

# CULTURE OF TOLERANCE IN THE IDEOLOGY OF THE TURKISH JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY

PhD MUNA HAMDI HIKMAT

*College of Political Science, University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq; research field: Political thought*

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## ABSTRACT

*The study focused on the role of the Turkish Justice and Development Party in establishing the values of tolerance in Turkish society. This study is based on the assumption that the party has the ability to instill a culture of tolerance within the Turkish society on the regional and international levels, Because of his flexibility in presenting his ideas that did not contradict or clash with the values of secularism, and contributed to those ideas of the advancement of Turkish reality, and push its foreign policy to play regional and international roles.*

*The AKP represents the moderate Islam, and the success of the party is due to the enlightened thinking of the party leaders, which gained a growing popularity that enabled it to reconcile the religious desires of the oppressed people, Who adhere to secularism in an extreme manner.*

**Keywords:** *Culture of tolerance • ideology • Turkish Justice and Development Party*

## INTRODUCTION

Tolerance is a feature of democratic societies based on respect for and acceptance of the other and recognition of their rights and freedoms. Tolerance is the mechanism through which we can bring about the peaceful coexistence of the components of one society through dialogue and acceptance of the other. Turkish society differs from other societies in the region in terms of diversity, diversity, and differences among its components.

And the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP) since taking office in 2002. It seeks to preserve the Turkish nation as a single bloc by maintaining that diversity and rejecting the policy of discrimination. Therefore, the party adopted a policy of openness through the launch of reform programs within Turkey to address the phenomenon of diversity and differences in all its dimensions and social, political and religious problems and to conduct a peaceful democratic political process based on tolerance for the other.

The problem of the study lies in the extent to which the AKP, through its opening policy with the Turkish internal community and at all levels, has succeeded in bringing about a culture of tolerance at the internal and external levels of Turkey.

To answer these questions, we proceed from the premise that the Turkish AKP has been able, more than any other secular party, to establish a culture of tolerance at the Turkish, regional and international levels because of its flexibility in presenting its ideas that do not contradict or clash with each other . And to promote Turkish reality and push Turkey's foreign policy to play regional and international roles.

To prove the hypothesis of the study, we will try to answer the following questions:

- 1\_ What do we mean by tolerance?
- 2\_ What are the conditions of origin and establishment of the Turkish Justice and Development Party?
- 3\_ What is the tolerance culture adopted by the party to preserve the Turkish nation as a single bloc, which established a broad popular base among different segments of Turkish society.
- 4\_ What is the tolerance culture pursued by the party in its relations with regional and international relations?

The first topic: The linguistic and the traditional meaning of the concept of tolerance

The first requirement: the linguistic meaning of tolerance

## **I. WESTERN LINGUISTIC MEANING OF TOLERANCE**

Tolerance is derived from the Latin words "tolere", which means suffering and suffering, and "tolerantia" means leniency. (1) Tolerance in English is used to mean one's willingness to tolerate beliefs, practices, and customs that differ from what is believed, and this term is used to describe or practice the act of tolerance. (2)

Although tolerance is different in terms of Latin or English origin, they carry the same meaning (endurance and coexistence) with unacceptable and incompatible things for peaceful coexistence. (3)

## **II - ARABIC LINGUISTIC MEANING OF TOLERANCE**

Tolerance is a language derived from the permissibility of any good, forgiving means tolerant, and allowed and meant serious and gave generosity and generosity. (4)

And came in Mukhtar Sahih, permitted \_ permitting, permissibility: the good. It is allowed (open), and permitting, and allowing (open), too, any serious. (5)

The Arabic linguistic connotation of the concept of tolerance means compassion and generosity. A tolerant according to this linguistic connotation is a person who waives his right to be respected and respected by others. (6)

We understand that generosity and generosity do not require equality between the forgiver (tolerant) and the tolerant (open), but there is a higher hand and a gift, and a lower hand is a recipient. (7)

This means that tolerance in the origin of its language has taken different meaning and meaning from one language to another. We find that the word tolerance does not start in its linguistic connotations of the principle of equality between the individual and the different of the acceptance, tolerance and tolerance of his views and beliefs for coexistence with him, but that this individual stems from the fact that there is a person giving and another tender, unlike in Western languages in the equal number A prerequisite.

