reputation related

¹⁴⁰www.tuik.gov.tr

¹⁴¹From 2003 onwards, the AKP legalized the harmonization packages. For detailed information on this:

“AB Uyum Yasa Paketleri” (2007) <http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/pub/abuyup.pdf>

“Türkiye’de Siyasi Reform” (2007) <http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/pub/tsr.pdf>

The most important steps taken towards democratization:

02.01.2003 IV. Harmonization Package: Improvement of the custody conditions, fight against torture, allowing religious foundations to own property, freedom of organization.

23.01.2003 V. Harmonization Package: Reconstruction of jurisdiction in Turkey.

19.06.2003: VI. Harmonization Package: Changes in the fight against terrorism law, allowing broadcast in different languages and dialects, allowing people of different religions to open places of worship.

30.07.2003 VII. Harmonization Package: Duties and responsibilities of the National Security Council NSC General Secretariat, improvement of the supervision of state properties in the army's hands by the chamber of accounts, regulating the relations between the army and the politics.

to democratization in its first year. Two harmonization packages that came out right after the report also revived the democratic initiatives of the past.¹⁴²

On December 17th 2004 the accession negotiations were agreed to start. From that point on, the negotiations having 35 titles were supposed to be realized. However, from 2005 onwards the process for the entrance to the EU went into a slow phase.

In 2007 general elections the AKP raised its votes and gained 46 per cent of the votes and 341 seats in parliament. AKP attempted to reconstruct the political system in Turkey with important constitutional changes to be made by itself during this period. All this process was ensured by the democracy discourse.

Table 5 2007 General Election Results ¹⁴³

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	46,6	341
Republican People's Party (CHP)	20,9	112
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)	14,3	71
Democrat Party (DP)	5,4	0
Independents (Bağımsızlar)	5,2	26

2007 was going to be an important year not only because of the 2007 general elections but also the presidential elections and the changes in the constitution related to the presidential elections. The election of Abdullah Gül as the president by the parliament made it easier for the government to reconcile with the executive board.

In September 21st 2007, a referendum was held on the timing of the legislative elections (once in four years instead of five) and on the change that would the public to vote for the presidential elections. This was the first referendum that the AKP had conducted and it was important to show an approval of the changes the party had implemented.

¹⁴²**07.05 2004 VIII. Harmonization Package:** Abolishing the State Security Courts, withdrawal of the military member from the Higher Education Council, taking the issues of the international treaties as the standard when they imply different judgements than the law.

28.06.2004. IX. Harmonization Package: Abolishing the issues regarding the death sentence in the law.

¹⁴³www.tuik.gov.tr

Table 6- 2007 Referendum Results

2007 Referendum		
Participation Rate	Yes	No
67,5	68,9	31,1

Given the relation between populism and democracy, it is important that the AKP to has restore trust with 68.95% “yes” votes in a referendum. If we take the distinction that Meny and Surel set between the representative democracy and the direct democracy and take a look at the relation these two systems had with populism, it is possible to say that referendums strengthen the people’s ties with the administration by familiarizing them with the idea of the direct democracy (Meny and Surel, 2002). It is useful expand on whether referendums are conducted upon the public demand or with an urge coming down from the ruling strata. Hayward thinks that if the referendum is motivated by a public demand, it empowers democracy while top-down applications feed into the populist politics (Hayward, 1995). This was also the first instance of restoring trust with referendums that the AKP has importantly utilized during its administration. The idea of the public vote in presidential elections was also the first instance that triggered the debate about the presidential system.

Again during this period, the lawsuits of Ergenekon I (which started in July 25th 2008) and Ergenekon II (started in March 25th 2009) were important cornerstone in questioning the army – government relations.¹⁴⁴ From then on, the orbit of the discussions about democratization in Turkey shifted to the intervention of the army in politics and civil politics.

The lawsuit¹⁴⁵ on the closure of the AKP in 2008 was important with regards to the formation of the equivalential chain. The fact that the party was not closed can be

¹⁴⁴The Ergenekon indictment had allegations about the instigation of Cumhuriyet newspaper and State Council attacks, attempting to launch a coup d'état in 2003 – 2004, plans about reactionary actions. Many out of 274 accused with these allegations were found guilty in the August 5th 2013 trial. In April 2016, the verdicts of the Ergenekon were abolished by the Supreme Court.

¹⁴⁵The indictment in the AKP’s closure case, submitted to the constitutional court in March 14th 2008, had allegations on the AKP for “being the focus of anti secularist acts.” 71 people including the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the president Abdullah Gül were requested to be kept away from the politics for five years. In the July 30 2008 proclamation, the verdict was declared to be a cut of funds from the treasury instead of a physical closure of the party.

interpreted as the AKP strengthening of its power bloc and that it will continue down on the road.

The discussions would continue until the 2010 referendum and the democratization of the AKP would be seen identical with a full demilitarization of the administration. The realization of this aim was seen to be identical with the realization of all of the AKP's goals. The EU goals were put aside during this period and the AKP adopted a more local language instead of a universalist tone. Again, in this period, the AKP's discussions with the main opposition party the CHP were compatible to a classic elites vs. commons argument.

After this process, the AKP demanded a constitutional change to regulate individual rights and economic rights, which would be particularly effective in the jurisdiction.¹⁴⁶ From deciding to hold a referendum on the package of change (May 12, 2010) until the realization of the referendum on September 12, Turkey has faced a highly polarized discourse of democracy.¹⁴⁷ The content of the package for the referendum was quite diverse but the AKP gathered this diversity around the signifier of “democracy” to go on to the referendum.

Table7 2010 Referendum Results in Turkey

2010 Referendum		
Participation Rate	Yes	No
73,7	57,9	42,1

The referendum took place in 12th September 2010 was considered as to approve or to disapprove democracy in Turkey, especially due to the support provided by the liberals to AKP. 2010 constitutional referendum resulted in the success of AKP's democracy discourse. 57% of votes were given to approve the constitutional

¹⁴⁶For a detailed information on the attitude of the AKP during the September 12 2010 referendum see “AKP'nin Anayasa Değişiklik Paketi ile İlgili Soru ve Cevaplar” (Temmuz 2010).

https://www.akparti.org.tr/upload/documents/ak_parti_ref_kitab_180710.pdf

¹⁴⁷For an analysis of the polarization that the referendum caused, see also Turan, İlter (2010)

Background to the Constitutional Referendum: Reinforcing the Politics of Polarization

<http://www.gmfus.org/publications/background-constitutional-referendum-reinforcing-politics-polarization>

amendment. As of then, AKP was completely convinced that it established the chain of equivalences. However, it would be appropriate to identify that there was a partial decrease in its reformist achievements during this period in comparison to its former two periods. Pluralist democracy understanding began to be ruined. Şakir Dinçşahin remarks that “Prime Minister Erdoğan managed to win the hearts and votes of the masses, and the 2010 referendum also revealed that popular support for the party is still on the rise. However, these consecutive electoral victories have given the AKP government an illusion of unlimited power.” (Dinçşahin, 2012:639)¹⁴⁸

AKP again was sure that there would not be a military intervention in politics in the process. Especially due to AKP’s antagonistic approach towards the military between 2008-2011 and the Ergenekon trials, AKP was able to find an opportunities to emphasize ‘civil politics and democracy’ themes. Again, since this process, as of 2009, the debates on finding peaceful solutions to Kurdish problem came to the agenda.

In 2011 general elections, AKP could gain over 49 per cent of the votes and 321 seats in parliament. But especially as of 2011 elections, the chain of differences clearly became prominent. The AKP was sure that it established the chain of equivalences and would like to preserve the majority. From this point with a classical populist approach, it used the “national will” concept to preserve the majority. This was an important election success which will used by Erdoğan especially after Gezipark protest against government “There is a 50 percent (of the population) we are having trouble keeping at home.”¹⁴⁹ to consolidate its voters.

¹⁴⁸For the detailed analysis of the era from Laclauian perspective see also Dinçşahin, Ş. (2012). A Symptomatic Analysis of the Justice and Development Party’s Populism in Turkey: The 2007 Electoral Crisis and After: Government and Opposition, 47:4 (2012), 618-640.

¹⁴⁹Prime Minister Erdoğan: “Yüzde Elliye Evlerinde Zor Tutuyoruz.” Hürriyet, 04.06.2013 available at <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/23429709.asp>

Table 8 2011 General Election Results¹⁵⁰

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	49,8	327
Republican People's Party (CHP)	26,0	135
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)	13,0	53
Independents (Bağımsızlar)	6,6	35
Felicity Party (SP)	1,3	0

Gezi demonstrations that took place during this period caused an important breakthrough in the discourse of the JDP. Starting out as an environmentalist demonstration, Gezi turned into a wide range political protest due to the violent response of the police. The JDP adopted a relatively harsh tone against the opposition who did not support him. This was also a period where the tension with the press was high. Esen and Gümüşçü argue that the political opposition and critical media were treated with the JDP's intolerance after the Gezi protests (Esen and Gümüşçü, 2016). Esen and Gümüşçü think the authoritarian characteristic of the administration became much more visible after this process.

In the following elections held, AKP was able to preserve its proportion of votes by its antagonistic approach. One of the most important agenda items in this period was the urge to find a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue. In the meantime, the Kurdish movement has also gained great support.

Again, after the 2011 elections, it was announced that the Kurdish problem was tried to be resolved under the name of 'solution process' by negotiations. However, despite significant criticism made by the nationalist party, there was no a step taken back in this process.

¹⁵⁰www.tuik.gov.tr

Again, in 2012, there was a significant polarization between the Gülen congregation, which was reported that its congregants was working in highest levels in state institutions, and the AKP. From 2012 until 2015 elections, Gülen congregation would be the most important object of AKP's antagonistic discourse. It is also a significant part of this process that the police and the jurisdiction confronted the executive board in two investigations on bribery and corruption that were started on December 17 – 25 2013. From then on, the Gülen movement also became an important target of the AKP antagonism.

In 2014 when Erdoğan became the president, AKP lost a significant rate of its votes in the 2015 elections. The chair of AKP was Ahmet Davutoğlu, however, Erdoğan continued to work as the actor defining the political discourse of the AKP. In this process, Halkların Demokratik Partisi-HDP-PDP, which is the representative of the Kurds in political arena, was able to increase its votes largely by the discourse of being the Turkey's Party and was able to be on the ten percent electoral threshold for the first time. Because of these changes took place in the political arena, when the AKP could not get the votes more than 40% in 3 June elections, AKP could not come to power alone and the new government could not be established. On 3 November 2015 the snap elections took place. Between these two elections for three months, AKP adopted a confrontational discourse, especially using the chain of differences and was able to get the 49.5% of votes again. The antagonism was directed especially to the Southeast due to increasing terrorist activities in this process. The discourse of democracy were seen just in constitutional and presidential debate. Chain of differences is increasingly highlighted whereas chain of equivalences is almost forgotten.

Table 9 June 2015 General Elections Results

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	40,9	258
Republican People's Party (CHP)	25,0	132
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)	16,3	80
People's Democratic Party (HDP)	13,1	80
Felicity Party (SP)	2,1	0

Table 10 November 2015 General Elections Results

Parties	Rate of Vote	Number of Representatives
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	49,5	317
Republican People's Party (CHP)	25,3	134
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)	11,9	40
People's Democratic Party (HDP)	10,8	59
Felicity Party (SP)	0,7	0

Now a closer look will be taken to the discourses used at this process and it will be evaluated in a Laclauian sense. By this way, we will get important data to make sense of the democracy – populism link.

6.2.3. Understanding of Democracy

In this part of the study, democracy discourse of the AKP will be analyzed in terms of populism. If we analyze the AKP's discourse of democracy in detail, we will have a chance to grasp the tension occurred between democracy and populism during the

government of the AKP. Thus, we can detect the periods that democratization has gone under positive or negative influence. We will also understand the function of democracy as a signifier in the formation of the union of demands. In trying to provide an answer to this question, I will utilize AKP's party programme and speeches of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan chairman of the party. Also Yalçın Akdoğan's - one of the important ideologues of the party- book, "*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi ve Muhafazakar Demokrasi*" will help me to understand the framework of the understanding of democracy of the AKP and its populist interpretation.¹⁵¹

Since from its foundation, AKP was announcing that it was following a conservative democracy understanding, especially after 2007, that it was following an advanced democracy understanding. Usually this discourse is used differently than it means and it was seen as the most pivotal political objectives of AKP.

While Albertazzi and Mc Donnell defining the main characteristics of the populism they emphasize the main argument of the populist parties. According to Albertazzi and McDonnell, they claim that radical changes for the better are possible and they can make them happen. In short they promise to make democracy work (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008:2) which today the AKP shouldered.

The AKP entered the Turkish political scene on 14 August 2001 under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with their innovation and democracy claims. In their party programme; "Justice and Development Party represents a new style of politics and a new understanding in the Turkish political life."¹⁵² When this new understanding was established, the party was adopting a discourse that would make especially the people's values prominent.

Our people are not desperate. The solution is the people itself. As the great Atatürk pointed out, the power to save the nation, is again their own dedication and commitment. Our party which is identified by the people, will surely reestablished the sense of confidence which was lost in the society. We believe that everyone has to look to the future

¹⁵¹AK Parti Parti Programı

<http://www.akparti.org.tr/site/akparti/parti-programi>

¹⁵²<http://www.akparti.org.tr/>

with confidence, we perseverancely try to ensure everyone to feel respected and despised as a member of this society” (AKP’s party program, p.2).¹⁵³

On the other hand, when defining democracy it emphasises the national sovereignty and it does not go beyond that. According to Justice and Development Party’s party programme; “In a democracy, sovereignty belongs to the people and this feature is a basic quality separating democratic regimes from all other regimes”¹⁵⁴ Further, party made a detailed definition and they addressed the people’s values besides their stress on people as an owner of the sovereignty in their concept “conservative democracy.” Again, in the 2023 vision adopted in 2012, it can be observed that reason of its success is seen by AKP as its conservative democracy understanding.

AKP, which started the greatest democratization and transformation movement in the period of Republic, was succeed in 5 elections and 2 referendums since it was founded in 2001 and was able to preserve its power for three consecutive periods by increasing its votes. The ‘Conservative democratic’ political identity formed by the AKP was turned into a major political attraction by being institutionalized and will constitute a role model for the other countries from the same region”¹⁵⁵ (AKP’s 2023 vision).¹⁵⁶

In the conservative democracy understanding, the conservativeness means a gradual change, whereas the democracy reflects the opinion of the classical national sovereignty. Yalçın Akdoğan who is considered the ideologue of the party briefly summarizes the politics and conservatism emphasis as follows: “Politics is a convention area in the public sphere which is represented by differences. Political authority must be found on judicial, constitutional and political legitimacy. Political

¹⁵³“Halkımız çaresiz değildir. Çare bizzat halkın kendisindedir. Büyük Atatürk’ün belirttiği gibi, milleti kurtaracak güç, yine kendi azim ve kararlılığıdır. Halkla özdeşleşen partimiz, her şeyden önce toplumda yok olan güven duygusunu mutlaka yeniden tesis edecektir. Herkesin yarınlara güvenle bakmasını, kendisini bu toplumun saygıdeğer ve horlanmayan bir ferdi olarak hissetmesini sağlamak azim ve kararlılığımızdır.” (AKP parti programı s. 2) www.akparti.org.tr/site/akparti/parti-programi

¹⁵⁴ AKP Party Programme.

