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## Applicability of Presidential System in Turkey

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**Abstract** - There have been many discussions on applicability of presidential system in Turkey in different period of time. Nowadays, the tension of the discussion on this topic has risen up. From this perspective, applicability of presidential system in Turkey is the main issue in this essay. The main question in this essay is whether presidential system will provide stable democracy for Turkey or not in terms of effective party number with regard to Laakso/Taagepera's Effective Party Number Index. My hypothesis related to this issue is; the more party fragmentation and effective party number a country has, the more democratic instability will happen, or the lesser party fragmentation and effective party number a country has, the more democratic stability will happen when presidential system is applied. This hypothesis is tested in countries where the presidential system is practiced by using statistical data, empirical studies, and literature review in terms of Laakso/Taagepera's Effective Party Number Index and Rae's Party Fragmentation Index. Among presidential countries, only the ones that have lower party fragmentation and effective party number lesser than three parties, have stable democracy. Then, I ascertain that Turkey has high party fragmentation and effective party number more than three according to Laakso/Taagepera's Effective Party Index and Rae's Party Fragmentation Index by using data from past elections in Turkey. Hence, I suggest that application of presidential system in Turkey will deteriorate recent democratic problems in that there has not been any stable presidential country in the world which has high party fragmentation and effective party number more than three like Turkey.

**Keywords** - *presidential system, party fragmentation, parliamentary system, effective party number, stable democracy.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

The government system is one of the most crucial elements of a country; it is the main dynamic that determines how to govern it. There are three main democratic government systems according to the principle of separation of powers: presidential system which preoccupies rigid separation of powers, parliamentary system with soft separation of powers, and semi-presidential system which has qualities from both presidential and parliamentary system. However, one of these systems in constitution does not corollary provides real democracy. In addition to constitution, election system, the structure of state and society, political history, cultural elements, an effective civil society, and free media that can check and balance the state, the understanding of universal human rights and law principles, and state tradition are some major determinants of quality of democracy. Therefore, it will be a reductionist approach if it is assumed that preferring one government system to another is the panacea for all problems with regard to democracy, law, human right violations, democratic stability, economic well-being. However, some government systems comparatively can provide more democratic stability and be more viable than others.

The main question of this essay: will the presidential system provide more democratic stability than parliamentary system with regard to effective party number in Laakso/Taagepera's Effective Party Index when the presidential system is implemented in Turkey? Will this system cause to more stable democracy

than today? As it is stated in Daniel Defoe's proverb that 'all men would be tyrants if they could' (Türküne, 2012: 127). While presidential system in USA provides stable democracy that sustains more than 200 years, why do most of presidential democracies experience unstable democracy with the same system? Is it because all the USA president have been so wise that they have caused the democratic system to sustain more than 200 years? Will Turkey get rid of military coups and authoritarian tendencies by means of implementation of presidential system?

The answers to these questions are very important in order to decide whether the presidential system will provide stable democracy or not. There is a tendency in Turkey that strong president in presidential system will result in stable executive and prevent coalition crises that is widespread in many countries which are governed by multi-party parliamentary system. However, presidents of most of the presidential countries have not backed by the support of Congress. In contrast to supposed stable executive in presidential system, they have encountered many political turmoils. Because this system is based on rigid separation of powers, they can not put into effect their decisions and policies which are anticipated from them. The rigid separation of powers causes immobilism and stagnation with minority support in legislature, particularly in multi-party systems. This is one of chronic problems of Latin American countries which comprise of most presidential countries from all over the world. This immobilism, in turn, has led political turmoils, even military coups (Mainwaring, 1995: 112- 113).

The presidential system has not fared well in most presidential countries. Among all of the presidential countries (past and present) between 1945 to 1990, only four-USA, Costa Rica, Colombia and Venezuela have stable democracy (Valenzuela, 2004; Mainwaring, 1990; Mainwaring and Shugart, 1993). All of these countries have a two-party system and less political polarization. There is not even one presidential country which has a multi-party system and stable democracy. Therefore, there is a correlation between two-party system and stable presidential democracy and vice versa. The combination of the multi-party system and presidential system is inimical to stable democracy (Mainwaring, 1990).

From this perspective, the applicability of presidential system in Turkey is the main issue in this essay. My hypothesis related to this issue is: the more party fragmentation and effective party numbers a country has, the more democratic instability will happen, or the lesser party fragmentation and effective party number a country has, the more democratic stability will occur when presidential system is applied. This hypothesis is tested in countries where presidential system is practiced by using statistical data, empirical studies and literature review with regard to Laakso/Taagepera's Effective Party Index (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979) and Rae's Party Fragmentation Index (Rae, 1967). Both of these indices are popularly used and strongly respected among academic environment in order to compare different government systems. Therefore, I will use these indices as a base to test my hypothesis and answer the main question of the essay.