The second requirement is the conventional meaning of tolerance

The meaning of tolerance has been developed by philosophic theory, and it has become an expression of two elements: the right and the duty. Every individual has the right to believe and the right to express his opinion and defend it, and there is no justification for monopolizing this right. (8) This means that the modern concept of tolerance, as well as its religious charge of being a natural right, as well as its subsequent philosophical baggage, is in the process of acquiring its legal charge.

Therefore, the acceptance of the other, which is different religiously and culturally, according to these rights and which are fundamental freedoms for all members of society, is not an honor and a gift for the other. It is one of the duties imposed by personal freedoms and the acceptance of the other based on his participation in the existence of the truth, In all parties, not absolute and should be monopolized by some without the other. (9)

As long as personal liberty as a matter of fact is relative, it is incumbent upon everyone to recognize the right of the other to choose his faith and to express and defend it without fanaticism. (10)

In accepting coexistence with the other, there is no need to be subject to fanaticism and a feeling of honesty, generosity and supremacy as much as a duty that requires real adoption and allowing him to freely express his incompatible views.

Muhammad MunirSaad al-Din defines tolerance as an individual's ability to apply the meaning of commitment and respect for the beliefs, customs and feelings of others in treating them as human beings regardless of their color, ethnic or sectarian affiliations or social backgrounds. (11)

Tolerance is measured on a common ground based on equal intellectual dialogue between the two parties, which provides true knowledge of the other, non-discrimination and intolerance, and respect for others. However, dialogue does not mean recognition and acceptance of the views, beliefs and culture of the other in general, and this is contrary to tolerance, which means all in general, even if it is wrong and amnesty for his mistakes. (12)

The second topic: Tolerance in the ideology of the Turkish Justice and Development Party

The first requirement: conditions of formation and formation of the Turkish Justice and Development Party

After attending the safety party, which was led by Necmettin Erbakan in 1980, the politicians of the Salama Party organized a new party formed after the lifting of the political activity in 1983, called the Islamic Welfare Party led by Necmettin Erbakan. (13)

In this party he starred RecepTayyipErdoğan and became head of the party's branch in Istanbul in 1985, where he succeeded in expanding the party's base there. (14)

In 1994, the Islamic Welfare Party won local elections in several cities and RecepTayyipErdoğan won the post of mayor of Istanbul. During his tenure, he succeeded in achieving great achievements for Istanbul in terms of economic and service. He was honored by the United Nations for his contribution to Istanbul during his tenure. (15)

In 1995, the Islamic Welfare Party won most of the parliamentary seats, but this victory angered the secular establishment. Secular President Suleiman Demirel entrusted the secular parties with forming a coalition against the party. However, the coalition collapsed and the rise of Necmettin Erbakan to the post of president In 1996, and contrary to what was expected by the army and the secular establishment to succeed within one year of reducing the debt of Turkey from \$ 38 billion to \$ 15 million, as well as his approach to resolving the Kurdish problem and establish diplomatic relations

A strong coup in the international arena, and other services in other fields, which made the Turkish army afraid of the secular establishment. He created a coup in which he attended the Islamic Welfare Party in 1998 and brought Erbakan to military trial for violating state secularism and preventing him from political action For five years. (16)

After attending the Islamic Welfare Party, the latter reorganized itself under the name of the Virtue Party. Erdogan and Abdullah Gul organized the party in their intention to bring about a change in the way they worked. They organized an Islamic movement within the party to avoid a useless clash with the secular establishment. This led to a crisis that ended in dissolving the Fadhila Party in 2001 by a decision of the Turkish Constitutional Court. This provoked the urban divide among the Islamic Movement among the traditional conservatives adhering to the Arbakani thesis, which founded the Sa'ada Party, Wing A. And they have established a new party called the Justice and Development Party (AKP) under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul, the party that took power in Turkey today after its overwhelming victory in the 2002 parliamentary elections by two thirds of the votes. The government alone in its first elections, putting an end to the phenomenon of coalition governments that were in control of the political scene in Turkey. (17)

