

Tarih ve GÜNce

Atatürk ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi Dergisi
Journal of Atatürk and the History of Turkish Republic
1/2, (2018 Kış/Winter), ss. 201-222.

AUTHORITARIANISM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NECİP FAZİL KISAKÜREK

Mustafa Cem ÖZKAYA*

Abstract

This article intends to study the concepts of state, leader, authority and obedience through the eye of Necip Fazıl as an Islamist. It intends to reveal the place of Necip Fazıl, who has a great influence on the Turkish right wing's gaining its present identity, in Turkish Islamist Thinking by explaining the concept of authoritarianism from his perspective.

Starting from the writings of Necip Fazıl, who is one of the most important thinkers of the Turkish Islamism, on the concepts of state, leader, authority and obedience, we intend to understand better the journey which the conservative Islamist thinking has followed from the day when it rose to the present throughout the history of Turkey. Starting from the magnitude of the influence of Necip Fazıl, who has guided a great number of statesmen through his thoughts in the Turkish political history, on the Turkish-Islamist thinking, we intend to show the place of the concepts of state, leader, authority and obedience in the traditional Turkish Islamist-Conservative thinking.

Keywords: Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Conservatism, Authority, Obedience, State

Necip Fazıl Kısakürek'in Perspektifinden Otoriter Rejim

Öz

Bu makale, otorite ve itaat kavramlarını, bir İslamcı olarak Necip Fazıl Kısakürek'in gözünden incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türk sağ üzerindeki etkisi yadsınamayacak derece büyük olan Necip Fazıl'ın kendine özgü İslamcılığını ve bunun Türk Siyasal İslam Düşüncesi'ndeki yerini, otoriterlik kavramına bakış açısından yola çıkarak belirlemeyi amaçlar.

* Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, Doktora Öğrencisi.

Türk İslamcılığının en önemli düşünce adamlarından biri olan Necip Fazıl'ın, devlet, lider, otorite ve itaat kavramları üzerine kaleme aldığı yazılarından yola çıkarak, Türkiye tarihi boyunca muhafazakâr İslâmıcı düşüncenin palazlanıp günümüze kadar izlediği yolculuğu daha iyi anlamayı da amaçlamaktayız. Türk siyasî tarihinde pek çok devlet adamına düşünceleriyle kılavuzluk etmiş olan Necip Fazıl'ın, Türk İslamcılığı üzerindeki etkisinin büyüklüğünden yola çıkarak; geleneksel Türk İslâmıcı-Muhafazakar düşüncede devlet, lider, otorite ve itaat kavramlarının önemini göstermek amaçlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Muhafazakarlık, Otorite, İtaat, Devlet

Introduction

Necip Fazıl is considered to be one of the most controversial figures of within Turkish political thought. Initially an Istanbul Gentleman who stayed away from politics and famous for his poems without political and social contents, Necip Fazıl became one of the sharp authors of the conservative thinking after a great change which he underwent in his thirties. He assumed an Islamist personality in a short time and became a mentor who trailed masses through the articles, books and plays he wrote and conferences he gave. As the number of his followers increased, the way he expressed his ideas got harder, his language sharper and became aggressive toward any views against his ideology. This aggressive figure of the Turkish and Islamist thinking was a flag bearer now followed by nationalists and by Islamists and conservatives.

In this article, we will examine the concepts of leadership, authority, obedience and state considering his main ideology *Büyük Doğu*, and we will try to find the place of such concepts as state, leadership, authority and obedience in Necip Fazıl's political thinking. We will try to answer such questions as "What is an ideal state? How must the State be organized with its top cadres and what kind of a relationship must it have with society? What kind of a sense of loyalty and obedience must Turkish society have about the State?" By this, we will try to shed light on the approach of Turkish Political Islam on authoritarianism, starting from Necip Fazıl.

Through a detailed textual analysis of Necip Fazıl's writings, I aim to show the authoritarian aspects of his conservatism which has been arguably a source of inspiration for Turkish Islamic conservatism. I will especially concentrate on *İdeolocya Örgüsü* (Ideological Pattern), *Benim Gözümde Menderes* (Menderes, in My Perspective), *Ulu Hakan* (The Great Khan) and his political writings. Starting from the magnitude of the influence of Necip Fazıl, who has guided a great number of statesmen through his thoughts in Turkish political history, on Turkish-Islamist thinking, I intend to show the place of the concepts of state,

leadership, authority and obedience in the traditional Turkish Islamist-Conservative thinking.

Here, in this article, we will discuss the state, authority and obedience concepts through the eye of Necip Fazıl and his view point about the change of the Turkish-Islamic society from past to present. His comments on Turkey's political journey, the ideal order and social structure he intended to construct ensured us to understand a great many details of his world of thinking will be evaluated. In addition, we will try to describe how he considers the issues of leadership and obedience to leader. We will address the superior-subordinate relationship and the relationship of the figure of state he idealized and the society from his point of view. And finally, we will discuss his view and counter-theses about the Western style institutions which started in the 19th century and consolidated with the Republic regime declared in 1923. We will try to reveal his anti-democrat and anti-liberal ideas -as he called them- which might be dangerous not only in the era he lived but in each and every age, trying to understand their origins.

1. State as an Absolute Authority

In this section, we will discuss how the state must be, its power over the society and the limits of its power and its form of functioning from Necip Fazıl's view. Before we start to discuss Necip Fazıl's thoughts about state and absolute power of the state, we have to refer to his definition of state and regimes which are the functioning mechanisms of states according to Necip Fazıl:

"State and form of government is a matter of invention and creation based on free and advanced mind. In this cause, free and advanced mind is hundred percent free to choose or invent the most correct, best and finest form by adhering to the main criterion at all time and following the adventure of communities and orders of state throughout history.

