

“New Liberalism” of Forum Journal in the 1950s

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Abstract

This study analyses the main ideological framework of Forum journal in the 1950s. Founded in 1954, Forum immediately became the voice of political opposition through targeting the anti-democratic policies of the Democratic Party. The journal immediately established ideological and organic links with the opposition political parties of the period, namely the Freedom Party and the Republican People’s Party. Consolidation of a liberal democratic regime in Turkey and achieving a rationally planned economic development were two major aspirations of the journal. According to Forum, intellectuals and scientists ought to play a central role in achieving these goals. This article argues that Forum did not only influence the political opposition in the 1950s, but also became a source of inspiration for the post-1960 political and constitutional regime.

keywords: Forum, democracy, liberalism, Freedom Party, Democratic Party

Résumé

“Le Nouveau libéralisme” de Journal Forum dans les années 50

Ce travail analyse le contexte idéologique principal de la revue Forum aux 1950. Fondé en 1954, Forum est devenu immédiatement la voix de l’opposition politique qui cible les politiques anti-démocratique du Parti Démocratique. La revue a établi immédiatement des liaisons idéologiques et organiques avec les principales parties politiques de l’opposition, c’est-à-dire le Parti de Liberté et Parti Républicaine du Peuple. La revue avait deux aspirations principale : consolider le régime libéral-démocratique en Turquie et établir un développement économique planifiée rationale. Pour Forum, les intellectuelles et les scientifiques devrait jouer un rôle important pour atteindre à ces résultats. Cet article soutient que Forum a largement influencé l’opposition politique aux années 1950, et est devenu une source d’inspiration pour le régime politique et économique établi après le coup d’état de 1960.

mots-clés: Forum, démocratie, libéralisme, Parti de Liberté, Parti Démocratique

Özet

1950’li Yıllarda Forum Dergisinin “Yeni Liberalizm”i

Bu çalışma Forum dergisinin 1950’li yıllardaki temel ideolojik çerçevesini incelemektedir. 1954 yılında kurulan Forum Demokrat Parti’nin anti-demokratik uygulamalarını hedef alarak kuruluşunun hemen ardından siyasal muhalefetin sesi olmuştur. Dergi dönemin muhalif siyasal partileri ile –Hürriyet Partisi ve Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi– ideolojik ve organik bağlar kurmuştur. Türkiye’de liberal demokratik bir rejimin pekiştirilmesi ve akılcı bir şekilde planlanmış bir ekonomik gelişmenin başarılabilmesi derginin iki ana gayesi olmuştur. Forum’a göre bu hedefleri gerçekleştirmekte entelektüeller ve bilim insanları merkezi bir rol oynayacaktır. Bu makale Forum’un sadece 1950’li yıllarda siyasal muhalefeti şekillendirmek ile kalmadığını, derginin aynı zamanda 1960 sonrası siyasal ve anayasal rejime ilham kaynağı olduğunu iddia etmektedir.

anahtar kelimeler: Forum, demokrasi, liberalizm, Hürriyet Partisi, Demokrat Parti

Introduction

It was the first day of April 1954 when a group of liberal intellectuals¹ started to publish a biweekly “journal of politics, economics and culture” named *Forum* to draw out the political, moral, legal and institutional framework of Turkish democracy. Throughout the 1950s, the average circulation of the journal was high as 10.000. *Forum* tried to present itself both as an academic journal and journal of actual politics. After the editorial comment of each issue, the journal spared an extensive place to actual political developments under the sub-section of ‘Notes from the Last Fifteen Days.’ This sub-section is followed by ‘Analyses’ in which political, social and economic matters are scientifically discussed. The remaining pages of the journal were spared to readers’ contributions, translations from foreign press, and short articles on art and culture (Somel 2006:5-6)². In this article I will analyze the issues of *Forum* that have been released between 1954 and 1960, and try to underline *Forum’s* contribution to political opposition’s agenda in the 1950s.

The name of the journal deliberately referred to the idea and practice of deliberation and freedom of discussion of the classical ages:

Today in most of the Western countries *FORUM* has become a symbolic term referring to any place whereby thoughts are expressed and discussed freely. In fact, today in those countries where democracy is successfully realized, there are some organs of thought that mould, direct, and inspire public opinion, functions reminiscent of the *FORUM* of the Classical Ages. Gathering around the journal, we believe that Turkish democracy is in urgent need of centers of thought similar to the *FORUM* of the Classical Ages (*Forum* 1954a:1).