The party also won the 2007 and 2011 parliamentary elections and managed to form a government on its own. But in the 2015 elections he was unable to form a government alone, despite winning the election. (18)

In the 2007 referendum on some constitutional amendments concerning the direct election of the president of the republic by the people rather than the parliament, the party won 95.68% and won in the 2009 referendum on some constitutional amendments which included 26 legal articles by 88, 57% . (19)

With regard to the municipal elections, the party won in 2004 in this election with a ratio of 67 to 41% of the votes, and won the presidency of 58 municipalities out of 81, the number of Turkish provinces, in addition to the majority of municipalities within the provinces. (20)

In 2014, candidate Recep Tayyip Erdogan won the presidency in the first direct presidential elections in the history of the Republic of Turkey to become the twelfth president in Turkey, and the first president of the Turkish Republic elected by the people. (21)

The party emphasizes in its literature that it is a political party that respects the Turkish laws and works to preserve the Turkish nation as a single bloc by safeguarding the religious, cultural and intellectual diversity of citizens, rejecting all forms of discrimination and defending the political rights of citizens within a pluralistic democratic system that respects freedom of expression. It is a party with Islamic roots, but it adopts market capitalism, seeks Turkey's accession to the European Union, and classifies it as a moderate, non-anti-Western stream of Islam. [22]

It considers the inequitable distribution of income and unemployment the most important economic and social problem, as well as its efforts to preserve the values of the family and young people by supporting policies that serve this objective and supporting educational and training programs. (23)

The second requirement: the Justice and Development Party and the culture of tolerance

The culture of tolerance that the AKP believes in has its way into two levels:

I. Internal tolerance:

The government of the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP) has sought to achieve democratic openness through the launching of reform programs covering various economic, social, political and legal fields.

In this regard, the impact of an attempt to create a European consensus can not be overlooked by the embodiment of meaningful democratic reforms for Turkey's membership of the European Union. (24)

In this context, a third of the 1982 constitution could not be amended by the constitutional amendments of 2004 and 2010, which met the needs of Turkish society as a whole. (25)

In the framework of opening up to minorities, the Kurdish issue, which the party has given priority to, is particularly important in that it has responded to the concerns of minorities and the need to deal positively with the Kurdish problem because it recognizes that the most important conditions for Turkey's accession to the European Union are respect for the rights of minorities and respect for the right to diversity, And to respect human rights and cultural diversity, he invested 12 billion dollars in five years in nine cities of Turkey to improve the living conditions of the Kurds to reduce their vengeance on the government of Ankara, and the drop of one

Factors belonging to the (PKK). (26) as well as the issuance of laws giving

Minorities have the right to learn in their own language, so that Kurds can issue magazines, newspapers and television broadcasts. (27)

In addition, the party adopted a policy of openness towards religious minorities, improving the situation of Christians in general, while 1014 properties belonging to the Syriac community were returned during the last 10 years, allowing them to build the first church on the Turkish territory in Istanbul in a decision which is the first of its kind since more than Ninety years, in 2015. In 2011, the first Christian presence in the Turkish parliament became the Syriac minority, to be the first Christian deputy in parliament half a century ago. [28]

The party's desire for tolerance with religious minorities is based not only on the need to show respect for these minorities better than the former secular rulers of Turkey, but also to serve Turkey in its policies and foreign relations, especially with Sweden, one of the most supportive European countries to join Turkey to the European Union. (29)

As a result of the policy of tolerance towards these minorities, 60% of the Armenians and 54% of the Kurds voted for the party in the 2007 elections, as well as for Greek minorities and Christian clergy who expressed their support for the party. (30)

In the context of the fierce identity struggle between Islam and secularism, the AKP is looking for a third language in which there is no contradiction between the Islamic identity of Turkish society and the freedom of the other to express itself away from the state's arbitrariness. The content of the European meaning is largely neutral on the religious question, and thus seeks to limit the degree of secular extremism of the state in its hostility to religion by adopting conservative democracy as a compromise system in which modernity, heritage and human values are consistent. Serving individuals and supporting civil society institutions. (31)

The party emphasizes the need to modernize political life by strengthening the values of democracy and the rule of law by activating the role of the people in decision-making, rejecting political exclusion and projects based on race, sex or sect. (32)

