

REFLECTIONS OF HISTORICAL FIGURES IN POLITICAL SPEECHES (2014-2019)

Yulet Ecehan - Döşkaya

Political Science & International Relations/FEASS, 4

doskayay@mef.edu.tr

Pamir - Şen

Cultural Studies/FASS, 3

pamirsen@sabanciuniv.edu

Pınar - Şengezer

Political Science & International Relations/FPS, 4

pinarsengezer@outlook.com

Burak Kazim - Yılmaz

International Relations/FEASS, 4

b.kazimyilmaz@gmail.com

Zeynep Nevin Yelçe

Foundations Development

Abstract

Reflections of Historical Figures in Political Speeches (2014-2019) is a project which aims to search and find the reflections of historical figures in Turkish politicians' speeches between two dates and determine if and how the place, time and context of the speech effects that politician's politics on the preference of the usage of the historical figure or figures.

While its final purpose is completing a research which involves five most well-known politicians of Turkey, this phase of the project includes only President Erdogan's speeches reached from the institutional website of the presidency.

Keywords: historical figures, politicians, reflections, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, speeches

1 Introduction

Our project has the aim of searching and finding the reflections of historical figures in political speeches of Turkish politicians between 2014 and 2019 and understanding how, when, where and why they need to refer to some person, group or event in the history.

For the whole project, in order to restrict our area to make a fertile research we selected five very well-known politicians who are President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım, The Main Opposition Leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and the opposition leaders Devlet Bahçeli and Selahattin Demirtaş. When we collect data we use six different sources. Three of them are daily newspaper archives: Hürriyet, Sabah and Cumhuriyet; two of them are news portals: Ensonhaber and Diken; and lastly the institutional websites of the presidency, premiership and the parties' official websites.

Our plan is to make search their speeches to find a reference to a historical figure; it can be a monarch, statesman, prophet, author or poet, reverend or any other kind of person. After that analyze in which context and why that figure is used, taking statistics of the names mostly used, also the city where the speech is done and all of these create our data to work.

Our final purpose is collecting all the data about our subject from these sources. However due to the impossibility of making a research as big as that, for this phase of our project we preferred to focus on a specific person's speech, President Erdogan. Therefore for this phase we collected data from only the presidency's institutional website. Our purpose was creating a template and theorizing Erdogan's referring preferences; finding to which historical figures he refers more and which ones less, how does the spontaneous events or upcoming events or the place where he makes the speech affect his preferences on making a historical reference to a person or group or event.

After our research we found out that there are some figures who are referred by the president in all of his speeches, some figures who are referred after and/or before specific events and some figures who are mentioned just for one or a couple of times between two years. The type of event or the place that the event sets or the current political atmosphere creates differences between his choices on referring. On the process which brought us to these conclusions we used hereinbelow methods.

Another process in the Reflections of Historical Figures in Political Speeches is data entrance and how the data is organized. For this aim, we created a Google Form which includes date of speech, city or country in which the speech is made, the event in which the speech is made, the person who made the speech, the type of speech as first or answer speech, the context as elections, national/international meetings, opening ceremonies, the historical figure(s), the title of the figure(s), quotation from the related part of speech, link of the text, date of the news, source of the news and, lastly, notes of the coder. These categories are important parts of this project since, for example, dates, cities or events shape the content of speeches.

Maps, also, are created in order to show which speech is made in which city. These maps show the intensity level and observations can be made according to them. There are two maps, one of them is for speeches are made in Ankara and the other is general map to mark the all speeches. The aim in benefitting from these maps is to ease to see where speeches are made.

2 Speeches in 2015

In 2015, there are 156 speeches, which were made by President Erdogan, in presidency website and out of these 156 speeches it is detected that in 79 speeches Erdogan used some historical figures. Here, which figures were used and how these figures took place are explained accordingly the context of the speeches.

