

**THE STRONG STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT:
DECENTRALIZATION
IN
FRANCE AND TURKEY**

A Thesis
Submitted to the Department of
Political Science
and
Public Administration
of
Bilkent University

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by

Mehmet Yılmaz

SEPTEMBER 1992

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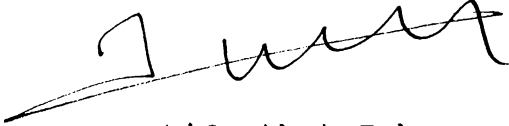
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I certify that I have read this thesis and in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and Public Administration.

Dr. Ahmet Icduygu



I certify that I have read this thesis and in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and Public Administration.

Dr. Ayse Kadioglu



I certify that I have read this thesis and in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and Public Administration.

Dr. Zehra Onder



ABSTRACT

This study analyzes local government tradition and decentralization comparatively in France and Turkey with the framework of a historical perspective, particularly with their close relation to the state traditions of the two countries.

In France, local governments had been under strict tutelage of the central government throughout the centuries. Strong state which penetrates into society by eliminating the elements of civil society stresses upon centralization provoking a discourse on "public interest". In France where strong state was embodied in the Jacobin principle "The One and Indivisible Republic", the Jacobin state elites saw all attempts at decentralization as a challenge to such Republic. Yet, the developments towards democracy, after the Second World War, brought about a decrease in the power of the state elites. Hence, in the strength of the state. In addition to these developments, the existence of a feudal tradition made decentralization easy in France in the 1980s.

In Turkey, not unlike in France, local governments had been under the tutelage of the central government. The Ottoman

Empire which had no tradition of civil society had not a local government tradition. The state elites (so-called Turkish Jacobins) in the Republican period stressed on centralization. Political elites had been weak vis-a-vis the state elites. Decentralization in the 1980s took place in a condition that power relations between them had changed in favor of the political elites.

OZET

Bu çalıřmanın amacı Fransa ve Türkiye' de yerel yönetim gelenegini ve adem-i merkeziyeti tarihsel olarak, özellikle de devlet gelenekleriyle iliskilendirilerek, karşılařtirmalı olarak incelemektir.

Fransa' da yerel yönetimler yüzyıllar boyu merkezi hükümetin kati vesayeti altında olmuřlardır. Sivil toplum kurumlarının gelişmesini engelleyerek toplumun her alanına nüfuz eden güçlü devlet, "kamu çıkarı" söyleminden hareketle merkeziyetçiliği vurgular. Fransa' da bu, Jacoben bir ilke olan "Tek ve Bolunmez Cumhuriyet" sloganında somutlaşmıştır. Ama İkinci Dünya Savaşından sonra demokratikleşme lehindeki gelişmeler devlet sekinlerinin gücünü, dolayısıyla devletin güçlülüğünü görece azalttı. Bu değişmeler, artık feodal bir gelenegin olması Fransa' da 1980 lerde yapılan adem-i merkeziyet reformlarının başarısını mümkün kıldı.

Türkiye'de de, Fransa'daki gibi, yerel yönetimler, merkezi yönetimin vesayeti altında olmuřlardır. Sivil Toplum gelenegine sahip olmayan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu yerel yönetim gelenegine de sahip değildi. Cumhuriyet Doneminde sözde Türk Jacobenleri olarak

adlandirabilecegimiz devlet seckinleri merkeziyetciligi vurgu-
luyorlardi.„ Bunlara karsin siyasal seckinler daha gucsuz durum-
daydilar. 1980 lerde Turkiye'de yapilan kısmi adem-i merkeziyet
reformlari bu guc dengesinin siyasal seckinler lehine degistigi
bir ortamda ancak gerceklesmistir.

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INTRODUCTION

During the 1980s Turkish society has experienced important social, political, economic, and cultural changes. Liberal economic policies have been introduced emphasizing market forces and market values transforming import substitution strategy to export-led industrialization. These trends were reinforced by the privatization programs which aimed to decrease the role of the state in the economy and society in general. One of the most important changes was the reinforcement of the local governments, especially municipalities, by giving more rights and competence to them. These developments, privatization and decentralization in Turkey, coincided with parallel developments in Western Europe. In the post-1980 period many of the Western European countries have undergone some decentralization experiences. Decentralization has become a general trend throughout the world along with some other policies which aimed to decrease the role of the state in the society. It became a general and accepted way of resolving the administrative, and political problems of centralization.

