



# SEPEAM

## SEMINAR SERIES-23

Democratic Culture and Sustainable Democracy

By

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It is now widely accepted that citizens' beliefs, values, and attitudes about politics, in its broadest definition, is closely related to the political regime of a country. Actually, this idea is as old as Plato and Aristotle whom we could call "the earliest culturalists." What is more recent is the availability of good quality comparative data which enable analysts to put this assumption to test. This development of the more recent decades has caused a surge of interest in political culture and political behavior. From a political culture perspective, citizens' mindset and values are at a least as important as the written laws of a country from a regime sustainability viewpoint. The burning question of our times, then, is whether or not a democratic regime can be sustained in a polity without democrats. It will come to no one as a surprise that the culturalist answer to this question is: very difficult if not impossible.

Prof. Dr. Yilmaz Esmer received his B.A. degree from Yale and his Ph.D. from Stanford Universities. He has published extensively on topics related to political culture, religion and politics, voting behavior, cultural values and social science methodology. Dr. Esmer has been the principal investigator for Turkish Values Surveys since 1990 and is presently the vice-president of the Scientific Advisory Board of the World Values Survey Organization. Prof. Esmer served as vice-rector of Boğaziçi University and rector of Bahçeşehir University. Currently, he teaches in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Bahçeşehir University and is a member of the Science Academy.

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