Forum writers repeatedly called for intellectuals to hold on to their ‘natural’ social and political responsibilities. They underlined the duty of ‘leading’ masses “without exploiting their reactionary tendencies” (*Forum* 1955l:3; 1954j and 1958; Yıldırım 1955 and And 1955). In line with this ambition, the journal

1 Aydın Yalçın, Bahri Savcı, Osman Okyar, Turan Güneş, Turhan Feyzioğlu, Bedii Feyzioğlu, Nilüfer Yalçın, Bülent Ecevit, Kemal Salih, Cahit Talas, Muammer Aksoy, Şerif Mardin, Coşkun Kırca, Mümtaz Soysal and Metin And were some of the well-known figures that gave the journal its character.

2 I would like to thank Ali Somel for sharing his master’s thesis, and his notes from *Forum* issues. His contribution helped me see many points that I have missed during my own archive work.

gave considerable place to daily political developments of the period. *Forum* described itself as a scientific journal “which uses empirical method”, as opposed to “a theoretical journal of philosophy and ideas, which relies on mere speculation” (*Forum* 1955h:2 and 1957d).

In great democracies there is a division of labor among intellectuals. The scientists and philosophers mostly devote themselves to generation of knowledge and research facilities. The other part of the intellectuals, who are located within the cadres of newspapers, radios and journals are obliged to publicize the knowledge for the masses, which was created by the scientists. We, through notes on daily politics and through analysis sections, are trying to handle this dual function. In this sense *Forum* is both a scientific journal, and also a journal aiming to contribute to the creation of an intellectual circle. Our target is mainly composed of intellectuals who are open-minded on the questions of state and political sciences (*Forum* 1957d:2).

In line with the stress on intellectuals’ social and political functions, *Forum* writers did not present themselves as an academic circle but immediately joined active political struggle through engaging with the Freedom Party (*Hürriyet Partisi-HP*), a splinter party from the Democratic Party (*Demokrat Parti-DP*), which was founded in December 1955 and merged with the Republican People’s Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-CHP*) in November 1958 (Özçetin and Demirci 2005 and Dağcı 2005). *Forum* repeatedly stated that the journal was not and would never become ‘a device of struggle for political power.’ They, nonetheless, added that “impartiality should never refer to absence of any ideas or stands” (*Forum* 1956a:1; for arguments on impartiality of the journal see, 1954a and 1954f)³. As stated by Simten Coşar (1997:203), *Forum* put an excessive emphasis on social and political responsibility of the intellectual as a natural derivative of his scientific identity. Scientific knowledge is a social product and ‘science without social consciousness’ could constitute a threat against democracy (Yıldırım 1955:19-20).

Following Simten Coşar, the initial relationship between *Forum* and the Freedom Party could be best described as ‘advisory’. The journal pointed at the

3 Bahri Savcı (1954b:9) makes a distinction between politics in its narrow sense and politics in general; the former refers to struggle for grasping the political power, and latter refers to defending freedom of thought and expression. Thus, for *Forum* writers the journal is political in the second sense of the term. This point becomes ambiguous with active political support given by the journal to the Freedom Party and Republican People’s Party in the following years.

lack of an intellectual basis behind the existing political parties as the major deficiency of the Turkish political system, and subsequently published articles concerning the ought-to-be disposition of the new party with respect to the social, political, ideological and economic problems of the period (Coşar 1997: 214-215). Through time, relations between the journal and HP proved to be more than a shared critical standing with respect to the policies of DP. This was first manifested in the remark about the propensity of *Forum* readers and subscribers among the party delegates. The identification was further ensured when Aydın Yalçın, who was among the core group of the journal, and Muammer Aksoy and Münci Kapani, two prominent columnists, joined the party (*Forum* 1957f:6). By Coşar's (1997:215) words, "the group provided the party with an intellectual framework. . . found an opportunity for the realization of their long-aspired intellectually-framed game of politics." The journal provided the opposition with powerful intellectual sources to cope with anti-democratic policies of the Democratic Party.

