

**TURKISH CONSERVATISM VERSUS WESTERN CONSERVATISM:  
CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE**

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**ABSTRACT**

In the conservative literature, mostly western insight and conceptual frame have been employed. Basic principles of conservatism reflect mostly the western values and most importantly western religion, namely Christianity. Given very importance of religion in emergence and evolution conservative ideology in the course of western history, it is consistent to claim that conservatisms differ in terms of religious beliefs and values. Then, different religious beliefs are expected to produce different conservatisms in different societies. This is really the case in Turkey given the Turkish conservative tradition has been mainly based on religious values and principles. There are no corresponding elements of some western conservative principles, like “human imperfection” or “property ownership”, in Turkish conservatism. Therefore, the idea that the basic tenets of Turkish conservatism must have some different principles constituted a starting point for this research. First of all, to grasp the core elements of Turkish conservatism, it must be comprehended the most salient differences between Christianity and Islam which unavoidably shape conservatisms in both parts of the world. In this work, Turkish and western conservatisms were examined in a systematic way and were tried to set forth convergence and divergence among them. Results clearly showed that; even though the Turkish and western conservatisms have some divergence stemming from religious difference, they have more commonalities than expected.

**Keywords:** Conservative, Conservatism, Religion, Christianity, Islam.