## II. DEFINING STABLE PRESIDENTIAL DEMOCRACY

Before analyzing the applicability of presidential system, it is very important to define how the terms of 'democracy', 'presidential system' and 'stable democracy' are used in this article. A democracy must meet three basic criteria: firstly there should be meaningful and open competition among individuals and groups in order to establish government and elections must in practice afford the opportunity of alternation of government, secondly there must be universal suffrage which paves the way for political participation to select leaders and policies at regular intervals, and finally there should be guaranteed civil and political rights and liberties such as freedom of speech, freedom of organization, rule of law, etc (Sorensen, 1993; Dahl, 1971).

The presidential system has three defining and distinguishing features. First, the president is elected for a fixed period of time, generally four consecutive years (Sartori, 1997: 113-114). The president can not be forced to resign due to a no-confidence vote by the legislature. Second, the president is both the head of state and government. He has the ceremonial functions as the head of the state and the effective governmental functions as a chief executive (Verney, 1995: 42; Linz, 1995: 119). Third, members of the assembly are not eligible for office in the government and vice versa (Verney, 1995: 43). The origins of the two major powers of the state are electorally distinct, with the president elected separately from the assembly (Carey, 2008: 93). The president is elected independently of the legislature in the sense that legislature elections and its post-elections do not determine executive power.

A stable democracy is defined here as uninterrupted democratic longevity without any intervention of illegal and unconstitutional actors or means such as military interventions forced early elections and resignations of presidents, and dissolution of legislature, etc. The president and legislature should be replaced only during conventional and fixed elections with regard to rules of the constitution and laws. They should continue their office in fixed years like four or six years as it is determined in the constitution.

### III. PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM VERSUS PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM

Presidentialism is said to have the advantages of executive stability, greater democracy, and more limited government. The first advantages of presidential government, executive stability, is based on the president's fixed term of office; it contrasts with the executive instability that may result in a parliamentary system due to the frequent use of the legislature's power to upset cabinets by votes of no confidence or, as a result of the cabinet's loss of majority (Lijphart, 1995: 11). From this perspective, it is claimed that parliamentary system in Turkey caused democratic instability owing to no-confidence votes of legislature, particularly during coalition governments in some periods of modern Turkey: between 1970 and 1980, and 1990 and 2002. Conversely, democratic stability only occurred during one-party governments: from 1950 to 1960 (Adnan Menderes' period), 1983 to 1990 (Turgut Ozal's period), and from 2002 to recent times (Recep Tayyip Erdogan's period) (Kuzu, 2011: 92). These arguments implicitly accept that parliamentary system provides democratic stability during one-party government.

Susceptibility to frequent government changes of parliamentary systems may indeed have deleterious effects on the governing effectiveness of cabinets. However, the vast majority of parliamentary systems have considerably more durable cabinets even when these cabinets tend to be multi-party coalitions. When cabinets last for at least two or three years, the difference from guaranteed presidential terms of four or five years becomes insignificant. Moreover, parliamentary systems may give these systems the flexibility to change governments quickly when changed circumstances or serious executive failures call for new leadership, whereas the stability of presidential executives may spell dangerous rigidity (Lijphart, 1995: 12). The presidential system induces rigidity to executives since the presidents are both heads of state and government, and they are elected for fixed term of office. Therefore, in case of immobilism or deadlock between Congress and the president in the presidential system, there is no impartial mediator like symbolic king or head of state (likewise in parliamentary system) who may prevent conflicts that may lead to collapse of whole system. Lack of impartial mediator between Congress and the president as the head of the state, convert immobilism to a regime crises. On the other hand, head of the state in parliamentary systems may be an impartial mediator between parliament and prime minister, and assuage immobilism by preventing a regime crisis. During Refah-Yol Government in 1997 in Turkey, Suleyman Demirel prevented a military coup as the head of state because he mitigated the tension and crisis between government member and

opposition parties with military support due to conflicts and harsh discussions among them related to the role secularism on state(Yazıcı,2011:51).

**Table 1: The Interrupted Presidents of Latin American Presidential Countries(1985-2004)**

President and Tenure	Country	Public Support	Plurality in Congress	Reasons for Immobilism	Military Intervention	Result
Raul Alfonsin (1983-1986)	Argentina	Minority	Minority	Inability to implement policies, economic crisis, street demonstration	No military role	Replaced by an elected successor
Jean-Bernard Aristide(1991)	Haiti	Majority	Minority	Clashes between presidential supporters and opponents	Military Coup	Replaced by a military junta
Joaquin Balaguer (1994-1996)	Dominican Republic	Majority	Majority	Fraud elections and massive protests	No military role	Replaced by an elected successor
Abdala Bucaram (1996-1997)	Ecuador	Minority	Minority	Economic crisis and corruption	Military supported for Congress	Replaced by a congressional appointee,
Fernando de la Rúa(1999-2001)	Argentina	Minority	Minority	Economic crisis, allegation of corruption and mass demonstrations	No military role	Congress appointed a series of successors
Fernando Collor de Mello (1990-1992)	Brazil	Minority	Minority	Economic crisis, allegation of corruption and mass demonstrations	No military role	Impeached and replaced by vice-president
Raul Cubas (1998-1999)	Paraguay	-	-	Vice-presidential assassination and president's pardon of former army commander	No military role	Congress appointed successor in absence of vice-president
Alberto Fujimori (1990-1995)	Peru	-	-	The president shut down Congress with support of the military	The military supported the president to shut down Congress	Reelected in 1995 as president
Alberto Fujimori (1995-2000)	Peru	Majority	-	Lose of Congress support and allegation of corruption	The military played a role in president's the decision to leave office	Replaced by Congressional appointee