2.1 Elections / Referendums

In the campaigns for elections, as most of the politicians do, President Erdogan also visits various cities in order to get public attention to his campaign and get as many as votes from citizens to run country for a certain period. While they speak in these cities, there is an obvious behavior which is using the cities' own historical figures if there is any. Politicians are mentioning about these figures, mostly, in the beginning of their speeches during their greetings with people of the cities. For instance, when President Erdogan visited Malatya on February 21, he referred to Battal Gazi, Sadreddin Konevi and Hamido (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 21.02.2015). Just as in Malatya, in a rally in Tokat on March 29 he mentioned about Gazi Osman Pasha of Plevne and praised his efforts on the battlefield and matched his courage with the one people of Tokat have (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 29.03.2015).

During the campaigns for elections on June 7 and November 1 in this year, to criticize opposition parties and praise what his party has done so far for the country, President Erdogan quoted Ziya Pasha's poems several times. In Rize on May 11 he used a phrase from Ziya Pasha while he was saying "Eşek ölür kalır semeri, insan ölür kalır eseri" which means if donkey dies, his paddle remains

but if a person dies his/her work remains (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 11.05.2015). He basically criticizes the opposition parties by intending they have left no work behind them after they run the country in the past.

2.2 Opening Ceremonies

In the year 2015 as parallel with the election campaign, President Erdogan participated lots of opening ceremonies of newly constructed facilities. In these ceremonies he mostly refers to Ottoman Sultans accordingly with the type of construction. If the construction is a metro or underground tunnel as it was in the one of the metro line opening in Istanbul on April 19 the figure is Mehmed II (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 19.04.2015). Erdogan refers Mehmed the Second when he speaks about Marmaray, also by saying that if Fatih Sultan Mehmed passed the ships through the land when conquering Istanbul we as their descendants should pass the metro under the sea (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 05.05.2015).

Besides Mehmed II, Erdogan also refers to Suleyman I in his speeches and there is a pattern which shows that in the openings of hospitals or any kind of health-related meeting, Suleyman I is referred by Erdogan as he did on October 1 in Presidency Palace (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 01.10.2015). In order to emphasize the importance of health Erdogan uses one of his phrases which is "halk içinde muteber bir nesne yok devlet gibi, olmaya devlet cihanda bir nefes sıhhat gibi". It means that there is nothing worthless among the public as state, but health is more important than state. Although the meaning of devlet (state) is controversial in this phrase whether it implies state or chance, Erdogan uses it as state.

2.3 National / International Meetings

Since the year of 2015 is the 100. anniversary of Canakkale Battle, President Erdogan attended various conferences or meetings about Canakkale and even if the focus of meeting was not Canakkale, he, at least, mentions about it in a small piece. As it is revealed in this work, he mostly refers to Mehmed Akif and his poems. Another thing which takes part in these speeches is the Seyit Onbası's bravery in battlefield as it was the case in a rally in Karabuk on March 27 (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 27.03.2015).

As one of Erdogan's mostly used figures, Prophet Mohammed is the figure in speeches about women. Around women's day, to indicate the importance which he gave to women, President Erdogan mostly refers Prophet Mohammed and how he saw women in the society. By referring him, Erdogan simply says women are deposits from God and that's why men should protect them (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 07.03.2015).

Besides women, when it comes to minorities such as Romans, Prophet Mohammed's views on embracing humanity as a whole as he stated in the last khutbah-there is no superiority among people other than pioussness- were used by President Erdogan. He means race, skin color or nationality make no difference between people in the presence of god that is why people should not be treated differently just for their some features. Yunus Emre, who was one of the prominent figures in Turkish culture in the case of tolerance, also was oftenly mentioned when Erdogan addressed to minorities. Not bodies but spirits of the people are crucial to understand them according to him.

Also, when Erdogan speaks in front of tradesmen, as it is seen in every meeting with tradesmen in 2015, he refers Ahi Evran to remind principles of being a tradesman (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 25.03.2015). These principles are, simply, be generous, keep your gate always open and invite people to your table. Erdogan wants to make these principles internalized by tradesmen and for this reason reminds them often.

When the focus of the meeting is science, then the figures are nearly all of the known Muslim scientists or writers such as Farabi, Ibn-i Sina, Ali Kuşçu, İbn-i Haldun. This tendency to use these

people in his speeches does not change while he addresses to rectors of universities or he addresses in a prize ceremony for scientists (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 09.04.2015).

