

## THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL ERA IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM IN TÜRKİYE

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### Abstract

There is no consensus among authors as to when the multi-party system started in Türkiye. While some authors state that the multi-party system in Türkiye started in the Second Constitutional Era, many authors generally accept that the multi-party system in Türkiye started after the Second World War. The second position has become so common that it has come to affect authors' perceptions; whenever the transition to multi-party system in Türkiye is mentioned, the process that started in 1945 first comes to mind. This study argues that the multi-party system in Türkiye started in the Second Constitutional Era, a view that is contrary to which is widely known and accepted. In this context, the current study aims to reveal this multi-party system by examining various aspects such as the related literature, historical background, and competition of the political parties in the multi-party elections to gain power. The study also aims to challenge conventional wisdom in the literature and change common opinion.

**Keywords:** Second Constitutional Era, Multi-party System, Türkiye, Turkish Politics, Political Party

**JEL Codes:** Z00, Y90

## TÜRKİYE'DE ÇOK PARTİLİ HAYAT BAĞLAMINDA İKİNCİ MEŞRUTİYET DÖNEMİ

### Öz

Türkiye'de çok partili hayatın ne zaman başladığı konusunda yazarlar arasında bir fikir birliği yoktur. Kimi yazarlar Türkiye'de çok partili hayatın İkinci Meşrutiyet döneminde başladığını ifade ederken, birçok yazar Türkiye'de çok partili hayatın İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra başladığını kabul etmektedir. Bir genel kabul haline gelmiş olan ikinci yaklaşım o kadar yaygınlaşmıştır ki yazarların algılarını da etkiler hale gelmiştir. Öyle ki, Türkiye'de çok partili hayata geçiş denilince akla ilk olarak 1945'te başlayan süreç gelmektedir. Bu çalışma, literatüre yerleşmiş yaygın görüşün aksine Türkiye'de çok partili hayatın İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi ile başladığını ileri sürmektedir. Bu bağlamda çalışma, ilgili literatür, tarihsel arka plan, siyasi partiler ve dönemin çok partili seçimlerine odaklanarak İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi'ndeki çok partili sistemi ortaya koymayı ve böylece literatürdeki yaygın kanaati değiştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi, Çok Partili Sistem, Türkiye, Türk Siyasal Hayatı, Siyasal Parti

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## INTRODUCTION

There is no consensus among authors as to when the multi-party system started in Türkiye. While some authors state that a multi-party system started in the Second Constitutional Era, many authors generally accept that the multi-party system in Türkiye started after the Second World War. Tunaya (2011a, p. 35), one of the authors who defended the first opinion, states that the Second Constitutional Era was “full of progressive and courageous breakthroughs in Türkiye’s democratic developments”, that there was no clear pluralism in the Ottoman political regime until this period, and that the multi-party regime in Türkiye started with the proclamation of Constitution again in 1908. Karpaz (1959, p. vii–viii) maintains that Türkiye adopted a multi-party system in 1908, and that the developments after the Second World War should be accepted as a new multi-party system. Similarly, Güneş (2012, p. 360) states that a period based on multi-party and free elections started with the Second Constitutional Era, while Örs (2013, p. 699–700) states that both pluralism and a multi-party regime in Türkiye started in this period.

As for the second opinion, the authors (e.g., Timur, 1991; Yeşil, 2001; Akın, 2002; Berber, 2012; Bayır, Ö. E., 2013; Güler, 2015; Akıncı and Usta, 2015; Akandere, 2016; Khaldibekova, 2022) widely acknowledged that the multi-party system in Türkiye started following the conclusion of the Second World War. The studies that embrace this view are not limited to those mentioned above. When many authors (e.g., Akıncı, 2012; Şentürk, 2012; Dağtaş, 2014; Özsüer, 2014; Feridunoğlu, 2016; Sertel, 2016; Uçar, 2018; Temizgüney, 2022) mention about the process of transition to multi-party system in Türkiye, they directly mean the period after the Second World War and do not even refer to the Second Constitutional Era. In this context, Çiçek (2018, p. 83) says that the process of transition to multi-party-political system began in Türkiye with the addition of domestic developments to the changing global conjuncture after the Second World War, while Akkaya (2011, p. 43) discusses Türkiye's attitude towards the internal and external factors that enabled its transition to multi-party political system. Also, Arataş and Solak, while examining the National Development Party, which is the first opposition party in the transition to multi-party system in Türkiye after the Second World War, do not mention the Second Constitutional Era.

The second position has become so common that it has come to affect authors’ perceptions; whenever the transition to multi-party system or politics in Türkiye is mentioned, it is the process that started in 1945 that first comes to mind. There are several reasons for this situation. First, some authors consciously propose that multi-party system started after the Second World War, considering the Second Constitutional Era inadequate for the start of multi-party system in Türkiye. However, no study in the literature compares both periods in the context of multi-party system. Second, some authors might think that the use of the name ‘Türkiye’ started within the Republic of Türkiye itself. In most of the publications within this framework,

it is striking that the period of the Republic of Türkiye is taken into account when referring to the multi-party system in that state. However, the name ‘Türkiye’ was used long before the Republic of Türkiye came into existence. Western authors started to use ‘Turchia’ and ‘Turquia’ for Anatolia from the end of the 12th century (Kafesoğlu, 1966, p. 319). The name ‘Türkiye’, which was often used by Western states when referring to the Ottoman Empire, was also widely used during the Second Constitutional Era (Kansu, 2002, p. xiv–xvi). In fact, one of the political parties of that period, the Ottoman Democrat Party, published a newspaper titled Türkiye; the newspaper was published in Istanbul and lasted only two issues. Furthermore, the name of the parliament opened in Ankara on April 23, 1920, has been referred to as the Turkish Grand National Assembly since 1921. At this point, some studies in the literature that focus on the multi-party system in Türkiye define the limits of their studies by using phrases like “during the Republic of Türkiye” (Kaştan, 2006), “during the Republican Period” (Güray 2020, p. 49), or “in Türkiye after the Second World War” (Ekinci, 1997), thereby avoiding an anachronistic mistake. It would be useful to mention two studies focusing on the multi-party system in Türkiye after the Second World War, and do not neglect the Second Constitutional Era. The first is the work of Karaömerlioglu (2006, p. 89), who named his study Türkiye’s “return” to multi-party politics, which deals with the period leading up to 1945 since the “genuine” parliamentary struggle took place in 1908. The other is the work of Haytoğlu (1997, p. 46), who says that the multi-party system that started during the Second Constitutional Era was multi-party in the 1908–1913 period and single-party between 1913 and 1918. Third, some authors might think that an uninterrupted multi-party tradition is necessary for a multi-party system, but the first multi-party experience in the Second Constitutional Era was interrupted in practice by the Union and Progress administration, which became authoritarian in 1913. We should underline here that the experience of multi-party system that started after 1945 was subsequently interrupted by the military coups of 1960 and 1980.