¹⁵⁵ AKP 2023 vision <https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/2023-political-vision>

¹⁵⁶“Cumhuriyet tarihinin en büyük demokratikleşme ve değişim hamlesini başlatan AK Parti, kurulduğu 2001’den bu yana girdiği 5 seçimden ve 2 halkoylamasından başarıyla çıkmış, üst üste üç dönem oylarını artırarak iktidarını koruma başarısı göstermiştir. AK Parti’nin geliştirdiği “muhafazakâr demokrat” siyasi kimlik, kurumsallaşarak büyük bir siyasi cazibe merkezine dönüşmüş ve diğer bölge ülkelerine örneklik teşkil edecek bir ilham kaynağı haline gelmiştir.”¹⁵⁶ (AKP 2023 vizyonu)

power should not be using only by particular group or person. Restricted government and state conception must be accepted. Conservatism supports gradual changes instead of revolutionary changes, based on moderation instead of radicalism and believes the necessity of preserving the tradition, family and social values which comes from the past” (Akdoğan, 2004:13).

In his very first democracy definition in Yalçın Akdoğan’s book, which is also adopted by Justice and Development Party in its constitution, refers to the people and their power on political authority. Akdoğan also denies to be in relation with populism or pragmatism as a party which they see as a discourse crisis. According to Akdoğan, Turkish politics became the scene of blurred and empty political discourses for many years. Especially power parties have related themselves with populism and pragmatism. It was resulted by action and discourse crisis. Conservative democracy is the endeavour of the AKP which aims to reproduce itself on concrete political ground (Akdoğan, 2004:18). This concrete political environment would be formed by conservative democracy understanding.

AKP again has clearly indicated in its party program that it has adopted a pluralistic democratic structure and that the majority will not be absolutized:

Competition of different approaches are the indispensable element of a stable democratic system. In this competition, who takes the majority of the votes comes to power and takes the responsibility of the whole country and local governments. But winning the competition and coming to power will not absolutize the will of the majority” (AKP’s party program).¹⁵⁷

In the following period, when it makes the advanced democracy prominent, the party seems to have a pretty ideal democracy understanding rather than a conservative democracy understanding.

As AKP, we define the advanced democracy as an institutionalized and liberal democracy in which; persons can enjoy their indispensable, inalienable, inviolable fully their fundamental rights and freedoms where those are protected

¹⁵⁷Farklı tercihlerin rekabeti, sağlıklı bir demokratik sistemin vazgeçilmez unsurlarındandır. Bu yarışta çoğunluğun oyunu alanlar iktidara gelir, tüm ülkenin ya da yerel yönetimlerin sorumluluğunu üstlenirler. Ancak yarışı kazanmak ve iktidara gelmek çoğunluğun iradesini mutlaklaştırmaz. (AKP parti programı) www.akparti.org. AKP Party Programme

against all authority as all guaranteed by the state; will of citizens have a decisive influence on all state institutions; citizens can participate in the management not only by the elections held at regular intervals but also by their control and decisions in all spheres of public life¹⁵⁸ (AKP's 2023 vision).

However, AKP does not stand back from making the definition of democracy as such is based on the will of the nation and a classical opposition of 'people vs. elite', apart from the ideal pluralistic democracy it adopted in official documents.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated in his speech at the meeting of provincial heads held in Antalya on 16 May 2003 as follows:

"The real children of our nation know well that the efforts to show our democracy and constitutional system as weak do not serve today and future of our nation. The power of our democracy is the power of our nation."(9)¹⁵⁹

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in the speech he made in parliament in 2010, he embraced a classic understanding of the national will.

We are such a troubled party staff. We are such people came as out of the blue, knowing the situation of the others came out of the blue. We know the value of the freedom, freedom of thought and of expression, of law, justice, equality; we know the worth of respect to the beliefs and lifestyles. Look dear friends. In this country, there were periods where the books were banned, even were burnt down. You also know it, as I know it. This was the period of the CHP. There were periods when the interventions to beliefs, worship and even the Azan took place. Houses were raided, books were confiscated, prayer rugs were considered as the evidence. I'm not mentioning you on another country, but on my country, since those were happened in my country. Now some tells us in some places that why we mention the periods of years

¹⁵⁸"AK Parti olarak **ileri demokrasiyi**; kişinin vazgeçilmez, devredilmez, dokunulmaz temel hak ve hürriyetlerinin eksiksiz yaşanabildiği ve bunların her türlü otorite karşısında korunduğu, devlet tarafından kesin bir biçimde garanti altına alındığı; vatandaş iradesinin devletin bütün kurumları üzerinde belirleyici etkiye sahip olduğu; sadece düzenli aralıklarla yapılan seçimlerle değil, kamu hayatının her alanında vatandaşların kararlarıyla ve denetimleriyle yönetime katılabildikleri kurumsallaşmış, özgürlükçü demokrasi olarak tanımlıyoruz."(AKP 2023 vizyonu) <https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/akparti/2023-siyasi-vizyon>

¹⁵⁹"Bu milletin gerçek evlatları demokrasimizi ve anayasal sistemimizi zaaf içinde gösterme çabalarının milletimizin bugününe ve geleceğine hizmet etmediğini çok iyi bilirler. Demokrasimizin gücü milletimizin gücü-dür.(9)" www.turkiyebulteni.org

before. How we cannot mention those. Those were the activities of people who says that ‘we are the party that founded the Republic’ when it suits them. The generations do not know these facts. We continue to mention on these for the generations to know better or to see better how the CHP is sincere or not when they say those.”(Erdoğan, 2010)¹⁶⁰

Besides their emphasis on people populist point of view they also represent themselves as “ordinary accessible people”. With his emphasis, they were telling that they are also from the people and owing to that, it became easier for them to refer the people. On July 2003 at AKP’s Istanbul Provincial Congress, Erdoğan stated that: “We did not bale out by parachutes, we climbed the steps one by one, we came from the people” (9)¹⁶¹

He accused the jurisdiction for not answering the public and glorified the executive power with a reference to the public after an annulment decision that the state council gave regarding the transportation fees.

We are standing before the people and adresssing the people. But those who make decisions in the name of the people have no obligations to offer explanations to the people, this is the problem. They say “in the name of the people” while giving a decision but is there an authority that they have to give accounts? No. But we are here before the people while giving decisions and giving accounts of our decisions. This is our difference (Erdoğan, 2010).¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰Biz dertli bir kadroyuz.Biz damdan düşen bir kadroyuz, damdan düşenin halini bilen bir kadroyuz.Özgürlüğün kıymetini, düşünce ve ifade özgürlüğünün, hukukun, adaletin, eşitliğin değerini; inançlara, yaşam tarzlarına saygının bedelini bilen bir kadroyuz biz.Bakın değerli arkadaşlarım.Bu ülkede kitapların yasaklandığı, hatta yakıldığı dönemler oldu. Bunu siz de en az benim kadar biliyorsunuz. Bu halk partinin iktidar dönemidir.Bu ülkede inançlara, ibadetlere, hatta ve hatta ezanın okunuşuna müdahale edildiği dönemler oldu.Evler basıldı, kitaplar derdest edildi, seccadeler suç aleti sayıldı.Ben size başka bir ülke anlatmıyorum, size ben ülkemi anlatıyorum ülkem bunları yaşadı.Bize şimdi bazı yerlerde diyorlar ki niçin 10 yıllarca öncesini anlatıyorsunuz.Nasıl anlatılmaz.İşlerine geldiği zaman ‘Biz Cumhuriyeti kuran bir partiyiz’ diyenlerin yaptıkları bunlar. Bunu bu kuşaklar bilmez bunu bu kuşaklara anlatacağız ki bunların söylediklerinde ne denli samimi olduklarını, ne denli samimi olmadıklarını iyi bilsinler iyi görsünler diye anlatıyorum.

“Cumhura Ait Olan Hiçbir Yer Cumhura Yasaklanamaz”, 16.10.2010, available at http://www.rte.gen.tr/cumhura-ait-olan-hicbir-yer-cumhura-yasaklanamaz_7423.html

¹⁶¹Biz paraşütle inmedik, basamakları tek tek çıkarak, halkın arasından geldik" (9) <http://www.turkiyebulteni.org/PDF/03%20ASTOS%202003.pdf>

¹⁶²Biz milletin karşısındayız, biz millete hesap veriyoruz. Ama millet adına karar verenlerin, millete hesap vermek diye bir durumu yok ki sıkıntı burada. Kararı verirken ‘millet adına’ diyor ama hesabı verirken, hesap vereceği bir merci var mı? Yok. Ama biz kararı alırken de hesabı verirken de milletin karşısındayız. Farkımız bu.

“Belediyeyi Gelsin Danıştay Yönetsin”, Vatan, 11.03.2010, available at <http://www.gazetevatan.com/-belediyeyi-gelsin-danistay-yonetsin--293008-siyaset/>

As Pasquino reminded populist leaders promise that they will get rid of traditional politics however they do not explain which kind of new politics they will construct. They just say that the leader will be fully accessible to the people” (Pasquino, 2008:21). Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan says in his speech which he made in Turkish Grand National Assembly group meeting that: “The governments which does not see and recognize people would not be long lived.”¹⁶³ Also in another speech which he made in Burdur he emphasizes that “You cannot make politics without speaking in people’s language”¹⁶⁴ Also it is seen obviously that Tayyip Erdoğan is attentive about speaking in their language all the time even in official meetings.

“Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said ‘We are the party of ordinary Turks.’ Erdoğan in an interview by the Newsweek reporter Owen Matthews, indicated that Turkey accomplished the otherwise thought impossible to be accomplished by succeeding in establishing balance between Islam, democracy, secularism and modernity. Erdoğan further continued:

(Our government) proves that a religious person can protect the idea of secularism. The AKP is introduced to be party rooted in Islam in the West. This is not true. The AKP is not only for religious people, we are the party of the ordinary Turks. We oppose ethnic nationalism, local nationalism and religious chauvinism. Turkey is an inspiration for the rest of the Islamic world with its democracy model (Erdoğan, 2008)”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³Başbakan Erdoğan: "Halka Gözünü, Gönünü Kapatın Yönetimler Uzun Ömürlü Olamaz"

01.02.2011, available at http://www.rte.gen.tr/halka-gozunu-gonlunu-kapatan-yonetimler-uzun-omurlu-olamaz_7848.html.

¹⁶⁴Başbakan Erdoğan: "Halkın Dilini Yakalayamadığınız Sürece Siyaset Yapamazsınız"

31.01.2011, available at http://www.rte.gen.tr/halkin-dilini-yakalayamadiginiz-surece-siyaset-yapamazsiniz_7837.html.

¹⁶⁵(Bizim hükümet) dindar bir insanın laiklik fikrini koruyabileceğini kanıtıyor. Batı’da AKP, her zaman kökleri İslamda olan bir parti olarak gösteriliyor. Bu doğru değil. AKP, sadece dindar insanlar için bir parti değil, biz ortalama Türkün partisiyiz. Etnik milliyetçiliğe, bölgesel milliyetçiliğe ve dini şovenizme tamamen karşıyız. Türkiye, demokrasisi ile İslam dünyasının geri kalan kısmı için bir ilham kaynağıdır.”

“Dindarlar Laikliği Koruyabilir”, Milliyet,05.05.2008, available at

<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/Siyaset/HaberDetay.aspx?aType=HaberDetayArsiv&ArticleID=524144&Kategori=siyaset&b=Erdogan:%20Dindarlar%20laikligi%20koruyabilir>

Justice and Development Party also underline the power of the people against the elites as many authors who studies on populism highlighted on their populism definitions. Prime Minister Erdoğan says in a speech which he made in a opening ceremony in Muğla Fethiye: “We are the servants of whole Turkey, not the masters.”¹⁶⁶ It is obvious that Justice and Development Party sees and recognizes the people as a main source of the political authority. So Erdoğan lays stress on people’s power in his political style. To say simply, Justice and Development Party see democracy sovereignty of the people and the government by the majority. “Since the people can apparently confer legitimacy on boundaries, constitutions, regimes and policies all sorts of groups and interests have an incentive to claim that they are or they speak for people” (Canovan, 1999:2). It is expressed that, they are the servants of the people and they are the sound of the silence majority. The presumption to speak in the name of the majority is a vital element for the Justice and Development Party.

As Pasquino also reminded “The possibility of populism is inherent, though not to the same degree, in practically all contemporary mass democracies. The very ‘ideology’ of democracy, its normative content that contemplates ‘the power of the people’ and suggests that political power must be exercised ‘for the people’ may lead, under some circumstances and through a distorted manipulated implementation, to populist recipes, claims, outcomes” (Pasquino, 2008:28). As Tayyip Erdoğan stressed in his group speech on 4 May 2010, “I know that each member of our party from the upper management to the members of most distant units is dying to serve this country and people.”¹⁶⁷ And he adds that they are “only” working for their people. “We have never worked for making someone to like or accept us. We find it satisfactory when our people appreciate and like what we do.”¹⁶⁸

Whatever their positioning on the left or right spectrum the key feature of the populists is their claim to be the true democrats fighting to reclaim the people’s

¹⁶⁶Başbakan Erdoğan: "Biz Tüm Türkiye'nin Efendisi Değil, Hizmetkarıyız", 15.01.2011 available at http://www.rte.gen.tr/biz-tum-turkiyenin-efendisi-degil-hizmetkariyiz_7780.html.

¹⁶⁷Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s Speech in Justice and Development Party Group Meeting, 04.05.2010 available at <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/group04052010.html>

¹⁶⁸Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s Speech in Justice and Development Party Group Meeting 23.03.2010 available at <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/group23032010.html>

sovereignty from others as Erdoğan says “Our criterion in every matter has been democracy and law. We will keep placing the supremacy of law above everything else in such matters.”¹⁶⁹

What Erdoğan opposed was not only the opposition parties but also the media organs that are considered to be the fourth power of democracy. Populist politics uses media as an important tool while putting it in the target when it does not support the status quo to increase the control on the media organs.

We are not doing politics in newspapers, on TVs, in Babiali or İkitelli. We are doing politics with our people, among them. Those who look for will find us in Kastamonu, Sivas, Sinop, Amasya, Merzifon or Aksaray. We are communicating with our people here in these squares not through media. We are communicating with our people in their language (Erdoğan, 2010)¹⁷⁰

According to Albertazzi like all ideologies populism proposes an analysis designed to respond to a number of essential questions what went wrong who is to blame and what is to be done to reverse the situation (Albertazzi, 2006:5). And they also put simply answers: The government and democracy, which should reflect the will of the people have been occupied, distorted and exploited by corrupt elites. In one of his speeches in Şanlıurfa, Erdoğan says that “They have no toleration to the people and their values”¹⁷¹ in relation to the approaches of elites against people. He also says that about constitutional changes, “we are moving to rule of law from rule of elites”¹⁷² to stress their distance from elites.