In international meetings with participation of other countries' presidents or businessmen, what stressed by President Erdogan were historical connections with the country he visited. He uses these connections to strengthen the current relations politically and, also, economically. For instance, Erdogan visited Mexico on February, mentioned about Piri Reis and Archiduke Maximillian in order to emphasis two countries historical connections (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 13.02.2015). Whether it is related with this speech or not according to a report released by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the data which was collected in 2016 shows that trade between two countries increased 5% in recent years.

3 Speeches in 2016

In this part, I will analyze the political speeches made by Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the dates between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2016. I collected data of thirty five political speeches from the presidency website and categorized them according to the context. I will touch upon some of my observations after analyzing the content and explaining common points in political speeches by giving some examples.

3.1 National Holidays

Recep Tayyip Erdogan remarks on the significance of the particular day but also, he prefers to talk about current events in holidays. Also, Recep Tayyip Erdogan praises struggle against foreign powers in Turkey's history. He reminds the enemies in the past national and international conflicts and continues with drawing attention to enemies of today. This kind of approach establishes a connection between history and increases the intensity of the argument.

Additionally, Ottoman Sultans such as Suleyman I, Mehmed II, Abdulhamid II are praised in 30th August Victory Day. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 30.08.2016) He uses historical and religious figures together in most of the speeches in national holidays.

3.2 Religious Holidays

In 2016, July 15 attempt affected the concept of the messages in religious holidays. Recep Tayyip Erdogan frequently remarks on the significance of the religious holidays in Islam and talks about their power to unite people with giving reference to Prophet Mohammed. The national and international dynamics also shape the speeches. He emphasizes the importance of cooperation between Muslims in these days and the Syrian Civil War is one of the important themes of 2016. In the light of these happenings, Prophet Mohammed is mentioned in political speeches to signify the importance of friendship among Muslims when the subject manner is about 'unity'. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 15.05.2016)

3.3 National and International Meetings

In these meetings, Recep Tayyip Erdogan uses the language effectively and he gives examples from the history according to the context. That means audience profile and the framework of conferences shape the process and determines dynamics of the political speech. In that sense, some patterns show that there are some tendencies of Recep Tayyip Erdogan when he references some particular historical figures. For example, there are some gatherings that subjects mainly "education" such as some graduation ceremonies and Recep Tayyip Erdogan refers to Mehmed II and says that he was able to conquer Istanbul despite his young age and encourages the youth population with showing Mehmed II as a role model. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 30.05.2016)

On the other hand, he also refers to “kanaat önderleri” who are advisers of Ottoman sultans and emphasize their important position in leading political leaders with their wisdom. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 06.06.2016) According to Recep Tayyip Erdogan, their teachings should unify society and these precepts are the heritage of history. Additionally, he frequently talks about Prophet Mohammed in conferences especially those subject Islam and “cooperation”. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 11.07.2016) He gives some advice to people about how they regulate their actions and take decisions parallel to Prophet Muhammad's experiences.(T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 05.06.2016) Also, he draws a relation between democracy and Islam with highlighting common points. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 18.08.2016) Recep Tayyip Erdogan justifies some government policies with referring anecdotes from Prophet Muhammad's life or his sayings. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 11.07.2016) He accepts Prophet Mohammed a unifying figure for the society against ethnic or racial differences. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 17.05.2016) If a particular speech indicates the importance of charitable foundations, he refers statements of Suleyman I in philanthropic institutions. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 13.03.2016) Last but not least, he also gives examples of four great caliphs and informs people about their leadership in some meetings to give some advice. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 08.06.2016)

3.4 Spontaneous Happenings and National/International Conflicts

July 15 Coup Attempt put its mark on 2016 and it shaped the theme of the political speeches in general. Recep Tayyip Erdogan talks about people who lost their lives while fighting for their country from terrorists and says that their position after death will be the closest stage to Prophet Mohammed's. He gives many similar speeches about this issue on many occasions such as funerals, some meetings, opening ceremonies and national or religious holidays. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 06.08.2016) He refers to Selim I when he is tackling this issue and talks about protecting the legacy of ancestors.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan mentions Prophet Mohammed when he talks about FETÖ and explains how the people in this organization misrepresent Islam in many senses. As mentioned before, he shows Prophet Mohammed as the true representative of Islam. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 30.08.2016)