Jamil Mahuad (1998-2000)	Ecuador	Minority	Minority	Allegation of corruption and mass demonstrations	The military played active role in his resignation	Replaced by vice-president.
Carlos Andrés Peres (1989-1993)	Venezuela	Majority	Minority	Two military coup attempts and allegation of corruption	Military played role	Replaced by Congressional appointee
Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada (2002-2003)	Bolivia	Minority	Majority Coalition	Mass demonstrations and civilian deaths	No overt military role	Resignation and replaced by vice-president.
Jorge Serrano (1991-1993)	Guatemala	Minority	Minority	Attempt to close Congress and arrest members of the Supreme Court	The military played active role in his resignation	Resignation <sup>a</sup> and replaced by Congressional appointee
Hernán Siles Zuazo (1982-1985)	Bolivia	Minority	Minority	Economic crisis, allegation of corruption and mass demonstrations	The military played active role in his resignation	Resignation <sup>a</sup> and succeeded by an elected president

Source: (Valenzuela,2004)

Table 1 shows that the rigidity of president's tenure in presidential countries with multi-party system as in Turkey causes regime crises when presidents lose majority support of Congress and public. Presidents can not implement their policies which are anticipated from them, so this situation leads to mass demonstrations of public. These case countries prove that fixed term of office of presidents does not concomitantly provide stability to presidential countries. Conversely, in the absence of constitutional instruments like confidential vote, censure, reelection of parliament members and forming new government via elections during presidents' loss of majority support of public and Congress, non-constitutional means and actors intervene to the government crises and immobilisms like military generals.

Out of thirty-one stable democracies that have had continuous democracies since at least 1967, twenty-four countries(%77) are parliamentary democracies, three countries(%10) are other systems, and only four countries(%13) have a presidential system(Mainwaring and Shugart,1993). This situation proves that presidential system does not corollary stable democracy as it is alleged due to fixed term of presidents.

Table 2: Stable Democracies(1967-1992)

Parliamentary Systems	Presidential Systems	Other Systems
Australia(1900)	Colombia(1958)	Finland(1906)
Austria(1945)	Costa Rica(1949)	France(1946)

Barbados(1966)	United States(1788)	Switzerland(1848)
Belgium(1831)	Venezuela(1958)	
Botswana(1966)		
Canada(1867)		
Denmark(1855)		
Germany(1949)		
Iceland(1874)		
India(1952)		
Ireland(1921)		
Israel(1949)		
Italy(1946)		
Jamaica(1962)		
Liechtenstein(1918)		
Luxembourg(1868)		
Malta(1964)		
Netherlands(1848)		
New Zeland(1852)		
Norway(1814)		
Sweden(1866)		
Trinidad ve Tobago(1962)		
United Kingdom(1832)		
Japan(1946)		

**Source:**(Mainwaring and Shugart,1993)

The scarcity of stable presidential democracies is not simply a result of a few attempted presidential democracies. Out of fifty breakdowns of democracy since 1945, nineteen countries had parliamentary system, twenty-seven were presidential democracies, and four countries had other democratic systems(Mainwaring,1993).This situation shows that parliamentary system assures better chance of survival and stable democracy than presidential system because % 38 of fifty breakdown democracies had parliamentary system, %54 were presidential system and %8 were other systems.

Is this statistical weaker position of presidential democracies versus parliamentary system due to the fact that the presidential system is applied by more countries than parliamentary system? According to Mainwaring's findings; among stable democracies which have at least twenty-five years uninterrupted democracy between 1945 and 1991, only 7 of 31(%22.6) presidential democracies have endured for at least 25 consecutive years, compared with 25 of 44(%56.8) in parliamentary, 2 of 4 hybrids(%50), and 2 of 3(%66.7) semi-presidential systems (Mainwaring,1993).Therefore, when compared proportional results between presidential and parliamentary systems, parliamentary system provides approximately 3 times more stable democracy than presidential system.