Forum's ideological and political framework can be summarized under two main headlines: first, deepening and strengthening the bases of Turkish democracy and second, structuring a sound and rational economic development strategy (Mardin 1959:9). Exploration of these two headlines will help us differentiate what I label as the 'new liberalism' of *Forum* from liberalism of the Democratic Party.

Institutionalization of the Turkish Democracy: FORUM versus the "National Will"

Institutionalization of Turkish democracy was an essential concern for *Forum*. *Forum* writers accused existing DP cadres for betraying the original mission of the party. Accordingly, the DP governments were pursuing policies which were against the principles of the freedom of thought, equality before law and freedom of the press. Also, the DP policies are criticized for eroding the autonomy of institutions such as bureaucracy, judiciary, universities, associations and foundations (*Forum* 1957c). *Forum* writers, as an essential outcome of their intellectual responsibility, tried to present an alternative path of democratic development for Turkey. This alternative path later became the main tenet of the opposition's (HP and CHP) political programme.

Drawing the limits of state power stands as the most important “problematic” for *Forum*. Münci Kapani makes a distinction between “legal” and “non-legal” restrictions to state power in modern democracies. Among “non-legal” limitations, ‘moral limitation’ comes first, which refers to ethical commitment to democratic institutions and ideals. Another crucial non-legal limitation is ‘the pressure of the public opinion’; which is formed and consolidated by existence of a ‘free press’ and ‘autonomous radio’. Existence of strong and independent associations and trade unions together with autonomous universities stand as other key “non-legal” limitations. On the other hand Kapani (1957a:8-9; 1957b:10-11) asserts ‘free and fair elections,’ ‘autonomy of the judiciary,’ ‘establishment of a Constitutional Court’ and ‘bi-cameral legislation’ as integral legal limitations to state power. In sum, Kapani’s position presents a summary of *Forum*’s democratic outlook.

Three different facets of *Forum*’s democratic vision can be delineated as: moral, legal and institutional. The first one is about creation of ‘a culture of democracy’ within the country. The other two are about legal and institutional propositions for extending the limits of Turkish democracy.

Setting the “Rules of the Game”

For *Forum*, politics can be described as an activity in which actors perform their roles through abiding the norms of mutual recognition and respect to the ‘rules of the game’ (1954k:1)⁴. The phrase ‘rules of the game’ refers to belief in democracy and establishing democratic principles as customary codes (Mardin 1954). The boundaries of the “rules of the game” are drawn by moderate policy making, anti-radicalism and ‘gentlemen policy makers’ (Savcı 1955c:8; Feyzioglu, 1954a:10; *Forum* 1954g:2). The Anglo-Saxon and American policy making traditions, or, in other words, the operational principles of western liberal-democracies are taken as ideal models.

The ‘rules of the game’ have both moral and institutional aspects: the former refers to the policy making tradition of Turkey which gives no space to the recognition of opposition and critique; and the latter refers to the institutional and legal aspects of democracy (*Forum* 1955e:1-2), among which

4 Feyzioglu (1956a) lists the main features of political discussion in Turkey as such: demagoguery, diverting the attentions to another relevant or irrelevant issue, exaggeration, personalization, lack of judgment and rationality, lack of adequate data related with the issue debated, and lack of a shared language among participants.

the absence of intermediary structures of the Anglo-Saxon tradition, is often referred to (*Forum* 1956c:1-2; Yalçın 1958:14-15). *Forum* writers accuse the DP for ignoring 'the rules of the game'. They blame the leaders of the DP for showing no tolerance to criticisms, or alternative perspectives. They underline that the legal and institutional aspects of democracy are crucial, but they are meaningless if not supported by a socio-cultural environment.

Related with the moral aspects of democratic order, the question about the legitimacy of opposition is a key point for *Forum*. As such, the existence of a culture of toleration and existence of channels for opposition to freely organize, act and express itself are crucial (Feyzioğlu 1954a:10). In many cases *Forum* implicitly accuses the DP governments for adhering to totalitarian and even "fascist" measures in order to overcome the ongoing socio-economic crises and the severe criticisms of the opposition. One can find many cases in which *Forum* writers compare the situation in Turkey with Fascist Italy, Peron's Argentina, or Hitler's Germany, and warn the political leaders by pointing to the fate of these dictators (*Forum* 1955m; 1955r; 1957b). Briefly, these political systems are described as regimes in which the 'absolute truth' about social issues is in the hands of a chief or a political oligarchy.