One of his speeches about July 15 Coup Attempt, he refers women who struggle against FETÖ in streets and likens them to Nene Hatun. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 29.07.2016)

3.5 Opening Ceremonies

In these kinds of context, Recep Tayyip Erdogan prefers to mention the constructions or actions made by Mehmed II and some other Ottoman sultans. He compares city constructions such as subways with services that are provided by Ottoman Sultans. Therefore he underlines a bond between his actions today and activities from past. Selim I is one of the historical figures mentioned in Recep Tayyip Erdogan's speeches. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 26.08.2016)

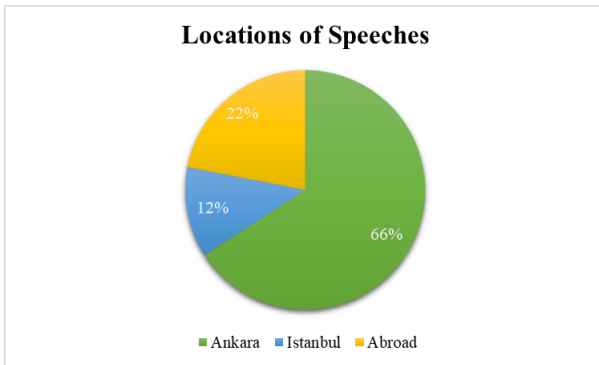
On the other hand, he prefers to choose historical figures according to the location of the event takes place. For instance, he refers Ebu Eyyub Ansari in the opening ceremony of Eyüp municipality Service Building. Recep Tayyip Erdogan states that Eyup municipality is blessed because its name is coming from this person and continues with explaining the historical grandness of this figure for Istanbul. (T.C.Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 6.05.2016)

4 Speeches in 2017

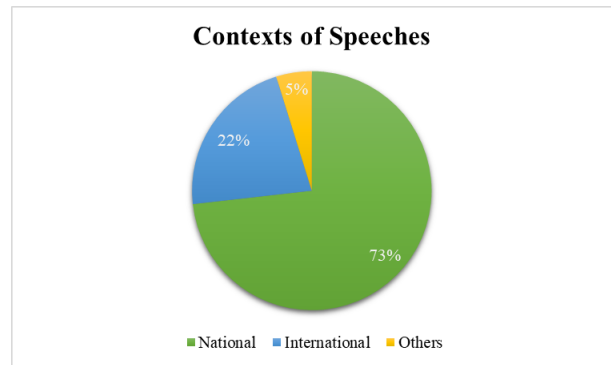
2017 was a difficult and intense year for Turkey. On one hand there were terrorist attacks by ethnic and/or religious groups (like ISIS' attack to Reina Club at the new year's day), crises with several states and/or institutions; and afterward implementations of the Coup Attempt at 15th July (trials and etc.). On the other hand there were some important political developments: Turkish referendum on presidential system, the first anniversary of the 15th July Coup Attempt and Kurdish referendum at Northern Iraq. 2017 was also a challenging year for Erdogan himself in terms of

political legitimacy, leadership and power consolidation. He strongly used the figures that are representing independence, stability, determination and unity in order to have a stronger influence on especially on the society (voters).

In 2017, Erdogan held 65,8% of his speeches at Ankara (see Figure 4.1) , dominantly at Presidency Complex at Beştepe where he stays and is seen as a sign of power by electors and members of JDP. All of these speeches (except for memorial day of Atatürk, November 10) were held in the context of national and/or international meetings (see Figure 4.2). Also, he made 12,2% of his speeches at Istanbul where once he was the mayor and he accept as the center of the civilization of Islam. Moreover, Erdogan also spoke at abroad which his use of historical figures were minimized in 2017.