Humanity accepts three types of governing which holds all the powers and responsibilities: individual, people and class; ruling of such groups staffed around Sultanate, Republic and various social system schemes... (Monarchy, Democracy and Oligarchy) Ancient history has various examples of the first one; the new history of the second one and the newest history of the third one and of all three. That is, humanity has not been able to find any form other than these three to govern itself so far. Time and experience have shown that the core of these three systems alone or that of those systems functioning in a mixed way is the spirit to which they are bound to not their form. All consists of the cadre which will put the main theme believed into practice.

For statesmen, the form of a state may never be the principal objective. At the very most, it may have been defined and designated in the best way by its form. If it is formally closer to monarchy, it may be designated as Sultanate and if it is closer to democracy, it may be designated as Republic. What is important is not the regime of that state but its spirit and objective. A Republic may not serve the

principal spirit and objective as a Sultanate which does not exercise its power and responsibilities in a personal and arbitrary manner will do. Thus, in a deep and true faithful sense, state is an institution which is not based on any form, which has only been shaped by the spirit and main criteria of Islam, which is single in terms of power and authority but general in terms of coverage, which always improve and renew itself ¹."

As it will be understood here, for Necip Fazıl, it is not so important what the regime of a state is. At the very most, it may be given a name considering its form of functioning. What is essential is whether or not such state runs in accordance with its objective. Whether it is monarchy or democracy, such state is at a loss if it is not governed in accordance with its objective and spirit.

"In a deep and true faithful sense, the state is the one which is the farthest from the people's rule and the one which is the closest to people's interest. Because a form of state which will really serve the interests of people must never be in the hands of aimless crowds. The state is responsible for putting the people into the right way by guiding it without discriminating between individuals, groups or classes just like a doctor who treats his patient without asking him. This right way is the way of the cause; and the cause means that the main spirit and criteria of Islam are to be fulfilled. How stupid is it that those who have failed to perceive the eternal and perpetual endlessness of Islam see our brand new ideal and call us sultanist and reactionary! In our opinion, the state is an institution which claims the representative of justice and truth under absolute submission to the Prophet of the Prophets and of which loyalty to Allah and the people increases as it achieves it. The cadres of this institution must be of such exaltation and virtue which will understand its greatness and will be entitled to be a part of it. Our ideal which is consisted of such cadres is comprised of the *Council of Supremes* (Yüceler Kurultayı) and the position of *Arch-Supremacy* (Başyücelik), which we consider to be the most advanced form of the form of republic ²."

According to Necip Fazıl's definition, the state is responsible for putting all the individuals, groups and classes which are submitted to it into the right way. In his opinion, there is a definite justice and it is truth; and truth dictates the *Sheriah* which is Allah's command. Each part of the society must individually be controlled until the terms of *Sheriah* are satisfied and this must be one of the state's most important duties. The state's main objective on earth is to guide the individuals under its sway into the right way and keep them in the right way. This may be the main different from the Western-type conservatism of Necip Fazıl's conservatism. For instance, one of the most important conservative thinker of Anglo-American society, Oakeshott notes that, duty of a government is

¹ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014. *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, pp.225-226.

² Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, 2014. *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.p.227-228

not to impose other beliefs and activities upon its subjects nor act as a guardian for them, but the duty of a government is to set rules only³.

Those who will govern that 'virtuous' state must be of such exaltation which will serve its objective of existence that, in Necip Fazıl's opinion, such people must be elected among the most superior ones of their society in each and every field. He calls this assembly the Council of Supremes. The person elected by the members of this council, who has such qualifications superior to all of them is granted the position of Arch-Supremacy. As a matter of fact, the name which the state will take after the Islamic Revolution idealized by Necip Fazıl shall be the Arch-Supremacy of Turkey.

2. Leadership and Obedience

As we mentioned in the previous section, for Necip Fazıl, a leader is the highest position reflecting the will of the society he represents. His prestige, authority and power of sanction bear so great an importance because he is directly submitted to Allah. In this section, we will discuss his conception of leadership. Starting from the duties and responsibilities which he assigns to the position of presidency, we will try to understand his viewpoint about the head of a nation. At the same time, we will analyze his approach to Sultan Abdülhamid II and Adnan Menderes, who occupy a prominent place in his works.

The ultimate purpose of our analysis will be to demonstrate the intimate connection between his understanding of leadership and obedience. To repeat, the Arch-Supreme is the head of the Arch-Supremacy of Turkey, which will be the new state to be established after the Islamic Revolution. He is elected among the members of the assembly which he calls the Council of Supremes for a period of four years by their votes and returns to his seat in the assembly once his office period has expired. That is, presidency is not permanent. What we understand from this is that he did not design an eternal position of leadership in his opinion, a leader is a man of duty and must assign the position of leadership to another man of cause with the same sense of mission once he has completed his mission. Despite this, the Arch-Supreme possesses superior powers which will not be encountered in democracies during his mission.

Necip Fazıl described the Arch-Supreme in the following manner: Arch-Supreme is not a head of state in the coarse and general meaning of the term. He is a full representative of the society. As the most mature member of the society, he is in charge of ensuring the unity between Allah, his inner conscience and his nation. It is also he who will ensure such unity with unique harmony without including his own desires. The message he will give shall be "I am seemingly

³ Oakeshott, Michael. 2009. Muhafazakar Olmak Üzerine, (Çev. İsmail Seyrek), Muhafazakar Düşünce, sayı: 1, Yaz, p.42.

the most virtuous, most sophisticated and smartest member of my nation!⁴ To put it in the simplest way, a political leader in Necip Fazıl's ideal must be a person who is mature enough to put aside his own desires, who sacrifices himself to his state, nation and Allah and who has devoted himself to the purpose of being the most superior of the society which he represents in faith, morals and science. Under these conditions, this leader may completely serve the cause.

As for his powers and responsibilities: The Arch-Supreme may not and does not give any commands against the laws enacted in each and every area by the Council of Supremes, which are compatible with one another; but, his every command is a separate law which supplements and determines the law. In cases where the law does not stipulate anything, the Arch-Supreme's command is the law. A government is replaced upon a word of the Arch-Supreme. All the members of the government are subjected to him and under his command from the bottom to the top. The whole organization runs on his behalf and justice is distributed in his name. The Arch-Supreme is the head of the army as well⁵.