In regimes that reject the principles of freedom and democracy there is no other truth apart from the officially accepted one. For them, the real source of truth is the chief, or the government which is under his control. The official view is the only one which is real. So, this idea is the driving force of all of the fascist regimes (*Forum* 1955q:2).

The Democratic Party governments and the Prime Minister Adnan Menderes are criticized for evaluating any criticism as a threat and plot against the "national will", which the government identified itself with (*Forum* 1956e:1). As against these authoritarian tendencies, *Forum* comes up with the principles of tolerance, freedom of thought and deliberation; and calls for moderate and rational policy makers. As it was the case for the intellectuals, the policy-makers must be the enlighteners for the society. It must be the scientific knowledge that guides the political parties. The political party cadres,

must be under the **guidance and rule of intellectuals** who had a sense of the direction of social development of the country... today political parties **must rely on a scientific grasping of our social structure**, not on bigotry or opportunism (Savcı 1954d:9, emphases added).

Law and Institutions against 'Politics'

One of the main considerations of the opposition movements during the second half of the 1950s was setting limits to political power. The ambiguous concept of "national will" caused the Democratic Party to ignore the legal and institutional aspects of democracy. As a response, *Forum* journal, from its earliest days onwards endeavored to draw an alternative legal and institutional framework for Turkish democracy.

Our democracy, under the rule of the DP faced several political problems. We can summarize these problems as a move towards the dominance of a party oligarchy, which concentrates the political power in its hands, and retreats from any control mechanism (*Forum* 1955j:3).

For *Forum*, this fact was mainly a natural outcome of the cultural aspects of Turkish democracy. More importantly however, absence of a democratic legal framework and intermediary structures/institutions –that stand as forces against concentration of political power in the hands of some privileged policy makers– were seen as maladies of Turkish democracy. The distinguishing property of the modern state, for *Forum* writers, is the increased involvement of the state in social, political and economic spheres. Accordingly, the modern state machinery is more complicated and potent when compared to its previous forms, which specifically brought problems of maintenance and persistence of individual rights and liberties against the state power. It is only through the set of policy changes that have been proposed by *Forum* that this goal could be achieved (Kapani 1957a:8-9;1957b and Savcı 1954c:9; 1954d).

Formation of a Constitutional Court in Turkey to check the legislative power and to entrench fundamental political freedoms is the most recurrent theme in *Forum's* pages. *Forum* criticizes the DP governments for enacting laws against the spirit of the Constitution. For *Forum*, the compatibility of laws with the Constitution was a legal subject, not a political one (Bilge 1954). Similarly, the right to enact laws by referring to electoral and parliamentary majority should not be used as a threat against political minorities, or opposition as a whole. According to *Forum* the need for a Constitutional Court is in line with one of the most basic liberal mottos: freeing citizens from the tyranny of the majority. However, in Turkey the political power "cannot live with the idea of existence of some limits in political life and cannot accept the existence of some limitations to political power, even the general will." However, for *Forum*,

democracy is not a regime in which the majority does whatever it wants. In real democracies, which rely on the principle of the rule of law, the Laws and decisions of the Parliament must be compatible with the Constitution; and constitution itself must be compatible with human rights (*Forum* 1957e:2; and see Savcı 1955a:10-11).

In fact, *Forum's* defense of the Constitutional Court could better be apprehended by noting the special place given to judiciary. Judiciary is seen as a vital barrier against the abuse of executive power. To perform its function, it must be independent and free from political intervention. Quoting from Montesquieu, Turhan Feyzioğlu (1955a:9) notes that "for overcoming the abuse of power, the political power must be balanced with another power. In this process the judiciary power takes the first place." Briefly, realization of the autonomy of the judiciary, and guarantee for the independence of the judges is crucial for the constitution of a democratic order. *Forum* writers agreed that the Turkey of the 1950s was far from realizing this objective (Feyzioğlu 1955b; 1955c; Savcı 1955c).

