

**Andrzej Adamczyk**

## ***Kemalism and Modern Turkey***

**Abstract:**

*The paper is devoted to internal contradictions of Kemalism, resulting from two tendencies which were distinct visible in Turkey during the life of Kemal Atatürk: a democratic one, represented by the constitutional acts from the years 1920–1924, and an authoritarian one, which was connected with the ideology of Kemalism. The institutional changes in Turkey in the 1920s had been directed towards introduction of a democratic constitutional order, but lack of proper social and economic premises made application of democratic constitutional norms difficult, facilitating transition to the single-party system contradictory to democratic principles. In the first part of the paper the author describes the most important constitutional acts, beginning from the 1876 Ottoman Constitution till the 1924 Turkish Constitution. This analysis shows beyond doubt that the goal of political system's reform was introduction of the democratic constitutional order. The form of government chosen by Turkey had many disadvantages however which were listed in the paper.*

*The second part of the paper is devoted to the second tendency, distinct visible in Turkey during the Atatürk presidency, i.e. the authoritarian tendency. The author underlines main events directing towards reversal of constitutional relations between the parliament (the Grand National Assembly) and executive in favour of the executive, and presents in a concise manner conclusions from an analysis of the six principles of Kemalism ('the six arrows'). He maintains that incorporation of these principles into the*

*Turkish Constitution in 1937 caused internal contradictions in the Constitution. The author tries to find reasons of the said contradictions.*

*Key words: Kemalism, Turkey, Kemal Atatürk, Turkish Constitution, political system, Sultan, nation*

The paper deals with relations between political system as described in the 1924 Turkish Constitution and the actual political system in Turkey in the period 1925–1946. Firstly, it refers to constitutional aspect of the Turkish revolution, then to practical dimension of the political system. In the end it shows the importance of incorporation of the six arrows of Kemalism as article 2 of the Turkish Constitution.

During the *Tanzimat* reforms (1839–1876) some new institutions were introduced into the traditional Ottoman political system which were signs of efforts directing towards rejuvenation of the Ottoman Empire. Among these were a principle of people's representation in the state agencies and broadening of legislative competences of various councils functioning around the Sultan, connected with change in their social composition.<sup>1</sup> The trials in this direction although inconsistent and not based upon determination to the total rejection of the existing political order, were instrumental in convening the first parliament upon the provisions of the 1876 Ottoman Constitution.<sup>2</sup> The elections in 1876 and 1877 were the first in the Muslim world and produced the parliament which showed astounding liveliness and initiative in criticizing administrative malfunction, despite constitutional restrictions in its competences.<sup>3</sup> The 1876 Constitution was an im-

1) This issue is debated in Stanford J. Shaw, 'The Central Legislative Councils in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Reform Movement Before 1876', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, I, 1970, pp. 51–84; Roderic Davison, 'The Advent of the Principle of Representation in the Government of the Ottoman Empire' in his *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History 1774–1923. The Impact of the West*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1991, pp. 96–111.

2) For an English translation of the 1876 Constitution, see Suna Kili, *Turkish Constitutional Developments and Assembly Debates on the Constitution of 1924 and 1961*, Istanbul, Robert College Research Center, 1971, pp. 150–159. A German translation is contained in Ernst Hirsch, *Die Verfassung der türkischen Republik*, Frankfurt am Main–Berlin, A. Metzner, 1966, pp. 195–206. A classic description of the first constitutional period in the Ottoman Empire is provided by Robert Devreux, *The First Ottoman Constitutional Period: A Study of the Midhat Constitution and Parliament*, Baltimore, John Hopkins Press, 1963.

3) See Hasan Kayalı, 'Elections and the Electoral Process in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1919', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 27, 1995, p. 267, and Ergun

posed constitution with the main principle of unrestricted Sultan sovereignty. In such a case the parliament, endowed with insignificant powers, had not been able to compete with the sovereign power of the Sultan who put an end to the first constitutional period by suspending the Constitution two years after its coming into force.