¹⁶⁹ Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s Speech in Justice and Development Party Group Meeting, 02.02.2010, available at <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/group02022010.html>

¹⁷⁰ Erdoğan, “Biz siyaseti gazete sayfalarından, televizyon ekranlarından, Babiali’den, İkitelli’den yapmayız. Biz siyaseti milletimizle birlikte, milletimizin içinden yaparız. Bizi arayan Kastamonu, Sivas, Sinop, Amasya, Merzifon, Aksaray’da bulur. Biz milletimizle medya üzerinden değil. Buradan meydanlarda iletişim kuruyoruz. Biz milletimizin diliyle iletişim kuruyoruz. AKP’yi arayanlar rantiyelerde değil, şantiyelerde bulur. Bizim işimiz hizmet, gücümüz millet. Millet bunun dışında bir anlayışa prim vermiyor” diye konuştu. “Başbakan Erdoğan Yine Medyaya Çattı”, Milliyet, 11.02.2010, available at

<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/basbakan-erdogan--yine-medyaya-catti/siyaset/sondakikaarsiv/11.02.2010/1061852/default.htm>

¹⁷¹ Erdoğan: "Bunların Bu Millete de Bu Milletin Değerlerine de Tahammülleri Yok" 01.11.2010, available at

http://www.rte.gen.tr/bunlarin-bu-millete-de-bu-milletin-degerlerine-de-tahammulleri_7509.html

¹⁷² Erdoğan: “Üstünlerin Hukukundan, Hukukun Üstünlüğüne Geçiyoruz” 07.11.2010, available at http://www.rte.gen.tr/ustunlerin-hukukundan-hukukun-ustunlugune-geciyoruz_6984.html

The elites and others (not of the people) are to blame for the current undesirable situation in which people find themselves. AKP also blames elites and others for current situation. According to Erdoğan others, namely Republican People's Party and its policies are responsible for current corrupt situation.¹⁷³

The people must be given back their voice and power through the populist leader and party. This view is based on fundamental conception of the people as both homogeneous and virtuous. The Justice and Development Party underlined the concept of democracy. If we define democracy simply as the rule of the people or self-government, the discourse of the right, with its emphasis mainly on the people, could easily unite with a rather rhetorical democratic discourse. As Akdoğan expresses “the factor behind the problems in Turkey is the deprivation of democracy, also a proper understanding of democracy is needed for the solution of other major problems.

As one can see, the AKP viewed democracy as the solution for all of the country's problems. This is why they changed their “National View” identity and took an effort in democratization based on the aims for the EU.

This period when the AKP came into power was a period when the AKP proceeded to a great deal in the route to democratization. The AKP became very successful in gaining the support of the masses through this discourse of democracy. However, because of the AKP's sole reference to the people, this discourse of democracy was not broad enough. Given the principles of liberal democracy, the index here turned towards populism rather than democracy.

¹⁷³Erdoğan: “Cumhura Ait Olan Hiçbir Yer Cumhura Yasaklanamaz.”, 16.10.2010 available at http://www.rte.gen.tr/cumhura-ait-olan-hicbir-yer-cumhura-yasaklanamaz_7423.html

Biz dertli bir kadroyuz.Biz damdan düşen bir kadroyuz, damdan düşenin halini bilen bir kadroyuz.Özgürlüğün kıymetini, düşünce ve ifade özgürlüğünün, hukukun, adaletin, eşitliğin değerini; inançlara, yaşam tarzlarına saygının bedelini bilen bir kadroyuz biz.Bakın değerli arkadaşlarım.Bu ülkede kitapların yasaklandığı, hatta yakıldığı dönemler oldu. Bunu siz de en az benim kadar biliyorsunuz. Bu halk partinin iktidar dönemidir.Bu ülkede inançlara, ibadetlere, hatta ve hatta ezanın okunuşuna müdahale edildiği dönemler oldu.Evler basıldı, kitaplar derdest edildi, seccadeler suç aleti sayıldı.Ben size başka bir ülke anlatmıyorum, size ben ülkemi anlatıyorum ülkem bunları yaşadı.Bize şimdi bazı yerlerde diyorlar ki niçin 10 yıllarca öncesini anlatıyorsunuz.Nasıl anlatılmaz.İşlerine geldiği zaman ‘Biz Cumhuriyeti kuran bir partiyiz’ diyenlerin yaptıkları bunlar.Bunu bu kuşaklar bilmez bunu bu kuşaklara anlatacağız ki bunların söylediklerinde ne denli samimi olduklarını, ne denli samimi olmadıklarını iyi bilsinler iyi görsünler diye anlatıyorum.

Through a Laclauian perspective Tarık Şengül explains how the discourse of democracy can melt all kinds of demands inside of it and can be offered as a solution to everything: “in an environment where the idea of democratic/ institutional politics where all public demands are met one by one became almost impossible, populist politics put some of these demands forward as representing all others. This individual demand is transformed into a higher representative where the other demands also identify themselves inside of it. When representation is successful, diverse groups concentrate around the hegemonic project (Şengül, 2010:146). But making frequent references to the public while defining democracy, the AKP left a broader definition of the concept in the written documents.

6.2.4. Was the Union of Demands Formed? 2010 Constitutional Referendum and Afterwards

Referendums play key roles during the periods in which politicians try to derive popular support by using the tools of direct democracy instead of the representative democracy. The questions asked in referendums are quite important with regards to what could be a matter of a referendum and what not, whether the demand for referendum comes from the people or the administrators, and the relations between populism and democracy.

The idea of referendum was brought up frequently during the AKP period in search of a solution for some controversial issues. However only for two instances, to put the constitutional change package to the vote, referendums were conducted in 2007 and 2010. The question of the first referendum was somewhat narrow-scoped while the 2010 referendum put a comprehensive change package to the vote.

Although the hegemony project of the government has been following this style of a populist politics, this idea became purely visible with the referendum. While the referendum was introduced as confrontation with “the power elites who restrict public space and freedoms,” the items of various content were defined and defended under the democracy headline in a skillful way.” (Şengül, 2012:147)

2010 referendum has an important indication for this dissertation, as it is possible to argue through a Laclauian perspective that a union of demands based on the AKP's discourse of democracy was formed after this date. Therefore, 2010 referendum became such a period where the democracy word lost its meaning most and turned into a void indicator. Because of its broad content, the 2010 referendum was seen as a means to measure the public approval of the AKP policies. In this respect, they tried to gain support by putting a more romantic discourse of democracy forward.

With the words of Aytaç and Öniş “the plescibitarian view of democracy and an accompanying disdain for institutions of horizontal accountability” came to the fore in this process (Aytaç and Öniş, 2014).¹⁷⁴

By emphasizing that the referendum is directly related to Turkish Nation's daily life, Prime Minister Erdoğan stated that “this amendment in constitution will change Turkey, will change the destiny and situation of Turkey. This amendment will ensure your labor to gain value and will bring more welfare. With this amendment Turkey will start a new era with full of hope and a brighter future”.

Prime Minister Erdoğan stated that the citizens will approve the amendment of constitution on again another 12 September. Prime Minister Erdoğan stated that “as the parliamentarians we wrote the introduction part of the history, now you will write the body part of the history and I hope our nation will write the conclusion part”. Our love is for people, on 12 September, say YES for approval, protect your own future!”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴See also Erdem Aytaç and Ziya Öniş “Varieties of Populism in a Changing Global Context: The Divergent Paths of Erdoğan and Kirchnerismo” , Comparative Politics, October, 2014.

¹⁷⁵“Millet tarih yazacak” Referandumun, Türk Milletinin günlük hayatı ile doğrudan ilgili olduğunu vurgulayan Başbakan Erdoğan, “Bu Anayasa değişikliği Türkiye’yi değiştirecek, bu Anayasa değişikliği Türkiye’nin kaderini, Türkiye’nin manzarasını değiştirecek. Bu Anayasa değişikliği emeğinizin değer kazanmasını, ekmeğinizin çoğalmasını getirecek. Türkiye bu Anayasa değişikliği ile yeni bir döneme, umut dolu, aydınlık bir geleceğe adımını atacak” dedi.

Başbakan Erdoğan, yine bir 12 Eylül tarihinde vatandaşların Anayasa değişikliğine büyük oranda evet diyeceklerini ifade etti. Babakan Erdoğan, "Bizim TBMM’de milletvekilleri olarak girişini yazdığımız tarihin siz şimdi gelişme bölümünü yazacaksınız ve inşallah milletimiz de sonucunu yazacaktır" diye konuştu.

Sevdamız millet oyumuz EVET 12 Eylül’de sen de EVET de, geleceğine sahip çık!
(www.akparti.org.tr)

In principle, it is a referendum package to vote pro or con for the constitutional changes regarding individual rights, law and economic and social rights. However, the regulations about the handicapped individuals were put in the same package along with the rules about the number of the members of the constitutional court. For this reason, it was hard to understand and the leader's discourse became determinant in public support. While Erdoğan viewed "yes" as the victory of democracy, the opposition thought that the changes in the jurisdiction would broaden the effect of the execution against the other power holders.

"We are about to come across a situation where the government supporters would vote "yes" while the opposition would vote "no." It is worrying that the constitutional changes are put to vote like that. Because the anticipation would be that the governments go but the constitution shall remain. But the point where the party in power brought us is that the administration instead of the constitution is being voted, and the public is divided into two camps (Şengül, 114)¹⁷⁶

Another important issue of this referendum is that the AKP had support from the liberal left wing. I argue that they were articulated into the power bloc through this. This group, who express themselves with the slogan of "yes but not enough" played an important role in the set up of the AKP's power bloc and the increasing trust in the AKP's discourse of democracy.

Erdoğan has always emphasized the importance of going to the people in referendum. For example, he asked the business circles to say "yes" for the sake of the regulations about the economic rights. In his talk on August, 4th 2010 right before the referendum, he made references to the people while insisting on a highly polarized discourse. The infamous "if you choose to be impartial, you will be left outside" was said as these discussions were going on.

"We aiming for the realization of our people's will with their votes. These non governmental organizations should have spoken up and acknowledge this as antidemocratic that this realization did not happen to be in the parliament. They

¹⁷⁶ Tarık Şengül, Parçalı Bulutlu Referandum, 112, 20 Temmuz 2010

should have asked: “Why do you interfere with this will?” You better take the people if not the parliament into seriously. We are going to the people, you tell them.

6.2.5. Antagonism: A Sharp Distinction: “We and Others”

“Marginal groups can not call us to account. Only nation can call us to account.” (Bize marjinal gruplar değil millet hesap sorar.) R.T. Erdoğan 09.06.2013

When the AKP came to power for the first time, it was not able to ensure a social agreement. Therefore, thanks to the legislation enacted for EU Accession in the first years the party had a more democratic approach. However, as of the second election it has begun to use an antagonist discourse believing that it strengthened its position and formed the union of demands. Starting from 2007 elections, the chain of equivalences has been narrowed whereas chain of differences began to rise slowly. The democracy understanding, which was emphasized by AKP mostly, started to be fostered by the antagonism.

In the early years of the AKP government, the AKP were protested especially by secularists and Republic meetings were held, close to the presidential election (the new president would be elected instead of Ahmet Necdet Sezer). Those meetings, of which the main reason is the presidential election, held in different cities in Turkey, aiming to criticise the government were reacted harshly by AKP. At AKP’s Party group meeting held on April 16 in parliament, Erdoğan mentioned on the participants of those meeting as “bindirilmiş kıtalar”¹⁷⁷:

Who did this? They gathered and came together. Good luck for them. Allright, they enjoy their democratic right. There are different figures in different newspapers, oh my good, millions. Just like the millions we removed in the banknotes... How exaggerated... I guess they are unaware of the surface area of a place... We are the competents of this business. We spent our lifetimes in that business, by thinking long and hard. We have no other reference point. If they come to the opening of the road in Black Sea coast and shot photos, they would see well what is what. It was such a

¹⁷⁷Bindirilmiş kıtalar

meeting with the participation of people from that province where they showed their believes, unlike the”bindirilmiş kıtalar” from 81 cities... Well, try to hide the truth as much as you can, but you can not tell this to the citizens of Samsun, Ordu, Giresun, Rize, Artvin¹⁷⁸

After the presidential elections, when the candidate whom AKP wanted was elected, the chain of differences became more obvious. The army became the first target in this process. The Ergenekon investigations which took place successively helped AKP to direct its antagonist discourse to the army and to form its democracy understanding based upon ‘army against civilians’. Erdogan provided a populist response in the speech he made on 15 July 2008 Wednesday in parliament to the explanations made by the opposition on the Ergenekon case:

“The prosecutor existed on behalf of the nation, so we have efforts to claim the justice on behalf of the nation. In this sense, I am a prosecutor”.¹⁷⁹

Since there are many people within the party who suffered especially in the period of 28 February, expression of ‘the victims of the 28 February’ is often used in the antagonism directed against the army. AKP would name them later as the steps for demilitarization, but while these steps for demilitarization, the existence of a significant antagonistic link should not be ignored.

The tutelary understanding formed by the constitution of 12 September Coup and subsequent legal amendments was totally ignoring the democratic will of the citizens at all; the most influential institutions and boards of the legislative organ was under the direction of the assigned staff without having a responsibility of accountability to public. The most important steps in this regard were taken by AKP

¹⁷⁸“Kim yaptı? Toplandılar, bir araya geldiler. Hayırlı olsun. Tamam bir demokratik hakkı kullandınız. Gazetelerde farklı farklı rakamlar. Aman yarabdim milyonlar filan... Milyon da çok basite indi. Aynen bizim 6 sıfır attığımız banknottaki milyonlar gibi... Ne kadar uçuk. Herhalde bunlar bir alanının yüzölçümünden bihaber... Biz bu işin kompetanız. Ömrümüz bu işlerle geçti, ölçüp biçmekle geçti. Başka sermayemiz yok. Karadeniz Sahil yolu açılışına gelip bunu fotoğraflayıp koymuş olsaydılar, neyin ne olduğunu gayet iyi görürlerdi. 81 vilayetten bindirilmiş kıtalarla değil, tamamen o bölgenin insanların sevdasını aşkını ortaya koyduğu bir yürüyüşü o...İşte, gerçekleri ne kadar gizlerseniz gizleyin, ama siz Samsunlu, Ordulu, Giresunlu, Rizeli, Artvinli vatandaşına bunu anlatamazsın,”

“Erdogan: Mitinge Katılanlar Bindirilmiş Kıta”, [www.ntv.com](http://www.ntv.com.tr/news/405722.asp#storyContinues), 17.04.2007, available at <http://arsiv.ntv.com.tr/news/405722.asp#storyContinues>

¹⁷⁹“Savcı millet adına vardır, biz de millet adına hakkı aramanın gayreti içindeyiz. Bu anlamda savcılık ise evet savcıyım.”