Some studies that started the multi-party system in Türkiye after the Second World War also refer to the Second Constitutional Era. For example, Timur (1991, p. 112) states that social classes with conflicting interests united against the government and that, after a while, the true face of the leading coalition became clear during this period, but he does not mention the multi-party system of the period beyond emphasizing its similarity with the Democratic Party that came to power in 1950. To Yeşil (2001, p. 7–10), many political parties in addition to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) were established by opposition groups both inside and outside the parliament during the Second Constitutional Era, which is an experience in the democratization process of Türkiye. Although he admits that the CUP, which aimed to establish a “parliamentary–constitutional regime” as in Europe, achieved its goal—albeit partially—in 1910; he chooses for some reason to refer to the start of the transition to multi-party system in Türkiye after 1945. Akıncı and Usta say that it is possible to see the first examples in the context of the transition to a multi-



party system in Türkiye during the Second Constitutional Era, but they do not make any statement other than to say that the period lasted for a short time due to pressure from the CUP. Although Kömür and Dursunoğlu (2020, p. 2) state that Türkiye experienced a multi-party system during the Second Constitutional Era, in addition to İlgen (2020, p. 128), Salep (2020, p. 1099), and Khaldibekova (2022, p. 31), who underlined that the first parties in Türkiye were established in this period, they all date the transition to the multi-party system in Türkiye after the Second World War. Interestingly, Karadeniz (2018), who focuses on the 1950 election and sees it as the turning point of the multi-party system in Türkiye after the Second World War, touches upon the elections of the Second Constitutional Era but overlooks the parties of the period. As seen above, a general trend has emerged that the multi-party system in Türkiye started after the Second World War.

Undoubtedly, this approach either ignores the Second Constitutional Era or reduces it to only a stage in Türkiye's democratization process. However, different segments of society began to become politicized and make their voices heard, many political parties took their place on the political scene, sometimes competitive elections were held, and political struggles took place within and outside the parliament in this period.

This study argues that the multi-party system in Türkiye started in the Second Constitutional Era, a view that is contrary to which is widely known and accepted. The study first gives political characteristics the Second Constitutional Era, then deals with those elements that contributed to the multi-party system of the period, especially the political parties and contested elections. In this context, the study aims to reveal this multi-party system by examining various aspects such as the related literature, historical background, and competition of the political parties in the multi-party elections to gain power. The study also aims to challenge conventional wisdom in the literature and change common opinion.

## **SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL ERA IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM IN TÜRKİYE**

### **Second Constitutional Era**

The Second Constitutional Era started on July 24, 1908, when the Ottoman Constitution of 1876 (Kanun-ı Esasi) was re-enacted by Abdulhamid II, and continued until the end of 1918 when the Ottoman Empire signed an armistice that ended its involvement in the First World War. It is possible to extend this period until 1922 when the Sultanate was abolished in the constitutional sense. In order to understand the period, it is necessary to go back to the First Constitutional Era when Abdulhamid II promulgated Kanun-ı



Esasi in December 1876. The Constitution had established a bicameral parliament comprising the Chamber of Deputies (Meclis-i Mebusan), whose members were elected by popular vote, and the Senate (Meclis-i Ayan), whose members were appointed by the Sultan. After the parliament continued to work for about 11 months, Sultan brought about a de facto end to this period in February 1878. The reason for this was the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. Even though Kanun-ı Esasi was suspended indefinitely and the Chamber was not called to a meeting, Kanun-ı Esasi remained in effect constitutionally.

The suspension of the Constitution and the dissolution of the Chamber brought about the emergence of opposition movements against the rule of Abdulhamid II. It was the CUP that forced the Sultan, who was the sole authority in the country, to re-enact the Constitution in 1908. The CUP had been founded in 1889 under the name of the Committee of the Ottoman Union by a group of medical students at the Imperial Military School of Medicine, including İbrahim Temo and Abdullah Cevdet. Their aim was to put an end to the “dictatorship” of Abdulhamid II and to make the Constitution and parliament functional again (Ramsour, 2001, p. 25). The Committee merged with the Committee of Union and Progress, which was founded by Ahmet Rıza in Paris in 1895 under the name of the Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union. The Committee members were secretly bringing their publications into the country and making their voices heard in the Empire. After the first congress was held in Paris in 1902, a division arose among the exiled Young Turks due to disagreements between the groups aligned with Ahmet Rıza and Prince Sabahaddin. Prince Sabahaddin established a separate committee under the name of the “Society for Private Initiative and Decentralization” (Zürcher, 1984, p. 17–18). In spite of the setbacks for the Young Turks, they succeeded in revising their movement in 1907. Actually, those intending to overthrow the Sultan were not restricted to these two groups; a group of soldiers comprising serving officers, especially those of the 3rd Army in Macedonia, had founded the “Ottoman Freedom Society” in Thessaloniki in 1906. The following year, the Committee of Progress and Union merged with this committee under the name of the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress (Zürcher, 1984, p. 38–41). Ultimately, the power that would force Abdülhamit to re-enact the Constitution would not be the Unionist intellectuals in Europe, but those Unionists serving in the 3rd Army in Macedonia.

The Second Constitutional Era, which started in July 1908, is itself a continuation of the First Constitutional Era that started in 1876. While the Unionists announced the proclamation of the Constitution in Rumeli on July 23, 1908, it was Abdulhamid II who proclaimed the Constitution a day later in Istanbul.



## Political Characteristics of the Second Constitutional Era

Since Kanun-ı Esasi was restored at an unexpected time (Ahmad, 1969, p. 14), the CUP, the only power that could control the Ottoman state, was not ready for the post-constitutional period. They were also young and inexperienced, and in the first years of the period they had to share power with the Sultan, the government, and, after its opening, the parliament (Akşin, 1998, p. 116–120). About ten days after the proclamation of the Constitution, Abdulhamid II changed government and formed a cabinet of honest and well-known names under the leadership of Kamil Pasha. According to Ahmad (1999, p. 9–10), these initiatives “deprived the revolution of its reason for existence” and increased the prestige of the Sultan. However, some Unionists believed that the goal of the proclamation of the Constitution had been achieved and they should not go further. For this reason, the CUP, which was content with the fact that a few of its members were ministers, tried to gain political experience. However, the CUP continued to give instructions to the cabinet. According to Ramsaur (2001, p. 187), this policy, which continued until the assassination of Mahmut Şevket Pasha in June 1913, was the Unionists’ greatest mistake. This is because the Unionists preferred to direct the parliamentary government through clandestine and duplicitous means, rather than trying to make it successful.