The institutions of the 1876 Constitution had great significance, however, for later evolution consisting in democratizing the political system. When in July 1908 a revolution made by the officer's conspiracy from Macedonia called the Young Turks had forced the Sultan to reinstate the Constitution, a conviction emerged that proper amendments to it would suffice for introduction of the parliamentary monarchy. The 1911 amendments to the Constitution provided e.g. that the ministers were collectively responsible to the Parliament and that the representative body would prevail in any conflict with the Council of Ministers.<sup>4</sup>

The application of the constitutional order in the 1908–1918 period was difficult because of many obstacles which culminated in the *coup d'état* made by Enver Pasha on 13 June 1913. The Constitution had been amended many times in order to strengthen the legal status of the Sultan to the effect that at the end of the World War I he could solve the Parliament with easiness as before.<sup>5</sup> The Sultan had been reigning as a real sovereign without the Parliament since 21 December 1918. Through cooperation with the political and military authorities of the Allies occupying the Ottoman Empire he wanted to restore the absolute monarchy under British protectorate.<sup>6</sup>

The history of Turkish constitutionalism in the 1920–1924 period is very strictly connected with political events which led towards establishing of the Ankara center of power.<sup>7</sup> The landmarks in this process were the Greek invasion on the Eastern coast of

Özbudun, 'Turkey' in Myron Weiner and Ergun Özbudun (eds), *Competitive Elections in Developing Countries*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1987, p. 333, for a general view of Ottoman electoral law and first elections in 1876 and 1877.

4) One of the best dogmatic analyses of these constitutional changes is provided by Gotthard Jäschke in his articles 'Die Entwicklung der osmanischen Verfassungsstaates von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart', *Die Welt des Islams*, I/II, 1917, pp. 6–55, and 'Die Rechtliche Bedeutung der in den Jahren 1909–1916 Vollzogenen Abänderungen des Türkischen Staatsgrundgesetzes', *Die Welt des Islams*, V, 1917, pp. 97–152. See also Wilhelm Albrecht, 'Die Entwicklung des öffentlichen Rechts in der Türkei in den Jahren 1909 bis 1911', *Jahrbuch des öffentlichen Rechts der Gegenwart*, 6, 1909, pp. 481–489.

5) Jäschke, 'Die Rechtliche', p. 147f.

6) See, for example, Halide Edib, *Turkey Faces West*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1930, p. 167, and Alexander L. Macfie, *Atatürk*, Londyn–New York, Longman, 1994, pp. 52–53.

7) Many works have focused on the establishment of the Ankara center of power. For

Asia Minor in May 1919 and arrival of Mustafa Kemal to Samsun. According to the Turkish historiography, this last event constitutes the turning point in the modern history of Turkey, because it marks beginning of consolidation of the resistance movement against the military occupation of Ottoman territories by the Allies, consequence of which was the creation of the revolutionary center of power in Ankara. The declarations of nationalist congresses in Erzurum and Sivas demanded that the parliament in Istanbul be convened. Nevertheless, the Representative Committee of the Society for the Defence of Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia, established during the first congress of the nationalist movement, declared itself temporary government. It had to govern in the name of the Sultan according to the law in force till emergence of a government in Istanbul enjoying the Turkish nation's confidence. The pressures of the Mustafa Kemal's nationalists inclined the Sultan to concessions, e.g. elections to the last Ottoman parliament. The parliament in Istanbul convened on 12 January 1920 showed independence from the Allies and endorsed the National Pact, i.e. the document which declared break with discredited ideologies of the past in favor of nationalism. In response the Allies decided on full-scale military occupation of Istanbul and the Sultan dissolved the parliament.

In view of the above mentioned facts, Mustafa Kemal acting as the Chairman of the Representative Committee of the Society for the Defence of Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia summoned a meeting of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (the TGNA). Nearly 100 deputies who could escape from Istanbul to Ankara together with over 200 deputies elected in the election held following Mustafa Kemal's proclamation on 19 March 1920, that an Assembly be convened in Ankara, met in Ankara and established the First Grand National Assembly on 23 April 1920. The declaration of the TGNA of 23 April 1920 stated that the power was concentrated in the TGNA, and his Chairman was *ex officio* prime minister presiding over only functionally separated government. The real authority in the country was to be the national will represented by the Assembly, superior to which was no other state agency. This regulation meant a real rejection of the authority of the Sultan, although according to the words of the Declaration: "Sultan-Caliph, as soon as he is free from the coercion to which he submits, shall take (his) place within the constitutional system in the manner to be determined by the Assembly".<sup>8</sup> Despite the declared