(Figure 4.1)



(Figure 4.2)

Additionally, as can be seen in Figure 4.2, most of the speeches are in the context of national or international meetings. The use of Erdogan's historical figures changes meeting by meeting highly in accordance with the audience and location. First of all, he does not need to use historical figures in his speeches in abroad; if he needs he uses religious figures or one of the most powerful figures in the host country's history. For instance, in his visit to the USA he mostly used Islam and the figures related with Islam (especially, Prophet Mohammad) in order to create a common ground with the Turkish citizens of the USA (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 21.09.2017). Another example for the opposite situation is the speech in Pakistan; he did not use any hitoical figure although it was a meeting of Muslim countries (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 01.03.2017). Moreover, he uses more of historical figures when he met with people more close to society (which he has to win their hearts and minds) rather than the times he met with people who have better educational background, have stronger status and/orwho he already won. The best example can be seen in the comparison of speeches in Meetings with Mukhtarsand 9th Meeting with Ambassadors (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 04.01.2017, T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı,09.01.2017).

It can be said that Erdogan's choices of historical figures that he uses in his speeches are highly shaped by this political situation at home and in abroad, as well as other factors such as location. As it is said before, there were three major points that shaped Erdogan's speeches: Turkish referendum for presidential system (April 16), 1st anniversary of the Coup Attempt (July 15) and Kurdish referendum for the establishment of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq (September 25) (See Figure 4.3). Until the Turkish referendum, Erdogan uses mostly the figures that are supporting his slogan "tek vatan, tek millet, tek bayrak, tek din" (One country, one nation, one flag, one faith) in terms of unity, independence, cooperation and solidarity. The most used figures in this sense are Ottoman Sultans. To give an example, as a symbol of a new age and representative of youth, he uses Mehmed II in his speeches (He explains the reduction in minimum age of being a member of parliament by giving example of Mehmed II.) (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 11.02.2017). Another sultan that Erdogan mentioned is Osman I who has known as the founder and the first sultan of the Ottoman

Empire. Moreover to say, in this period (January-April 2017), Erdogan mentioned about Mustafa Kemal Atatürk only to memorialise him.

From April to July, we see that after the change of political system in Turkey, Erdogan's use of historical figures in his speeches were turned through use of religious figures immediately. Prophet Mohammad is the first striking example (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 06.05.2017). Another religious figure that is used by Erdogan is Rumi (Mevlana) as a symbol of universality of culture (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 03.03.2017). Moreover, in this period Erdogan visited abroad so often; but, as it is mentioned before, he did not prefer to use historical figures except for one example: during his visit to India, he is given honorary PhD by Jamia Milia Islamia University (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 01.05.2017). In the speech he made, he mentioned about Shah Jahan, Akbar as historical figures from India, and Suleiman I, Abdulhamid II to refer common points between Indian and Turkish history.