After the 31 March Incident, Abdülhamit II was dethroned on the grounds that he had played a role in the uprising. With the constitutional amendments made after the overthrow of Abdülhamid II, the powers of the Sultan were reduced while the powers of the Chamber were increased.

In the process that started with the 1913 coup d'état, known as the Raid on the Sublime Porte and heightened as a result of the assassination of Mahmut Şevket Pasha, the CUP, which had gathered all the power in its hands, turned into a single-party government. It is not possible to see a de facto multi-party regime in the next period. For this reason, it is necessary to divide the Second Constitutional Era into two parts, p. the period until 1913 when CUP was not the only authority, and the following period which was marked by the CUP’s unchallenged rule. The second period under the authoritarian rule of the CUP can not be regarded as a multi-party regime, but rather a period of single-party rule. For this reason, the multi-party system is a phenomenon that we encounter in the first part of the Second Constitutional Era.

## Cabinets

According to Kanun-ı Esasi, the power to appoint the head of government, known as the Grand Vizier, belonged to the Sultan. Sait Pasha’s government was in office in the first days of the Second Constitutional Era. Upon the resignation of the government on August 3, 1908, Kamil Pasha, a liberal figure, formed the first cabinet of the Second Constitutional Era. The 1908 elections were held during the Kamil Pasha cabinet



in accordance with the Law of Deputies Election, which was newly enacted in the Chamber and approved by the Sultan.

New practices related to the functioning of the government began in this period. The Kamil Paşa cabinet was the first cabinet to prepare a government program in Turkish politics. It was also the first cabinet to be overthrown by a vote of no confidence. The Chamber could overthrow the cabinet or its members based on the 1909 amendments (Kanun-ı Esasi, Art. 38). On February 13, 1909, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha formed a cabinet. The tradition of investiture vote, a formal process in which the members of a parliament vote to show whether they approve the government, first started with this government in Turkish politics. According to another amendment, the cabinet would not only be responsible to the Sultan but also to the Chamber (Kanun-ı Esasi, Art. 30). These political changes brought the Ottoman forms of government closer to the parliamentary system.

Cabinets were then formed by Tevfik Pasha on April 14, 1909, by Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha on May 6, 1909, by İbrahim Hakkı Pasha, who can be regarded as the first Unionist dominated head of government (Kansu, 2000, p. 16) on January 12, 1910, and by Said Pasha on October 1, 1911. The CUP had supported all cabinets up to this period. In those days, the Moderate Liberty and People's Parties intensified their opposition after the Tripoli attack by Italy. The struggle between the ruling and opposition parliamentary parties was clearly evident. During this period, the opposition parties grew stronger. On July 22, 1912, the Ahmet Muhtar Pasha cabinet, which was opposed by the CUP, was established and the same process continued during of Kamil Pasha cabinet (October 29, 1912). Since there was a significant loss of land due to the Balkan War, a group of Unionists carried out the Raid on the Sublime Porte, and forced Kamil Pasha to resign. Subsequently, Mahmut Sevket Pasha formed a cabinet on January 23, 1913. After the Pasha was assassinated, Said Halim Pasha went on to form a government on 11 June 1913, which served until February 1917 (Güneş, 2012).

### **Political Parties and Elections**

The Second Constitutional Era initiated an atmosphere of freedom that had never been experienced before in the Ottoman State. When the 1908 elections were held, the Constitution included no provision regarding political parties. Accordingly, no official permission was required to establish an association, and it was only necessary to declare that an association has been formed, with parties also being considered associations. In addition to the associations established by minority groups, very different associations, such as those focused on women, professionals, and students, also emerged in this period. The Law of Associations was enacted on August 16, 1909 (Birinci, 1990, p. 24–27) to provide some order to these newly



founded associations. Accordingly, it was forbidden to establish parties that violated the law and morals of the state, that threatened the integrity of the state, that aimed to overthrow the government, and that damaged relations between elements in the country; the formation of nationalist and sexist parties were also banned. In order to become a member of a party, members had to be aged 18 years or older, could not have been convicted of serious crimes, and could not be deprived of marital status (Aslan, 2010, p. 60–61). Another change we encountered in this period was the practice of martial law that started during the 31 March Incident. This situation made the position of the opposition parties difficult.

During this period, three general elections were held in 1908, 1912, and 1914. The Chamber was opened on December 17, 1908 and was subsequently dissolved on two occasions, on January 18, 1912, and on August 4, 1912. Due to the outbreak of the Balkan War, elections were postponed and the Chamber remained closed until the 1914 elections. The elections involved no direct voting system. The first voters chose the second voters, and the second voters chose the deputies by simple majority. Since women and those who did not pay taxes more or less were prevented from voting, the elections involved a principle of limited—not universal—suffrage. The 1908 elections lasted more than four months and 281 deputies from 121 sanjaks were elected. Additionally, 42 deputies were elected in the by-elections for deputies that remained vacant for any reason during the legislative period (Demir, 50–60, 160). The number of deputies in the parliament that the CUP could rely on for critical votes was just over 50, which was far below the absolute majority. The largest group in the parliament was the independents, consisting of 147 deputies, and until 1912, the CUP could only make parliamentary decisions with the support of these deputies. The opposition, on the other hand, was not as well organized as the CUP. Although the total number of opposition deputies was more than 70, no party had more than 35–40 members at the same time (Kansu 2002, p. 352–353).

With the proclamation of the Constitution in 1908, different segments of society were rapidly politicized, and many political parties began to appear on the political scene. Apart from the CUP, the parties established in this period were mainly the Ottoman Liberty Party (Ahrar), Ottoman Democrat Party, Mohammedan Union (İttihad-ı Muhammedi) Party, Moderate Liberty (Mutedil Hürriyetperveran) Party, Ottoman Radical Reform (Islahat-ı Esasiye-i Osmaniye) Party, People's (Ahali) Party, Ottoman Socialist Party, and Freedom and Accord Party, also known as the Liberal Entente.