As it was the case in the second half of the 1940s, the debate over the election system was one of the most important issues of the agenda throughout the 1950s. Despite often emphasizing the significance of judiciary mechanisms for a democratic order, *Forum* writers maintain that "the democratic regimes survive not only through constitutions, but also with institutions" (Feyzioğlu 1954e:9). Institutions such as a neutral presidency, free press, autonomous universities, associations and communities, and influential local governments stand as guarantees for the maintenance of a democratic order (ibid:9). Given the lack of such social and political institutions, the appropriateness of majority rule for Turkey is questioned, and proportional representation is offered (Feyzioğlu 1954d and 1957a)⁵:

In Anglo-Saxon countries direct elections, majority system and existence of two major parties render a stable and fruitful democracy available. But in those countries there are powerful customs, traditions and institutions, which make majority respectful towards criticisms and the rights of the minority... Throughout the Turkish history, our main problem was the political power holders' isolation from critique and control. The opposition has always been oppressed (Feyzioğlu 1954d:10; also see *Forum* 1960).

5 For counter-arguments within *Forum* see, Arsel 1954 and Savcı 1954a.

Intra-party democracy stands as another crucial theme for *Forum* writers. For *Forum*, “the Democratic Party stands exactly within the absolutist tradition of the single party era... that we do not feel ourselves in a multi-party political environment” (Savcı 1955d:9). They argued that firstly, there were no fair and free elections within the party. Secondly, the ideas and decisions of the higher rank party officials could not be discussed freely, which implied an over-centralized decision making process. Furthermore, the candidacies for the parliament were mainly controlled by the center, which it was claimed, resulted in absolute control of the political fortunes of the deputies by the party center. And lastly, for *Forum*, the DP did not tolerate any opposition or criticisms within the party (ibid:9-11).

For *Forum*, over-concentration of political power in the hands of party leaders, and centralization of all aspects of political power in the hands of the government have always been the most crucial threats to realization of democracy in Turkey (Savcı 1954c:7-9; Feyzioğlu 1955d:9-10). As Bahri Savcı (1954d:9) states, it is most probable for inexperienced democracies like Turkey that the governments turn out to be the executive boards of the party oligarchies. Constitution of a democratic order within the political parties, in addition to existence and strength of autonomous institutions to support democracy are proposed as two fundamental precautions to overcome this threat.

Within the liberal vocabulary of *Forum*, the word “autonomy” occupies a considerable place in establishing a balanced relationship between the state and society. The autonomy of institutions such as universities, associations, trade-unions, radios, and especially the press are considered to prevent abuse of political power. Thus, as important as the opposition parties’ actions in the parliament, these autonomous institutions would check and balance the executive power. The question about “autonomy” is not only conceived negatively; it is also believed that strong and autonomous institutions might provide people with democratic conduits for participating in daily politics (Feyzioğlu 1955e:8-9).

Given the social-political character of science and producing knowledge, the university is seen as the cradle of critical thought by *Forum*. Accordingly, faculty members must be involved in daily politics for ‘enlightening’ the politicians and the masses. To achieve this end, the universities must be free

from any kind of political or fiscal pressure (*Forum* 1954g:1; 1954h:2). As it is known, the Democratic Party, by the mid-1950s, had started to lose its support from intellectuals, and the tension between the ruling cadres and intellectual circles had already started to rise. The tension reached its peak when some faculty members were removed from their posts by the order of the ministry. Most notable among them were Turhan Feyzioğlu and Osman Okyar, who were also *Forum* writers (*Forum* 1955k; Aksoy 1957a; 1957b and Feyzioğlu 1956b). As Coşar (1997:212) states, “due to its attribution of a dual identity to the university both as the cradle of scientific research and derivatively the center for intellectual contribution to democracy, *Forum* criticized the government for misinterpreting intellectuals’ political responsibility as politicization.” As against such an interpretation, *Forum* had repeatedly supported the idea of autonomous and free universities, which considers science and producing knowledge as social processes (Aksoy 1955). This has been followed by critique of the intellectuals who isolate themselves from social and political matters (*Forum* 1955k; And 1955, 1956; Aksoy 1956).