*historical aspects, see Elaine D. Smith, Turkey: Origins of the Kemalist Movement and the Government of the Grand National Assembly (1919–1923), Washington, 1959, or Suna Kili, Kemalism, Istanbul, School of Business Administration and Economics, Robert College, 1969. The following part of the paper concerned with formation of parliament in Ankara is based mainly upon these sources.*

8) For English translation of this Declaration, see Kili, *Kemalism*, p. 20, and Donald E. Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk. Social Process in the Turkish Reformation*, Philadelphia, American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1939, p. 86.

goal of the TGNA, which was liberation of the Caliphate and the Sultanate on the base of the principle of sovereignty of the nation, the Parliament began to enact laws which real purpose was to establish the democratic constitutional order. The principles and institutions of the Constitutional Act of 20 January 1921: the sovereignty of the nation, an elected parliament and the principle of representation, prove that thesis.<sup>9</sup> The said act had only temporary character.<sup>10</sup> The Sultanate, regarded as an obstacle on the road to democracy, was abolished by the TGNA on 1 November 1922. The Caliphate, bound in the Ottoman Empire with the Sultanate, could not exist longer in Turkey as in institution of spiritual guidance over the Muslims scattered all over the world. From this reason it was liquidated in the beginning of March 1924, after proclamation of the Republic (29 October 1923). This last amendment to the Constitutional Act of 1921 formally separated state organs: the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the National Assembly. From this time on the political system of Turkey seemed to be like the parliamentary democracy. The electoral law was also democratized in 1923 when the franchise was extended to all males over eighteen years of age, and the tax-paying requirement for first and second electors was lifted.

The culmination of the institutional reform process was adoption of the Constitution in 1924 which retained most of the basic principles of the 1921 Constitutional Act, notably the principle of national sovereignty.<sup>11</sup> The TGNA was considered, as it was in the said act of 1921, "the sole representative of the nation, on whose behalf it exercises the rights of sovereignty" (Art. 4). Both legislative and executive powers were concentrated in the Assembly (Art. 5), but the Assembly was to exercise its executive authority through the President of the Republic elected by it and the Council of Ministers appointed by the President (Art. 7). The Assembly could at any time control the

9) See English translation of this act in Kili, *Turkish Constitutional Developments*, p. 160–162.

10) The following concise presentation of institutional changes in Turkey till 1924 is based upon vast English and German literature. See, for example, Yavuz Abadan, 'Die Entstehung der Türkei und ihre verfassungsrechtliche Entwicklung bis 1960', *Jahrbuch des öffentlichen Rechtsgeschichte*, 9, 1960, pp. 353–422.

11) An excellent analysis of the 1924 Constitution with German translation of analyzed act is contained in Erich Pritsch, 'Geschichtliche und systematische Übersicht nebst Anmerkungen zur Verfassung', *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin, XXVI–XXVII/II*, Berlin 1924, pp. 164–251. See also Zahit K. Özbulak, *Das türkische Verfassungssystem*, Berlin, Triltsch, 1936, for a comparative analysis of this Constitution.

Council of Ministers and dismiss it, while the Council had no power to dissolve the Assembly to hold new elections.

The belief in legislative supremacy was so deeply entrenched and emotionally held during the years of the First TGNA (1920–1923) that, in the course of the debates on the Constitution, the Assembly rejected or modified many proposals favouring a somewhat stronger executive.<sup>12</sup> For example, the draft Constitution prepared by the Constitutional Committee gave the President of the Republic, apparently with the blessings of Mustafa Kemal himself, the power to dissolve the Assembly and to veto bills. Such a veto could be overridden by a majority of two thirds. In the end, the Assembly rejected the entire article on dissolution, and the veto power was restricted in such a way that the President's objection could be overridden by a simple majority. Consequently, the constitutional status of the President of the Republic was very weak.