The CUP was the most important agent behind the proclamation of the Constitution. The CUP had been established as a secret committee that accepted members through an oath ceremony, which involved prospective members laying their hands on Qur'an and a gun. The CUP increased its power by organizing within the army and bureaucracy over time, and achieved its most basic goal by the proclamation the



Constitution in 1908. However, the Committee would maintain this secrecy after the proclamation of the Constitution and would hold its general congresses of 1908, 1909, 1910, and 1911 in Thessaloniki in closed sessions (Akşin, 1998, p. 218). In the 1908 congress, which was held just before the 1908 elections, the CUP took a decision that the union members would work under the name of the Party of Union and Progress (Akşin, 1998, p. 147). The Committee was spread nearly all over the Empire, but the Party comprised only the representatives of the Committee in the Chamber. The Committee would openly declare itself a political party in 1913 (Tunaya, 2011b, p. 253–255). Since most of the deputies were not true Unionists, the Committee kept the party away from itself in the first years, and the party could attend the general congresses of the Committee with only 3 representatives. We also see the collective leadership in the Committee. Although Talat and Enver Pashas came to the fore in later years, especially during the First World War, the decision-making body of the Committee was always the headquarters (Akşin, 1997, p. 76).

The CUP, which opened branches in many places in the Empire following the proclamation of the Constitution, prepared a political program for the 1908 elections. In its campaign, the CUP emphasized themes, such as freedom, national sovereignty, agricultural and industrial development, and fair taxation (Akşin, 1998, p. 144–146; Demir, 2007, p. 71). Among the promises in the program were that the government would be accountable to the parliament elected by the people's votes, and that the government would collapse if it could not obtain a vote of confidence. There were also other suggestions such as electing two-thirds of the Senate members by popular vote, introducing a new election law, and limiting voting rights to those who are at least 20 years old. According to Kansu (2002, p. 226–228), all these marked a revolution in which the country transitioned from an absolutist state to a liberal democratic one. The CUP accused the Liberty Party of trying to divide the Empire due to its decentralized views during the elections. The CUP won the 1908 election, but most of its deputies were not true Unionists. For this reason, some of these deputies would leave the party and join the opposition parties in the following days. This would be the most important factor in preventing the CUP from dominating the parliament (Akşin, 1998, p. 151).

The first opposition party that emerged against the CUP after the proclamation of the Constitution was Ottoman Liberty Party. The party was founded on September 14, 1908, by people close to Prince Sabahaddin. At that time, the Law of Associations had not yet been enacted (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 175–177). After the proclamation of the Constitution, Sabahaddin's "Society for Private Initiative and Decentralization" merged with the CUP and Sabahaddin came to Istanbul. However, he did not receive the attention he expected from the Committee (Akşin, 1997, p. 65). Sabahaddin advocated equality for ethnic elements and decentralization within the Ottoman Empire, which prevented him from agreeing with the CUP. The new party was ideologically shaped around Sabahaddin's ideas and advocated individualism,



liberalism, private enterprise, and decentralization. Since Sabahaddin did not accept the presidency offered to him, the party's chairmanship was left vacant. The party also received the support of the opposition newspapers of the CUP and the minority deputies in the parliament who did not welcome the Turkic policy of the CUP. The only party to participate in the 1908 elections apart from the CUP was the Liberty Party (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 177–183).

Unlike the CUP, the Liberty Party, which unites all opposing ethnic and religious groups under the umbrella of a party against the CUP (Kansu, p. 2002, p. 259), could not campaign effectively because of its limited organization. The party said that the CUP should cease to be secret and turn into a legal political party and that the Committee should allow for the elections to be held fairly (Demir, 2007, p. 134). Although there were famous candidates such as Grand Vizier Kamil Pasha and Ali Kemal, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Ikdam*, the party was only able to get a single deputy, p. Mahir Sait Bey, who was elected from Ankara by his own efforts. Due to the death of Manyasizade Rıfat Bey, a deputy of the CUP, a by-election in Istanbul was held in March 1909. The Liberty Party nominated Ali Kemal for the election but once again lost against the competing CUP candidate. Although the party was not successful in the elections, there were deputies who moved to the party after the election. The party, which could not get the successful results it expected from the elections, would turn to non-political means and some of its members would support the March 31 Uprising. The party, which could not organize outside of Istanbul and remained on the political scene for up to six months, was closed down after the 31 March Incident (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 177–186). Some of its members, including Sabahaddin, were arrested and subsequently released, while some other members fled abroad. Consequently, the party would dissolve itself on January 30, 1910 (Birinci, 1990, p. 37-38). Tunaya (2011a, p. 182) says that the Liberty Party can be seen as a cadre party and has a democratic internal structure due to its statute.

Mohammedan Union, a political Islamist party, was founded on April 5, 1909, under the leadership of Dervish Vahdeti. The party started its activities with Vahdeti's speech following a mawlid that was taught in the Hagia Sophia Mosque. *Volkan*, a daily newspaper, acted as the organ of the party and harshly criticized the CUP. In order to become a member of the Mohammedan Union, the mediation of either a party member or the *Volkan* was necessary. Nevertheless, some deputies in the Chamber supported *Volkan's* publications on the compliance of laws with Islam. *Volkan* made provocative publications following the assassination of Hasan Fehmi, editor-in-chief of the anti-CUP newspaper *Serbesti*, on April 6, 1909, and expressed the demands of the rebels during the uprising; this placed the party at the center of the rebellion. Since the party was established shortly before the 31 March Incident and was banned just after the uprising, it did not stand in any elections and had no representative in the Chamber. After the uprising

was suppressed, Vahdeti was executed, and the newspaper and the party were banned. It is remarkable that the party announced to the public that it adopted the multi-party system in the constitutional regime and that it saw the CUP as the founder of this regime (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 216–230). The party was only able to open branches in Muş and Damascus (Birinci, 1990, p. 38).

Before the 31 March Incident, the two opposition parties mentioned above were established. After the uprising, Abdülhamit II was dethroned on the grounds that he had a role in the uprising, and his brother Mehmed V, who was a moderate character and had no political ambitions, became a new Sultan (Akşin, 1995, p. 72). In addition, while the constitutional amendments that took place in 1909 reduced the power of the Sultan against the parliament, the martial law that was put into practice after the uprising made the work of the Unionists easier. Accordingly, the CUP would assume a more oppressive role against the opposition groups. Even though all opposition parties were banned, it didn't mean that there was no opposition to the CUP's policies. Although there was no Liberty Party in May 1909, there were many Liberal Party supporters who opposed the Committee's policies (Ahmad 1969, p. 47). Despite being crushed in April 1909, the opposition slowly started to reemerge in the following years. Between 1909 and 1911, several new parties were formed, some by the CUP's old-established enemies and others by dissident Liberal Party supporters who favored a more liberal or conservative line (Zürcher, 2017, p. 99).