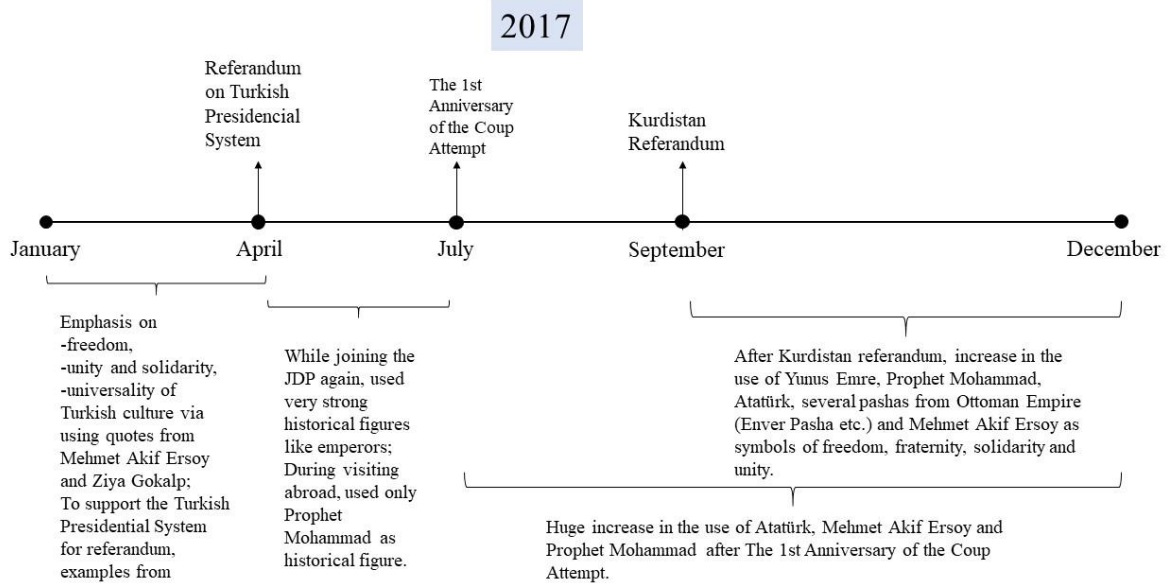


Figure 4.3

After the first anniversary of Coup Attempt (July 15), Erdogan's mentions about Atatürk, Prophet Mohammad and Mehmet Akif Ersoy are strikingly increased. Ersoy is probably one of the historical figures that Erdogan most frequently used in his speeches as a sign of independence and unity. He uses lots of quotes from Ersoy's poems, for instance to stress "independence" he quotes from Independence March. In addition, he uses Ersoy's term "Asım'ın nesli" (meaning that a strong, intelligent, religious -Muslim- and well-behaved youth) to emphasize his expectations from youth (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 18.10.2017).

Erdogan, in general, did not prefer to mention about Mustafa Kemal Atatürk if he did not have to do (like in the days like Memorial Day of Atatürk etc.). However, especially after the Kurdish referendum on independence in Northern Iraq, Erdogan started to refer to Atatürk in his speeches frequently in order to use Atatürk's approaches towards Kurds and Atatürk's approach of "National Oath" (Misak-ı Milli). In addition to this, Erdogan mentioned about several pashas from the late period of Ottoman Empire (Enver and Talat Pashas etc.) in order to reinforce his speeches on Kurds and the unity of Turkey.

To conclude, 2017 was the year of consolidation of power for Erdogan, challenger and changer year for Turkey and the World. In this year, Erdogan made his speeches dominantly in Presidency Complex at Ankara. Moreover, he used mainly three historical figures in 2017: Mehmet Akif Ersoy, Prophet Mohammad and Atatürk. In addition, he used historical figures in accordance with his audience, in accordance with the location and in accordance with the current political situation.

5 Speeches in 2018

When we come to 2018, before the elections it is found 14 speeches that the president referred to one or more historical figure. They can be categorized according to their context and similar attributions to historical figures can be seen. Especially to Mohammed, the First Four Caliphates, Ottoman Sultans Mehmed II, Selim I, Suleyman I; Abdulhamid II, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Mehmed Akif Ersoy.

5.1 National Holidays

First context we can handle is the National Holidays. Of course because most of the current Turkish National Holidays came to exist in Republican Period, it is impossible for him to not mention Mustafa Kemal Atatürk at least one time. Additionally Mehmed Akif was the most addressed historical figure in the speech in March 18, especially with his poem about the Gallipoli Campaign (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 18.03.2018).

5.2 National/International Conflicts

Secondly we can handle the context of Terrorist attacks or conflicts in or out of the country. One of them is the International Problem of Jerusalem, which is a conflict between Muslims and Jews. When he gives a speech about it he generally addresses Caliphate Omar and Saladin, two Muslim conquerors of the city. Especially Saladin is one of the historical figures who is highly respected by not only Muslims but Jews and Christians. Which makes the speech more interesting for the international listeners. The “ascension” of Prophet Mohammed which is known as started from Jerusalem and one of the main reasons of the importance of Jerusalem for Muslims, is also a subject which is referred in the speeches (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 09.01.2018).