Of course, the position of Arch-Supremacy is a utopian position idealized by Necip Fazıl. A surrealistic position which will be filled by a surrealistic person may describe the ideal leader type in Necip Fazıl's world of thinking. However, in the real world, there are real leader types and we have to try to understand and comment on the thoughts about such leaders on the basis of his own articles. As we have mentioned previously, what Necip Fazıl writes about Sultan Abdülhamid II, whom he admires so much and considers one of the greatest statesmen of the Islamic world is worth studying in this context.

"Each *Büyük Doğu*-ist knows that Abdülhamid II is a great Turkish ruler who has been treated and is still being treated unfairly by certain groups. The services he rendered to the basic existence of the Turks have been overlooked and his savior identity disregarded. Our cause is to know the group that has treated him unjustly and dethroned him rather than Abdülhamid himself. It should be clearly disclosed that Abdülhamid was the sultan who took a stand against the uncontrolled blindfolded Westernization policies during the *Tanzimat* period and its aftermath. He ruined the plans of those internal and external forces who wanted to suppress Turkish spirit and turn it to an imitating monkey several times. For us, Abdülhamid is great just for this reason.

The agents of the material and spiritual Western colonialism, Judaism, conversion, freemasonry, cosmopolitanism, snobbery, Levantines and those false reformists who followed their tales of freedom, equality and justice came up with a great many lies about Abdülhamid once they had overthrown him. They intended to injure Abdülhamid's spiritual legacy and to discredit him. However, they

⁴ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014. *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.291.

⁵ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, 2014. *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.291.

defiled the history and raped the reality which is the most important identity and basis of humanity⁶.”

As it will be understood from these two paragraphs which are the summary of the history of Abdülhamid and his enemies as Necip Fazıl related in detail in his biographical book entitled *Ulu Hakan* which he wrote about Abdülhamid II, Necip Fazıl is a great fan of Abdülhamid. He refers to him as the great Turkish-Islamic ruler and says that he was a sultan who always served the Islamic cause during his reign. He claims that he was therefore dethroned by the Unity and Progress Society supported by the Western forces, Jews and converts. His most basic argument is that the Unity and Progress Society financed by the Jews and converts took the opportunity of the March 31 Uprising to dethrone Abdülhamid II and replaced him by Mehmed V in the period commencing when capitalist Jewish businessmen wanted to purchase a small land in Palestine from the Ottoman Empire and offered to settle all the foreign debts of the Ottomans in return but Abdülhamid refused it.

Considered to be the most authoritarian sultan in the last period history of the Ottoman State, Sultan Abdülhamid II ruled the country in a manner which we may call *despotism*, that is, absolute and arbitrary ruling system for many years. He established a strong intelligence organization and wanted to be monetarily kept posted about what was going on against him at home and abroad. He was called *The Red Sultan* by his opponents who were imprisoned during his reign and *The Great Khan* by his supporters during his reign and had to die in reclusion with a lot of unknown about him. During his reign, he pursued an Islamic policy in the East and a policy of balance in the West. According to Necip Fazıl, all these were actions which Sultan Abdülhamid took for the sake of his love for the country, nation and religion. Once he has lost his power, his opponents who had overthrown him defamed him.

In his writings Necip Fazıl paid particular attention to Adnan Menderes who was accused of being a dictator by his opponents during the period when he was the prime minister in the Democrat Party government. In the period when the Democrat Party held the power, he wrote a lot of articles containing recommendations for Adnan Menderes. On the basis of these articles, we will discuss Necip Fazıl’s views about the Democrat Party government⁷.

Democrat Party was founded under the leadership of Celal Bayar in 1946 by the cadres opposing İsmet İnönü. As a matter of fact, the Democrat Party, which was made up of such people who had left the Republican People’s Party and who were more conservative in terms of social transformation and more

⁶ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, *Ulu Hakan İkinci Abdülhamid Han*, Bütün Eserleri 51, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.11.

⁷ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, 2013. *Baş Makalelerim 1*, Bütün Eserleri 77, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları. p.166

liberal in terms of economy, rose to the power in 1950. When Celal Bayar replaced İnönü as the president after that victory in the elections, Adnan Menderes, who was a young and energetic politician, was appointed as the prime minister. During the decade following it, the Democrat Party maintained its reign and was a party which Necip Fazıl sympathized from the day when it was founded to the day when it was closed down. We can say that the greatest reason for this was the fact that he was a great opponent to the RPP rather than being a genuine supporter of the Democrat party. Rapid westernization movement which occurred in the period following the declaration of the Republic and the reforms closely following one another aroused disturbance in Necip Fazıl as in all conservative intellectuals and politicians. This is why the Democrat Party which accommodated a great number of politicians whom we may call conservative and Islamist was a political formation which was worth supporting for Necip Fazıl. In this section, we will try to reveal the role of the Democrat Party and Adnan Menderes in his intellectual world on the basis of the articles which Necip Fazıl wrote addressing the cadres of the Democrat Party and its leader Adnan Menderes. In an article which he wrote in the *Büyük Doğu* newspaper in July 1952, Necip Fazıl describes the importance of the leader in a cause in the following manner:

“One of the former deputies told me ‘You give an impression in your articles that you believe in and follow Adnan Menderes rather than the Democrat Party.’ Former RPP deputy told me, ‘One should adhere to a party not to a single person... The person heading the party may change tomorrow, but his party will survive. So adhere to the party so that they may keep supporting you regardless of the person who comes and goes.’ I replied that former deputy who is unable to think of any policies other than daily and cheap interests as follows: ‘You are quite right in your opinion. We attach ourselves to a single person, i.e. Adnan Menderes, because this attachment is the example of our commitment to the cause. Our attachment to a single person and our risking all our goals together with that single person shows that we have full confidence in both our cause and our leader. It does not interest us whether or not he remains in government; if he goes, we also go with him and put up our struggle alone as we have done in the past. If he remains in government but disappoints us in this way of that, we cease to follow him. If he fails to remain in the government and leaves because he adopts our cause, then we consider him even greater and sacrifice all for his sake. If he both remains in government and adopts our cause, then we will be proven right. To wit, each and every cause which has friends and enemies and which conflicts with all ideologies contrary to it is absolutely under danger and risk. It should cease to be a cause so that it may occur otherwise. Then there will be no opinion but empty talk and only those who utter such empty talk may attach themselves to this party or that. And now, we are attached to Adnan Menderes because we own an opinion and a cause and because we consider him to

be worthy of representing them. As we are not of those who are lazy and pursue policies of interest and because we say "All or Nothing!" We are bound to him⁸."