One crucial indicator of decentralization is the share of the local government in public expenditure. From this particular perspective, for instance, it is claimed that West European

governments have grown and decentralized with the relative decline of the center in terms of the public expenditures. In Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany (FR), Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and USA the share of the local government in general government expenditure has increased during the post-war period.¹

Turkey introduced local government decentralization in the post-1980 period by creating a two-tier metropolitan municipal system. This was an important break from earlier practices because the Ottoman-Turkish political tradition was highly centralized and had no tradition of civil society or intermediary institutions between the state and society.² By creating a new metropolitan municipal system, more resources and authority were given to the municipalities and the tutelage³ which was previously exercised by central government had begun to be exercised by metropolitan municipalities-in reality by a metropolitan mayor.⁴

In France, local government was decentralized with the act of March 2 1982. With this law, the executive power was transferred from prefects who were centrally appointed members exercising tutelage over local authorities to the elected presidents, and the prefects were abolished. After the reforms, all a priori tutelage of the prefects had disappeared. Local government activities have come to be placed under a posteriori

legal and financial control.⁵ In France, a genuine local government was created. A genuine local government means that locally elected authorities have the right to make decisions on local issues and implement policies without prior permission of the central government. In Turkey, on the other hand, decentralization stopped at the metropolitan municipality level. In three major urban centers (Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara) a new metropolitan municipality system was created after 1983. Metropolitan municipality is made up of a metropolitan municipality and district municipalities. The tutelage, exercised previously by the central government, was transferred to the metropolitan municipality. I believe, the extent and success of decentralization is closely related to the political culture of a society and especially to the extent that there has been a strong state. In this study, political culture means more than just the patterns of political behaviour. It refers to the subjective orientation of nations, social groups and individuals to politics. It is a set of attitudes, beliefs and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political system. In fact central-local government relations of a country can not be understood without looking at the political culture, especially at the state tradition, because such a relationship has been established throughout a certain period of time within a particular political and social context. In the societies where state emerged as a strong and autonomous agent, decentralization has been a difficult task because in such societies the state imposes norms to maintain its autonomy vis-a-vis the intermediaries between the state and society.

In both France and Turkey there has been a strong state tradition but in Turkey the state has been stronger than in France. In this study the strong state refers to a state which successfully penetrates to all spheres of a society by eliminating intermediaries between itself and society. Within this theoretical framework which was developed by Theda Skocpol, Kenneth Dyson and Metin Heper, the state is taken as an independent agent that has its own logic and norms independent from the norms of the people and society in general.⁶ First of all, it is necessary to define centralization, decentralization and other concepts that will be used in this study. Decentralization and centralization are two concepts that refer to geographic relationships in terms of the division of powers between and among levels of government or hierarchical relationship within levels of government.⁷ In a broader sense, decentralization is defined as "... the transfer of planning, decision making, or administrative authority, from central government to field organizations,.. or local governmental organizations".⁸ Centralization and decentralization represent a continuum rather than a dichotomy and can take different forms.

Three types of decentralization are defined in the literature. First one is deconcentration which means the passing of some authority or responsibility to a lower level within the central government machinery. In addition to the executive,

local officials have also discretion to plan and implement programs. This is an important step towards decentralization in highly centralized political systems. Second process is delegation which means the transfer of responsibility for specific functions to the agents that are outside of the central bureaucratic structure. These agents can be some public corporations, regional development agencies, and other agencies, either public or private. The rationale behind this is to increase efficiency and to make some jobs outside the central bureaucracy which delays the fulfillment of the functions. The last one is devolution which means creation of subnational units of the governments which are financially and legally more powerful regarding the activities which are outside the direct control of central government.⁹ The ideal form of decentralization is the one where there is local autonomy which means that locally elected bodies have the right to make decisions and plans without prior permission of central government.

In every kind of political system there exists a kind of decentralization, such as the simple delegation of some functions to the agents that are administered by a centrally appointed person. This means that a pure and ideal-typical centralized system does not exist in reality. Local government is a unit of government in which an elected agent fulfills some functions at the localities. The form of local government varies among countries based on their social and political traditions. Concerning the central-local government relations we can distinguish three kinds of relationships. These are

political, administrative, and fiscal or financial relationships.¹⁰ Administrative relationship between central and local government has a political dimension which is exercised as tutelage. Even in the Anglo-Saxon tradition which gives the local government the greatest autonomy, there is a certain kind of central control and supervision over local governments. Especially in democratic countries where multi-party politics is in function, local government gains political character. In the centralized traditions central government tries to control local government in order to maintain the local government as the units of central government at the localities. This has been the case in Turkey.¹¹ In regards to political relationship it is clear that local governments are politicized units which mobilize people. Therefore the central government, which is also a political entity made up of a political party or coalition has some interest in local government. Especially partisan considerations come into the scene within this dimension. If local government is in the hands of opposition, which is a common case in Turkey, resources are distributed by such considerations. Also central government by decreasing the resources can influence the financial situation and in many countries local governments are dependent on central governments regarding their financial needs.