When Table 2 is considered, the only USA among stable presidential democracies is a developed country in the same welfare and economic conditions as stable parliamentary democracies like Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, Japan, Germany, France,etc. Thus, it seems to be plausible to ask whether the stronger democratic stability position of parliamentary democracies versus presidential democracies comes from economical and welfare reasons since parliamentary democracies have better welfare and economic well-being than presidential countries. This hypothesis may cast doubt on the claim that parliamentary system offers better stable democracy than presidential system.However, Stepan and Skach's study about fifty-three non-OECD countries that experienced democracy for at least one year between 1973 and 1989

refutes directly this hypothesis as it is seen in Table 3. Out of fifty-three countries, twenty-eight were pure parliamentary, twenty-five were pure presidential, and none were either mixed or semi-presidential. Only five of twenty-five pure presidential democracies(%20) were democratic for any ten consecutive years in the 1973-89 period; but seventeen of the twenty- eight pure parliamentary systems(%61)were democratic for any ten-year span in the same period. Parliamentary democracies had a rate of survival more than three times higher than that of presidential democracies among non-OECD countries. Pure presidential democracies were also more than twice as likely as pure parliamentary democracies to experience a military coup(Stepan and Skach,1993).This study shows that parliamentary system provides much more stable and uninterrupted democracy than presidential system even if countries do not have economic prosperity and well-being. Consequently, fixed terms of office in a presidential system do not generate stable and uninterrupted democracy since parliamentary democracies are much more stable democracy, although this system does not guarantee fixed terms of government. Therefore, the arguments that presidential system will provide much better democratic stability and prevent military coups if this system is implemented in Turkey, are not supported by empirical studies and statistical comparative data. In this perspective, this system will make Turkey's current democracy problems get much worse than today.

**Table 3: Universe of the 53 Non-OECD Countries that were democratic for at least one year between 1973 and 1989, and the percentage of all the Countries from this set continuously or have military coup**

Situation of Countries	Pure Parliamentary	Pure Presidential	Semi-presidential or Mixed
Total non-OECD countries that are democratic for at least one year between 1973 and 1989	28	25	0
Number of countries from above set continuously democratic for ten consecutive years in this period	17	5	0
Democratic Survival Rate	% 61	% 20	NA
Number of non-OECD Countries between 1973 and 1989 set having experienced a military coup while democracy	5	10	0
Military Coup Rate	% 18	% 40	NA

**Source:** (Stepan and Skach,1993)

Another claim about the advantages of a presidential system is that because the responsibility and authority come together explicitly in the president, constituency can make better and accurate decisions(Kuzu,2011:99). However, the responsible authority for the failures of government is also overt in parliamentary system. For example, after 2001 economic crisis in Turkey, electorates made all coalition parties in the government drop under %10 election threshold by not voting for them, even though all of these parties had had much more votes than that of the previous election. Thanks to mass media and technological advances, citizens can analyze closely the policies of governments and decide which

government ministers are responsible for the negative outcomes of these policies even in a coalition government. Conversely, during deadlocks and immobilisms in presidential system, only are the presidents perceived to responsible for the results, and other Congress members and secretaries who may be the main reason for the deadlocks or failures can escape from the responsibilities.

Due to the fixed term of office, the presidents can not be replaced apart from impeachment, which is not an efficient instrument owing to the difficulty to reach such majority of Congress, although they have lost their legitimacy and popularity among the public(Yazıcı,2011:44). Therefore, the constituency has to wait the end of tenure of fixed years of presidents even though they desire to get rid of the presidents immediately. So, the presidents can not be replaced on time even though the responsibility of government failures become clear. On the other hand, in addition to impeachment, the parliamentary system has some additional constitutional and effective instruments like motion of censure, early elections, mediation of head of state between legislature and executive, and dissolution of parliament. Accordingly, unpopular and fallacious governments may hold responsible before the end of their normal tenure. According to Yazıcı, this flexibility of parliamentary system obviated the deadlock between Refah-Yol Government and parliament in 1997 by establishing Anasol-D government via censure. If Turkey had had presidential system during the same situation, the deadlock would not have been solved owing to lack of constitutional devices in presidential system, and another military coup may have occurred before waiting for the end of president's tenure(Yazıcı,2011:45).

Another argument about the advantages of the presidential system is said to be that strict separation of powers in presidential system means limited government-an indispensably protection of individual liberty against government tyranny(Lijphart,1995:14). However, separation of powers doesn't match up with political reality. Recently, it has routinely been violated and nearly outmoded(Teziç,2014:475). In presidential system, both the president and legislative derive their power from the votes of the people in free competition(Linz,1995:120). Therefore, Congress is forced to take a stand against the president, and the weakness of the system is magnified by the fact that though legislature can seek its own elevation only by discrediting him, it can not destroy him due to the fixed term in office of the president. The result of the system, normally, is to dissipate strength rather than to integrate it(Laski,1995:76). Thus, presidential system is generally more prone to immobilism than parliamentary system, particularly when the president has the minority support of the Congress. Because of the fixed electoral timetable, the system has no way of dismissing the president except for impeachment which is only used for criminal events of the president, even if Congress and public massively opposed to the president. Conversely, presidents lack tools for implementing their policies during periods of deadlock between legislative and executive. Because the system bar immediate reelection of both legislative and executive, they are lame ducks. They can not dissolve the Congress and call for new elections during deadlocks and immobilisms, while the most prime minister can use these instruments in parliamentary system. In conjunction with the lack of a vote of no confidence like the one in parliamentary system, the absence of this threat serves as an incentive to party indiscipline in many presidential systems. As a result, presidents generally become incapable of implementing a cohesive policy package owing to their lack of support in Congress. During this deadlock, no other legal actors or means can resolve the problem playing within democratic rules of the game. In many cases a coup appears to be only means of getting rid of an incompetent or unpopular president. Thus, the effort to get rid of one incompetent or unpopular person can destroy the regime(Mainwaring,1990). Table 1 provides many cases of deadlocks and their negative results. For instance, while former Ecuador president Abdala Bucaram was forced to resign due to collaboration of Congress and military during