Due to the provisions of the 1924 Constitution, the Parliament was to be elected by Turkish citizens. Among freedoms and rights it listed e.g. the right to vote in the election of Turkish deputies and the right to be elected deputy, reserved for men who reached 18 and 30 years respectively, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of press and freedom of public meetings and association.

The analysis of the constitutional acts from the 1920–1924 period shows beyond doubt that the purpose of the political system reform in Turkey was establishment of the democratic constitutional order. The 1924 Constitution was undoubtedly democratic in spirit. It had many disadvantages however. The political system it introduced was not a parliamentary government where powers are, to some extent, separated from each other. The authors of the Constitution chose an "assembly government" model based on the unity or concentration of the legislative and executive powers.

This simple model of democracy was distinct visible in many provisions of the 1924 Constitution. Its creation of an all-powerful Assembly, its somewhat emotional and unnecessary distrust of the executive, its insufficient safeguards for the independence of the judiciary, and its failure to institute formal restraints on the legislative power, notably the lack of a judicial mechanism for reviewing the constitutionality of laws, could make the political system unstable in practice. The rights granted by the Constitution were relative because of the formula "within the limits stipulated by law" inserted in many provisions concerning rights and freedoms. Hence, the Assembly was constitutionally free of restricting basic rights at will.<sup>13</sup>

Turning our attention now to the 1924 Constitution in practice, we notice that when in 1924 an opposition party named the Progressive Republican Party (the PRP) had

been established, the governing party of Mustafa Kemal the Republican People's Party (the RPP) was put to the democratic test.<sup>14</sup> From the program and manifesto of the PRP emerges a picture of the party which was loyal to the then existing constitutional order. While the resistance movement was convinced that the political system be modified, a group of it around Mustafa Kemal and the Republican People's Party wanted to make the revolution much more deeper in scope, by extending it into the socio-cultural sphere. Using the Sheikh Said revolt that had broken out in the Eastern provinces of Turkey in February 1925 as a pretext, the multi-party experiment was brought to an abrupt end. The Law for the Maintenance of Order, passed on 4 March 1925, gave the constitutionally weak government wide extraordinary powers. Martial law was declared, and the Independence Tribunals were reactivated. The PRP was closed on 3 June 1925, by a decision of the Council of Ministers which implicated it in the revolt although no concrete proof of such a connection had been produced. Thus the RPP ruled Turkey from 1925 to 1945 without the presence of any opposition party, with one significant exception of the Free Party episode in 1930.

The theoretical supremacy of the Assembly was in practice transformed into the domination of the executive, since normally the executive is composed of party or faction leaders, while the legislature includes a numerically larger, but politically much weaker, group of back-benchers. The parliamentary control over the government was therefore suspended. The parliament's members chosen by Atatürk would have to break party discipline, acting against their chiefs in executive organs. Atatürk's status in the state structure was not based upon constitutional norms because his competences as the President of the Republic were insignificant. His supremacy over the political system resulted not from the law but from the fact that the parliament had been dominated by the only one legal party. The office of party Chairman held by Atatürk from 1923 until his death in 1938 was the locus of virtually total power over all parts of the party organization at the national level, and thus over the lower echelons of the party.<sup>15</sup>

*duction to Turkish Law, Ankara, Matbaasi, 1966, pp. 21–22. The "assembly government" was analyzed by Pierre Bastid, Le gouvernement d'assemblée, Paris 1956. His concepts in this regard were presented in Polish by Paweł Sarnecki. See his 'Założenia systemu "rządów zgromadzenia" i możliwości ich adaptacji do przyszłej konstytucji RP' in Michał Domagała (ed), Konstytucyjne systemy rządów. Możliwości adaptacji do warunków polskich, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1997, pp. 138–158.*

*14) See Erik J. Zürcher, Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic. The Progressive Republican Party 1924–1925, Leiden–New York–Kobenhavn–Köln, E.J.Brill, 1991, for detailed examination of political struggle in Turkey in this period.*

*15) Walter W. Weiker, Political Tutelage and Democracy in Turkey. The Free Party and Its Aftermath, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1973, p. 199.*

*12) Debates upon the 1924 Turkish Constitution are presented by Kili, Turkish Constitutional Developments, pp. 30–63.*

