

A Review of Emzar Makaradze's Book: „The Main Issues of Turkey's Domestic Policy 2000–2024“. Publishing House: Georgian National Academy of Sciences. Tbilisi, 2025.



A remarkable and significant contribution to the Georgian academic sphere, particularly in the field of Turkology, is Prof. Emzar Makaradze's new monograph, "The Main Issues of Turkey's Domestic Policy (2000–2024)". I can confidently state that this work is the result of the author's many years of observation, conference presentations, independently published articles, and extensive experience.

In the book, an analysis of the political issues of contemporary Turkey between 2000-2024 is presented, addressing the key domestic political topics, particularly focusing on the role of the Justice and Development Party and its leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in the country's affairs.

The book is structured into three chapters:

Turkey's Domestic Politics from 2000 to 2014 (pp. 6-64).

In the first chapter, the author begins by discussing the prospects of implementing the so-called “Turkish model” in the Middle East after the “Arab Spring” (a series of mass movements across the Arab world in 2010-2011) and continues by analyzing the role of Islamic republican states, with Turkey being one such example, particularly the rise of Islamic parties to power. It is well-known that when Turkey's first president, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1923-1938), established the republic, he drew a strict line between religion and politics,

strongly opposing any leader who used religion to govern the masses. From Atatürk's time onward, military leaders, who predominantly upheld Atatürk's course, were appointed to the top positions of the Turkish Republic and firmly opposed political parties driven by religious fanaticism. However, in the 1990s, the issue of Islamic parties gained prominence in Turkey, and soon these parties came to power.

Prof. Emzar Makaradze insightfully examines all the developments in the political landscape of the Turkish Republic from 2000 to 2014, particularly evaluating President Erdoğan's policies on the economy, domestic issues, and foreign relations. It must be noted that among the leaders of the countries in the Middle East, Erdoğan stands out as one of the key figures around whom numerous global political matters revolve, not only in the region but also in the European political arena. It is no surprise that he attracts the attention of many scholars, both those who view him positively and those with a more critical stance.

The first chapter also presents an account of all the domestic and foreign political processes that unfolded in 2014, some of which raise questions about the democratic nature of the Turkish Republic. There is also a discussion on Turkey's electoral issues, specifically the role of the "Meclis" (Grand National Assembly of Turkey) in elections. The political community with similar and differing viewpoints is also explored, including figures such as Ahmet Necdet Sezer (2000-2007), who succeeded Süleyman Demirel after the 2000 elections, and the new president chose a political course of "protecting and strengthening Atatürk's principles"; Devlet Bahçeli, Vice Prime Minister Hüsamettin Özkan, Bülent Ecevit, Recep Onadi, Mustafa İlmaç, İstemihan Talay, Abdullah Gül (President 2007-2014), Ahmet Davutoğlu, and others.

Particular attention is given to a detailed analysis of the military, an issue that is of great significance to researchers interested in the contemporary structure of Turkey's military forces. For instance, the period of 2007-2012, during which military generals were involved

in political matters, is highlighted as a significant and resonant process of that era.

The first chapter concludes with the presidential elections held on August 10, 2014, which were of monumental importance for the Turkish Republic. As a result of the election, the era of a corrupt government ended, and the former Prime Minister and leader of the Justice and Development Party, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, assumed the office of President. Erdoğan continues to serve as the President of the Turkish Republic to this day.

Turkey's Domestic Politics from 2014 to 2024 (pp. 64-95).

In the second chapter of the book, the author describes the period of Erdoğan's presidential rule, constitutional changes, and the concentration of power in the hands of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). Analyzing the attempted coup of 2016 and its impact on Turkey's political system, the chapter highlights how such events, which have been frequent in Turkey's history (e.g., the coups of May 27, 1960, and September 12, 1980), marked a turning point that pushed the government towards greater authoritarianism. The analysis is grounded in factual data and clearly demonstrates how democratic institutions' functioning was constrained. The role of opposition movements and the state of civil liberties are also discussed.

The author also addresses the reduction in political pluralism, the state's policies targeting opposition parties, and the increased control over the media. Particular attention is given to nationalist sentiments and political narratives based on religious conservatism, which play a significant role in Erdoğan's rhetoric.

Another crucial topic is Turkey's economic policy and its effect on domestic political stability. The chapter describes the rising inflation, the devaluation of the Turkish lira, and economic challenges, which have led to increased social discontent. The author notes that the economic crisis became one of the factors activating political opposition.

A detailed analysis of the most recent presidential and parliamentary elections is presented, illustrating how Erdoğan managed to

maintain his political positions through stringent mobilization and the use of state resources. The author emphasizes the opposition's strategies, their failures, and the polarization within society.

In summary, the second chapter is a robust analytical work, offering not only factual information but also profound interpretations for the reader. The sources used and the detailed analysis make this chapter a significant academic contribution.

Modern Turkey's Two Main Political Doctrines (pp. 95-110).

The third chapter of Prof. Emzar Makaradze's book focuses on an important topic—the analysis of “the two main political doctrines of modern Turkey.” The author illustrates how these doctrines have influenced the country's domestic and foreign policy, as well as their impact on Turkey's social and economic development. The doctrines that define Turkey's political strategy are presented, with each doctrine's core principles, political goals, and ideological foundations clearly explained. Special attention is given to the formation and development of these doctrines during Erdoğan's rule. The author successfully places these doctrines within their historical context, reviewing the evolution of Turkey's domestic political processes, the dynamics of international relations, and the country's strategic positioning on the global stage.

As in previous chapters, the author effectively combines factual data with analytical views, providing the reader with in-depth and multifaceted insights into Turkey's contemporary political strategies. This chapter is an essential piece for better understanding modern Turkey's political landscape.

Prof. Makaradze's book is functionally informative and complements his earlier works on Turkey's domestic politics. At the end of the book, a chronological list of significant political events from 2000 to 2024 is included, which not only covers political changes but also analyzes the connections between them. This section helps readers gain a deeper understanding of how historical events have shaped the country's political dynamics. The author also emphasizes the impact of

key events such as constitutional changes, the formation of political parties, and the dynamics of international relations.

Moreover, the book includes biographical information on notable political figures, presented concisely but informatively. The author describes the biographies of leaders such as Necmettin Erbakan, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, Bülent Ecevit, Devlet Bahçeli, Deniz Baykal, Tansu Çiller, Abdullah Gül, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Binali Yıldırım, and Ekrem İmamoğlu. This information offers the reader insight into these leaders' political decisions and career trajectories. The author's neutral and critical approach allows the reader to independently assess the roles these figures have played in Turkey's history.

It should also be noted that the bibliography used in writing this book adds to its reliability. The author relies on both Georgian and foreign sources, which significantly enhances the academic value of the work. Notably, the book includes diagram-based sources, providing additional visual material to help the reader better grasp and analyze the issues discussed.

Emzar Makaradze's work, "The Main Problems of Turkey's Domestic Politics from 2000 to 2024", represents a thorough analysis of Turkey's political history. The author's analytical work, chronological precision, and the variety of biographical details create a comprehensive and reliable study.

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