The first formal party established after the 31 March Incident was the Moderate Liberty Party. Those who founded the party in November 1909 were the deputies who entered the parliament from the list of the CUP in the 1908 elections. Before its establishment, 52 deputies attended the meeting, which was held in March and in which the chairman and vice-chairmen of the party were elected (Birinci, 1990, p. 38–39). Akşin (1997, p. 81) claims that the Party has feudal tendencies. According to its program, the socially and civilizationally backward regions would be “gradually” brought into civilization. In addition, the general provincial council would be able to prepare local laws for this purpose. Due to martial law, this party could not develop outside the parliament. The party, which was inadequate in terms of organization, had no branches other than those of Rize and Basra. The party adopted the idea of Ottomanism, arguing that equality should be ensured between the different ethnic groups of the Empire and that this would be realized within the constitutional order. The party was very active in the parliament together with the People's Party and made an active opposition in the process of the no-confidence motion given to the Minister of War, Mahmut Şevket Pasha. The independent existence of the party ended in November 1911, as it was among the founders of the Liberal Entente, which united the opposition against the Union and Progress (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 243–246).



Another party of the period was the Ottoman Radical Reform Party, which was founded in Paris at the end of 1909. Şerif Pasha, who left the CUP at the beginning of 1909, was the party's founder. When the CUP claimed that Pasha had established a secret association against the CUP, about 50 people, including Rıza Nur, were temporarily imprisoned. The party could not go beyond the personal initiative of Şerif Pasha and was inclined towards non-political ways against the CUP. The Party, which continued to exist until August 1913, tried to remain politically effective from Paris with a small number of supporters, before cooperating with the supporters of the Liberal Entente in Paris (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 252–258).

İbrahim Temo and Abdullah Cevdet, the founders of the CUP, transformed the General Salvation (Selamet-i Umumiye) Club—which was founded a few years earlier in 1908—into a political party. The party was founded on February 6, 1909, and was named as the Ottoman Democrat Party. The only representative of the party in the Chamber was Şahin Taki Bey, the deputy of Görice (Birinci, 1990, p. 39). It can be said that the party has social democratic tendencies. Temo intended to form a civilized and loyal opposition, however, the party's newspapers were constantly closed by martial law (Akşin, 1997, p. 80-81). As its official media organ, the party tried to publish the newspapers *Türkiye* in Istanbul, *Feryat* in Izmir, *Hukuk-ı İbad* in Monastir and *Ahali* in Aleppo. The party was unable to participate in any elections, Only Fuat Şükrü Bey, one of the founders of the Party, was a candidate from Istanbul on his own, but could not be elected. The party was not effective in the political arena and decided to join the Liberal Entente on December 5, 1911 (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 207–212).

The founders of the People's Party, which came to the political scene on February 21, 1910, were six deputies who had been elected in the 1908 elections from the CUP lists. The party, headed by Gümülcineli İsmail, made an effective opposition to the CUP, especially through its posing of questions and no-confidence motions in the Chamber. Together with the Moderate Liberty Party, with which they submitted the motion of no confidence against the Minister of War, Mahmut Şevket Pasha, the People's Party gave the parliament a pluralistic and multi-party character. These two parties made an effective opposition in the Chamber, did not resort to non-political methods, and set a good example in terms of the relationship between power and opposition. The party had no organization other than in parliament. The party did not publish its own newspaper but received general support from the anti-CUP press. Adopting a conservative line, the People's Party did not enter an election under its own name but participated in the 1912 elections from the Liberal Entente lists, in which it would later participate. Another striking feature of the party was that it openly announced that it was anti-Semitic, and within this framework it targeted the Minister of Finance, Cavit Bey, who was a convert (Donmeh) Tunaya, 2011a, p. 267–273). The Party, which had deputies in the parliament (Birinci, 1990, p. 40), can be considered a religious party. In addition to its

demands such as the expansion of chambers of commerce and agriculture, the teaching of contemporary sciences in madrasahs, and workers' rights, their program also included demands such as facilitating the recruitment of regimentals, paying attention to Arabic in madrasahs, and ensuring that candidates for parliament were settled in the region they would represent for at least 5 years (Akşin 1997, p. 81).

One of the parties that colored the multi-party political life of the Second Constitutional Era was the Ottoman Socialist Party, which was founded on September 15, 1910 (Birinci, 1990, p. 40). The party was a small group with little actual power and no representation in the legislature. It was not a real socialist party, despite its name; rather, it was a progressive, liberal party (Zürcher, p. 2017, p. 99). Therefore, it is not possible to see the party as a classical socialist party. The program of the Paris branch of the party, which was established without the permission of party headquarters, was more detailed than that of the program of the main party. Adherence to Marxist principles and scientific socialism is clearly stated in the program of the Paris branch. The chairman of the party was Hüseyin Hilmi Bey, who published the socialist weekly *İştirak*, a journal that encouraged workers to unite and strike. However, the party did not propose or provide much original criticism when compared to the other opposition parties of the period. The CUP adopted a harsh position against the Ottoman Socialist Party by closing down the newspapers and unions that defended it. The party did not participate in any elections and did not have a representative in the parliament. While the party itself lost its effectiveness and subsequently came to an end, the Paris Branch would become one of the founders of the Liberal Entente (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 278–286).

During the Second Constitutional Era, several other parties were established, including the Progressive (Terakkiperveran) Party and the Union of the Elements (İttihad-ı Anasır) Party, which were founded in Monastir and about which we have little information (Birinci, 1990, p. 40–41).

The largest and most organized opposition party of the period was the Freedom and Accord Party, also known as the Liberal Entente. The Liberal Entente was founded on November 21, 1911, ten days after Tripoli's occupation by the Italians. At that time there was an atmosphere of chaos in the country; the Chamber was also confused and the Unionists too were being accused and criticized. The Grand Vizier İbrahim Hakkı Pasha Cabinet had resigned, and Said Pasha, disliked by the CUP, formed the new cabinet. The main founders of the party were essentially the members of the People's and Moderate Liberty Parties. Nearly all the opposition parties that were unable to attain success on their own came together within this party with the aim of overthrowing the CUP. Arab, Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, and Armenian deputies, who were disturbed by the Turkish nationalist-oriented approaches of the CUP, and the Independent Party (Hizb-i Müstakil), which had formed within parliament during the 1909 amendments, also joined the Liberal Entente. Thus, all the CUP opponents, both in and outside the parliament, came together under the umbrella



of the Liberal Entente. Only their opposition to the CUP held these groups together, which comprised various socialist, democratic, and other various ideologies within their aims and names (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 294–297). Although it included democrats and socialists in its ranks, it was clear that the Liberal Entente was an organization to the right compared to the CUP (Akşin 1997, p. 83).