5.3 National/International Meetings

International meetings or conferences are another area to give speech for Mr. President and his references differ according to the place or context. For instance in the Summit of Muslim Minorities his greatest reference is the Prophet again and especially he refers to his Final Sermoni. Ali and Rumi are also referred who are more (but not totally) heterodox symbols in the Muslim World. Mehmed Akif Ersoy is an important figure in his international speeches about Muslims around the world, especially when the subject is independence and having the courage to have it. (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 16.04.2018). However if he makes a speech in a conference about the relationships between Turkey and a Western European Country, he refers to the relations between Turkey and that country since the Early Imperial Era.

Maximum reference to historical figures in his speeches are done on National meetings or conferences, especially in the Party Group Meetings. Starts from Seljukian Emperors and arrives to the Republican times. Atatürk and Abdulhamid generally mentioned side by side due to the chronological order and with referring them both Erdogan makes a balance between the listeners who are his secular or nationalist electors and the listeners who are religious and conservative voters of him. While Atatürk is the greatest historical figure of the first group, Abdulhamid is a symbol for the second group and both are the figures who are the reason of conflict between two groups. To mention them together he hints that he respects to both groups and aspires the votes of both of them. However between this balance and mentioning that both of them are a part of our history, Abdulhamid has more place with the criticism of the people who called him “the red sultan” (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 10.02.2018) and the contemporary believers of this idea. We also see Mehmed Akif so much in the speeches on National meetings. Again with his many poems and passages from the March of Independence (14.03.2018).

Mehmed Akif is probably the most referred figure after Mohammed. He is generally mentioned with some pre-modern Islamic scholars or Gallipoli and Turkish Independence War. Another issue about him that the president mentions is the dream of Asım's Generation (Akif's son) and the son of another poet Tevfik Fikret, Haluk's generation (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 07.01.2018). This comparison is also one of the hallmarks of the conflicts between secular and conservative intellectuals in Turkey.

In that speeches Erdogan also refers to Ismet Inonu generally without giving his name and he talks about his regime as "Single Party Regime" and not always but sometimes he clarifies that with this saying he does not involve the period of Ataturk (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 28.04.2018), which was also a single party regime expect some breaks.

Other figures in national meetings sometimes can be some mystics like Yunus Emre or other scholars from Islamic Golden Age like Ibn Khaldun (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 09.07.2018). They are almost totally Muslims even some of them may have some heterodox tendance.

Another context is the assemblies of the provinces that he refers many times to the historical figures. He generally refers to the "ulama" who is born in that province and/or took the education or the sultans who took office as a governor in that province. For instance in Amasia Province Congress he refers to Sultans Bayezid II and Selim I and Islamic scholar Ak-Semsetdin (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 28.01.2018).. He also refers to the Biblical prophets like Abraham and Elisha in the city of prophets "Urfa/Edessa" (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 25.02.2018).

Even if it is not seen very much, some late Ottoman statesman like Ahmed Cevdet Pasha (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 06.03.2018) can find them a place in the speeches. Especially the important generals of the first World War like Fahreddin Pasha who is the defender of Madinah are also mentioned if the political area permits or necessitates (18.03.2018).

Lastly some poets or authors except Mehmed Akif Ersoy who lived in the late imperial and early republican period like Arif Nihat Asya, Yahya Kemal and Ömer Seyfettin are mentioned by the president at least one time since the beginning of the year (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 15.03.2018). It is remarkable that these poets and authors are the symbols of different ecoles and political views. After them Necip Fazıl Kısakurek's name finds a place in the same speech who is one of the mentors of the Turkish conservative ideology.

6 Conclusion and Future Work

The first step of the study, in which the speeches of President Erdogan were the main focus, ended with specific conclusions on the tendencies of Erdogan's use of historical figures in his speeches. First of all, Erdogan's use of historical figures depends on 4 variables: the location that the speech was held, the type of event, the audience and the type of historical figure, and the current situation of the politics at home and in abroad.

To start with the location, Erdogan held speeches generally in Ankara and Istanbul (see figure 6.1). Moreover, Erdogan usually chooses historical figures based on the city that the speech is held. For instance, he used Prophet Abraham during his speech at Şanlıurfa (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 25.02.2018). Also, when he talks about Istanbul he mentions Mehmed II, or about Bursa he mentions Orhan I (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 03.03.2017).