deadlock, former Peru president Alberto Fujimori shuttered Congress in 1992 with the help of military during immobilism and deadlock (Valenzuela, 2004). Consequently, because presidential system has a structure that is prone to immobilism and deadlocks mainly due to rigid separation of powers and lack of legal means and instruments to solve them, unconstitutional actors or devices are recruited either by presidents or Congress.

#### IV. TURKEY'S POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM AND PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

According to Stepan and Skach, there were forty-three consolidated democracies in the world between 1979 and 1989. Excluding the mixed cases of Switzerland and Finland, there were thirty-four parliamentary democracies, two semi-presidential democracies, and only five pure presidential democracies. They recruited Markku Laakso and Rein Taagepera's index of effective party number to measure effective number of political parties of these forty-one stable democracies. As it is reflected in Table 4; out of the thirty-four parliamentary democracies, eleven countries had between three and seven effective party number while twenty-three countries had fewer than three effective party number. Both of the semi-presidential democracies had between three and four effective political parties. However, no stable presidential democracy had more than 2.6 effective party number. These findings indicate that stable parliamentary and semi-presidential democracies can be associated with more than three effective party number in their legislatures, while stable presidential democracies do not survive with more than three effective party number in Congress. More than three effective party number means the possibility of multiparty coalitional behavior that facilitates democratic stability in context of numerous socio-economic, ethnic, and ideological cleavages and of copious parties in the Congress (Stepan and Skach, 1993).

**Table 4: A Laakso/Taagepera Index of Effective Political Parties In The Legislatures Of Continuous Democracies (1979-1989)**

Parliamentary	Parliamentary	Semi-Presidential	Semi-Presidential	Presidential	Presidential
3.0 or more parties	Fewer Than 3.0 Parties	3.0 or More Parties	Fewer Than 3.0 Parties	3.0 or More Parties	Fewer Than 3.0 Parties
West Germany 3.2	Kiribati	France 3.2	-	-	USA 1.9
Norway 3.2	Nauru	Portugal 3.6			Colombia 2.1
Sweden 3.4	Tuvalu				Dominican Republic 2.3
Luxembourg 3.4	Botswana 1.3				Costa Rica 2.3
Israel 3.6	Santa Vincent 1.4				Venezuela 2.6
Netherlands 3.8	Botswana 1.3				
Italy 3.9	Dominica 1.5				
Papua New Guinea 4.0	Jamaica 1.5				
Iceland 4.3	Bahamas 1.6				
Danmark 5.2	Trinidad and Tobago 1.6				
Belgium 7.0	Barbados 1.7				
	St. Lucia 1.7				
	New Zealand 2.0				
	Canada 2.0				

	United Kingdom2.1				
	India2.1				
	Greece2.2				
	Austria2.5				
	Australia 2.4				
	Solomon Islands2.5				
	Mauritus 2.5				
	Spain2.7				
	Ireland2.7				
	Japan2.9				

**Source:** (Stepan and Skach,1993)

Mainwaring's study in Table 5 also supports the findings of Stepan and Skach in Table 5. According to Mainwaring's study; all of four stable presidential democracies have low indices of party fragmentation and have under three effective party number. Venezuela, which has the most fragmented party system among the stable presidential democracies, nevertheless has a less fragmented party system and effective party number than all instable presidential democracies. The correlation between lower party fragmentation and effective party number with stable democracy is striking. There are reasons to accept that this correlation is not accidental, that the combination of presidential system with multi-party system makes it more difficult to achieve stable democracy(Mainwaring,1990).

**Table 5: Party System Fragmentation and Number of Effective Parties in Presidential Democracies and Mean Share of Seat in Lower Chamber Controlled by President's Party**

Stable Presidential Democracies	Party System Fragmentation (Rae Index)	Number of Effective Political Parties (Laakso/Taagepera Index)	Mean Share of Seat in Lower Chamber Controlled by President's Party
USA	0.475	1.90	%45.8
Costa Rica	0.592	2.45	%50.9
Colombia	0.521	2.09	%52.2
Venezuela	0.620	2.63	%49.9

**Source:**(Mainwaring,1990)

The fewer effective number of political parties, particularly two-party systems, is peculiar to the countries' political history and are not necessarily a desideratum. They tend to hinder the building of coalition governments, thus making it difficult to establish coalitional forms of government(Lijphart,1989). Nevertheless, having a two-party system does not entirely resolve the problems of immobilism, executive and legislative deadlocks and weak executive power, but it increases the likelihood that the president will enjoy majority backing in Congress and hence lessens the likelihood of impasse between presidents and Congress(Mainwaring,1990). Therefore, it is not accidental that president's party in all stable presidential democracies have approximately %50 of control of Legislative and fewer effective party number than three according to Laekso/Taagepera Index as it is obvious in Table 5.