A liberal democratic regime, for *Forum*, would have no chance of survival without an independent and free press. *Forum* criticizes the DP governments for their anti-democratic attitude towards the press (Feyzioğlu 1954b; *Forum* 1955i; 1955n). Likewise the DP is denounced for using the state-owned radio as a propaganda tool⁶. By Muammer Aksoy’s words, “in modern democracies there is another power which controls the rulers:Free Press. . . if there is democracy, you will also find free press; and if there is not, there will be no democracy” (Aksoy 1957c:9). In modern times the press functions as a medium in which crucial social, economic and political developments are discussed and criticized. Therefore, it must function as an independent power and must be free from any political, especially fiscal threats⁷.

6 On the question of radio, especially see Aksoy (1960). On DP’s violation of the principle of “fair elections” through one-sided use of the radio, see Feyzioğlu (1957b and 1957c). Also see, Kocabaşoğlu (1980) for a history of radio organization in Turkey, and place of radio in Turkish political life.

7 The “Right of proof” dispute has a considerable place in the pages of *Forum*. *Forum* as an advocator of the “right of proof” sees the principle as an indispensable element of autonomy and freedom of the press. See *Forum* (1955d) and (1955p).

Economic Planning and Democracy: Towards a Social-Liberal Synthesis?

Following the decline of the economic triumph of the early 1950s, the inadequacy of DP's economic policies became one of the key themes for the opposition. *Forum* writers, especially Osman Okyar and Aydın Yalçın, had pioneered this chorus with their critical articles on Turkey's economic development. In a comparative perspective, they assessed the main shortcomings of the DP's economic policies through drawing a distinction line between developed and underdeveloped countries. For them, Turkey was to be squarely placed in the latter group. *Forum's* analysis of the DP's economic policies, and its policy alternatives would help us to differentiate *Forum's* liberalism from that of the DP's.

Forum criticizes the economic policy of the DP governments for 'lack of rationality,' which not only pays no heed to the notion of planning but also identifies planning with totalitarianism. Yet, *Forum* complains that the same government which condemns state's intervention into economic affairs constantly interrupts the so-called "free-floating mechanism" (1954k:2)⁸. For *Forum*, the government with "no rational understanding or ultimate direction of economic growth" (Yalçın 1955a:11-12; *Forum* 1954k:4, 1955a:5; 1955g:8) saw ad hoc, and mostly contradicting arrangements as main tools to overcome the economic difficulties of the day (*Forum* 1954c:6-7, 1955b Okyar 1954a; 1954b). So far as *Forum* is concerned, for the DP "the issue of economic development lacks a detailed philosophical content" (Yalçın 1956a:12).

The position of the government vis-à-vis the idea of planning is still ambiguous. Sometimes the government rejects the idea of planning through identifying the notion with totalitarianism, and declares its commitment to liberalism; on the other hand, the same government argues that they are committed to an economic plan and program. This ambiguity itself shows us that the government does not have an economic plan and program (Okyar 1955a).

After setting two main different ways of economic model in the industrialized world, namely liberalism and authoritarian/totalitarian economic orders, Osman Okyar defines Turkey as a country "which has never applied the

8 Osman Okyar (1958: 264) labels the Democratic Party's position as pseudo-liberalism.

main principles of a totalitarian economic order” (Okyar 1954a:7). Rather than being guided through a definite economic doctrine, the étatist period in Turkey was merely a consequence of practical necessities (ibid:8)⁹. But also it is a common point among *Forum* writers that in an underdeveloped country such as Turkey the faith of economic development should not be left into the hands of free-floating market mechanisms¹⁰. By Osman Okyar’s words, “in a liberal system, which gives no space to state intervention, a steady economic growth is not possible” (Okyar 1954b:8). Planning, for *Forum*, implies the necessity for a conscious and shared route towards economic development, a process which took place in the industrialized world “automatically” (Okyar 1957a:15).

Although the shift from liberal orthodoxy to use of government intervention as a remedy for economic crises in the inter-war period was a necessity, Osman Okyar states that this peculiar period implied a decisive break in the history of economic ideas (Okyar 1957a). Especially the Keynesian revolution had shown that “a free floating capitalism would not necessarily bring an optimum balance for societies” (Okyar 1957b:14).