“Evet Ergenekonun Savcısıyım”, Vatan, 16.07.2008, available at, <http://www.gazetevatan.com/-evet-ergenekon-un-savcisiyim--189246-siyaset/>

government. With the steps like the legislative changes pertaining to the National Security Council and its General Secretariat, constrictions in the authority of the military court, the fact that military spending would be subjected to the audit by Court of Accounts, the authorization to assign members by National Security Council or Presidency of General Staff to the various boards (such as YÖK (Board of Higher Education), RTÜK (Radio and Television Supreme Council), Board of Inspection of Cinema, Video and Musical Works, etc.), many developments were realized in terms of demilitarization" (AKP's booklet on Advanced Democracy).¹⁸⁰

On 28 February 2012, on the occasion of the anniversary of 28 February, Erdogan stated as follows:

They just remember democracy when it only suits themselves. They only remember in the general assembly stands the democracy, which they did not remember on 28 February, 27 April and in struggle Ergenekon. I am not saying that general assembly meetings since we have already seen that there is no democracy in their assembly. They only pronounce democracy on stands. Where were you on 28 February if you love democracy so much? If you have so much passion for democracy, why you were silent on 27 May. In fact, you went further to say that there are prosecutors in Ankara. Their love for democracy is a platonic one. They are only remote lovers of democracy" (Erdogan as cited in Ferik:2015).¹⁸¹

28 February divested the equal opportunities of poor children of Anatolia, the meaning of vocational schools was emptied in this way. The deceased Adnan Menderes and Turgut Özal as well as intelligent children had the opportunity to get educated in best universities whereas unionist mentality of

¹⁸⁰“12 Eylül darbe Anayasası ve izleyen yasal düzenlemelerle oluşan vesayetçi anlayış, vatandaşın demokratik iradesini hiçe sayıyor; yürütmenin en etkili kurumları, kurulları, halka hesap verme sorumluluğu taşımayan atanmışların yönlendirmesi altında kalıyordu. Bu konuda en önemli adımları AK Parti iktidarı attı. Milli Güvenlik Kurulu ve MGK Genel Sekreterliğine ilişkin yasal değişiklikler, askeri mahkemelerin yetkilerinin daraltılması, askeri harcamalara Sayıştay denetimi getirilmesi, çeşitli kurullara (YÖK, RTÜK, Sinema, Video ve Müzik Eserleri Denetleme Kurulu vb.) MGK Genel Sekreterliği veya Genelkurmay Başkanlığı'na üye seçilmesinin kaldırılması gibi adımlarla sivilleşme alanında büyük mesafe alındı.” (AKP ‘İleri Demokrasi Kitapçığı)

¹⁸¹“Bunlar demokrasiyi sadece işlerine geldiklerinde hatırlarlar. 28 Şubat'ta 27 Nisan'da Ergenekonla mücadelede hatırlamadıkları demokrasiyi bunlar sadece kurultay kürsülerinde hatırlar. Kurultay'da demiyorum kurultaylarında demokrasi olmadığını zaten gördük. Sadece kurultay kürsüsünde demokrasiyi telaffuz eder bunlar. Demokrasiye bu kadar aşkıttınız da 28 Şubat'ta nerdeydiniz? Demokrasiye bu kadar tutkundunuz da 27 Mayıs'ta neden sesiniz çıkmadı. Hatta o kadar ileri gittiniz ki Ankara'da da savcılar varmış dediniz. Bunların demokrasi aşkı platoniktir. Bunlar demokrasiyi ancak uzaktan severler. (Erdogan, as cited in Ferik,2015)”

the CHP and elitist mentality of 28 February darkened the future these children. In the past, bureaucratic authorities and wealth were passing from father to son and these were shared in a narrow and elitist environment. Here Anatolia spoilt this game. The poor children of peasant, farmer, caretaker, tailor and carpenter families were able to get educated, and they became governors, lawyers, prosecutors and bureaucrats. Sorry to say but 28 February was such an intervention against the rise of Anatolia” (Erdoğan as cited in Ferik, 2015).¹⁸²

Almost 80 years later, Erdogan manages to feed his antagonism using classic Anatolianist and peasantist discourse. This antagonistic discourse provided AKP with an extraordinary victory in 2010 referendum and in 2011 elections. After 57% of votes was taken by ‘union of demands’ having 26 articles being formed in constitutional referendum in 2010, the ratio was anticipated approximately. The 2010 referendum was not such a democratic tool to get the ‘idea’ of people, but rather was an approval mechanism to understand to what degree the government was able to consolidate the groups the Government took its support from.

6.2.6. Climax of the Chain of Differences:

Gezipark protests in June 2013 became also a turning point for the AKP’s populist democracy discourse. The majoritarian and exclusionist democracy discourse became stronger than ever before as a reaction against protesters. Anyone who did not vote for AKP was considered as same. Especially Erdoğan used a populist democracy discourse to exclude protesters from political space and portrayed them as useless minor factors in Turkish politics. Erdoğan accused all the protesters of having pro-coup mindset and antidemocratic claims and on the other hand he glorified others as democracy lovers just because supporting AKP. As underlined by Panizza the construction of the “other” and the antagonism created by the separation between the people and its other constitute one of the basic dimensions of populism (Panizza,

¹⁸²“28 şubat Anadolunun yoksul evlatlarının elinden fırsat eşitliğini almış, bu şekilde meslek liselerinin de içini boşaltmıştır. Merhum Adnan Menderes merhum Turgut Özal ile nadolu’nun zeki çocukları, iyi üniversitelerde iyi bölümlerde okuma fırsatına kavuşurken işte bu ittihatçı zihniyet, CHPli zihniyet, 28 Şubatçı elitist ihniyet bu çocukların önünü kapatmış, istikbalini karartmıştır. Geçmişte bürokratik makamlar, zenginlik babadan oğula geçiyor, dar ve seçkin bir çevre içinde pay ediliyordu.İşte Anadolu bu çarkı bozdu.Yoksul ailelerin köylülerin, çiftçilerin kapıcıların, marangozların terzilerin çocukları okudu.Vali kaymakam avukat savcı bürokrat olmaya başladı.28 Şubat hiç kimse kusura bakmasın, işte Anadolunun bu şahlanışına karşıda yapılmış bir uygulamadır” (Erdoğan as cited in Ferik).

2005). So Gezi Park protests in June 2013 provide a fertile ground for Erdoğan to reinforce his populist discourse and to prove his power on people.

“2013 Gezi Park Protests” started on 28 May 2013 with few people in Taksim Gezi Parkı in İstanbul, initially to contest the urban development plan which stipulates the cutting of trees and constructing a shopping mall in the place of the park. In the mid-night police attacked harshly on peaceful protesters who stay in Park and fired their tents. The event spread rapidly in social media and the police violence against protesters is get reaction. Then the reaction turned into protests against government’s especially Erdoğan’s style in politics. Protests took place across Turkey and major cities witnessed protests with high level of participation. Protesters have wide range of concerns such as freedom of the press, freedom of expression, the government’s encroachment on Turkey’s secularism.

On 1 June 2013 in the general meeting of Turkish Exporters’ Assembly, Erdogan was talking on the protests as follows:

“Taksim Square can not a place where extremists moved freely”¹⁸³ and he was accusing all the activists with being extremists. He stated that police will continue to be in the square and when required they will use tear gases legitimately.

This was clearly a confrontational discourse. Then, he addressed the opposition leader Kılıçdaroğlu and said that;

In particular, I appeal to the main opposition leader. Currently it is rightful for him as he decided to have a meeting in Kadikoy for tonight, it does not make any problems, you can make this. But if you use any expression in that meeting, which is violent and provoking, the nation will not forgive you and you will not win anything with the extremist gathered around you. If it is necessary for a meeting and a social movement to be held, I can stand here and gather 200 thousand of people whereas he gathered 20 people, I can gather 1 million people on behalf of our party whereas he gathered 100 thousand people. We have no such problem. But they should not dare me.” (Erdoğan as cited in Ferik, 2015)¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³“Taksim meydanı aşırı uçların cirit attığı bir yer olamaz”, Hürriyet, 01.06.2013, available at <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/basbakan-erdogandan-gezi-parki-aciklamasi-23414469>

¹⁸⁴“Özellikle anamuhalefetin genel başkanına sesleniyorum. Şu anda bu akşam için kendisi Kadıköy’de miting yapma kararı vermiş hakkındır, yapabilirsin problem değil. Fakat o mitingte ağır tahrik ifadeleri kullanacak olursan,bilesin ki millet seni hiçbir zman affetmez ve etrafınızda

Democracy was almost reduced to an issue of a number. When the protests continue to rush, Erdoğan did not step back. On 7 June 2013, when he was returning from his trip to Morocco, his voters welcomed him at the airport and this event turned into a meeting. He stated there that;

We show our respect to democracy, elections and national will, and quite rightly we want to be respected by everyone. We have said something while we started our way, we said that ‘advanced democracy’ was our target, we will achieve this. My brothers, the nation gave us a loan. It is only the nation to receive it back. Nobody can bestow their hand on it except the nation itself, apart from the election poll "(Erdoğan as cited in Ferik).¹⁸⁵

Erdogan made a brief definition of democracy with this way. Erdogan did as he said and gathered the voters immediately after the protests in the meetings with the participation of populist names.

Erdoğan and government responded protests by consolidate its supporters and made undersigned two big meetings in major cities Ankara (Sincan) and İstanbul (Kazlıçeşme) with the name of “Respect to National Will” on 15th and 16th of June 2013. The name of the meetings per se reflects a populist manner. In both meetings, Erdoğan frequently expressed the significance of “national will” and its importance on their democracy understanding.

In those protests, Erdogan accused the groups that do not support him with having in a cooperation with international actors and with being a spy. Antagonism was again linked to the external factors. Erdogan was addressing the foreign media organizations in the meetings as O! CNN and O! Reuters. As of this process, the elements that create antagonism in AKP has been linked to foreign matters considered as internal matters, like in DP period. The civil coup in Egypt and the civil war in Syria became

toparladığımız bazı aşırı uç takımlarla bu toplantılar bir şey kazandırmaz. Olay miting yapmaksa, burada toplumsal hareketse ben kalkarım onun 20 topladığı yerde 200 bin toplanırım, onun 100 bin topladığı yerde partim olarak 1 milyon insan toplanırım. Bizim böyle bir sıkıntımız yok. Ama işi buraya getirmesinler” (Erdoğan, as cited in Ferik:2015).

¹⁸⁵“Biz nasıl demokrasiye, seçime milli iradeye saygılıysak, herkesten ama herkesten çok haklı olarak bize de saygılı olmalarını istiyoruz.Biz yola çıkarken bir şey söyledik ‘hdef ileri Demokrasi dedik .Bunu başaracağız. Kardeşim emaneti veren millettir. Emaneti alacak olan da sadece millettir.Millet dışında hiç kimse bu emanette el uzatamaz. Sandık dışında hiçkimse bu emanete kastedemez” (Erdoğan as cited in Ferik:2015).

tools to foster a discourse in Turkey against the coup. This was almost the same as internalization / externalization politics of DP.

In this way, it was able to have the opportunity to reproduce democracy discourse through foreign matters. On 4 July 2013, on the events happened after Mursi government was overthrown, Erdoğan stated that As a country of which citizens are Muslim mostly having democracy, Turkey is a role model for Egypt and the other countries in the region.¹⁸⁶

Similarly, when criticizing the ruling Assad government in Syria, he praised the democracy in his country. When it comes to 2014 and 2015, the new target that antagonism has been largely directed to became the congregation.

Gezi protestors, congregation and PKK were almost identical as the target of antagonism. After the local elections held on 30 March, he stated that:

The nation gritted its teeth against the Gezi protests. It did not respond in the same way against the steps taken. It literally gritted its teeth. Thank God, despite all the dirty campaigns, our nation did not fight in the streets. It did not respond to these attacks. It did not fall into the trap. The nation waited for 30 March patiently. Nation once again provided us with a vote of confidence. Our people authorized us to struggle against the parallel structure, whose treason is proven, the nation gave us permission to discharge it". (Erdoğan, 2014)¹⁸⁷

6.2.7. Populism of the Justice and Development Party

Throughout this section, it has been tried to analyze the populist approach of the AKP from Laclauian perspective. The main point is here to understand the chain of

¹⁸⁶"Halkının çoğu müslüman olan, demokrasiyle yönetilen Türkiye'nin" Mısır ve bölge ülkeleri için referans olduğunu" söyledi. "Erdoğan'dan Batı'ya 'Mısır darbesi' eleştirisi", [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2013/07/130705_misir_cuma_gosteri), 05.07.2013, available at http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2013/07/130705_misir_cuma_gosteri

¹⁸⁷"Gezi olayları karşısında sabretti. O atılan adımlara karşı aynı şekilde cevap vermedi. Millet adeta dişini sıktı. Allah'a hamd olsun, bütün kirli kampanyalara rağmen milletimiz sokağa çıkmadı. Saldırılarına karşılık vermedi. Tuzağa düşmedi. Millet sabırlar 30 Mart'ı bekledi. Millet bize bir kez daha güvenoyu verdi. Halkımız bize paralel yapıyla mücadele talimatını verdi. Vatana ihaneti artık tescillenen bu yapının tasviyesi için millet bize yetki verdi."

"Halk Paralel Yapıyla Mücadele Yetkisi Verdi", Cumhuriyet, 08.04.2014, available at http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/siyaset/58569/Erdogan_Halk_paralel_yapiyla_mucadele_yetkisi_verdi.html

equivalences formed by the AKP and to analyze how it adopted democracy to denominate the equivalences in this chain. Following that, the chain of differences that gain momentum in time by the AKP is addressed. With that, it has been tried to show how this chain of differences gradually gained a momentum during the AKP government and how this potentiated the effects of AKP's antagonism. AKP's populism is quite suitable to be addressed both from classical populist approach and from a historicist perspective. By addressing this discourse in terms of classical elites versus people dichotomy, another scientific study can be made. On the other hand, the economic performance of the AKP government can be examined based on the idea that the AKP is the conveyor of neoliberal populism in Turkey. However, there can still be missing points within these two perspectives. In particular, it seems that it will not be possible to respond the ongoing discussions of today on democracy or authoritarianism by using these two analyze tools.

As it is argued throughout this thesis, the most appropriate method to address the relations between democracy and populism both in AKP and DP is the framework of analysis provided by Laclauian populism understanding. Classical and economic approaches can reveal the presence of populism and populist discourse in Turkey from past to present. However, for Turkey's political history after 1950, it will not be adequate to reveal just populism. To demonstrate how populism firstly emerged in the democratic systems and how it continued to survive under the umbrella of democracy will offer a new and fresh contribution to the studies on populism performed until today. As it is also stated by Laclau, to understand the populism today should not be limited to reveal how elites vs. people dichotomy is reflected in the discourse and not be limited to the analysis of economic policies.

The AKP has not furthered and upgraded Turkish Democracy by making it more pluralistic and participatory; instead the AKP experience has involved what can be called "instrumentalization of democracy"; first by reducing democracy to parliamentary majoritarianism, second by privileging a specific and religious right claims over the others, even to the degree of discrimination. (Keyman and Gümüşçü, 2014:44)

Therefore, it can be possible to reveal the populist discourse itself apparently, which hid itself within the discourses such as the 'will of the nation' and 'democracy' and then 'advanced democracy'. Today, even if it is not possible for us to make a definition of democracy or to reach the ideal of democracy, it can be possible for us to stand against the emergence of authoritarian attitudes under the name of democracy thanks to these kinds of scientific studies.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I analyzed the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey from the perspective of Laclau's theory on populism, focusing on the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party as illustrative cases. The framework that Laclau developed to study the populism phenomenon was used in the analysis of the discourse of democracy adopted by both the DP (1946-1960) and the AKP(2001-today) Using mainly the concepts "chain of equivalences" and "chain of differences" coined by Laclau, I identified the populist elements in the discourse of democracy employed by these two political parties, claiming that this discourse is based on the dichotomy of "the people" and "the others." I also argued that the two political parties in question equated democracy with the chain of equivalences that they established in the process of constructing "the people," and maintained that these two parties succeeded thus in sustaining this unity of demands for quite a long time. I asserted, on the other hand, that the same unity of demands was eroded due to antagonism, and that liberal democracy was reduced to a populist discourse due to the discursive choices made by these two parties.

Populism has been one of the key concepts of political science ever since the emergence of the concept of "the sovereignty of the people." It is also an analytical tool that has been increasingly used in political science since democratic systems of government gained dominance throughout the world, notwithstanding the fact that there is no consensus on the definition of populism. Yet, despite the challenge posed by the complexity of the concept, a thorough inquiry into the relationship between populism and democracy is imperative for a sound analysis of populist discourses.

The different approaches to populism observed in the relevant literature were classified by Francisco Panizza into the following three broad categories, which I find very helpful in conducting an analytic review of the literature: empirical generalisations, historicist accounts and the symptomatic approach (Panizza, 2005:2). After having outlined these three kinds of approaches, I discussed Laclau's theoretical framework in depth. To the end of proving the superiority of Laclau's

approach to its counterparts, I initially tried to define populism within the framework of these other approaches, and then within Laclau's framework.