In the area of legal reform, the party has reduced the influence of secularists on the basis of human rights by enacting laws that expand the scope of individual freedom and are compatible with human dignity, including: the enactment of a law allowing the individual to obtain information

The prohibition of torture in prisons and police stations, the granting of minorities the right to learn and teach their own language, as well as the passage of a law granting amnesty to Kurdish repentants who joined the movement of the Turkish Party, and the expansion of the right to express opinion in all its problems and rallies, demonstrations and other reforms, Issuance of citizens. (33)

It also included the party's policy of tolerance of the poor and deprived classes in the small cities and rural areas and attracting them through the provision of great services to them on the social, educational and health aspects, including: the distribution of one and a half million of coal free of the poor families living in cold areas and winter without Heating is adequate. He also built (280) thousand apartments in installments convenient for poor families and less than the monthly rent. The party also made huge strides in the field of education and health, making education free of charge, allocating salaries to the poor students, establishing 39 new universities, opening all hospitals to public hospitals, where the patient pays a small percentage of the fee. . (34)

## II. External tolerance

There is a culture of tolerance in which the party believes its way to apply to him at the external level in two levels:

### I. Regional tolerance

## 1\_ Iraq

Despite the negative attitude of Turkey in the second Gulf War and the tension in the relations between the two sides, Turkey under Erdogan took a positive attitude in the US war on Iraq in 2003, in which it stressed the importance of strengthening its relations with Iraq, Sectarian foundations, by supporting the efforts of political stability in Iraq, especially after the US military withdrawal from Iraq in 2011. (35)

This is explained by Erdogan's speech in January 2007 rejecting the division of Iraq, stressing the need for the supervision of the Iraqi government exclusively on its wealth, and to achieve that Turkey

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The policy of dialogue with the Kurds of Iraq as a means to achieve this, as well as seeking to unify the regional positions (Syria and Iran) of the Kurdish issue in northern Iraq to emerge a position supportive of the unity of Iraq. (36)

The practical application of Turkey's foreign policy trends to its handling of Iraq can be seen under the AKP government. Turkey has sought to be a transit point for Iraqi energy towards European countries. This effort was reinforced by an increase in the capacity of the Kirkuk-Jihan oil pipeline and the establishment of a natural gas pipeline from Iraq to world markets. [37]

The improvement in the relationship between Turkey and Iraq based on tolerance shows that Turkey has received successive heads of government and sought to control the Turkish border with Iraq to prevent the entry of terrorists into Iraqi territory and the opening of its border crossings for trade with Iraq. (38)

## 2\_ Syria

The normalization of relations with Syria and its transformation in the direction of cooperation and coordination have not only been economic, but have been developed and taken into account in the process of reviving peace with Israel by adopting a policy of good neutrality with the Arab-Israeli conflict, enabling them to express their solidarity with the Arab countries And the Palestinians on the one hand. And on strengthening relations with Israel on the other. [39] This is a major political success of the Erdogan government.

The Turkish position towards the Syrian revolution was characterized by balance and the attempt to persuade the Syrian people until mid-2013 to contain the Syrian crisis with points that guaranteed

the Syrian people their freedom and democracy. In order to establish their relations with the Syrian people, Turkey's foreign policy towards Syria was based on an open door policy, And the first signs of reviving the European-Turkish negotiations, which were frozen for 11 years, and opened the door to logistical support for the rebels. (40)

### 3\_ Iran

The Turkish-Iranian relations, despite their competitive nature in the Middle East, have seen some improvement in the AKP's ascendancy to power in Turkey. This has been demonstrated by Turkey's role as an effective mediator between Iran, the Western Europe and the US. (41) to resolve the differences through diplomatic negotiations to deal with the crisis of the Iranian nuclear file, by acknowledging that Iran has the right to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, while rejecting pressure and threats to deal with this crisis and reject any cooperation with the United States to prepare a military strike against Iran. Erdogan's government therefore supported the European approach to Iran,

And to try to convince Iran of a series of incentives offered by the major powers in preparation for a halt to enrichment

Uranium. (42)