While Damat Ferit Pasha was elected as the chairman of the party, Miralay Sadık, one of the active figures of the party, was elected as one of its vice presidents. The party also experienced a change of leadership, and Müşir Fuat Pasha was elected instead of Damat Ferit Pasha, who resigned due to health reasons. The party also held a congress between June 2–9, 1912. About 100 deputies in the Chamber were involved in the preparations regarding the establishment of the party, which reached more than 100 branches gives an indication of the party's size (Birinci, 1990, p. 46, 65–70). The party had not only taken over the branches of the Moderate Liberty Party but also the newspapers of those parties that joined it. In addition, the party was able to open new branches in many places, especially in Istanbul, and was also supported by the other opposition press. The party, which did not have a homogeneous structure, adopted the views and ideologies of those parties it comprised (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 298–312).

The Liberal Entente adopted Sabahaddin's idea of decentralization and private enterprise and defended the idea of Ottomanism against the Unionists, who defended Turkish nationalism. Arguing that the Unionists had disrupted the constitutional order, the Liberal Entente argued that it was necessary to restore it (Birinci, 1990, p. 55–57). In its program, the Party suggested maintaining the current system of two-stage elections and the appointment of the Senate members by the Sultan, "for the time being" and planned to give the Senate a more significant role in making laws, budgeting, and supervising the government. Additionally, their demands, such as giving the Sultan the power to veto laws, are noteworthy (Akşin, 1997, p. 84).

The CUP competed with Liberal Entente in the Istanbul by-election held on December 11, 1911, 20 days after the party was founded. The Unionists nominated Memduh Bey, the Minister of Internal Affairs, and the Liberal Entente nominated Tahir Hayrettin Pasha. Pasha received 196 votes and Memduh Bey 195, with Pasha winning the election by a single vote. While this election worried the Unionists, it also gave hope to the Liberal Entente members hoping to come to power. In the by-elections, only the second voters elected in the last general election were voting. The Liberal Entente campaigned successfully, receiving support from Greeks and Armenians, and won the election by one vote (Demir, 2007, p. 171–172).

Having been defeated in the by-election, the CUP wanted to dissolve the parliament and hold elections in order to eliminate the opposition. Although Liberal Entente won the Istanbul by-election, it was a new



party and therefore not very strong. As a result, the Chamber might have been filled with Unionists after the new election. For this to happen, the 35th Article that concerned the dissolution of parliament first had to be changed (Ahmad, 1969, p. 101). In order for the Sultan to dissolve the parliament, elections needed to be held within three months and the Senate's approval was required (Kanun-ı Esasi, Art. 7). Opposition and minority deputies were against this change. The Liberal Entente had engaged in an important struggle with the CUP within the Chamber this time. When there was no result after a month-long struggle, the Sultan appointed the Independent Group deputies in the Chamber as mediators. Although the mediators sought a ground for reconciliation by bringing the parties together, their efforts were insufficient. This process saw Said Pasha resign, and his subsequent assignment to re-establish the cabinet. Said Pasha brought the proposal to the agenda of the Chamber once again, without securing a vote of confidence. When the proposal was rejected once more, the Sultan dissolved the Chamber upon the positive opinion of the Senate on January 18, 1912. The Liberal Entente finally consented to this situation and started preparing for the elections (Demir, 2007, p. 173–177).

One of the most serious political crises of the Second Constitutional Era was experienced during and after this period. Both the ruling party and the opposition party did not hesitate to deviate from non-political means, and both supported every possible means of gaining power. According to Kanun-ı Esasi (Art. 69), the elections would be held every 4 years; this meant that the next election was to be held in October 1912. However, the CUP, which moved its headquarters to Istanbul prior to the election to direct the elections, faced the risk of losing power. The deputies elected in 1908 were not strictly affiliated with the CUP, and for this reason, the CUP was now much more careful regarding the selection of its candidates. After the dissolution of the Chamber, snap elections—known as “big-stick election” in Turkish political life—were held. Ahmad (1969, p. 103), who accepts that some violence occurred during the campaign, also believes this aspect may have been exaggerated. To him, the CUP used more sophisticated methods, such as offering positive incentives in exchange for votes and implementing new laws that limit the freedom of the press and the ability to hold public meetings. However, the opposition was unable to come up with a response that could match the power of the CUP's big guns.

During the election campaign, the CUP gave an account of the past, made new promises, and criticized the Liberal Entente. Meanwhile, the Unionists controlled the bureaucracy and suppressed opposition during the elections, which could be held in 15 sanjaks for 281 deputies due to the significant loss of Ottoman territory. The 1912 election, which took more than three months to complete, was held in accordance with the law on parliamentary elections implemented in 1908. Since martial law, which started with the 31 March Incident, continued during the elections, the election had the distinction of being the first



election held under martial law conditions in Turkish political life (Demir, 2007, p. 179–181). The Liberal Entente only secured 6 out of 281 parliamentary members, and the election resulted in a landslide victory for the CUP (Birinci, 1990, p. 156–157). While the CUP maintained that the electoral outcome merely reflected the choice of the people (Demir, 2007, p. 278), the Liberal Entente was weakened after the election.