Laclau's populism theory places discourse at the heart of populism. Laclau's approach had an ever increasing popularity among scholars thanks to his analysis of the relationship between populism and democracy, which is much more potent than its above-mentioned counterparts.

His objective in establishing his populism theory was to comprehend "the nature and logics of the formation of collective identities" and the following three categories are central to his theoretical approach: These are discourse, empty signifiers and hegemony and rhetoric (Laclau, 2005: 68).

"Discourse" is one of the key concepts in Laclau's populism theory. According to Laclau, discourse is not limited to language and the text. It has a much wider scope: it is indeed from within the framework of discourse that all meaning, including populism, is constructed.

Laclau asserts that the concept of "the people" is generated in each and every society and that it takes on a different meaning in different societies in accordance with the varying circumstances under which the concept is created and perpetuated. On the other hand, an "other" is needed in order for this word to take on a meaning, i.e. to be constructed, as the declaration of who the "other" is, is the only way to clarify who "the people" are. This "other" is estranged from "the people" through antagonism. It is in such a context that the concept of "the people" turns into an empty signifier and a hegemonic identity. In Laclauian terms, hegemony can be summarized as "the political, intellectual and moral leadership over allied groups" (Mouffe, 1979; Laclau, 2005). The transformation of the identity of the people, which is created in the realm of discourse, into a hegemonic identity, is also clear sign of the emergence of populism. According to Laclau, who tries to understand how these collective identities are created, ideology can shape a "collective will" by unifying a historical block thanks to "intellectual and moral leadership". The final stage in the construction of "the people" as a political entity is thus achieved through constructed rhetoric.

Laclau's populism theory draws upon previous studies on mass psychology, and notably those by Gustave Le Bon. However, unlike previous scholars, Laclau does not take the mass as the unit of analysis. He reduces the unit of analysis in size, and specifies it as "demand" (Laclau, 2005), as the coalescence of democratic demands is the fundamental process that initiates the formation of a people. That is, populism can be seen as the joining together of democratic demands through a common discourse in democratic systems. Following this unification process, "the people" begins to turn into a hegemonic identity. Once this unity of demands, i.e. chain of equivalences, which brings together the demands of the people under a single name, like democracy, it begins to turn into an empty signifier.

Let us return to how populism emerges in a society: Laclau asserts that two preconditions should be fulfilled simultaneously for populism to emerge: The first one is "the construction of an equivalential chain between unfulfilled demands" and the second one is the dichotomization of the social space through the creation of an internal frontier (antagonism). Once equivalences are established, the group does not try to eliminate the differences within. The emphasis of "us against others" makes it possible for the group to maintain its differences. In Laclau's theory, while constructing an antagonism, agents first find a purely negative identity which cannot be represented positively in a given discursive formation. This external identity should be presented as a threat.

This framework sheds more light on the formation of the populist configuration more than its previous counterparts. Based on my analyses within this framework, I argue that, during the rule of both the DP and the AKP, the demands in question were unified under the name of democracy and the chain of equivalences was thus established. However, this chain of equivalences or the popular identity found for itself a negative identity, and it tried and continues to try to maintain the unity of "the people," which it established, by constantly attacking this negative identity. It is thus thanks to antagonism in Laclauian sense that a populist configuration is attained and that the construction of the people in the realm of discourse is achieved.

The history of populism in Turkey can be traced back to early 20th century, when a government declared for the first time that the people was its only source of power,

and encouraged it to be politically mobilized. Again in Turkey, the transition from constitutional monarchy to the republican system was realized thanks to populist discourse. During this process, movements such as “nationalism,” “peasantism,” and “Anatolianism” contributed greatly to assigning meaning to notions such as the “nation,” “national will,” and the people. The discourse that referred to these notions played a major role in the consolidation of the republican regime. This discourse did not cease to exist during the establishment of the democratic regime.

However, it was only during the transition to the multi-party system that the notions of populism and democracy coalesced. In other words, it was at this point that democracy emerged as a new constituent of the populist discourse. Populism and democracy are alike in that they both make reference to the people. But the democratic procedures of liberal democracy require more than a simple reference to the people.

Therefore, when the populist discourse emerges in democratic regimes, it is shaped within and expressed through “the discourse of democracy.” Various studies that focus on this process claim that populism reinforces is an inevitable constituent of democratic systems (See Canovan). On the other hand, there also exists numerous studies that argue that the populist discourse is a pathological element of and can cause great harm to democratic systems (See Taggart). In order to have a deeper understanding of this relationship between democracy and populism, one has to study different cases, looking at how the populist discourse affects democratic regimes. Laclau’s approach to populism is of major importance to such a study in that its framework makes it possible to identify in detail how the populist discourse damages democracy.

In this study, I used two illustrative cases in order to show how this relationship was established. When I looked at the first case, i.e. that of the DP, I observed that the period when the DP was founded was a period of crisis, marked by the people’s discontent with the single-party regime. The DP is seen to have emerged as an opposition movement from within the CHP, which was then in power, and gained the people’s support by forming a unity of demands out of the various displeasures with the CHP, and calling this unity “democracy.” However, once the party came into

power, its understanding of democracy increasingly narrowed. In this period, the DP identified an “other” for itself. The chain of differences that the DP established was based on an anti-communist discourse. However, it did not take long before this anti-communist discourse began to alienate a much larger group of people than the communists. Especially during the period when the DP came to other all the people who opposed to its policies, the party’s discourse of democracy gave way to a completely populist discourse, and the will of the nation was reduced to the right to vote. It was during this period that the unity of demands dissolved, and Turkish politics began to witness even more polarization and fragmentation.

Yet, nearly 40 years later, a similar populist configuration was to come to power, constructing a new unity of demands, and make frequent reference to the DP as its precursor. It is apparent that the way these two parties established a unity of demands, called this chain of equivalences democracy, and identified an other for themselves, gradually expanded this group, bears a strikingly resemblance.

The second case is that of the AKP, which emerged in the aftermath of the economic crisis of 2001 and disintegration of the party system. In this period, the central right political parties underwent a process of fragmentation, which set the scene for the emergence of a new political movement. The Islamic right wing faced a dilemma: whether to hold on to the past or renew itself. The AKP emerged with a reformist discourse and unified the demands of the people under the name of “conservative democracy.” This discourse was filled in mainly with the constituents of the populist discourse.

In its formation period, the AKP adopted a discourse that brought to the foreground the objective of becoming a member of the EU. However, in time, especially after the prevalence of the Turkish army on the political realm was brought to an end, the AKP adopted a truly populist discourse. In this process, the Constitutional Referendum marks a breaking point. Unlike the “others” of DP, that of the AKP appears to be constantly changing: Initially, the elites and the CHP were the others. Then the army was pointed to as the “other” in order to disempower army out. And after the Gezi Park Protests of 2013, the “other” was expanded to include all the people who did not support the AKP, regardless of their ideological views.

The following conclusions were drawn from the above-summarized analyses:

The concepts of populism and democracy are rather difficult to define. Yet, it is imperative to comprehend the relationship between the two, as populism is one of the most frequently encountered phenomena in democratic systems. And because the concept of democracy cannot be considered independently of the people, understanding populism and its relationship with democracy is essential if democratic systems are to be analyzed.

The framework that Laclau developed for comprehending the formation of collective identities is a very useful and sophisticated academic framework for clarifying the relationship between populism and democracy. Using this framework facilitates the identification and analysis of populism.

Until today, the three principal approaches have been referred to in order to identify populism (Panizza, 2005:2). The classical approach limits our analyses to the key features of populism, while the historicist approach is an economic reductionist approach that falls short of expounding on populist movements except those that emerge from within a certain economic model. But the Laclauian approach, which centers around the concept of discourse, provides scholars with the opportunity to make exhaustive analyses of the relationship between populism and democracy.

Contrary to previous approaches, Laclau's symptomatic reading of populism incorporates some of the features populism as identified by the empiricist and the historicist approaches, but justifies their inclusion in terms of the concept's analytical core, based on the constitution of the people as a political actor (Panizza, 2005:3). Laclau's framework of populism can be employed for understanding populism as it is experienced in Turkey.

I based my analyses on two illustrative cases, namely that of the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party, in order to prove the analytic superiority of Laclau's framework.

I based my analysis of these two political parties' discourse of democracy on the concepts of "chain of equivalences," "chain of differences," and "antagonism,"

which are central to Laclau's approach. In Panizza's words, "[t]he notion of the sovereign people as an actor in an antagonistic relation with the established order, as the core element of populism"

In this study, I developed a framework as to how the relationship between populism and democracy should be treated. While developing this framework, I came to the conclusion that in democratic societies, populism contributed at times to the further development of democracy, and was at times deemed to be a pathological constituent of the democratic system. I demonstrated that the cases of the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party provides us with important clues as to the nature of the relationship between populism and democracy as experienced in Turkey.

I illustrated how a unity of democratic demands has been constructed around the discourse of "democracy" in Turkey since the foundation of the Democrat Party. It was thanks to this unity of demands, which the Democrat Party established, that this political party achieved the construction of "the people" in the realm of discourse. As a consequence, it won three consecutive elections. However, the chain of equivalences soon began to disintegrate. I explained through examples this process whereby the chain of differences emerged, due mainly to the discourse of anti-communism and the inclusion of all political dissidents in this discourse.

While discussing the case of the Justice and Development Party, I examined how a long-fragmented political structure came to power by establishing a unity of democratic demands, centred around the discourse of "conservative democracy." I showed how this unity of demands had created a majority through the discourse of democracy by the 2010 Constitution Referendum, and how the political party in question came to expand the chain of difference, which came to a head during the 2013 Gezi Park Protests, by fostering conflict and polarization.

In the analyses that I made in the last chapter of the dissertation, I maintained that the discourse of democracy adopted by the DP and the AKP alike, included populist elements and that this discourse had not been interrupted since the foundation of the Republic. This discursive continuity also serves as proof that the AKP was founded with reference to the DP.

It is clear that the establishment of a democratic system of government requires making reference to the sovereignty of the people, and consequently conducting elections and gaining the support of the people. This, in turn, requires the establishment of the chain of equivalences through the gathering of democratic demands under a single roof. However, this is not enough: If, during the construction of the people, the chain of differences and antagonism outgrow the chain of equivalences, then liberal democracy becomes limited to the will of the majority.

Principles such as liberty, equality, pluralism, majoritarianism, the state of law, separation of powers, freedom of expression cannot be put on the back burner, as they are requisite for the development of a broad-based democratic order. The people should be constructed on the basis of “the sovereignty of the people”, and “majoritarianism.” All democratic demands should be accorded priority, and the boundaries of antagonism should not be crossed. If they are crossed, the collective mind is not organized around democracy, but populism.

Finally, the emergence of populism in democratic systems sometimes contributes to the establishment of democratic systems, especially when a unity of demands is built around the notion of democracy. But as Laclau has shown, when the chain of differences grows stronger than the chain of equivalences through othering and antagonism, this inevitably does great harm to democratic systems. This presumption was confirmed in this study by the cases of the DP and the JDP.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1
TURKISH SUMMARY

Popülizm kavramı günümüzde siyaset biliminde giderek önem kazanmaktadır. Dünyadaki pek çok siyasal hareket bugün popülizm perspektifinden değerlendirilmekte ve popülizm bir analiz aracı olarak önemli çalışmaların merkezini oluşturmaktadır. 19.yüzyıldan itibaren popülizm üzerine yapılan çalışmalar popülizm kavramı üzerine geniş kapsamlı bir akademik yazının oluşmasına katkıda bulunmuştur. Bununla birlikte geçen süreçte demokratik sistemlerin tüm dünyaya hâkim olmasıyla birlikte popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi anlamak da zorunlu hale gelmiştir. Halk egemenliğine referans veren kavramlar olarak birbiriyle iç içe geçen popülizm ve demokrasi kavramları arasındaki farkların ve benzerliklerin teşhis edilmesi, popülizm üzerine daha ayrıntılı analizlerin yapılabilmesine katkı sağlayacaktır.

Popülizm, Türk siyasal hayatında da sıklıkla kullanılan ve pek çok analizin belkemiğini oluşturan bir kavramdır. Bununla birlikte, özellikle Avrupa ve Amerika’da artan sayısına rağmen popülizm ve demokrasi kavramlarını birlikte ele alan birbiri ile iç içe ele alan bir analizi ele alan akademik çalışmaların sayısı da kısıtlıdır. Bu açıdan Türkiye’de siyasal hayata odaklanan çalışmalar arasında popülizm ve demokrasi perspektifinden yeni çalışmalar ile yeni ve güncel analizler yapılması ihtiyacı doğmuştur.

Popülizmi anlamak bakımından tüm dünyada çeşitli yaklaşımlar geliştirilirken, görece daha yeni olan, söylem analizini merkezine alan Laclau’nun popülizm teorisi, araştırmacıların dikkatini çekmekte ve bu perspektiften yapılan çalışmaların sayısı giderek artmaktadır. Bu yaklaşım popülizm ile demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi kavramak açısından da yetkin bir analiz aracıdır. Ancak Türkiye’deki popülizmi analiz ederken bu yaklaşımı benimseyen çalışma sayısı henüz çok azdır.

Tüm bunlardan hareketle bu çalışma, daha spesifik bir yaklaşım üzerinden Türkiye’de popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi analiz etmeye odaklanmıştır.

Bu tez, Laclau'nun popülizm teorisi perspektifinden, Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi örneklerine odaklanarak Türkiye'de popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir.

Ben bu tezde Türkiye'de popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek bakımından en yetkin analiz çerçevesinin Laclau'nun popülizm teorisi olduğunu ileri sürüyorum. Laclau'nun popülizm çerçevesinde ortaya koyduğu, eşdeğerlikler zinciri, farklar zinciri, antagonizm gibi kavramların analitik araçlar olarak Türkiye'de 1950 sonrasında popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisini analiz etmekte kullanılabileceğini ve verimli sonuçlar elde edilebileceğini ortaya koyuyorum. Bununla birlikte bu analizi yaparken popülist söylemin zaman zaman demokratik sistemin gelişimine katkıda bulunurken zaman zaman ona hasar verdiğini ileri sürüyorum. Bu argümanları kanıtlamak bakımından Türkiye'de Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin söylem ve uygulamalarının popülizm ve demokrasi çerçevesinde açıklanabileceğini ve demokratik sisteme pozitif ve negatif etkilerinin ortaya çıktığı dönemlerin teşhis edilebileceğini ortaya koyuyorum.

Bu tezde metodoloji olarak söylem analizi yöntemini kullandım. Bu yöntem kullanılırken geniş anlamda söylem analizinin ilkeleri gözetirken, tezin seçtiği yaklaşım açısından Laclaucu söylem analizine ağırlık verdim. Söylem analizi temelde metin ve konuşmaların belirli yöntemler çerçevesinde analizine ve bundan sonuçlar çıkarılmasına dayanır. Bu genel tanımın yanı sıra Laclaucu söylem analizi, Laclau'nun da işaret ettiği üzere, yalnızca metin veya konuşmaların çözümlenmesine dayanmaz. Bunun yanında bu söylem örneklerinin oluştuğu tarihsel çerçevenin kısa bir özetini de okuyucuya sunar. Böylece söylemin oluştuğu koşullar sayesinde söylemin anlamını kavramak ve analizini yapmak kolaylaşır. Büyük bölümünü Laclau'nun öğrencilerinin oluşturduğu Essex Söylem Analizi Okulu¹⁸⁸'nin çalışmaları bu anlamda tezin metodolojik yaklaşımına ışık tutmuştur.