Keynes’ ideas had great reflections on the history of economic thought and revealed that a conscious and planned government intervention into economic affairs has a function in capitalist economies. If you notice, the main objective of a Keynesian intervention **is not to destroy capitalist economic relations**. Contrary to that, the main goal is to overcome the deadlocks of the system and to better off its functioning (Okyar 1957b:15 emphasis added).

In the developing countries, the first critical responsibility of the state is to promote adequate capital accumulation (Yalçın 1956b:12; Okyar 1955b:6); and planning will be about finding the sources for that. Through measures taken both in public and private sectors, the state is obliged to rationally and systematically carry out this task (Yalçın 1956b:12). For *Forum*, there are two basic tools for overcoming the economic difficulties of the mid-1950s; two

9 “To its initiators, étatism was neither socialism nor liberalism. It was born out of Turkey’s needs and therefore represented a pragmatic compromise solution... Apart from its intrinsic contribution to economic activity, this intervention was also meant to have a certain pump-priming effect of private enterprise” (Okyar 1958: 264).

10 “For a country such like Turkey to achieve a fast growth, the limited economic resources must be used with most appropriate and rational way,” and for *Forum* the budgetary policy plays a key role in this rational plan (*Forum* 1954k: 1-2).

measures, which the DP governments had always avoided to take. The first one is provision of funds, and the second one is budgetary policies. As Okyar (1955b:7) states "in an economically underdeveloped country" like Turkey, "economic development has two prerequisites: first one is the acceleration of the capital accumulation, and the second one is the compliance of economic behaviors of individuals with rationality and capitalist mentality."

According to *Forum*, the relationship between planning and democracy is misinterpreted by the Democratic Party. Against the DP's identification of the term with totalitarianism, *Forum* stresses that a successful planning can only proceed within a democratic order. Planning process through the guidance of science of economics has become a necessity for all liberal and democratic countries (Yalçın 1955b:12; Okyar 1954b:8-9). Without participation of various sectors of the society into debates over planning, it will have no legitimate and rational grounds. Also *Forum* criticizes the DP for seeing democracy as an impediment to economic development: "Economic development must take place in a democratic order, and should not be seen as a substitute for basic freedoms" (*Forum* 1956d:3-4; also see *Forum* 1955s:2; Yalçın 1955a:11-12)

Over-emphasis of *Forum* on social justice is one of the key factors that help us to differentiate 'the early break in Turkish liberalism.' *Forum's* emphasis on social justice leaves us with a complex situation in determining the political and ideological coordinates of the journal. The Democratic Party was criticized for turning into a status quo power which defends the interests of the rich, and for abandoning the idea and practice of the social justice (Savcı 1959:6). For *Forum*, a sound social policy is both ethical, and economically rational (Talas 1955:15; 1956:10-11). "Today, in an underdeveloped country like Turkey... no one can deny the necessity for a real social justice and welfare politics," remarks the *Forum* editorial (*Forum* 1954c:6-7; Okyar 1954a, 1954b and 1955a; Talas 1955). The principle of social justice brings the issue of 'redistribution' to the agenda:

If the state retreats from the task of intervening into the process of distribution of wealth among its citizens through a firm budgetary, financial and social security policy, the groups which are economically weak would be deprived of some of their fundamental rights and instruments (*Forum* 1954e:2).

The notion of social justice is tied up with the democratic development of a given country. Thus, freedom is redefined through adding a *social dimension* to the concept:

Today the necessities of the route of our social development **fill freedom with a social content**. As the idea of respect to individual refers to the basic freedoms of the individual, the freedom of the individual implies preventing those individuals from falling into economically and socially deprived positions. Thus an understanding of freedom which does not take into consideration this social content is either living in the romanticism of 1789, or abusing the notion of freedom for preserving an economically and socially backward system (Savcı 1956:10, emphasis added).