The only presidential democracy with a long history of constitutional continuity is the United States

while the vast majority of the stable democracies in the world today are parliamentary systems(Linz,1995:118). From 1810 through 2007, the nineteen Latin American presidential countries designed 231 different constitutions(Cheibub, Elkins and Ginsburg,2011) in order to sustain a stable democracy, but most of them failed. Why has USA maintained stable democracy with a single constitution while most of Latin American countries have failed with the same system although they have tried more than 231 constitutions? According to Duverger; we can not find out the answer in USA constitution(Duverger,1994:84). While the president strongly claims to plebiscitary legitimacy, the legislators can also claim this legitimacy. Under such circumstances, who has the stronger claim to speak on behalf of the people: the president, or the legislative majority that opposes his policies? Because both of them derive their power directly from the votes of the people in a free competition among well- defined alternatives, a conflict is always possible and at times may erupt dramatically. There is no democratic principle on the basis of which it can be solved in the system.It is, therefore, no accident that armed forces were often tempted to intervene as a mediating power in many presidential democracies. The uniquely diffuse character of USA political parties is the main reason to explain how American political institutions and practices have achieved this success. Unfortunately, the American case is an exception; the development of modern political parties,particularly in socially and ideologically polarized countries, generally exacerbates rather than moderates conflicts and immobilism between the legislature and the president(Linz,1995:119-120).

**Table 6: Percentage and Numbers of Democrat and Republican Parties' Seats in the House of Representatives Between 1980 and 2006**

Electio n	Electio n Type	Presiden t	President's Party	Percentag e of Democrati c Party Votes	Percentage of RepublicanPa rty Votes	Plurality in Seats in House	House Seats Won by Majorit y Party
1980	General	Ronald Reagan	Republican	% 50	% 48	Democratic Party-51	243
1982	Mid- term	Ronald Reagan	Republican	% 55	% 43	Democratic Party-101	268
1984	General	Ronald Reagan	Republican	% 52	% 47	Democratic Party-71	253
1986	Mid- term	Ronald Reagan	Republican	% 55	% 45	Democratic Party-81	258
1988	General	George Bush	Republican	% 53	% 46	Democratic Party-85	260
1990	Mid- term	George Bush	Republican	% 53	% 45	Democratic Party-100	267
1992	General	Bill Clinton	Democratic	% 51	% 46	Democratic Party-82	258
1994	Mid- term	Bill Clinton	Democratic	% 45	% 52	RepublicanPart y- 26	230
1996	General	Bill Clinton	Democratic	% 49	% 49	RepublicanPart y- 20	227
1998	Mid- term	Bill Clinton	Democratic	% 48	% 49	RepublicanPart y-	223

						12	
2000	General	George W. Bush	Republican	% 48	% 48	RepublicanPart y- 9	221
2002	Mid-term	George W. Bush	Republican	% 46	% 51	RepublicanPart y- 24	229
2004	General	George W. Bush	Republican	% 47	% 50	RepublicanPart y- 30	232
2006	Mid-term	George W. Bush	Republican	% 52	% 46	RepublicanPart y- 29	231

Source:(Cook,2006)

As it is reflected in Table 6, the president's party has not had majority support of the legislature. The loose-disciplined two-party system of USA prevents presidents to have the guaranteed support of Congress although his party controls the majority of it. This party system is the main reason why USA presidents can not abuse their power and show authoritarian tendencies even if their parties control majority of Congress. As Sartori points out, because USA electoral system enables public to directly determine their candidates without authority and permission of political party leaders, every representative prioritize local preferences of his electorate in every vote in the legislature by thinking of how he can make electorate be satisfied with his votes, not political party leader, or even the president from his party(Sartori,1997:121). This situation is counter-flow road since opposition party leaders also can not dominate over their party's legislative which facilitates presidents to find support in legislature even if he has minority support. As seen in Table 6, the presidents' party has no lesser than %43 of all seats. The difference between president's party and opposition party representatives is generally between nine and fifty representatives, only in the most extreme case it is 101 representatives. Therefore, presidents can find additional support from opposition party legislatures due to a loose two-party system.

In a two-party system like USA, competition tends to be centripetal to win a majority because the parties should win votes from the center of the political spectrum. Loose and catch- all parties which generally have a centrist and moderate orientation tend to dominate the electoral preferences. These features usually favor moderation and compromise, and they, in turn, strengthen the likelihood of stable presidential democracy(Levine,1973; Rustow,1955;Sartori,1997). Therefore, only under special conditions, presidential system provides stable democracy when we look at the panoply of problems and deadlocks of many unstable presidential democracies. The two-party system, loose parties, and exceptionally limited ideological polarization have contributed to making USA have a viable and stable presidential democracy(Riggs,1988).