Tezin analiz ettiği verilerin toplandığı kaynaklar çeşitlilik arz etmektedir. Söylem örnekleri ve partilerin demokrasi söylemi incelenirken, Meclis konuşmaları, parti liderlerinin çeşitli mitinglerde yaptığı konuşmalar, parti tüzük ve programları, seçim

¹⁸⁸Essex School of Discourse Analysis

ve referandum öncesi belirlenmiş programlar, parti liderlerinin demeçlerinin yer aldığı gazete yazıları taranmış ve örnekler bu kaynaklar arasından seçilmiştir. Bunun yanında söylemin üretildiği tarihsel bağlamı ortaya koyma zorunluluğu açısından Türk siyasal hayatı üzerine yazılmış pek çok akademik çalışma da taranmıştır.

Popülizm sosyal bilimlerde tanımlanma güçlüğü yaşanan, bu özelliği nedeniyle çok farklı tanımları yapılan ve tüm dünyada farklı araştırmacılar tarafından farklı yaklaşımlar çerçevesinde tartışılmakta olan bir kavramdır. Dolayısıyla bu tezde, Türkiye’de popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelerken, öncelikle farklı açılardan popülizmin nasıl tanımlandığı üzerinde durulmuştur. Popülizmin anlamı, kullanıldığı bağlama, coğrafyaya ve kullanıldığı tarihsel döneme göre büyük farklılıklar göstermektedir. Tanımlama güçlüğüne rağmen, yine de popülizmin ne olduğuna bir açıklık getirmeye çabalamak hem bu çalışma açısından, hem de popülizm üzerine yapılmış diğer çalışmalar açısından mecburi görünmektedir. Bu çaba popülizme kesin bir tanım getirmese de kavramın üzerindeki belirsizliği bir nebze gidermeye yarayacaktır. Bu açıdan bu çalışmada öncelikle popülizmin bir siyasal hareket, bir ideoloji ve bir strateji olarak nasıl farklı şekillerde tanımlandığına yer verdim. Aynı zamanda bu farklı tanımlamaların yanında popülizmin bir “söylem” olarak tanımlanmasının da yeni ancak dikkat çeken bir yaklaşım olduğunu vurguladım.

Popülist hareket, ideoloji, strateji veya söylem öncelikle halka¹⁸⁹ verdiği referansla diğer hareket, ideoloji, strateji veya söylemlerden ayrılır. Öte yandan popülizm halkı yüceltirken, halkın karşısında gördüğü elitler, yöneticiler, seçkinler gibi kavramlara olan karşıtlığın da altını çizer. Halka karşı elitler söylemi genellikle tüm popülizm tanımlamalarının merkezini oluşturur. Bu yüzden popülist hareket için halk kavramının inşası büyük önem taşır.

Popülizm farklı siyasal hareketlere eklenmesi kolay olan bir ideolojidir. Bu özelliği ile zaman zaman sağ, sol, sosyalist veya radikal siyasal hareketlerin bir ögesi olabilir. Bundan dolayı popülizmi çok farklı yaklaşımlar çerçevesinde ele almak

¹⁸⁹The people

gerekliliği doğmuştur. Örneğin Rusya’da ortaya çıkan popülist hareketleri Latin Amerika’dakilerle karşılaştırırken ortak noktaların yanı sıra ayrışan noktalar da bulmak mümkündür. Bundan dolayı popülizmin farklı şekillerde tanımlanması kadar, popülizmin ne tür bir yaklaşım ve metodoloji ile ele alındığını analiz etmek de popülizm kavramının anlaşılmasına ışık tutar. Bu çalışmada bu farklı yaklaşımlar, Panizza’nın kavramsallaştırması aracılığıyla, Emprisist, Tarihselci ve Semptomatik (Söylemci) yaklaşım olarak ele alınmıştır.¹⁹⁰ Emprisist yaklaşım popülizmi, popülizmin dünyada görülen popülist hareketlerin ortak özellikleri yönünden bir değerlendirmeye tabi tutmaktadır. Söz konusu yaklaşım, özellikle Wiles’in belirlediği popülizmin 24 özelliğine referans vererek bir analiz perspektifi sunmaktadır.¹⁹¹ Tarihselci yaklaşım ise ekonomik bir analiz yapmakta ve popülizmi belirli ekonomik politikalarla birlikte belirli tarihsel koşulların ürünü olarak ortaya çıkan bir hareket olarak görme eğilimindedir. Bu yaklaşım genellikle 1930lardan itibaren Latin Amerika’daki popülist hareketlerin çözümlenmesinde yaygın olarak kullanılmıştır. Bugün ise hem Latin Amerika’da hem de diğer ülkelerde neopopülizm üzerine yapılan çalışma ve analizlerde bu yaklaşımın etkisini görmek mümkündür. Öte yandan bu tezin de metodolojik yaklaşımını oluşturan Laclau’nun temelini attığı semptomatik (söylemci) yaklaşım merkezine söylemi alır ve geliştirdiği analitik araçlarla popülizmi, belirli koşullar çerçevesinde ortaya çıkan, “kolektif kimliklerin oluşumunun ve doğası ve mantığını” anlamaya yönelik bir analiz birimi olarak görür. Tezin ilk bölümünde popülizme genel bir çerçeve çizilmeye çalışılırken popülizmin dünyadaki görünümülerinden, Amerika, Rus, Çin, Latin Amerika ve Avrupa popülizmi örneklerine yer verilmiştir. Çünkü popülizmin farklı coğrafyalarda ortaya çıkışı aynı zamanda popülizm kavramını değerlendirmek için ortaya konan yaklaşımları da anlamamızda önem arz eder. Amerikan ve Rus Popülizmlerini ele almak popülizmin doğuşuna ışık tutarken Çin ve Latin Amerika popülizmlerine bakmak ise dünyanın farklı coğrafyalarındaki popülist hareketlerinin diğerlerinden farklı doğmasına ilişkin önemli ipuçları verir. Bugün bu tezde de kullanılacak olan semptomatik (söylemci) yaklaşım ağırlıklı Avrupa’daki popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişki göz önünde bulundurularak yapılan çalışmalarda kullanılırken diğer coğrafyalardaki popülizmlerin analizinde de kullanılmaya başlanmıştır.

¹⁹⁰Panizza F. (2005). *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* London:Verso

¹⁹¹Wiles, P. (1969). A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine. In G. Ionescu & E. Gellner (Eds.), *Populism-Its Meaning and National Characteristics*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 166-179.

Popülizm kavramına yapılan geniş bir bakışın ardından, İkinci bölümde Laclau'nun popülizm teorisi ayrıntılarıyla ele alınarak tezin metodolojik yaklaşımı da ortaya konmuştur. Bu şekilde tezin örnek olay bölümünde kullanılacak analitik araçlar da belirlenmiş ve tanımlanmış olacaktır. Laclau'nun popülizmi ele almasının temel nedeni; kendi ifadesiyle kolektif kimliklerin oluşumunun doğası ve mantığını anlamaya çalışmaktır.¹⁹² Laclau'ya göre, geçmişte popülizm üzerine yapılan çalışmalar genellikle popülizmin ortak özelliklerine gönderme yaparak veya popülizmi politik- ekonomi perspektifinden açıklamaya odaklanmıştır. Ancak bu çalışmalar popülizm literatüründe belirsizlikleri de beraberinde getirmiş, hatta belirsizlikleri daha da arttırmış ve açıklayıcılıkları sınırlı kalmıştır. Buradan hareketle alternatif bir bakış açısı geliştirmek popülizmi ele almak için zorunlu hale gelmiştir.

Laclau popülizm teorisinin temelini 80li yıllarda Hegemonya ve Sosyalist Strateji adlı eserinin yayımlanmasıyla atar. Laclau, Chantal Mouffe ile birlikte, Marksist yaklaşımın 1970lerde girdiği krizi ve ekonomik indirgemeciliğin yarattığı sorunları, Gramsci'nin hegemonya, söylem, mevzi savaşı gibi kavramlarına yeniden hayat vererek aşmaya ve Marksist teoriye yeni bir soluk getirmeye¹⁹³ çalışır. Post-modern teorisinin ve söylem analizinin katkısıyla “gösteren”, “boş gösteren”, “retorik” gibi kavramlar da analize katıldığında söylem yaklaşımı daha zengin hale gelmiştir. Post-modern teoride ve onun Marksist teori üzerine etkilerinin yanı sıra, Laclau 20. yüzyılın başından itibaren zenginleşen kitle psikolojisi tartışmalarını da yakından takip etmiştir. Özellikle Gustave Le Bon¹⁹⁴ ve Sigmund Freud'un¹⁹⁵ kitle psikolojisi üzerine yazdıkları, Laclau'nun kolektif kimliklerin oluşumu ve doğası üzerine bir analiz yapma ve yeniden yorumlama çabası ile sonuçlanmıştır. Laclau, özellikle Le Bon'un dikkat çektiği “gösteren” ve “gösterilen” arasındaki ilişkinin hareketliliğinden yola çıkarak sözcüklerin ve söylemin kitle psikolojisi üzerindeki etkini ele alır. Bu da söylemi, kolektif kimliklerin anlaşılması çabasının merkezine koyar. Bu iki etkenin, yani post-Marksizm ile kitle psikolojisi tartışmalarının yarattığı etkilerin birleşmesi ile Laclau'nun popülizm teorisinin temelleri oluşmuştur.

¹⁹²Laclau, E. (2005) “On Populist Reason” London: Verso.

¹⁹³Laclau'nun bu çabası Postmarksizm teorisi tartışmaları içinde de ele alınabilir.

¹⁹⁴ Le Bon, G. (2015). Kitleler Psikolojisi, (F. Z. Bayrak, Çev.). İstanbul: Hayat Yayıncılık.

¹⁹⁵Freud, S. (2015). Kitle Psikolojisi, (K. Şipal, Çev.). İstanbul: Say Yayınları.

Laclau popülizmi açıklamaya çalışırken üç temel kavramın merkeziliğinden söz eder. Bunlardan ilki hegemonya, ikincisi boş gösteren ve söylem ve sonuncusu retoriktir.¹⁹⁶ Popülizm hegemonik bir kolektif kimlik yaratmak için, boş gösterenler aracılığıyla bir söylem kurar, bu söylemi sürekli tekrar eder ve bu söylem, yöneltilen kitle tarafından sorgulanmayan bir retorik haline dönüşür.

Öte yandan popülizm anlaşılmaya çalışılırken kitle psikolojisi tartışmalarının etkisi ile analiz birimi hep kitle olarak ele alınmıştır. Oysa Laclau'ya göre bu durum, popülizm kavramını analiz etme kabiliyetini zayıflatmaktadır. O halde gruplardan daha küçük bir analiz birimi belirlenmesi zorunludur ve bu en küçük analiz birimi “talep” (demand) olmalıdır. Taleplerin her birine Laclau “demokratik talepler” demeyi tercih eder. Demokratik taleplerin birbirine eklenmesi “halk”ın oluşumunu başlatan en temel harekettir. Demokratik taleplerin birbirine eklenmesi ile bir “talepler birliği” veya Laclau’nun deyişiyle “eşdeğerlikler zinciri” oluşur. Eşdeğerlikler zincirinin oluşumunun ardından bu eşdeğerlikler zinciri içinden bir “farklar zinciri” doğar. Çünkü eşdeğerlikler zincirinin ayakta durabilmesi için kendisini bir “öteki”den ayırması ve ona karşı antagonist bir söylem benimsemesi gerekir. Popülist aktör sürekli eşdeğerlikler zincirini vurgulayarak, farklar zincirine karşı ise antagonist bir söylem benimseyerek basit bir popülist konfigürasyon elde eder. Bu iki zincirin oluşumu popülizmin ortaya çıkmasının temel şartıdır. Laclau’nun bu formülasyonu hem popülizmi hem de popülizm ile demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi ele almak açısından önemli kolaylıklar sağlar. Buradan hareket ederek; bu çalışmada popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi ele alırken, eşdeğerlikler zincirinin oluşumu ve farklar zincirinin oluşumunu analitik araçlar olarak ele aldım.

Laclau’nun çatısını kurduğu bu teori ile popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisi ele alındığı için bu bakış açısını çok partili hayata geçiş sonrası Türkiye’ye uyarlamak uygun görüldü. Çalışmada 1950’den itibaren tüm merkez sağ partilerin söylemlerini ele almayı amaçladım ancak yukarıda belirttiğim analitik araçlar ile ele alındığında Türkiye tarihinde Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin kurduğu popülist söylem diğer sağ partilere nazaran ön plana çıktı.

¹⁹⁶Laclau, E. (2005) “On Populist Reason” London:Verso.

Ancak popülizm ve demokrasi kavramları arasındaki ilişki ele alınırken her iki kavramın içiçeliği çözümlenmeli ve bu ilişkiye nasıl bakmak gerektiğinin de yorumlanması gerekmektedir. Bundan dolayı popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisine bakarken izleyeceğim yolu ayrı bir bölümde ele aldım.

Politik kuramın merkezi kavramlarından olan “temsil” (representation) ve “demokrasi”, popülizm kavramıyla iç içedir. Bundan dolayı özellikle 1980lerden sonra popülizm ile demokrasi ilişkisini sorgulayan yazında çarpıcı bir artış gözlemlenmiştir. Bu artışın önemli bir nedeninin dünyada görülen demokratikleşme dalgaları (democratization waves) olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Dünyada daha geniş coğrafyaların demokratik sistemlerle yönetilmeye başlamasıyla birlikte demokratik sistemlerin sorunları daha küresel düzeyde tartışılmaya başlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda popülizm de, demokratik sistemlerin bir bileşeni olarak daha fazla ele alınan bir kavram haline gelmiştir.