As it is seen in this passage, what is essential for him is the cause itself. His ideal of accomplishing the cause at all times and in each period is above all of his political choices. That he turns to Adnan Menderes as a person rather than the Democrat Party, as we have mentioned above, is because Necip Fazıl is not a supporter of the Democrat Party in real terms. As a conclusion, even if the Democrat Party accommodates some Islamists, it is a party the majority of which is consisted of former cadres of RPP. The Party policy is still Kemalist and Westernist. They are, at the very most, conservative reformists who plan the Westernization to occur more slowly and step by step. Therefore, Necip Fazıl made it certain in many articles that he could not find what he expected during the Democrat Party government. The principal purpose of Necip Fazıl is to take Adnan Menderes, who is the leader of the party, under his influence and include him into his *Büyük Doğu* cause.

Necip Fazıl, in an article which he wrote in July 1952, addresses Adnan Menderes in the following manner:

"You may terminate the rule of a mentality which sets free desecration of any values and people whose holiness has been proven by divine commands but which does not allow its own taboos and idols to be touched! You may clear up those religious fanatics who have been overcasting our spirits for many centuries and cause us to meet with real Islam and give it its freedom again! You may terminate the government of those who have made it a system to imitate the West in almost all areas from private life to public life. You may say stop to Turks' being distracted from their roots, identity and history. You may pass these paths as the beloved one of Allah, the Prophet, Turkish nation and Turkish history and rise as a true and great hero after false heroes⁹!"

As it is seen, Necip Fazıl intends and hopes burdening Adnan Menderes with a great task. In his opinion, the Westernization movement commencing with the *Tanzimat* destroyed Turkish and Muslim consciousness upon the declaration of the Republic and the reforms. Statesmen who have kept office so far have failed to say stop to this regression, but if Menderes adapts the *Büyük Doğu* ideal, this fall of Turkish and Islamic world will come to an end. This is how Necip Fazıl feels. Therefore, he never stops raising hope on Menderes and always keeps giving him recommendations until the fall of Democrat Party.

In the two articles he wrote in the *Büyük Doğu* newspaper in 1952 and 1956, he speaks of his expectations of Menderes in a beseeching manner:

⁸ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2013. Baş Makalelerim 1, Bütün Eserleri 77, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları. p.p.76-77.

⁹ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2013. Baş Makalelerim 1, Bütün Eserleri 77, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları. p.94.

“Dear Prime Minister, why are you not holistic? Why aren’t you at least holistic in some matters? I just cannot get it. Why aren’t you holistic even though you are intelligent enough to be able to understand that we may get rid of the beings of this deviant order by being holistic¹⁰?”

What we understand from this is that Necip Fazıl expects Menderes to be more resolute and wants him to make more definitive decisions. As from its foundation, the Democrat Party made religious values an instrument of its politics in order to gather those groups opposing to RPP around it and to look sympathetic to the traditionalists and conservatives who resist the westernization policies applied by RPP. Having adhered to this way of politics until it succeeded to power, DP maintained this attitude at regular intervals and doses once it had come to power. Necip Fazıl should have been encouraged by this attitude of DP that he encourages Menderes to maintain such discourses and put them into practice, but Menderes never pursued Necip Fazıl’s Islamist political line.

This ill-temper of Necip Fazıl is not only caused by Adnan Menderes’s failure to satisfy his expectations but by his failure to satisfy the expectations of the people and his party. After the Democrat Party came to power for the second time, the opposition inside and outside the party started to cause Menderes to experience hard times. In this period, Necip Fazıl represents his anticipation about what will happen once Menderes has lost the government in the following manner:

“If Menderes quits but if the Democrat Party remains in power, regardless of the person who will replace him, anarchy will prevail and the opponents will bring the country in a chaos situation with the support of their Russian, Israeli and American masters. They will start to harm Turkish nation spiritually and materially. If Menderes will leave, and RPP replaces him with all its group, everything will become worse. The RPP spirit which has not unfortunately been destroyed but only hindered for a while will start with such ambition that it will cause much harm to the nation if it succeeds to the government once again. Therefore, RPP is in fact the greatest enemy of the people of whose support they need to be reelected and it tries to deceive the people who are their enemy.

Let any real Turks know that Menderes is the only person who may satisfy the principal causes, longings and expectations of this country no matter how he is criticized in terms of his personality and the things he has done. And if he leaves the government together with his party, there will be nothing left behind other than oppression, enmity and treachery¹¹.”

This article shows that Necip Fazıl still considers Menderes and the Democrat Party to be the sole remedy. His enmity for İnönü and RPP brings him

¹⁰ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *İbid.*, p.28.

¹¹ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, 2008. *Başmakalelerim 2, Bütün Eserler 78*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları. p.292.

closer to Menderes and his party which he considers is closer to him. What is interesting is that he believes that there will be anarchy, that external forces will cause chaos in Turkey and that kind of a conflict atmosphere will be experienced if RPP comes to power; that he thinks that the will which will ensure the security of the nation and the state is that of Menderes; and that he believes that he and his party were the sole hope of this country. This way of thinking seems to affect his approach to the concept of opposition.