In the new period, wherein the Unionists took control, a new development took place. A group of officers within the army, referred to as the Halaskar Zabitan, aimed to overthrow the Unionists and forced the Said Pasha cabinet to resign on July 17, 1912. This group had affiliations with the rebellious troops in Macedonia and the Liberal Entente in the capital and aimed to destroy the power of the CUP and restore “legal government”. They also wanted the government to be left in the hands of legislators and officials, and they asked that the military be removed from politics. Following Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Pasha's appointment as Grand Vizier on July 21, 1912, the Sultan issued an “irade” that declared the Chamber's action illegal, as well as a “Hatt-ı Hümayun” that dissolved the Chamber and called for new elections (Ahmad 1969, p. 106–111). The elections were postponed due to the outbreak of the First Balkan War, which resulted in a significant loss of land for the Empire. While the war was going on, a group of Unionists, including Enver Pasha, carried out the Raid on the Sublime Porte on January 23, 1913. This group forced Kamil Pasha to resign by raiding the Ottoman Porte and killing the Minister of War. Mahmut Şevket Pasha, who was not a Unionist, but was seen as a big brother by the Unionists, became the new grand vizier and formed a cabinet. The opposition groups tried to overthrow the government and Mahmut Şevket Pasha was assassinated (Akşin, 1997, p. 90-92; Zürcher, 2017, p. 105–108). Some members of the Liberal Entente were exiled to Sinop, some were executed, and some fled abroad after the assassination of Mahmut Şevket Pasha. These events resulted in the establishment of the CUP's one-party regime. Those members of the Liberal Entente who fled abroad joined the CUP opponents living in Paris. The Liberal Entente was not in a position to continue its political life, even though it was not dissolved or closed down (Tunaya, 2011a, p. 313). For this reason, the party would not be able to participate in the 1914 election. The CUP was indeed the sole formal political party to run in the 1914 elections, and the Greeks, who desired three deputies from Istanbul, also had their wishes granted, while the Armenians consented to be represented by sixteen deputies (Ahmad, 1969, p. 144). The Liberal Entente, which was not formally dissolved, refrained from political participation and would reappear during the Armistice Period. Following the elections, the parliament would serve as a submissive tool for the CUP (Zürcher, 2017, p. 108).

The CUP, which had originally been established to end the Sultan's tyranny, then started a tyrannical period of its own. What is most remarkable at this point is that the opposition too turned to non-political means. In this process, the Liberal Entente first achieved its goal with the intervention of the Halaskar

Zabitan in politics, and then the CUP once again came to power again with the Raid on the Sublime Porte. All of these changes happened within 6 months. From this time on, multi-party life disappeared and it is only possible to speak of this period as a single-party government under the strict supervision of the CUP.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The proclamation of the Constitution in July 1908 brought about innovations in terms of political life, as well as changes and innovations in many other fields in Türkiye. In the first days of the period, a vast surge of ideas and self-expression started to be released, which had been previously contained by the Sultan's censorship. For example, on July 25, 1908, the newspapers *İkdam* published 60,000 and *Sabah* published 40,000 copies, and by the afternoon, these copies were being sold at forty times the marked price. According to Lewis (2001, p. 230–231), this led to a series of new literary, political, and other periodicals appearing. In addition, Kansu (2002, p. 35) considers the Sultan's approval of the Constitution in 1908 as a revolution due to its social, political, and economic consequences. To him, the revolution aimed to establish a liberal democratic form of government. In this period, various institutions and mechanisms, such as parliament, associations, non-governmental organizations, and political parties, which were previously non-existent, emerged. Unlike the old absolutist period, the political arena was opened to the public and its scrutiny (Kansu, 2000, p. 3–4).

This study aimed to reveal that the multi-party system in Türkiye did not start after the Second World War, which is the widely accepted view, but rather during the Second Constitutional Era. As mentioned in the introduction part, some other authors also underline that the multi-party system in Türkiye began in this period; there is no separate study in the literature that focuses on the Second Constitutional Era within the context of the beginning of the multi-party system in Türkiye. To support this claim, mainly the political parties, multi-party elections, formations and resignations of the cabinets, and the existence of an active parliament during the period have been cited and discussed in the study.

The first political parties in Türkiye were established in the Second Constitutional Era. Apart from the CUP, many political parties were established during this period. These included the Ottoman Liberty, Ottoman Democrat, Mohammedan Union, Moderate Liberty, Ottoman Radical Reform, People's, Ottoman Socialist, and Freedom and Accord Party, also known as the Liberal Entente. Political parties are permanent organizations that gather around a program and aim to obtain or share political power. The most important element here is the aim of “seizing” political power or at least sharing it with other parties (Kapani, 2002, p. 160). It's clearly understood from their activities that the aim of the political parties of the Second Constitutional Era was to obtain political power. In fact, according to Ahmad (2002, p. 37), there was a



“constant struggle for political power” during the first five years of constitutional government, and eventually, the CUP emerged as the victorious party.

A multi-party system can be defined as a political atmosphere in which voters can choose between more than one party in elections. Experiencing such a process for a certain period of time is sufficient to say that multi-party life has begun. Undoubtedly, many political parties were officially established during this period. Also, the multi-party elections of the period were sometimes competitive. Having taken their place on the political scene, the political parties sometimes ran in the competitive elections, and the political struggles for power took place within and outside the parliament in this period. Three general elections were held in 1908, 1912, and 1914. Apart from the CUP and the Liberal Party, minorities and independent candidates participated in the 1908 elections. The number of independents was greater than the number of party and minority candidates in the 1908 election. While the CUP as a party won the 1908 elections, the independents, consisting of 147 members, became the largest group in the Chamber. Due to its limited organization, the Liberty Party, which united all opposing ethnic and religious groups under the umbrella of the party against the CUP, could win only one seat. As a result, 281 deputies were elected in the 1908 elections, and 42 deputies were elected in the by-elections for deputies that remained vacant for any reason during the legislative period. The number of deputies in the parliament that the CUP could trust for critical votes was just over 50, which was far below the absolute majority. That’s why, the CUP could only make parliamentary decisions with the support of the independent deputies. Some deputies elected from the CUP lists in the 1908 elections would be the representatives of the opposition parties established after the 31 March Incident. Although the total number of opposition deputies was more than 70, no party would have more than 35–40 members at the same time.

Following the 31 March Incident, many parties appeared on the political scene, the most organized and the largest party was the Liberal Entente. The CUP competed with Liberal Entente in the Istanbul by-election held on December 11, 1911. While the result worried the Unionists, it also gave hope to the Liberal Entente members hoping to come to power. The Liberal Entente’s election campaign was very successful and they won the election by just one vote. Lewis (2001, p. 221-222) claims that this by-election was the first real electoral contest between two candidates representing different parties and programs. The victory of the opposition candidate was considered by many at the time to be as important a success as the 1908 Revolution itself. It appears that the opposition party was able to take advantage of their victory and use it to their benefit. They seemed to suggest that the defeated party was now a thing of the past. This election also had a significant impact on the future political activities of both parties. The Liberals were pleased with the outcome and saw it as a clear indication that the tide had finally turned in their favor. However, the



Unionists viewed it as a warning sign of their imminent decline and therefore felt compelled to take immediate action (Ahmad, 1969, p. 100).