Demokrasi de popülizm de halk egemenliğine referans veren kavramlar olduğundan sıklıkla birbirine karıştırılmaktadır. Pasquino, bu ilişkinin kaçınılmaz olduğunu şöyle ifade etmektedir. Hem popülizm hem de demokrasi kavramlarının kökeni halka dayanır ve referans verir, her iki kavram da halkın olağanüstü önemine işaret eder.¹⁹⁷

Bu açıdan popülist söylemin teşhisi için özellikle demokrasi söylemine odaklanmak gerekir. Popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiye bakarken, bugüne kadar ortaya konan düşünceler temelde iki başlık altında toplanabilir. Bazı araştırmacılar popülizmi demokratik sistemlerin bir parçası veya mecburi bir bileşeni olarak tarif ederler. Öte yandan popülizmi demokratik sistemlerin patolojisi olarak gören araştırmacılar da vardır. Ben tezimde temelde bu iki görüşü takip ettim ve öncelikle popülizmi demokratik sistemlerin bir parçası olarak ele aldım, örneğin oy verme ve siyasal katılımın hem popülizm hem de demokrasi kavramları içinde nasıl bir yere sahip olduğunu tartıştım. Popülizm oy verme ve halkın siyasete katılımına büyük önem verirken, demokrasinin sadece oy verme davranışından ibaret olmadığını, demokrasinin siyasal katılım yanında, hukuk devleti, çoğunlukçuluk, çoğulculuk,

¹⁹⁷Pasquino, G. (2008). Populism and Democracy. In D. Albertazzi & D. Mc Donnell (Eds.), *Twenty-First Century Populism: The Spectre of Western European Democracy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 15-29.

kuvvetler ayrılığı gibi prensiplere dayandığını vurguladım. Bu bağlamda popülizm demokratik sistemin bir parçasıydı ancak, demokrasi popülist söylemin vurguladıklarından daha fazlasını içermekteydi. Bunun yanında temsili demokrasinin popülizmle olan ilişkisini ve temsili demokratik sistemlerde popülizmin canlı tutulması için kullanılan bazı doğrudan demokrasi yöntemlerinin varlığı üzerinde durdum. Bu bölümde özellikle referandumların, nasıl demokratik bir yöntem olarak gösterilirken popülist söylemin bir aracı olabileceğini vurguladım. Bu tartışma özellikle partileri analiz ettiğim bölüme ışık tuttu. Yine bu bölümde popülizm ile demokrasi arasındaki önemli gerilim noktalarına rağmen popülizmin demokratik sistemin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilebileceği görüşlerine yer verdim.¹⁹⁸

Öte yanda popülizm demokrasiye zarar veren ve gelişimini engelleyen bir patolojik öge olarak ele alınabileceğine ilişkin diğer görüşü de tezimde işledim. Örneğin Paul Taggart¹⁹⁹ popülizmin temsili demokrasiye düşman olduğunu iddia eder ve demokratik sistemleri krize sürükleyebileceğini ortaya koyar. Yine Meny ve Sural²⁰⁰ popülizmi temsili demokrasilerin yarattığı bir problem olarak görmektedirler. Bundan dolayı nazizm faşizm gibi örnekler popülist hareketlerin radikalleşmesi üzerine ortaya çıkar. Bundan dolayı demokratik sistemlerin belirli ilkeler çerçevesinde tanımlanması gerekir. Her iki görüş de çeşitli açılardan örneklendirilmiş ve son bölümde analiz yapılırken Türkiye’de popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisinin nasıl ele alınabileceğine ilişkin bir fikir vermesi bakımından tartışmaya açılmıştır.

Popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisini incelerken mutlaka değinilmesi gereken bir konu da politik partilerdir. Popülist söylemi özellikle demokrasi söylemleri aracılığı ile üreten en önemli aktörler olması nedeniyle politik partilerin popülizm ile olan ilişkisini mutlaka tartışmaya açmak gerekir. Demokratik sistemlerde politik partilerin

¹⁹⁸Bkz. Arditi, B. (2004). Populism as a Spectre of Democracy: A Response to Canovan, *Political Studies*, 52:135-143.

Bkz. Canovan M. (2005). Taking Politics to the People: Populism as the Ideology of Democracy, 25-44. In Y. Meny, & Y. Sural, (Eds), *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*.

¹⁹⁹Taggart, P. (2002). Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics. In Y. Meny & Y. Sural (Eds.), *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 62-71.

²⁰⁰Meny, Y. and Yves Sural (2002). Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics. In Y. Meny & Y. Sural (Eds.), *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

popülizm ile yakın ilişkileri vardır ve bu açıdan popülizmin ele alındığı pek çok çalışmada örnekler politik partilerin söylemlerinden alınmakta ve partiler aracılığı ile analizler zenginleştirilmektedir. Bu tezde de popülist söylemi oluşturmaları bakımından iki parti örneğine yer verilmiştir.

Popülizmin demokratik sistemlerde ortaya çıkışını analiz edebilmek için aynı zamanda medya ve iletişim konularına da değinmek gerekir. Popülist söylemin kitlelere yayılması açısından günümüzde medyanın önemi ortadadır. Geçmişte gazete ve radyo gibi araçlarla sınırlı olmakla birlikte bugün televizyon ve sosyal medya gibi araçların da ortaya çıkması popülist söylemin kitlelere daha kolay ulaşmasını sağlamaktadır. Aynı zamanda iktidarların medya ile olan ilişkileri de popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisi bakımından önem arz eder. Bir siyasal iktidarın medyayı özgür bırakıp bırakmadığı, hangi noktalarda medyaya müdahale edip etmediği, ifade özgürlüğünü ne kadar koruduğu gibi tartışmalar bir siyasal iktidarın popülizm ve demokrasi bakımından analizinde çok önemli yer tutar.

Tüm bu tartışmaları ele aldıktan sonra; tezde popülizmin Türkiye’de doğuşu ve popülizm demokrasi ilişkisinin nasıl ele alınabileceği konusuna yöneldim. Tezde 1950den sonra Türk sağ partilerindeki popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi ele almaya odaklanmama rağmen bu ilişkiyi anlayabilmek için Türkiye’de 1950ye kadar popülizmin nasıl bir seyir izlediğini de ele almak gerekir. Çünkü öncelikle, Türk siyasal tarihinde halk (the people) kavramının nasıl oluştuğunu ve ne tür bileşenler sayesinde ayakta tutulduğunu görmek ve ortaya koymak gerekir.

Bu çalışmada Osmanlı döneminde ilk kez ortaya çıkan popülizmin, Rus popülizmine benzer şekilde, öncelikle aydınlar aracılığı ile doğduğunu ve onlardan halka doğru yayılan bir düşünce olduğunu iddia ediyorum. Bu noktadan itibaren ise monarşiden meşrutiye, oradan da tamamen halk egemenliğine dayanan cumhuriyet rejimine geçişte halkçılık düşüncesi çok önemli rol oynamıştır. Hem Cumhuriyet sonrası vatandaşlık kimliğinin hem de kolektif kimliğin oluşması açısından çimento görevi üstlenmiştir. Bu süreçte halkçılık düşüncesine “arkadaşlık” eden, başka bir deyişle halkçılık düşüncesinin beslendiği, diğer düşünce akımlarının da altını çizdim. Bunlar, ilk başta milliyetçilik ve milliyetçiliğe göre daha az düzeyde olmak üzere Anadoluculuk ve Köycülüktür. Bu üç akım da kolektif kimliklerin inşa edilmesinde

önemli rol oynamıştır. Bu süreçte özellikle Millet sözcüğü 1950 sonrası Türk sağ partileri popülist söylemin temel gösterenlerinden biri olacaktır. Günümüzde milliyetçilik hala Türkiye’de sağ ve sol popülizmin önemli bir bileşeni olmaya devam etmektedir. Anadoluculuk da kurulan halk kimliğinin coğrafi referansı olarak popülist söylemde yer bulmaya devam etmektedir. Ancak köycülük 1950 öncesi popülizmin önemli bir ögesi iken 1960lardan itibaren sanayileşme ve kentleşmenin artışı ile adım adım kaybolmuştur.

Bu tezde ayrıca 1950 öncesi Türkiye’deki popülizme “halkçılık” demeyi tercih ettim çünkü 1950den itibaren halkçılık kavramı demokrasi ile karşılaştığında önemli bir değişime uğramıştır. Türkiye’de 1950’ye kadar Halkçılık, halka referans veren bir söylem aracılığı ile halkı (eğitim ve kültür politikaları aracılığı ile) dönüştürmeye dayalı bir takım stratejileri içeren ve Kemalist ideoloji ile içiçe bir hareket idi. 1950den itibaren popülizm ise halkı dönüştürmekten ziyade onlara referans veren söylemler aracılığıyla yeni hegemonik bir kimlik kurmanın aracı haline gelen yeni bir siyasal hareket/söylem haline gelmiştir. Bu açıdan halkçılık düşüncesinin yeni çok partili bir demokrasi ile karşılaşması, onu büyük ölçüde değiştirmiştir. Bu noktadan itibaren halkçılık yerine popülizm sözcüğünü kullanmak daha doğru bir yaklaşım olacaktır. Böylece iki kavram arasındaki farklılık da vurgulanmıştır. 1946 sonrası popülizm, yavaş yavaş demokrasi göstereni etrafında tüm demokratik talepleri bir potada eritmeye yönelik bir düşünce akımı haline gelmiştir. Bu söylemin kitleleri etkilemesinin ise Demokrat Parti sayesinde gerçekleştiğini söylemek mümkündür. Bundan dolayı bu tezin Türkiye’de popülizm ve demokrasi analizi Demokrat Partinin analizi ile başlayacaktır.

Son olarak; Laclau popülizm teorisi perspektifinden popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelerken iki örnek olaya yer verdim. Bunlar; 1946’da kurulan ve Türkiye’de çok partili hayata geçişi bakımından büyük önem arz eden Demokrat Parti; diğeri ise 2001 yılında kurulan ve günümüze kadar tek başına iktidarını devam ettiren Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisidir.

Demokrat Parti popülizminin analizini yaparken Laclau’nun çerçevesinden ödünç aldığım, talepler birliğinin kurulması, eşdeğerlikler zinciri, farklar zinciri, antagonizm, boş gösteren gibi kavramlardan yararlandım. Demokrat Partinin

1946'daki kuruluşunu açıklarken de talepler birliğini, başka bir deyişle eşdeğerlikler zincirini, nasıl demokrasi göstereni etrafında bir araya getirdiğini ve bu sayede popülist bir söylem geliştirdiğini ortaya koydum. Demokrat Parti, tek parti döneminde halkın yaşadığı hoşnutsuzlukların tamamını Laclaucu anlamda demokratik talepler olarak değerlendirdi ve demokrasi sözcüğü çerçevesinde tüm bu isteklerin karşılanabileceği vaad etti. Bu durumu hem parti tüzüğünden hem de 1946'dan 1950'ye kadar geçen süreçte gazete yazılarından açıkça teşhis etmek mümkündür. Bu süreçte, Demokrasi sözcüğü sihirli bir sözcük olarak her problemin çözümü olarak sunulmuştu. Bu süreçte içsel olarak tek parti döneminde halkta oluşan bir takım rahatsızlıkların demokrasi talebine dönüşmesi kadar tüm dünyada ikinci dünya savaşının bitmesinin yarattığı dışsal etki de rol oynamıştı. Türkiye bu süreçte iki kutuplu dünyada Amerikan yanlısı bir tavır benimseyerek “demokratik” bloğun yanında olmayı tercih etmişti. Bu tercih, eşdeğerlikler zincirinin demokrasi adı altında kurulabilmesinin en önemli dışsal nedeniydi. Bu süreç ayrıca partinin bu dönemde oldukça geniş bir demokrasi tanımı yapması ve demokratik bilinci geliştirmesiyle sonuçlanmıştı. Ancak 1950'de partinin iktidara gelmesinden sonra, partinin demokrasi anlayışı giderek daralmış, serbest seçimler ve oyların çoğunluğunu kazanan partinin iktidar olmasına indirgenmişti. Partinin iktidara gelmesinden sonra kullanılan “milli irade” kavramı sadece demokrasilerdeki çoğunlukçu modeli temsil etmeye başlamıştı. Öncelikle muhalefete karşıt bir söylem benimsenirken giderek muhalif basın ve üniversiteler Demokrat Parti'nin tanımladığı halkın karşısında tanımlanmaya başlanmıştı. Seçimlerde en çok oyu alan parti olmak, demokratik bir sistemin tek ön koşulu olarak gösterilmeye başlanmıştı. Demokrasi sözcüğünün nasıl giderek içeriğini yitirdiğini ve bir boş gösterene dönüştüğünü bu süreç içinde takip etmek mümkündür.

İkinci olarak, Laclaucu bir popülist analiz için Demokrat Partinin kurduğu farklar zincirini ve antagonizmayı incelemek gerekmektedir. Demokrat Partinin farklar zincirine yönelttiği antagonist söylemi genel olarak antikomünizm olarak belirlemek mümkündür. Demokrat Parti'nin, kuruluşundan itibaren, komünizme karşı hem içsel hem de Amerikan yanlısı bir politika izlemenin getirdiği dışsal nedenlerle oldukça sert ve çatışmacı bir üslupla yaklaştığını görüyoruz. Çeşitli örneklerle hem muhalefeti hem de kendi iktidarına karşı olan unsurları antikomünist söyleminin bir ögesi haline getirerek popülist söylemini başarılı şekilde devam ettirdiğini göstermek

mümkündür. Demokrat Parti böylece basit popülist bir konfigürasyon elde etmiş oluyordu. 1950 ve 1954 seçimlerinde artan oy oranlarını bu popülist söylemin başarısı olarak değerlendirmek mümkündür. 1957 seçimlerinde ise ülkede ekonomik büyümenin yavaşlamasının yanı sıra, antagonist söylemden kaynaklı giderek artan gerilim halk nezdinde Demokrat Partiye olan desteği görece azaltmıştı. Bu noktadan itibaren çatışmacı söylemin, talepler birliği ve eşdeğerlikler zinciri aleyhine giderek büyüdüğünü iddia ediyorum. Antagonist söylemin ulaştığı doruk noktası olarak ise Vatan Cephesi kutuplaşmasını ele aldım. Bu kutuplaşma, hem Türk siyasal tarihi bakımından cepheleşmelere önemli bir örnek teşkil etmektedir, hem de Demokrat Parti popülizminin artık demokratik sisteme zarar verdiği noktayı saptamak açısından önemli bir dönüm noktasıdır.

Demokrat Partiden Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisine kadar geçen dönemi Laclaucu çerçeve “Dağınık Talepler Dönemi” olarak ele aldım. Çünkü DP’den Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi’ne kadar geçen süreçte hiçbir parti kurduğu eşdeğerlikler zincirini bu iki parti kadar uzun süre devam ettirememişti. Üstelik Laclaucu çerçeve inceleyebilecek netlikte bir eşdeğerlikler zinciri ve farklar zinciri tablosu oluşmamıştı. Bu süreçte Adalet Partisi ve Anavatan Partisinin popülist söylemler sayesinde önemli seçim başarıları elde ettiklerini söyleyebiliriz. Ancak her iki hareketi de Laclaucu çerçeve yerine tarihselci bir çerçeve incelemek daha derin bir analiz imkanı sağlar. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin, Milli Selamet Partisi, Milli Nizam Partisi, Refah Partisi ve Fazilet Partisinin oluşturduğu İslamcı Parti geleneğinden bir parti olmakla birlikte günümüzde “Milli Görüş” düşüncesini bıraktığını bunun yerine liberal ekonomi politikalarını uygulayan bir merkez sağ parti görünümüne kavuştuğunu görüyoruz. Ancak görece diğer merkez sağ partilere göre dini geleneklere daha fazla referans verildiğini, merkez sağ geleneğinin söylem bakımından daha sağa çekildiğini söylemek mümkündür. Laclaucu analizin ortaya koyduğu tablo ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin sıklıkla ve neredeyse sadece Demokrat Partiye referans vermesini ve kendi geçmişini diğer İslamcı partiler yerine Demokrat Parti ile açıklamasını da bu çerçevede açıklama imkanı verir. İki parti arasındaki benzerlikler bu analiz çerçevesinde daha net şekilde ortaya çıkar. Popülist söylemin ve popülizm ile demokrasi arasında kurulan ilişkinin benzerliği her iki partinin uzun süre seçmen desteğini nasıl alabildiği konusunda fikir vermektedir. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisine kadar geçen süreçte Türkiye’de parti yapısında

yaşanan parçalanma, özellikle merkez sağın bölünmesi, İslamcı partilerin yükselişi öte yandan ekonomik istikrarın peş peşe gelen ekonomik krizler nedeniyle bir türlü sağlanamaması da Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin alacağı desteği önceleyen bir organik kriz manzarası ortaya koyuyordu. Türkiye bu gelişmeler çerçevesinde 2000li yılların başına kadar geldi.