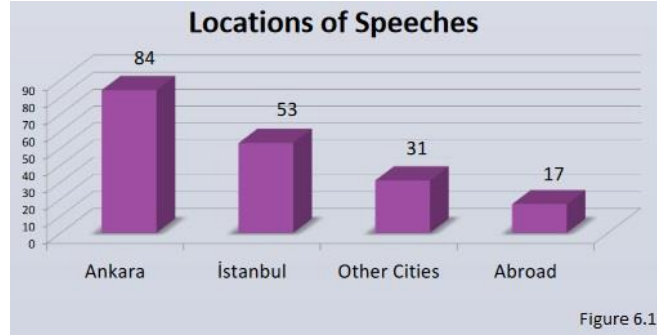


Figure 6.1

The type of event also determines the type of historical figure (if it is a monarch or a statesman). In opening ceremonies he generally use monarchs in accordance with the type of facility he opens. For instance, he uses Suleiman I in the openings of health institutions and charities (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 01.10.2015).

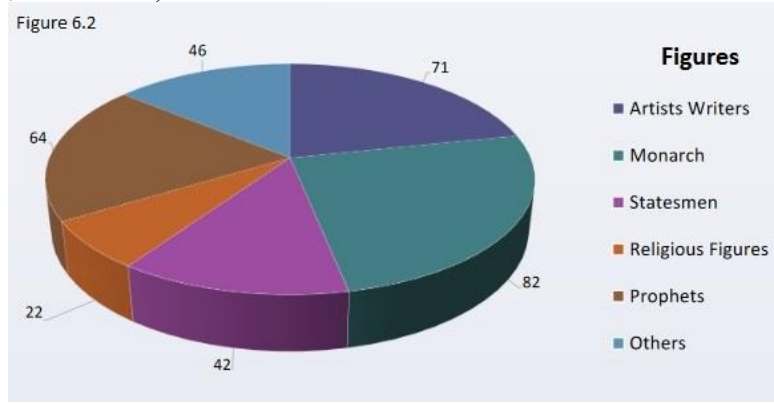


Figure 6.2

The audience is also important. If the speech is made to well-educated or high-status-having audience, the use of historical figures is minimized. Moreover, the type of historical figure can shape the use of it. For instance Prophet Mohammad is mentioned in women related issues to define the status of women in society; in case of racial or religious discrimination by others; against Islamophobia, as the true representative of Islam; and after July 15 Coup Attempt, to signify martyrdom as the closest status to the one of Prophet Mohammad life after death. In addition, Mehmed II is mentioned in cases of emphasizing the importance of youth and education. Furthermore, Mehmet Akif Ersoy is mentioned for showing the importance of independence from Western hegemony, for unity and solidarity and for the expectations from youth of Turkey.

The current situation of politics during the speeches shape the use of historical figures significantly. For instance in case of Kurdish Question, Erdogan generally refers to Atatürk's view of national unity or uses quotes from Mehmet Akif Ersoy's poems (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 18.10.2017).

In the future, we are planning to work on the next phases of our project by analyzing other political speeches from different political leaders. This kind of study gives the opportunity to compare and contrast political speeches that reflect various ideologies. That process also helps us to understand how other political leaders are inclined to use historical figures in political speeches. On the other hand, other political leaders may use different historical figures which are dissimilar to the figures that are used by Recep Tayyip Erdogan or if they refer similar people from history how they mention these figures differently from him.

Additionally, we are aiming to review news from multiple media sources to analyze how they approach the political speeches. In the next step, Kemal Kılıçdarođlu, Selahattin Demirtaş and Binali Yıldırım will be included to the project to broaden the number of political leaders. In order to collect data from different sources, we will use five different media sources, these sources selected accordingly with which political ideologies they represent. As the opposite sides Cumhuriyet-Sabah (printed) and Diken-En Son Haber (electronical) are used. Hürriyet also is benefitted since it

represents mainstream media. We are going to analyze news that subjects the political speeches made by these particular people. The collected data will help to understand the patterns and the dynamics in political speeches over the years.

To sum up, this study explains how history is included politics in today and how it shapes the tendencies of political leaders.

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