Dissenting voices started to rise within the Democrat Party as from 1956. Some persons including, but not limited to, Fuad Köprülü did not approve the policies pursued by Menderes. This confused environment within the party was, in Necip Fazıl's view an indication of weakness and fatigue. He explicitly states this in the following manner in a letter he wrote to the deputies of the Democrat Party:

"...There is a voice rising throughout the country. This voice is the voice of Turkish nation, who wants its spirit and substance to be developed and improved. And the only person to whom it directs this request and from whom it expects a reply is Adnan Menderes. No mother in this Turkish homeland has given birth to a son who will say stop to this five hundred years of poor conduct and who will satisfy Turkish nation's requirements better than Adnan Menderes for five centuries. However, he is sorry, hurt and hesitant just like all great people whom Allah always tests. Furthermore, even if the nation and Allah favor him, he unfortunately takes an attitude which is extremely gentle and good-mannered... Whoever the enemies of Adnan Menderes are, they are also the enemies of the Turks, Anatolia, Turkish peasants, Turkish history, Islam and finally Allah.

You, the members of the Democrat Party group, the real Turkish children and representatives of the national will! Will you give a chance to the enemies of Menderes to disturb the order of your party with their lies of freedom, justice and reform while your party is marching towards the *Büyük Doğu* ideal? No, we wish you instead of giving them this chance, to stand up just like an inner fortress next to your leader Adnan Menderes as you tread on the way of justice and destroy those who want to sow discord among you in the name of Turkish nation that is the main fortress¹²."

As it is seen, Necip Fazıl talks to the members of the Democrat Party group and invites them to support their leader Adnan Menderes. Even when one considers the way of praising a statesman in that period, Necip Fazıl's eulogies of Menderes are rather high in number. He considers the Democrat Party to be an instrument to take Turkey to the reform of his dreams and exalts Menderes as the only and real leader of this movement. His invitation for the party members to destroy those who oppose to Menderes is a separate indication of intolerance.

¹² Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2008. Başmakalelerim 2, Bütün Eserler 78, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları. p.20.

Moreover, in another article in which he addresses Menderes and says that he supports him against the intra-party opposition, he says:

“No group, class or person within the Democrat Party may overwhelm you as long as the Democrat Party survives and remains in government! You are the head and spirit of the Democrat Party! You will be gone only if it completely falls. Otherwise, you may not be prevented from being the head and the spirit by any intra-party action! They will be crushed and gone and you will exist as long as the Democrat Party survives¹³.”

This intolerance of Necip Fazıl towards the opposition is not only valid for the intra-party opposition but for RPP, which is the extra-party opposition as well. Necip Fazıl, who, as a matter of fact, hates the RPP policies to a great extent, considers İnönü and RPP's tough opposition to be responsible for the country's thorough confusion after 1956. In fact, he expects Menderes to erase RPP from the stage of politics completely. We may infer this from an article of his dated 1954: Once Menderes has said, 'We are a revolution government!' Reality of these words is hidden in that the people have assigned him with this task but not that his is such a government. Turkish nation has voted for and elected the Democrat Party as their representative so that they say stop to the despotism of the People's Party. If the Democrat Party were really a revolution government, it would first erase the government it has replaced from the stage of politics. It would destroy the whole spirit, meaning and cadres of that government. However, the Democrat Party has kept the cadre of the government it took over completely just like the crew of a ship with a new captain¹⁴.” It should be clear by now that, Necip Fazıl did not accept any people and organizations which constituted an obstacle before the accomplishment of his holy cause and tried with all his might to eliminate them. This was literally a fight for him. Parties of that fight were the *Büyük Doğu*-ists on one side and the communists, Zionists, freemasons and those groups belonging to many different disciplines and doctrines on the other. It appears that Necip Fazıl did not even have any tolerance to the existence of these groups. In the next section, we will discuss Necip Fazıl's approach to the groups and classes differing from his own understanding and approach and the policies he pursued against those who were in his ideal order.

3. Anti-democratic and Anti-liberal Tendencies

“Man is not free. Who is free may be, at the most, animals. It is not fit for a man to live in such freedom which is specific to animals without restraining or putting clamps on one's own self. Even animals eat, reproduce, live and die under certain rules. There are two essential identities specific to human beings; and while one sets the person free, the other causes him to be put into dungeons:

¹³ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *ibid.*, p.33.

¹⁴ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2013. *Baş Makalelerim 1, Bütün Eserleri 77*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları. p.252.

spirit and desire (Turkish: Ruh ve Nefs). Spirit finds freedom in being the slave of the reality. But desire sees freedom to be able to do anything it wants. While spirit considers itself to be in need of disciplining itself constantly, desire is continuously in search of satisfying itself. It desires and consumes everything that is worldly. But spirit must disobey its desire in order to get enlightened by mystical criteria and to reach that supreme spirit¹⁵.

In this case, considering in personal terms, what disobeys spirit is desire, and in social terms, what disobeys the society's moral is that of an individual. In both fronts, desire and an individual's moral should be disciplined in an equitable manner and put into the right way for the good of the community. While those nations who want freedom just for freedom's sake avoid being prisoners of their own selves, they are convicted to be prisoners of other forces for freedom must not be a goal but a tool and when it is possible to reach one's goal. Tool may not be transformed to goal. The essential goal is to surrender to Allah and Allah's commands, but not to be free¹⁶."

These statements are those which best describe Necip Fazıl's perception of society and state. In his opinion, a society should be protected just like a child requiring to be matured and tamed by the state which is its parent, not to be allowed to do whatever it wants but be disciplined. The Quran, which is the words of Allah, must be taken as a criterion of such discipline and individual and social life must be designed as commanded by Allah. This is the essence of Necip Fazıl's thought. Any and all personal rights and freedoms may be restricted until the *Shariah* order is achieved because what is prohibited and limited by religion is in accordance with human nature. In this context, in his utopia, he mentions that the state should pass various laws in order to maintain the social order and personal maturity.