*13) Ergun Özbudun, 'Constitutional Law' in Tugrul Ansay and Don Wallace (eds), Intro-*

Thus we see that during the single-party regime there were two totally different systems of government in Turkey. We have already stated that the President was described in the 1924 Constitution as the executive organ endowed with insignificant competences. Thanks to the 'Chief' system he possessed in reality an extreme authority that was never mentioned in the Constitution.<sup>16</sup> We are inclined to ask if there was any trial to reconcile these two different systems of government on the constitutional level. The question should be answered in the affirmative because the six arrows of Kemalism (republicanism, nationalism, populism, secularism, etatism and revolutionism) were inserted in 1937 into the Turkish Constitution.

The six arrows were instrumental in petrifying dictatorship in Turkey, causing at the same time internal contradictions in the 1924 Constitution.<sup>17</sup> Unlike Ziya Gökalp's theoretical ideas, the six arrows of Kemalism did not constitute system of coherent ideological principles. It was a kind of recapitulation of reforms made mainly in the 1925–1930 period when the Law for the Maintenance of Order was in force. Being the recapitulation of reforms imposed from above by dictatorial measures this ideology could not express democratic ideas. The principles of Kemalism directly or indirectly legitimized one-party state, while the ideal confirmed by the RPP Program of 1935 and some achievements in 1930s testified that democracy was seen as a goal to be obtained in future.

16) Cemil Koçak, 'Some Views on the Turkish Single-Party Regime During the İnönü Period (1938–1945)' in Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zürcher (eds), *Men of Order. Authoritarian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah*, London–New York, I.B.Tauris, 2004, p. 126.  
 17) According to Abadan, *op.cit.*, p. 378, 'so gesehen muß die Betonung des "republikanischen, nationalen und volksnahen" Charakters der Türkei in der Verfassung (durch die obengenannte Änderung von 1937) in gewisser Weise als die Bestätigung des nationalen Souveränitätsprinzips gedeutet werden (Art. 1, Verfassung von 1921; Art. 3, Verfassung von 1924)'. Much more accurate are, however, words of Şevket Süreyya Aydemir: 'the contents of the Turkish constitution, which had been written under the influence of the principles of French revolution, have been reinterpreted in accordance with the speeches of the leaders of the revolution and the research of the party. In addition to the constitution, there has appeared a large amount of literature concerning social reforms and ideological matters. In this large amount of literature, it can be seen that our national regime is totally different from the French revolution; the differences are, for instance, economic and cultural étatism, rejection of parliamentary democracy, and anti-colonialism. This is what the Turkish revolution is about and thereby it is an original movement...' See Mustafa Türkes, 'The Ideology of the Kadro [Cadre] Movement: A Patriotic Leftist Movement in Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies. Special Issue: Turkey Before and After Atatürk*, Internal and External Affairs, 4, 1998, p. 113.

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**Ivona Mišterová**

## **Medieval London as Seen through the Eyes of Czech and German Travellers**

**Abstract:**

*The aim of this article is to analyze the first depictions of London in Czech literature, namely in travel journals of the Czech writer and traveller Wenzel Schaseck of Birkov and the German burgher Gabriel Tetzl of Gräfenberg and Nuremburg who accompanied the Czech nobleman Leo of Rozmital and Blatna on his diplomatic mission through western European countries in the years 1465 to 1467. Furthermore, similarities and differences between Schaseck's and Tetzl's accounts of London are pointed out and discussed. The comparative analysis of both travel journals and historical sources will uncover not only the similarities and differences regarding the depiction of their mission and particularly the city of London, but also the credibility of their observations. Finally, the article concludes that Schaseck's and Tetzl's travel journals present not only a valuable illustration of late Medieval Europe and a specific Medieval way of thinking, but also a unique picture of Medieval London as seen through the eyes of non-English writers and travellers.*

*Key words: medieval London, Wenzel Schaseck of Birkov, Gabriel Tetzl of Gräfenberg and Nuremburg, the Czech nobleman Leo of Rozmital and Blatna, George of Podebrady, Edward IV, diplomatic travels, travel journals*