Bu tezde ikinci örnek olay olarak; Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin demokrasi söylemi içindeki popülist unsurları Laclau'nun popülizm teorisindeki, yukarıda belirttiğim kavramları göz önünde bulundurarak inceledim. Bu sayede; Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi döneminde popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisinin önemli duraklarını tespit etmeye çalıştım. Bu amaçla bir önceki bölümde, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'ne giden yolda, Türk sağ partilerinin söyleminin nasıl bir dönüşüm geçirdiğinin üzerinde durdum. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'ne giden yolun önemli dinamiklerinin anlaşılmasından sonra, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin "demokrasi söylemi" sayesinde veya "muhafazakar demokrasi" veya daha ilerleyen dönemde "ileri demokrasi" kavramı aracılığıyla dağılmış merkez sağı kendi ekseninde toplamasını ve ilerleyen seçimlerde bu talepler birliğini sürdürmedeki başarısını çeşitli örnekler aracılığı ile ortaya koydum. Diğer bir deyişle partinin hegemonyasının daha fazla noktayı kapsar biçimde yayılmasını çeşitli söylem örnekleriyle açıkladım.

2001 yılında kurulan Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin 2002 seçimlerinde tek başına iktidara gelmesinden itibaren, sürekli artan bir oy oranı ile demokratik talepleri kendisine eklemlediğini demokrasi söylemi aracılığıyla ortaya koymak mümkündür. 2002'de iktidara geldikten sonra Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi demokrasi söyleminin içini Avrupa Birliği uyum yasaları çerçevesinde doldurdu. Avrupa Birliğine uyum paketleri artarda hızlı bir şekilde yasalaştı ve bu sayede Türkiye'de demokrasi söyleminin çerçevesi oldukça genişlemiş oldu. Avrupa Birliği uyum yasaları sayesinde demokrasi söylemini güçlendiren Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi ekonominin yeniden yapılandırılmasına yönelik önlemleri de başarılı bir şekilde uygulayarak, ekonomik istikrarı ve büyümeyi sağlayabildi.

Talepler birliğinin veya eşdeğerlikler zincirinin kurulması bakımından Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi döneminin ilerleyen safhalarında bazı önemli dönemeçlerle karşılaşyoruz. Ben bu çalışmada bu dönemeçlerden ilkinin 2010 Anayasa

Referandumu olduğunu iddia ediyorum. Daha açık ifade etmek gerekirse, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin talepler birliğini kurduğuna emin olduğu nokta olma açısından 2010 Anayasa referandumu büyük değer taşıyor. Bu tezin popülizm ve demokrasi bölümünde ele alınan “referandumlar ve demokrasi” tartışması ve popülizm ve temsili demokrasi tartışmasıyla bağlantılı olarak, 2010 Anayasa Referandumunun Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi açısından bir doğrudan demokrasi aracı olmaktan ziyade, partinin kurduğu talepler birliğini/eşdeğerlikler zincirini ispat etmesi olarak değerlendirildiğini görüyoruz. Bu açıdan bu tezde özellikle 2010 Anayasa Referandumu öncesi ve sonrasındaki parti söylemi daha ayrıntılı olarak mercek altına alınmıştır. Böylece talepler birliğinin/eşdeğerlikler zincirinin doruk noktasında Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin hangi talepleri demokrasi göstereni aracılığıyla bünyesine aldığı anlaşılabilir.

2010 referandumu ile birlikte askeri vesayetin bittiğine ilişkin kanaat oluşmuş durumdaydı. Geçmişle karşılaştırıldığında tüm devlet organlarında kendisine karşı muhalif bir tehdidi hissetmez hale gelmişti. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'ne açılan kapatma davasında partinin kapatılmaması, 2007'de cumhurbaşkanlığına Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin istediği aday olan Abdullah Gül'ün seçilmesi, 27 Nisan e-muhtırasının halk tarafından tepkiyle karşılanması gibi olaylar sayesinde Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi büyük ölçüde bir eşdeğerlikler zinciri kurduğuna inanmıştı. Bundan dolayı çok çeşitli anayasa değişikliklerini içeren bir paketi halkoyuna sundu. 2010 Anayasa referandumunda elde edilen %57'lik evet sonucunun bu anlamda bu inancı perçinlediğini iddia etmek yanlış olmaz. 2010 Anayasa referandumu ile özellikle askeriyede ve yargı alanında istediği pek çok değişikliği de gerçekleştirmiş oldu.

Öte yandan Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin kurduğu farklar zincirine geldiğimizde, partinin kuruluşundan itibaren çok farklı kesimleri farklar zincirine eklemleyerek antagonistik bir söylemle hitap ettiğini görüyoruz. Sıklıkla muhalefet partisi olan Cumhuriyet Halk Partisini diğer karşı olduğu unsurlarla bir arada değerlendirdiğine tanık oluyoruz. Özellikle ilk iktidara geldiği dönemde Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin tek parti dönemi zihniyeti, elitler, bürokratik ve askeri elitler kavramlarını sıklıkla kullanarak bir farklar zinciri oluşturmaya çalıştığını teşhis etmek mümkündür. Bu da Laclaucu anlamda antagonistik söylemin, tüm karşıt olduğu unsurları aynı potada

eriterek popülist bir söylem belirleme çerçevesine uygun bir örnek olarak değerlendirilebilir.

Bu tezin farklar zinciri bakımından önemsedığı dönemeç ise 2013 Gezi Parkı eylemleri sırasında Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin kullandığı demokrasi söylemi olmuştur. Bu tezde 2013 yılı Mayıs Haziran aylarındaki Gezi Parkı Eylemleri ile birlikte Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin antagonistik söyleminin de doruk noktasına ulaştığını, farklar zincirinin geçmişte görülmemiş ölçüde büyüdüğünü iddia ediyorum. Kurulduğu dönemde partinin vaat ettiği çoğulcu anlayıştan ziyade çoğunlukçu bir demokrasi anlayışının ortaya çıktığını, Gezi Parkı eylemleri sürecinden itibaren daha belirgin biçimde talepler birliği kurulmasının getirdiği uzlaşmacı bir anlayış yerine antagonist bir söylemle kitlenin bir araya getirildiğini görüyoruz. Gezi sürecini aynı zamanda klasik popülist söylemin de doruk noktaya çıktığı, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin Milliyetçi ve Anadolucu yeniden söyleme sarıldığı bir nokta olarak görmemiz mümkündür. Biz ve onlar kutuplaşmasının demokrasiden ziyade popülist bir anlayışa evrildiğini söyleyebiliriz. Bu kutuplaşmanın popülist bir çerçevede değerlendirilebileceğinin en önemli örnekleri, Milli İradeye Saygı mitingleri ve bu mitinglerde benimsenen söylemlerdir. Bu süreçten itibaren Türkiye'de Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin otoriter bir anlayışa evrildiği üzerine tartışmaların da alevlendiğini gözlemlemek mümkündür. 2015 Haziran seçimlerinde partilerin birbirleriyle uzlaşamaz ve konuşamaz hale gelmiş olduklarını, bundan dolayı koalisyon kurulamadığını ve ülkenin kısa süre içinde erken seçimlere gittiğini ortaya koymak, hem sağ hem de sol siyasette kutuplaşmanın artmış olduğunu teşhis etmek gerekir. 2015 seçimlerinden itibaren ise Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin eşdeğerlikler zincirini daha çok başkanlık tartışmaları etrafında örgütlemeye başladığını görüyoruz. Artık farklar zincirine yöneltilen eleştirilerin ise büyük ölçüde Gülen cemaatinin yapılanmasına karşıtlık çerçevesinde ele alınabileceğini söylemek mümkündür.

Bu çalışmada kurulan teorik çerçeve ve peşinden yapılan örnek olaylar analizi ışığında bu tezden çıkarılan sonuçlara gelecekte olursak;

Bu tezde popülizm kavramına ve popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiye bakmak için çeşitli yaklaşımlar olduğunu ancak bunlar arasında görece yeni olan Laclau'nun

popülizm teorisinin/Semptomatik Yaklaşım/Söylem Yaklaşımı öne çıkan ve giderek daha sık kullanılan bir analitik araç olduğunu ortaya koydum.

Bu tezde Türkiye’de 1950 sonrasında popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisini incelemek açısından Laclau’nun popülizm teorisinin diğer yaklaşımlara (Emprisist ve Tarihselci yaklaşımlar) olan üstünlüğünü ön plana çıkardım. Temelde Eşdeğerlikler zinciri ve Farklar zinciri (Antagonizma) kavramlarının, bunun yanında hegemonya, boş gösteren ve retorik gibi kavramların hem Demokrat Parti hem de Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi’nin demokrasi söylemindeki popülist unsurların analizi açısından analitik araçlar olarak kullanılabileceğini ve bu analitik araçların sonuçlar çıkarılabilmesine imkan sağladığını çeşitli örneklerle ortaya koydum. Bu bakımdan Laclau’nun popülizm teorisinin çizdiği çerçeve Türkiye’de Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin demokrasi söyleminin analizi için en uygun çerçeve olduğunu iddiamı destekledim.

Bu tezde bu analitik araçlar aracılığıyla, popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiyi inceleyeceğimden popülizm ve demokrasi arasındaki ilişkiye bakarken de sistematik bir bakışa ihtiyaç olduğunu gözetmek gerekiyordu. Bu noktada popülizmin demokratik sistemlerde zaman zaman demokrasinin gelişimine katkıda bulunduğunu ve demokrasinin bir parçası olarak görüldüğünü, zaman zaman ise demokratik sistemin patolojik bir bileşeni olarak görüldüğü sonucuna vardım. Bundan dolayı bu ilişkiyi bu iki başlık altında inceledim. Türkiye’de bu ilişkinin nasıl olduğunu anlamak için Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi örneklerinin incelenmesiyle önemli sonuçlar elde edileceğini ortaya koydum.

Türkiye’de Laclaucu bakımdan değerlendirildiğinde Eşdeğerlikler zincirinin, burada örnek gösterilen her iki örnek olayda da “demokrasi” göstereni etrafında kurulduğunu, farklar zincirinin ise her iki partinin söyleminde zaman zaman değişkenlik gösterdiğini ileri sürdüm. Farklar zincirine karşı yöneltilen antagonistik söylem Demokrat Parti örneğinde antikomünizm düşüncesi etrafında ortaya çıkmışken, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi döneminde, askeri bürokratik vesayet, tek parti dönemi zihniyeti elitler ve daha sonrasında cemaatin devlet yapılanması gibi farklı odaklara yönelmişti. Antagonistik söylem bir eşdeğerlikler zinciri kurulması ve bu zincirin sağlam tutulması bakımından önem arzederken, bu farklar zincirinin

büyütülmesi ve söylemdeki antagonim dozunun artması giderek demokratik sisteme zarar veren bir hale geldiğini ortaya koydum.

Popülizmin zaman zaman demokratik sistemlere özellikle “siyasal katılım” ın artması bakımından katkılar sağladığını, öte yandan özellikle talepler birliği yerine farklar ve antagonistik bir söylem benimsendiğinde bu söylemin demokrasiye zarar vereceğini ortaya koydum. Bir başka bir deyişle Laclau’nun ortaya koyduğu gibi, eşdeğerlikler zinciri büyüdükçe demokratik kazanımlar elde edildiğini, farklar zinciri eşdeğerlikler zinciri aleyhine büyüdüğünde de demokratik sisteme zarar verildiğini ortaya koydum. Bu ilişkinin Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi açısından da doğrulandığını göstererek Demokrat Parti ve Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi açısından popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisi üzerine bu çıkarımın yapılabileceğini çeşitli örneklerle gösterdim.

Tezden çıkarılan bu sonuçlar da göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, son olarak Türkiye’de demokratik sistemin gelişebilmesi için demokrasi söyleminde, eşdeğerlikler zincirini büyütülmesinin yani ortak demokratik talepleri ön plana çıkarılmasının önemli olduğunu vurgulamak isterim. Farklar zincirinin kurulmasının belirli bir düzeyde demokratik ve popülist söyleme katkıda bulunduğunu kabul etmekle birlikte, farklar zincirinin eşdeğerlikler zinciri aleyhine çok büyüdüğü durumlarda demokratik kazanımlardan geri adım atılmasının kaçınılmaz olacağı açıktır. Bundan dolayı daha demokratik eşitlikçi ve çoğulcu bir siyasal sistemin kurulabilmesi için demokrasinin dar anlamda popülist bir formülizasyonu yerine daha geniş çoğulcu bir tanımının yapılması oldukça önemlidir. Hem Türkiye’de hem de dünyada popülizm ve demokrasi ilişkisini ele alırken demokrasinin katılım, eşitlik, çoğulculuk, hukuk devleti kuvvetler ayrılığı gibi önemli prensiplerinin de göz önünde bulundurularak bir demokrasi tanımlaması yapılmasının ve siyasal söylemin bu çerçevede oluşturulmasının önemi büyüktür. Bu tez bu açıdan yapılacak diğer çalışmalara bir örnek teşkil etmesi için yazılmış ve popülizm demokrasi tartışmalarına farklı bir perspektif sunma gayesi taşımaktadır.

APPENDIX 2

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Kıvrak Köroğlu, Esin

Nationality: Turkish (TC)

Date and Place of Birth: 11 July 1982, Denizli

Phone: +90 532 355 82 46

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU Political Science and Public Administration	2008
BS	AU SBF Public Administration	2005
High School	Ticaret Odası High School, Balıkesir	2000

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2013-	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt	Research Assistant
Present	University, Department of Political Science and Public Administration	
2010-2013	Balıkesir University, Bandırma IIBF, Department of Political Science and Public Administration	Research Assistant
2009-2010	Akdeniz University, Department of Public Administration	Research Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English

PUBLICATIONS

1. KIVRAK, Esin ve Gökhan Orhan (2012) “Türkiye’de Kamu Politikalarının Belirlenmesi ve Uygulanması Süreci: 1980 Sonrası Kadın Hareketinin Kamu Politikalarına Etkisi” içinde Hikmet Kavruk (Yayına Hazırlayan) Kuram ve Yöntem Açısından Türkiye’de Kamu Yönetimi: KAYFOR 2011 Bildiriler Kitabı, Ankara, TODAİE, ss.151-165.

PRESENTATIONS

1. KIVRAK, Esin (2015) “**Populism and Democracy in Turkey: Misperception of Liberal Democracy under the shadow of Populism**” presented in “The Current Populism in Europe: A Threat to Liberal Democracy?” 1st International Populism Conference in Prague organized by Charles University and Heinrich Böll Stiftung 18 - 19 May, 2015
2. KIVRAK, Esin (2013) “**Populist Persuasion in Turkey: Reproduction of Power in Turkey through the Justice and Development Party**” presented in American Political Science Association Annual Meeting in Chicago Illinois USA on 29-30-31 August- 1st September
3. KIVRAK, Esin. (2011) “**Popülizm ve Demokrasi: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin 2010 Anayasa Referandumu Öncesi Demokrasi Söylemi**” (Populism and Democracy: Justice and Development Party’s Democracy Discourse Before 2010 Constitution Referendum) presented in Turkish National Social Science Congress in Ankara on 15th of December 2011.
4. KIVRAK, Esin. (2012) “**Popülizm ve Demokrasi Söylemi: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin Suriye Politikası**” (Populism and Democracy Discourse: Justice and Development Party’s Syria Policy) presented in Turkish Political Science Association Conference in Ankara on 16th of December 2012.

APPENDIX 3
TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Kıvrak Köroğlu
Adı : Esin
Bölümü : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : “CHAIN” OF POPULISM FROM THE
DEMOCRAT PARTY TO THE JUSTICE OF DEVELOPMENT PARTY IN
TURKEY

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☒

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