## II. International tolerance

### 1\_ United States of America

Despite the deterioration of Turkish-American relations because of the Iraq crisis, this did not prevent the US administration from continuing to consider Turkey as an important strategic ally can not be underestimated regardless of the degree of disagreement with him. On the other hand, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said that his country's relationship with the United States of America is moving strongly because it is based on common values of democracy, freedom and free economy. (43)

An expression of the party's tolerance of the United States was its attempt to settle relations with the United States that followed the Sulaymaniyah incident by sending troops to Iraq for peacekeeping in response to the US demand for the contribution of some States to the peacekeeping mission in Iraq. (44) The party also sought to present itself to the Americans as a model of moderate Islam that allows for peaceful co-existence between Islam, democracy, Islam and secularism, especially that Turkey is the first country to open the Greater Middle East project, which Abdullah Gul described as " Middle East with the Eastern Mediterranean and South Eurasia.

(45) Thus, the party government succeeded in consolidating its relationship with America, so as to take their role in the American project.

## 2\_ European countries

The European position on the Turkish presidential election was clear. The German Presidency of the European Union announced its call for adherence to the democratic rules of the presidential elections. The European Presidential Council also adopted a decision to start direct negotiations on Turkey's accession to the European Union in January 2005, The government of the party led by RecepTayyip Erdogan convinced the European Union to do so by achieving a reformist track that the European side praised, through the European Commission's report on the Turkish progress in the reform process and its commitment to the Copenhagen Treaty T terms of accession to the EU. (46)

In 2009, the German and Western sides proposed a privileged partnership with Turkey, but not Actually join the Mediterranean proposed by President Sarkozy of 2007, which is Embodied in the Turkish presence at the June 2008 Summit. (47)

In 2013, France and Germany showed signs of openness, and France backed the opening of Chapter 22 on regional policies. On the visit of French President Francois Hollande, Ankara announced that the accession of Turkey would be put in a referendum in France. (48)

In 2015, the European Union and Turkey opened Chapter XVII of accession negotiations on economic and monetary policies. (49)

The agreement to limit the flow of Syrian refugees to the EU could be seen as an opportunity to strengthen Turkish-European relations to ensure Turkey's interests in exempting its citizens from a visa to Europe. On the other hand, in response to the European Union's interests in reducing the flow of refugees and repelling terrorist attacks, as well as the parties' keenness on economic relations and interests. (50)

## **CONCLUSION**

After the AKP has been leading the political scene in Turkey because of its effective strategy, which stems from the principle of solving problems and building relations with the other, whether internal or external, based on tolerance to preserve the Turkish nation. The party was able to return to Turkey under this policy stability, the stability that enabled the party to promote the Turkish economy to compete with the economies of industrialized countries, in the atmosphere of democratic reconciliation.

To verify the hypothesis, the study was confirmed to the validity of the hypothesis, as this was confirmed by the following:

- 1 - tolerance of the party with minorities in Turkey, and respond to their concerns, and the need to engage positively with them.
- 2\_ Issuing a variety of laws expands individual freedoms, and reduce the influence of those who are secular according to the requirements of human rights.
- 3 - The policy of the party, based on tolerance with the neighboring countries of the region, especially Syria, Iraq and Iran, based on the need and importance of strengthening relations with each of them in several areas, following the same policy with the United States and European countries belonging to the European Union.
- 4\_ sympathetic attitudes that the party stood with the disadvantaged and poor classes in the health and education, and other service areas.
- 5 - stand against the military establishment, through the adoption of a flexible policy confirms that the coming of the party to power and its policies are not inconsistent with the values of secularism as representing moderate Islam.

This study led to many conclusions, the most important of which are:

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) represents moderate Islam, as it aims to reform its tolerance policy.

- 2\_ Enables to reduce the role of the military in the political sphere, through the laws that have been adopted.
- 3 - The party's adoption of conservative democracy as a system of compatibility between Islam and secularism, enabled the Turkish society through which to return to its eastern identity away from the clash with the extremist military establishment of secularism.
- 4 - Increasing the popularity of the party through the reforms carried out, and based on tolerance of the other, which earns the party the confidence of the Turkish citizen, and the victory of the party in successive elections.
5. The Party has sought to strengthen its relations with the European Union and the United States, based on common values: democracy, freedom and free economy.

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