The tendency of president's minority support of Congress and immobilism is an acute problem in multi-party presidential democracies, particularly with high fragmented party systems. Under these circumstances, the president is likely to face a majority opposition in Congress, enacting laws and implementing his policies are inclined to be difficult. Accordingly, immobilism and impasse between the president and Congress often occur with potentially deleterious consequences for democratic stability. Protracted conflicts among two major powers of state generally lead to serious

regime crises(Mainwaring,1990).

These studies and findings support and substantiate my hypothesis that the more party fragmentation and effective party number a country has, the more democratic instability will happen, or the lesser party fragmentation and effective party numbers a country has, the more democratic stability will occur in a presidential system. Among more than thirty presidential democracies, only countries which have fewer than three effective party number, according to Laakso/Taagepera Index,have experienced consolidated and stable democracy. The survival rate of a presidential system is inversely proportional to its increasing effective party number in the legislature. Therefore, it is utmost importance of determining effective party number before deciding to implement presidential system in Turkey.

Douglas Rae's party fragmentation index is a strong and popular index in order to determine party fragmentation of a country's legislature. The Rae index is derived by squaring each party's share of seats in legislature and subtracting the sum of all these squares from 1. The formula can be expressed as follows:

$$F=1-\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2$$

F is the index of fragmentation expressed in seats, n is the number of parties, and  $p_i$  is the proportion of seats held by i party in legislature. A low number close to 0 means that a few parties control a large majority of seats in the legislature, while a high number close to 1 indicates the opposite. 0 means absolute unity(one-party system) whereas 1 shows absolute fragmentation(Rae,1967:53-64).

According to general election results in 2015 in Turkey, Justice and Development Party(AKP)gained 258 seats, Republican People's Party(CHP) secured 132 seats, Nationalist Movement Party(MHP) had 80 seats, and People's Democratic Party(HDP) obtained 80 seats in the parliament which always comprise of 550 representatives in total(Yüksek Seçim Kurulu,2015).Thus, AKP had  $258/550=0.47(\%47)$  , CHP had  $132/550=0.24(\%24)$  , MHP had  $80/550=0.145(\%14.5)$ , and HDP had  $80/550=0.145(\%14.5)$ proportion of seats of the parliament.When I add together the squares of each party's share of seats, the result is  $0.47^2 + 0.24^2 + 0.145^2 + 0.145^2 = 0.32055$ , so  $F=1-0.32055=0,67945$ . As a result, the party fragmentation of Turkey is 0,67945 which is closer to 1(absolute fragmentation) rather than 0(absolute unity) which means it has higher party fragmentation than all stable presidential democracies in Table 5.

Markku Laakso and Rein Taagepera's Index of Effective Party Number, which can be calculated from the Rae's Party Fragmentation Index through a simple algebraic transformation, has also been used widely in academic environment as a strong index. The effective party number is derived by squaring each party's share of seats in the legislature, adding all of these squares, and dividing 1 by this number. The formula for calculating the effective party number(EPN) is:

$$EPN=\frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}=\frac{1}{1-F}$$

where EPN is the effective party number expressed in seats of the legislature, and  $p_i$  is the proportion of seats held by i party. If every party has an equal number of seats, the number of effective parties is equal to the number of parties that have seats. If two equal parties control a large majority and a third has fewer

seats, EPN is equal to some numbers between 2 and 3, indicating the domination of the two largest parties, but the presence of a third smaller competitor (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979). With respect to this formula,

$$\text{Turkey's effective party number (EPN) is } \frac{1}{1-0.67945} = \frac{1}{0.32055} = 3.11963812$$

Thus, according to Laaekso/Taagepera Index, Turkey's effective party number is approximately 3.12. From this perspective, probability of survival of presidential system in Turkey, if implemented, is rather difficult because its effective party number is higher than that of all stable presidential democracies in all over the world, as it is obvious in Table 4 and 5; there is no presidential democracy which has more than three effective party number according to Laaekso/Taagepera Index among all presidential democracies.

**Table 7: Party System Fragmentation and Effective Party Number in Turkey According to General Election Results in 2015**

Political Party	Number of Seats in Parliament	Proportion of Seats in Parliament
AKP	258	0.47
CHP	132	0.24
MHP	80	0.145
HDP	80	0.145
Party Fragmentation (Rae Index)	0.67945	0.67945
Effective Party Number (Laaekso/Taagepera Index)	3.11963812	3.11963812

Because Turkey has nearly 3.12 effective party number, this means that it has more than three party domination of the parliament and has also the presence of smaller parties. If presidential system is implemented, the president's party rarely will enjoy a majority in the legislature. Subsequently, interparty coalitions are essential to attain majority. However, as Mainwaring points out, coalitions to support a candidate in presidential elections usually do not cause stable base of legislative support as coalitions to form a government in a parliamentary system. In a parliamentary system, the coalition parties effectively play role to choose the cabinet members and the prime minister. On the other hand, the responsibility of forming the cabinet rests overwhelmingly on the president rather than parties. The president may have made prior agreements with the parties to support him/her, but these agreements are not as binding as they would be in a parliamentary because presidents are freer to dismiss and reappoint the cabinet than prime minister, and they continue to rule although coalition parties cease to support the government (Mainwaring, 1990). However, in a parliamentary system, the prime minister has to cooperate with coalition partner if he wants to maintain the government. Therefore, presidential coalitions are more prone to dissolve. When presidents lose majority support of the legislature, they will continue to rule for a fixed term of office. With rigid separation of powers and minority support of the legislature, they can not implement their policies and make legislature enact his desired laws which generally leads to impasse and deadlock between presidents and legislature. Because this system has no institutionalized means of resolving deadlocks like censure and early elections, deadlocks induce regime crises which will destroy all system. Many Latin American presidents with minority support of legislature, rely on the military to help intimidate