The tie between social justice and democratic development is further ensured by the existence of free, strong and autonomous trade-unions. "In the western democracies," states the journal editorial, "trade unionism constitutes one of the most important foundations of the democratic order" (*Forum* 1954d; also see *Forum* 1955f:6; 1955o:4). Workers' rights like collective bargaining (Talas 1959:6) and right to strike stands as the fundamental democratic instruments of the unions. *Forum* writers criticize the government for using the excuse of "geographical and political exigencies" to prevent the enjoyment of these rights (*Forum* 1954e:2; 1955c:4).

Forum's Place in Turkish Politics

Forum's overemphasis on the importance of state intervention for a sound economic development, and stress on social justice made the journal's liberalism somehow imprecise. Simten Coşar notes that *Forum* is liberal for giving importance to individual and her freedoms; and for affirming the free market mechanism (*Forum* 1959:8). But she also adds that, *Forum* is 'liberal-socialist', because while giving importance to social justice, it believed that the state's existence in economic affairs must be limited with actions which are exclusively aimed at consolidating free market mechanisms (Coşar 2002:80). The critical stance of *Forum* towards economic liberalism can easily be observed; yet, it should be stressed that this stance still stands "within" liberalism. In other words, *Forum* presents a 'liberal' critique of liberalism in Turkey; a critique that endeavors to differentiate itself from the liberalism of the Democratic Party.

The intellectual framework that has been presented by *Forum* refers to a crucial break in Turkish politics. The journal tried to dissolve the solidarist-authoritarian imagination which located the individual within “a unified mass without classes and privileges”, and endeavored to replace it with “a new individualism” (Mardin 1955a:7). Within this pluralist milieu the individual could only realize herself through political participation (Mardin 1955b:11-12; *Forum* 1954b). For *Forum*, “a dictator primarily tries to destroy individuality for maintaining his reactionary and primitive rule” (*Forum* 1957a:2).

The new liberalism of *Forum* also differentiated itself from other political currents through its emphasis on the centrality of law and institutions; which, at some instances, reflects itself as a peculiar distaste with politics. Distaste with politics peculiarly found its expressions in *Forum*'s appraisal of intellectuals' social and political responsibilities. As I have pointed above, *Forum* proposes to replace the 'science' of politics and economics with 'irrational' dynamics of political competition. The intellectuals are seen as the elite 'experts' of the political process, as opposed to populist politicians. This is why the journal considers establishment of institutions that contains the political field integral for realizing its democratic vision.

The recurrent elements of *Forum*'s discourse had immediate effect on formation of the opposition's political agenda. As stated, the journal took part in active politics through the mediation of the Freedom Party and the Republican People's Party. The Freedom Party merged with the CHP, but it did not dissolve within it. In other words, the marriage between two parties helped transform the CHP. The *Forum* and former HP members brought a considerable ideological dynamism to the CHP. The Freedom Party-*Forum* circle, both before and after merging with the CHP, contributed significantly to the ideological and structural transformation of the CHP, especially in the 1960s¹¹. Articulation of the Kemalist modernization ideology with a social-liberal synthesis described the ideological stance of the *Forum* circle. This found its expression in the CHP's attempt at redefining its position as 'left-of-center' in the following years.

11 There were also some HP members who were always critical of the CHP. This group, which was led by Ekrem Alican, has never lost its critical stance towards the CHP. Alican did not deal with active politics between 1958 and 1960. However, after the military intervention Alican formed the New Turkey Party (Yeni Türkiye Partisi). For further information see, Dağcı (2003).

We can finally conclude that the basic outline of the post-1960 legal and political framework has mostly been inspired by *Forum*. This, in itself can be illustrative of the salience of the HP in Turkish politics. The formation of the Constitutional Court and State Planning Organization, liberalization of the press law, autonomy given to universities, freedom of associations and trade unions, formation of the Second Chamber in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, were all innovations based on ideas and issues debated throughout the 1950s in *Forum* pages. In fact, many figures of the *Forum* circle not only ideologically, but also individually contributed to constitution of the new legal and sociopolitical order after the 1960 military intervention. For instance, figures such as Muammer Aksoy, Turhan Feyziođlu and Bahri Savcı who were among the founders of *Forum*, as well as İlhan Arsel whose articles also appeared in the journal, happened to be among the members of the three different commissions formed subsequently (Coşar 1997:244). The crucial names of *Forum* continued to be integral figures of Turkish social, political and intellectual spheres in the following decades.

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