Necip Fazıl calls such laws and prohibitions the *Arch-Supremal Commands*. In the Arch-Supremacy which is Necip Fazıl's ideal state order as we discussed in detail in the previous section, the Arch-Supreme, the head of the state as a duly authorized figure of authority, Arch-Supremacy Government directly under the Arch-Supreme and the Council of Supremes elected by anti-democratic ways, which constitutes both, constitute the cadre of the state. New laws and commands passed by this cadre contain restrictions unprecedented in democracies. In Necip Fazıl's opinion, the goal is to discipline the society and made it compliant with Islam collectively and individually through such laws and prohibitions¹⁷.

"Except for the compelling reasons within the limits of our main criterion, a man's killing another man is a major crime. Death penalty is given by the court

¹⁵ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014. *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.424.

¹⁶ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *ibid.*, p.425.

¹⁷ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014. *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.315.

that gathers and decides in a short time and capital punishment is performed immediately. Except for legitimate compelling reasons, punishment for a person who kills a man is retaliation. If punishment is intended to prevent any evil action from being committed and to get such evil action not to be repeated, the most effective and sacred method in the world is to cut off one of the arms of the one who steals. By any means, one arm of a person who has definitely committed theft shall be cut off at a public place. He shall bear a mark on himself during his lifetime in order to show that lack of one arm has not been caused by an accident or handicap but theft. As this dreadful punishment will remove the action of theft from the whole society, those people who sympathize theft may only argue that it is so cruel a punishment. Here, it is not intended to cut off an arm but to abolish theft which harms the people's trust in one another. Moreover, any kinds of offenses such as bribery, corruption, embezzlement, etc. committed against the society are punished just as theft, thus leaving a mark on the one who has committed the offense, which will ensure him to live shamefully during his lifetime¹⁸.

As the punishment of denial of Allah and blasphemy is death, owner of any thought which contradicts our social conscience and faith, including but not limited to communists, will be sentenced to death. Any infidel who will be treated as if he has committed the offense of treason, he is tried for his thoughts and actions which will set people against one another, create trouble and cause a chaos. Likewise, bandits and terrorists will also be sentenced to death. In this way, we will reveal the legal spirit of the new order and will not stop until we achieve Islam, which is our essential criterion. Even if it is necessary to put the whole society to death until only a man and a woman is left out, we will not hesitate to maintain the justice of Allah in order to ensure the welfare of the society. This is our only method and the basis for all our issues. It is our essential purpose to build the superior community deserving the friendship of Allah and the Prophet¹⁹."

Any *Shariah* punishments imposed on murder and theft considered to be the greatest crimes in all monotheistic religions are inevitable in Necip Fazıl's utopia in order to maintain the public order. This system of punishment which is impossible to see in modern democracies is doubtlessly a method of punishment remaining from ancient times. He considers these severe punishments to be so necessary in order to build the superior Islamic society.

The above mentioned crimes and punishments are those related to one's injuring the assets or life of another. Necip Fazıl further anticipates some penalty sanctions for one's personal choices which he experiences in his own self.

¹⁸ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *ibid.*, p.316.

¹⁹ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *ibid.*, p.317.

“There will be rules about pleasure, discipline, codes of conduct and aesthetics within the framework of the deepest understanding, morals, customs and traditions to be enacted by the Council of Supremes. If such rules are not complied with, the person who commits the action will be punished in the most drastic manner by the security forces and the other members of the society. It is only in this manner that the society will be cleared of all its evil and degenerate members. In the *Büyük Doğu* society, there will no such people who wander about in streets, disturb the people, make a lot of noise, spit and blow their noses and assume rakish and indecent attitude in several manners nor such ruffian-like people who disturb the social harmony, cause confusion and chaos in streets and highways. Moreover, there will not be any such people who look like Westerners, hippies, and snobs, indecent women, tramp-looking artists and such people who intentionally or unintentionally rebel against the general ethical rules of the society either. These types shall be under watch and continuously pursued by special police forces that are established under special laws. Such people will be given such punishments which will teach them discipline, pleasure, morals and good conduct as well as aesthetic until they cease to repeat their improper actions.

Gambling is definitely prohibited. This prohibition also includes horse races and all kinds of lottery owned by the state because they aim at earning money without making any efforts. Those who gamble, those who allow people to gamble and even those who just watch people gambling, will be sentenced to imprisonment. Alcohol and drugs are definitely prohibited. It is prohibited to produce, sell, keep and consume any alcoholic drinks which provide any kinds of intoxicating feelings. It is prohibited to keep, sell and use any kinds of drugs and pleasure-giving substances. The general criterion of this law is the *Hadith* meaning “Anything intoxicating is forbidden”. Adultery and prostitution are prohibited within the territories of homeland. Adultery means an illegitimate sexual intercourse between a man and a woman out of marriage and prostitution is the occupation and art of such incident. What is essential here is that sin lies on their part as it is not possible to watch and control any sexual intercourse experienced between a man and a woman within an enclosed space and as such individuals live such a crime arising out of their illegitimate intercourse between them and Allah. As it will not be in compliance with Allah’s commands and social ethics to pursue a person under prejudice, this is not our business. As this is the case, the criterion is the following: if the action of adultery has taken place before four eyewitnesses, then the case is different. In this case, the judgment of *Shariah* is practiced²⁰.”

In Necip Fazıl’s ideal society:

“It is not possible for an individual to make decisions by himself and perform improper actions against the rules of religion. In order to control and prevent such actions, security forces which we may call vice guards are assigned and those who commit such actions must be punished pursuant to the Islamic law.

²⁰ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, 2014. *Ideolojya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.p.317-326.

In the last analysis, we may say that the abovementioned actions must not occur in a superior and faithful society. These actions originate from a man's failure to deny his self but emulate the West and move away from the ethical lines and social norms. Individuals must never by any means be allowed to go astray and disciplined under the severest rules²¹.