representatives into supporting his policies; so the military displaces parties as pillars of support. Conversely, the legislature collaborates with military to overthrow presidents. Moreover, either presidents or legislatures attempt to mobilize the masses to offset lack of congressional support as in many cases in Table 1. Therefore, if presidential system is implemented in Turkey, it will produce the same problems, deadlocks and immobilism between presidents and legislature due to high effective party number and party fragmentation which will generally make them have minority support of legislature. From this perspective, this system will get worse democratic stability of Turkey since there is not even one case presidential country which has stable democracy with effective party number more than three according to Laaekso/Taagepera Index. Today, Turkey has four consolidated effective parties which gain more votes than %10 election threshold. While AKP, CHP, MHP, and HDP had %87 majority of constituency support in total in 2007 general election, it reached %95,5 majority of electorate support in 2011 general election. These results prove that Turkey has four consolidated effective parties (Özbudun, 2011:64-65). This trend continued in 2015 general election since those parties secured %95.23 of all electorate votes. Therefore, when presidential system is applied, presidents will generally need support of at least two effective political parties in legislature which requires coalition support for them. They will need coalition parties support in order to implement their policies. However, when coalition partners are dissolved due to disagreements, the government will breakdown and a new government can be formed or hold early elections in a parliamentary system; but presidents will continue to rule in a presidential system because this system has not got these institutionalized means like early election or reforming a new government. Even if the president's political party continue to support him, he will have minority support in the legislature and can not implement his policies. The president will use his veto power in order to stop legislature's actions and proposed law drafts that aim at pressing him which concomitantly induces impasse and immobilism. Under these circumstances, owing to lack of constitutional instruments in presidential system like censure and fixed term of office, it is likely that unconstitutional actors and means like military will intervene to the process as it is seen in many samples in Table 1 in many Latin American countries since Turkey has military coup tradition as well.

One of the most significant and constant defects of Turkish political system is polarization. This polarization has been based on division and conflict of center (secular)- periphery (Islamists) for a long time; Turkish-Kurdish and Alawite-Sunni added to this polarization over a period of time (Özbudun, 2011:72-73). After 2007 general elections, center-periphery based polarization begins to fade away since race-based division has come to forward. This transformation shows that race-based rising polarization is at the center of the Turkish political system. All of these polarization factors seem to affect future political system by influencing the quality and architecture of democracy (Kiriş, 2011). This high level of polarization and fragmentation will increase intensity of impasse and conflicts between president and legislature in Turkey which facilitates the probability of regime crises due to strict separation of powers in presidential system.

## V. CONCLUSION

Turkey's democratic problems are because of Turkey's peculiar conditions, not the structural problems of the parliamentary system. There are copious stable parliamentary countries with multi-party system. When government systems are compared, presidential system has the worst democratic record in terms of rate of military coup and uninterrupted democracy. Out of all presidential democracies, only USA, Costa Rica, Colombia and relatively Venezuela (it experienced two military coup attempts in 1992 after

a long period of stable democracy) experienced consolidated and stable democracy. All of these countries have fewer than three effective party number and lower party fragmentation. Among more than thirty presidential democracies, there is not even one case country that has more than three effective party number. Because the more party fragmentation and effective party numbers a country has, the lesser legislature support presidents will have. This situation leads to deadlock and immobilism since presidents can not implement their policies with lack of Congress support, and the legislature can not enact laws due to impassable veto power of the presidents in addition to lack of constitutional instruments to solve deadlocks of presidential system like mediation of head of state, censure and reviewable elections. Under these circumstances, presidents maintain to rule as a result of fixed term of office without support of legislature, and they can not enact laws for their policies. Therefore, governmental crises can turn into regime crises in presidential system which are more easily preventable in parliamentary system. Consequently, unconstitutional actors and means intervene in the process. As a result, if presidential system is implemented in Turkey with its high party fragmentation and effective party number, current democratic problems of Turkey will deteriorate since there is not any stable presidential democracy with such a highly effective party number in the world. When I take into account of Turkey's poor democratic performance with a parliamentary system which provides nearly three times better democratic survival and stability than presidential system all over the world, its democratic problems will exacerbate with presidential system. Implementing presidential system which provides the least democratic stability of all democratic systems will not be a panacea for Turkey. Therefore, current democratic problems of Turkey should be better solved in parliamentary system by means of generating strong civil society, free media, and improvements in political party system.

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