

Hamad bin Jassim's memoirs (and perhaps not even then), *Qatar and the Arab Spring* provides, overall, as compelling an answer as we are likely to find uncovering the core motivations for Qatar's activism during the Arab Spring.

F. MICHAEL WUTHRICH, *National Elections in Turkey: People, Politics, and the Party System* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2015). Pp. 376. \$49.95 cloth. ISBN: 9780815634126

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The center–periphery dichotomy as articulated by Şerif Mardin has been one of the most popular lenses through which to read political struggles in modern Turkey. According to this perspective, sociocultural cleavages pitting a secular-modernist camp against a religious-populist camp has been the most persistent source of conflict in the country since the late Ottoman period. Michael Wuthrich's *National Elections in Turkey* offers an emphatic critique of this dichotomy. In his study of electoral campaigns and results since the 1950 elections, Wuthrich aims to show how identity-based considerations have often been secondary to economic and contextual factors in shaping voter behavior and party strategies. He presents a chronological approach to Turkish elections that is more attentive to historical contingencies than generalizations based on the center–periphery dichotomy. At the same time, his alternative explanatory framework highlighting the importance of factors other than political identities in shaping the dynamics and outcome of electoral contests is rudimentary and underdeveloped. In particular, he does not provide much insight about the increasing ideological polarization in Turkey especially since the 2011 elections.

In his attack on the center–periphery dichotomy, Wuthrich pursues several strategies. First, he questions the stability of left–right positioning in Turkish politics and suggests that the criteria of this positioning has evolved considerably over time. In his view, the Turkish electorate and parties are less ideological than typically assumed. Next, he downplays the importance of religion in shaping both voter behavior and electoral campaigning. Third, he goes back to the foundational texts of Edward Shils, Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan, and Şerif Mardin that conceptualize the center–periphery dichotomy. In an engaging, albeit occasionally redundant discussion, he shows how these conceptualizations cannot be directly applied to Turkish politics. Finally, and less compellingly, he argues that the Turkish electorate has a strong national orientation transcending cultural differences.

The main empirical analysis is presented in the second part of the book on Turkish electoral history in five eras: 1950–65, 1965–80, 1983–91, 1995–2007, and post-2011. In each of these periods, different issues are politically salient with distinctive characteristics in electoral competition. While the ways in which Wuthrich separates these periods are rather subjective, his periodization is an effective antidote to scholarly approaches that seek to explain Turkish politics according to predetermined and persistent ideological cleavages. He also rightly points out that mundane and local considerations such as expectations of tangible benefits have been more important for the voting behavior of many Turkish citizens than ideological commitments. Starting with the early 1990s, success in municipal administrations and access to and control of media have tremendous influence over electoral outcomes. Nonetheless, his narrative mostly overlooks the role of the military and high judiciary in restricting electoral competition especially between 1980 and 2007.

While Wuthrich's critique of the center–periphery dichotomy as a master narrative of Turkish politics is convincing, his own empirical analysis lacks rigor and appears outdated in terms of methodological sophistication. The main empirical sources are province-level electoral results and

articles from Turkish newspapers since the 1950s, which are analyzed in a rather ad hoc manner. Wuthrich's analysis of electoral data is rather descriptive and includes some basic correlations and indicators, such as effective number of parties and volatility. In particular, he does not even use basic spatial techniques to explore continuities and ruptures in electoral geography over time. This is especially disappointing given the book's claim to provide a *longue durée* perspective of Turkish politics. It is also surprising that Wuthrich does not utilize any data from publicly available surveys about voting behavior. He primarily draws inferences about microlevel voter behavior on the basis of macrolevel aggregate electoral data. Hence, his inferences are vulnerable to ecological fallacy, as the provincial and regional patterns may not reflect the political actions of individuals. Finally, the coding schemas he employs in categorizing party campaigns are not clearly articulated and have weak empirical basis.

In terms of literature review, some important works on Turkish political parties in Turkish, such as Tark Zafer Tunaya's *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler*, 3 vols. (İstanbul: İletişim, 2015), Fikret Bila's *CHP: 1919–2009* (İstanbul: Doğan, 2008), Ruşen Çakır's *Ne Şeriat, Ne Demokrasi* (İstanbul: Metis, 1994), Ümit Cizre's *Muktedirlerin Siyaseti* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1999), Nuray Mert's *Merkez Sağın Kısa Tarihi* (İstanbul: Selis, 2007), and Tanel Demirel's *Adalet Partisi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004), are not consulted. These are significant omissions. Furthermore, Wuthrich overlooks recent studies that offer systematic analyses of voter behavior using advanced statistical methods, such as the articles of Ali Akarca, Arzu Kıbrıs, and Erdem Aytaç. As these works go beyond the center–periphery dichotomy to assess the effects of economic considerations, political violence, and patronage distributions on electoral behavior, they could have helped Wuthrich to better articulate his own critique of this dichotomy. He could have also benefited from drawing more explicit comparisons between the Turkish electoral system and that of Eastern European and Latin American democracies on the basis of secondary literature. Such a comparative perspective would have bolstered his attempt to undermine the arguments about the uniqueness of the Turkish elections.

Overall, *National Elections in Turkey* makes a strong case against a culturalist reading of Turkish politics. It will be a useful resource for scholars looking for a historical narrative and descriptive analysis of the Turkish electoral system, party politics, and voter behavior.

EKAVI ATHANASSOPOULOU, *Strategic Relations between the US and Turkey, 1979–2000: Sleeping with a Tiger*, Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Politics (New York: Routledge, 2014). Pp. 209. \$145.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780415834315

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Strategic Relations between the US and Turkey by Ekavi Athanassopoulou explores the evolution of the strategic relationship between the United States and Turkey from 1979 until the late 1990s. Based on archival documents as well as interviews with experts and US, Turkish, and Israeli officials, some of whom were involved in critical decisions that shaped US–Turkey relations, it traces the convergence and divergence of the interests of the two countries and the resultant elements of cooperation and discord in their relationship. The book undertakes an analysis of foreign policy making process in the United States and Turkey in conjunction with changes in the international environment, with a specific emphasis on the Middle East. It proposes to examine the broad trends in and provide new ways of looking at the evolution of the strategic relations. The author argues that Turkey's weakness relative to the United States, ambitious plans of the Turkish leaders for military modernization, and geopolitical factors are three parameters that affect the progression of bilateral relations.