In the accomplishment of the *Büyük Doğu* ideal, apart from watching and controlling people's behavior and actions, it is of utmost importance that elements providing the proper conditions will be under the control of the state. Radio is one of the most effective weapons of the *Büyük Doğu* cause. Radio broadcast addressing millions of people must completely be owned by the state and used as an instrument of propaganda. Likewise, cinema must be definitely under the state's control. To import movies shot by the Western world with commercial concerns which do not fit our customs and traditions means undermining the foundations of the society. Each of the movies imported from the United States and Europe are allowed to run once they have been inspected down to the last detail and made certain that they are appropriate for Turkish culture and moral. As nine hundred ninety-nine per thousand of the Western and world cinematography is not appropriate for us, such movies may not be allowed by any means. Any dances and sculpture not originating from our own culture are also prohibited. These so-called art branches entered our life upon the *Tanzimat* and did not serve anything but deteriorating the morality of society²²."

"Furthermore, press and media are not free in the sense known to us in the *Büyük Doğu* ideal. Once we have moved away from the nonsense of freedom for freedom's sake, newspapers, books, periodicals, booklets, posters and any media organs will be put under the state's control. Any artists and intellectuals may print anything he draws or writes after the approval of the state. Every thought is not and must not be free. Those thoughts capable of addressing and affecting millions of people may sometimes be dangerous thoughts not appropriate for us. Therefore, until everyone understands what real freedom is, and until individual and social outcomes are obtained in accordance with the personality of such freedom, freedom of the press and media will be restricted by the state. All articles which are not of good quality, which fail to serve any value for the sake of thinking and arts and which injure people's faith and ethical system are prohibited. Further, any articles adapting any ideologies contradicting ours in their entirety without considering them with their negative and positive aspects are also prohibited²³."

"Essential purpose is not to allow any ideologies which encourage one to live in a brutish freedom and guide him not to give a damn to the most basic rules of living together and which make him disregard Allah's words. In the *Büyük Doğu* ideal, people know how to live in the freedom of the divine truth and are extraordinarily satisfied with it. We, in fact, now set free any freedoms that have been

²¹ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, *ibid.*, p.336.

²² Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014, *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları., p.338.

²³ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *ibid.*, p.340.

restricted so far. For instance, clothing: our essential purpose is to make free the Western style clothing which entered our life upon the *Tanzimat* and has been imposed recently. What is essential is that any one may wear whatever he chooses within the Islamic limits in accordance with Turkish customs and traditions. Targeting to achieve enlightenment in spirit but not in outlook, the *Büyük Doğu* ideal does not like hat just because it is a hat and does not find a fez strange just because it is a fez; what is important is whether or not it complies with the moral and aesthetic rules. Woman's clothing in our ideal is neither burqa covering the whole body just like canned food nor immodest like food thrown before hungry dogs. A committee which consists of the leading clergymen and aestheticians of the country decides how women will properly clothe themselves. From now on a *Büyük Doğu* woman will be one who is superior enough to be taken as an example by all the world nations for her beauty, elegance, the way she stands, sits and gets up²⁴."

"The relationship and marriage of a woman possessing these superior characteristics and a man who will be suit her, must also occur within the social order. With regard to reproduction, our prophet of prophets has great edicts on that we have to reproduce uninterruptedly, without delaying and increase our number continuously. We have to follow his example in order not to deprive our Prophet, Master of the Universe, who reports that he will take pride of the multitude of his *Ummah* on the Judgment Day, of this sense of pride. Marriage is so important in the *Büyük Doğu* ideal. This is why it is the state's and family's common task to ensure the young people to get married and have children at very early ages. Measures must be taken to encourage the young people to get married and have children so that the relationship between the individual, family and state may be consolidated through such measures. Here, the most important task falling upon the society is to encourage their children who reach the age of marriage to get married and have children and not give the right for happiness to those who are not married and do not have spouses and children²⁵."

To assume family as a worth protecting organization is not only for Necip Fazıl's approach, but also conservatives consider that family is the basic unit of the society and the protector of the traditional ethics. For family creates and consolidates part of the bonds keeping the society together²⁶. To keep together the society and prevent it to atomizing and provide solidarity in it, is one of the most important responsibility of the state both for conservatives and Necip Fazıl. The distinction is, the role of the religion in his conservatism is more binding than classical conservative thinking. That is why we prefer him as an Islamist rather than conservative. Earlier in this section, while discussing the outlines of Necip Fazıl's ideology, we could see that he is anti-liberal as he defines himself. In his opinion, a society needs an authority which will discipline it at all times. As a man obeys a doctor at hospital, a commander in the army and a teacher at school

²⁴ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *ibid.*, p.p.364-365.

²⁵ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. *ibid.*, p.265-267.

²⁶ Nisbet, Robert. 1986. *Conservatism: Dream and Reality*, Buckingham: Open University Press. p.23.

and does not claim freedom before him, a society also has certain rules and norms and they also require obedience. A state authority is required to control and punish those who break such rules. As Necip Fazıl's ideal state is an Islamic state, such state organizes itself in accordance with the *Shariah* and concerns about maintaining this order. Any threat against its order is an enemy and infidel. And the punishment for such traitors and the enemies of the order is death for they are against the divine values. Finally, in his opinion, the address of the freedom is neither a political party nor a newspaper nor a bar nor a harbor statue in the United States. The appropriate address of freedom is Islam itself.

When we consider the organization and functioning of the state in the Islamic Revolution idealized by him, we could well see that the system was not democratic at all. Now, we will try to reveal how democracy is perceived in our society and why it is not a form of government which is not needed through Necip Fazıl's perspective and through inferences from his own articles²⁷. According to Necip Fazıl, democracy is a political form which has come out of the West's deviated world order and which is not suitable for Turkish and Islamic society. It is not a system needed by the Oriental civilization in the *Büyük Doğu* ideal. It is a system which allows for an environment where everyone speaks of something different, where certain groups poison society's moral and soul by conveying their own deviated choices and ideologies. As we have especially repeated here in this section several times, the members of Necip Fazıl's ideal society are not free to do whatever they want. Democracy is a form of government is based on individual freedoms and pluralism. Necip Fazıl's authoritarian conservatism represents a repudiation of such a form of government. In his view, it is essential to control society and each group within society. Everything from clothing, to manner of behavior, of thinking and form of expressing thoughts should be under the control of the state to be founded as a result of the Islamic revolution. Individuals cannot usually make correct decisions when they are left alone. If they are not strictly controlled by the state, they will first harm themselves and this will inevitably lead to the collapse of all social order. The state exists in order to prevent such corruption. The ideal state is obliged to protect all individuals and groups under its sway from any and all unhealthy tendencies and ideologies and this is its first and foremost duty to guide them to the right way, to the way of the truth and of Allah²⁸. Otherwise, according to the conservatives, the state is neither an organization which has a negative meaning in society and which restricts the freedom of an individual as in liberal contract

²⁷ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014, *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.500.