The 1912 election, which was postponed due to the outbreak of the First Balkan War lasted for over three months. It was conducted as a snap election in compliance with the law on parliamentary elections that was put into effect in 1908. It was also the first election held under martial law conditions in Turkish political history. While the Liberal Entente only managed to secure six out of 281 parliamentary members, the CUP won a landslide victory. From this time on, it's interesting to see how both the opposition and ruling parties resorted to non-political tactics. The Liberal Entente was successful in achieving its goal through the intervention of the Halaskar Zabitan in politics. Similarly, the CUP regained power through the Raid on the Sublime Porte. Some members of the Liberal Entente were exiled, some were executed, and some fled abroad after the assassination of Mahmut Şevket Pasha. These events resulted in the establishment of the CUP's one-party regime. The Liberal Entente was unable to continue its political life and was not able to participate in the 1914 election.

We also see the existence of an active parliament during the period, especially following the removal of Abdülhamid II and the rise of Mehmed V. Most of the legislative efforts were done in the Chamber in May of 1909. The Chamber legislated on a wide range of issues, from the most important to the trivial. The government presented a total of 73 bills to the Chamber, out of which 53 were passed after discussion and the rest were referred to various committees. 68 of the deputies' motions were approved, and 158 of them were forwarded to the relevant ministries by committees that were formed specifically for this purpose. As per the constitutional amendments, out of 119 articles in the Kanun-ı Esasi, 21 were modified, 1 was annulled, and 3 were added. Article 3 was revised to subject the Sultan's powers to the Constitution and the Şeriat. Even though he still had most of his previous powers, his ability to make almost any kind of treaty was now subject to Parliament's approval. The Sultan's power to nominate and revoke ministers was removed from Article 7 and he had to comply with special laws when nominating people to high office. After the modification of the key articles, the Ottoman Sultan's role in government was significantly reduced. While the Sultan could still appoint the Grand Vizier and the Şeyhülislâm, the appointment of ministers was taken away from the Sultan, and the duty of selecting the rest of the Cabinet was given to the Grand Vizier. Similarly, the deputies now chose the president and vice presidents of the Chamber, and the Sultan had to approve their appointments. As a result of these amendments, the Sultan could no longer have complete control over the government and could only approve decisions that the Chamber or cabinet had already made (Ahmad, 1969, p. 57–59).



The Second Constitutional Era was not a perfect period in terms of a multi-party regime. It was a period that started in 1908 when Abdulhamid II was forced to restore the Constitution of 1876 and continued until the end of 1918. These ten years must be divided into two periods, p. before 1913, when the CUP was not the only authority, and after that, when the Committee's unquestioned rule was evident. The second period under the authoritarian rule of the Committee cannot be regarded as a multi-party regime but rather a period of single-party rule. For this reason, the multi-party system is a phenomenon that we encounter in the first part of the Second Constitutional Era. In the chaotic political atmosphere of the period, the ruling and opposition parties did not refrain from deviating from non-political ways. Also, the Second Constitutional Era was a very difficult period for the Ottoman state. The Empire was forced to hand over Tripoli and Benghazi to the Italians with the Tripoli War that broke out in 1911, and lost a significant amount of land with the Balkan Wars that followed. In this process, the CUP, which had seized power once again with the Raid on the Sublime Porte, started a single-party period and the outbreak of the First World War made it impossible to return to the political pluralism in the country. There is no longer any trace of the political pluralism as in the first years of the Second Constitutional Era. The multi-party regime de facto came to an end as of 1913 and the Chamber remained closed until 1914. Only the CUP could participate in the 1914 elections.

Due to the democratic legacy, it left for later Turkish politics and establishment of multi-party system in Türkiye, the Second Constitutional Era is a highly significant period. While describing the period between 1908 and 1913 as a legacy of multi-party democracy for Türkiye, Zürcher first emphasizes that the peaceful transition to multi-party democracy in 1946 and the peaceful transfer of power four years later are unique experiences in the developing world. He then points out that one should not lose sight of the fact that Türkiye has experienced parliamentary elections since 1876 and multi-party democracy between 1908–1913, 1923–1925, and 1930. For this reason, Turkish democracy did not need to be created from scratch, even though it had weak foundations and was readily suppressed (2017, p. 20). While assessing the legacy of 1908, Kansu similarly regards the biggest success of 1908 as realizing the importance of people's participation in power. Even the military coups couldn't shake this; the parliament was closed with a military coup in 1912 but reopened with a counter-coup in 1913. While the Sultan closed the parliament in 1918, it was reopened in 1919. Although an opposition party was not allowed until 1946, elections continued. also had to tell the people that elections would be held as soon as possible and that civilian politics would be restored (2002, p. 368–369).

Following the defeat of the Empire in the First World War, the CUP was disbanded and political parties, such as the Liberal Entente, the People's Economy Party, the Social Democrat Party, and the





National Liberty Party appeared on the political scene. While some of these parties were the continuation of previous parties, which were banned or repressed under the CUP's single-party regime, some were newly established, and it seems that the political parties took to the stage when they found a suitable environment. However, most of modern-day Türkiye was under Allied occupation and the resistance of nationalist local groups had begun against the Allies. The Association for the Defense of the Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia which was under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha dominated the 1919 election. Although the Chamber could be opened in the first days of 1920, the Allied forces arrested and deported several deputies following the severe occupation of İstanbul on March 16, 1920. This brought about the laying of the foundation of the Turkish Grand National Assembly in Ankara.

Shortly before the proclamation of the Republic on October 29, 1923, Mustafa Kemal Pasha founded the People's Party. However, the new republican regime was cautious about the multi-party system. While the Progressive Republican Party, which was founded in 1924 and tried to compete with the People's Party, was banned in 1925. In 1930, the Liberal Republican Party was founded by Fethi Okyar on the request of President Mustafa Kemal Pasha. As this party was embraced by opponents of the regime, it was subsequently disbanded. While the Republic was not against political parties, it nevertheless exercised caution in the context of multi-party system. This is because a new society was being built, and so it was believed that no obstacle should turn the country away from this process, including political parties aiming to gain power. For this reason, the extraordinary conditions that posed a threat to Türkiye after the Second World War would bring a new multi-party system for Türkiye, which adopted a more Western position. As a result, the multi-party system in Türkiye started during Second Constitutional Era, and after various short and long interruptions, Türkiye once again adopted the same path after the Second World War.

#### **AUTHOR STATEMENT / YAZAR BEYANI**

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