²⁸ Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl, 2014, *Ideolocya Örgüsü, Bütün Eserleri 42*, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları, p.500-502.

theories nor an institution which owns the production and which has a superior authority over the individuals²⁹.

Conclusion

As a result of the article, we have reached the conclusion that Necip Fazıl's perspective has strong authoritarian tendencies. Furthermore, we have started that his Islamist outlook adds a religious dimension to his authoritarian conservatism. Although we have benefited from his other articles, our most determinative resource has been his work entitled *Ideological Pattern* in which he has described his utopian state in detail. As he describes his ideology to the finest detail in this work, we have unfalteringly obtained Necip Fazıl's thoughts about authority, obedience, state, morality and religion. The new order which Necip Fazıl describes as the *Büyük Doğu* ideal placed Islam in the center and attributed everything to it without any exception. This order designed to the finest detail illustrates a state and society order established to create and put into practice Islam in his mind. He considers the state and the regime to be an instrument to establish this new Islamic order. Concepts of democracy, freedom and equality do not mean anything for him. Those concepts might only be instruments at the very most. The only and real objective is Islam.

The state in the *Büyük Doğu* ideal is the Arch-Supremal State. In that state, the head of the state is the Arch-Supreme, the national assembly the Council of Supremes and the government the Arch-Supremal Government. These cadres are not elected through democratic ways but are an assembly consisting of the most superior ones of the society from which they have been emerged in moral and professional terms, which took office after the constituent assembly created by the Islamic revolution as Necip Fazıl put it. Members of this assembly are not elected by the people and their office period continues until they die, resign, go senile or overshadow the virtue of the cause by committing a disgraceful offense. The head of the state who was elected from among the members of this assembly called Council of Supremes is called the Arch-Supreme, and the government established by the ministers elected among the members of this assembly and directly reporting to the Arch-Supreme was called the Arch-Supremal Government. Top levels of the state were comprised of these three bodies. Laws enacted are called the Arch-Supremal Commands and have an anti-liberal and anti-democratic content which might be considered 'extreme' not only in the present day but also in that period. These laws are intended to regulate and control all

²⁹ Scruton, Roger. 2002. *The Meaning of Conservatism*, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press. p.48.

spheres of social life from clothing and speaking, to nutrition. Here we see the radicalism of Necip Fazıl's authoritarian vision.

For Necip Fazıl, a man is not free and must not intend to be free. His principal purpose is to be suitable for Islam, to train his self and lead a life complying with the general mentality of the society. If an individual refuses to comply with these conditions, then the state guides the society to expel him from the society. Apart from casting out, it is anticipated that such an individual must be punished by the state even if he does not give harm to the rights and freedoms of other people. He believes that the state must discipline each individual under its sway just as parents discipline their children. In these terms, it may be easily seem that Necip Fazıl's utopian state order is anti-liberal.

Necip Fazıl is an anti-democrat as well. The form of government of his ideal state is oligarchy which is a kind of class government. As he describes, the state may only be governed by those members of the society who are most superior in such fields as ethics, science, trading, education, etc. He thinks that those politicians who are elected by the votes of all people will degenerate in consideration of being elected, tell lies and deviate from the path of justice and candor. He argues that they will be apt to do what the society believes is right for itself but not what is right for the society and that they may move the society away from the truth and the way of Islam. He therefore designs an assembly of which members are not elected by democratic methods. This Council of Supremes which we have also mentioned above consists of such members who believe in a single cause and pursue a single ideology. In Necip Fazıl's ideal state, there is no room for any cause other than the true cause of justice and truth which the Council of Supremes pursues at all times. He considers such concepts as communism, liberalism, socialism and capitalism to be concepts belonging to the West but not to us and describes those who pursue such currents are on the wrong way.

Nation, state, leader, cause... They are such values that cannot be considered separately and chaos will prevail when they are separated from one another. As long as these values act all together for the same ideal, then the *Büyük Doğu* ideal will start to come into being. An epos of uprising which will set an example for all the oppressed nations of the East will start to be written. The epos of returning to one's self and revival of the Eastern nations that have been captured by the imperialism and capitalism of the West may only be written in this way. Instead of imitating the West, we must rather accept and practice the values belonging to our own history. And this an expression of Necip Fazıl's hostility to the Westernization.

His desire to reach Islam, which is his principal and only ideal, can be seem in many of his writings. In this sense, Necip Fazıl is one of the most radical Islamist of the Republic period. It is Necip Fazıl's real cause to regulate the state

according to Islam and to Islamize the society. Furthermore, the state is the symbol of Allah's will on earth. It is and must at all-time be obliged to fulfil its laws completely. This is the authority of the state through the eye of Necip Fazıl Kısakürek.

References

- Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2013. *Baş Makalelerim 1*, Bütün Eserleri 77, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları.
- Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2008. *Baş Makalelerim 2*, Bütün Eseleri 78, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları.
- Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014. *İdeolojya Örgüsü*, Bütün Eserleri 42, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları.
- Kısakürek, Necip Fazıl. 2014a. *Ulu Hakan İkinci Abdülhamid Han*, Bütün Eserleri 51, İstanbul: Büyük Doğu Yayınları.
- Oakeshott, Michael. 2009. *Muhafazakar Olmak Üzerine* (Çev:İsmail Seyrek), Muhafazakar Düşünce, sayı: 1, Yaz.
- Nisbet, Robert. 1986. *Conservatism: Dream and Reality*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Scruton, Roger. 2002. *The Meaning of Conservatism*, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press.