The present study aims at analyzing the phenomenon of local government and decentralization in France and Turkey. In the first chapter a general theoretical framework that this

study dwells upon will be discussed. It includes an elaboration of the concept of the "strong state" which is used to define different polities on the bases of its ability to prevent the development of the civil societal elements vis-a-vis the state. In this chapter, the state in the French and Turkish contexts is covered.

The second chapter deals with local government in the French political context. Local government in France has been under strict central control and decentralization was considered as a direct threat to the national unity. Despite this fact, decentralization has been a major concern of French political and administrative elites. Nevertheless, only during the Socialist period a genuine local government decentralization reform was undertaken. This chapter analyzes local government tradition and the socialist decentralization.

The third chapter dwells upon the local government tradition in the Ottoman-Turkish context. Local government in Turkey does not have a long tradition. Its rudiment forms took place by the end of the nineteenth century. The Turkish Republic did not inherit a strong local government tradition, whereas, it operated in a centralized fashion. Local governments in Turkey faced serious fiscal, and political crisis. The third chapter analyzes these developments as well as the reforms of the 1980s.

The fourth chapter is about the comparison of local gov-

ernment traditions and decentralization in France and Turkey. It aims to find the principal reasons behind two different paths of evolutions of local governments in these countries. The state in France favored the developments of civil societal groups, thus, aimed to close the gap between civil society and itself. Therefore, the French political elites radically changed the role of the state at the periphery by abolishing all kinds of tutelage, whereas in Turkey the decentralization reforms remained partial and limited.

NOTES

- (1). L. J. Shape, "The Growth and Decentralization of Modern Democratic State," European Journal of Political Research, 16 (1988), p.369.
- (2). In this study civil society refers to a society in which there exists some intermediaries vis-a-vis the state.
- (3). Tutelage is the administrative control of the central government over some public and private institutions.
- (4). Metin Heper, "Local Government in Turkey with Special Reference to the Metropolitan municipalities," in Local Government and Urban Affairs in International Perspective, J. J. Hesse ed. (Baden: Nomos Werl, 1991), p.592.
- (5). Sonia Mazey, "Decentralization: La Grande Affaire du Septennant," in Mitterrand's France, S. Mazey and M. Newman, eds.(London etc.: Croom Helm, 1987), p.113.
- (6). For further elaboration, see chapter one. For more detailed discussions, see Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in Bringing the State Back In, Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, eds.(Cambridge, etc.: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Kenneth H. F. Dyson, The State Tradition in Western Europe: A Study of an Idea and Institution (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1980); and Metin Heper, ed., The State and Public Bureaucracies: A Comparative Perspective (New York etc.: Greenwood Press, 1987).

(7). A. B. Gunlics, "Administrative Centralization and Decentralization in the Making and Remaking of Modern Germany," Review of Politics, 46(1986): p. 323. "

(8). H. F. Illy, "Decentralization as a Tool For Development: Notes on Current Debate," in Dilemmas of Decentralization: Municipal Government in Turkey, Metin Heper, ed. (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1986), pp. 121-124.

(9). Ibid., p. 124.

(10). Rusen Keles and Hilmi Yavuz, Yerel Yonetimler (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1985), p. 215.

(11). Ibid., p. 215.

CHAPTER I

THE STRONG STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECENTRALIZATION: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I. State Traditions in France and Turkey

A distinction is made between the strong state and the weak state in the literature. As Heper mentions "... in some polities public interest means more than the sum of private or group interests. From this particular perspective we can talk about the phenomenon of the state ... which reflects a notion of public interest with little affinity to sectional interests".¹ The constitutive agents of the public interest are governmental leaders and/or public officials which are state elites and are different from governmental political elites. State elites are the guardians of public interest which is derived from intrinsic public needs; political elites are the elected representatives of the people and are accountable to them.²

States elites do not take into account private interests, namely the interests of the people and of private groups in implementation of policies, rather they base their actions on

the notion of the public interest which, in itself, is a state norm guiding the actions of the state elites. This has some important consequences for the liberal democracies. In the societies where the state has been "a strong one unelected institutions has been important in the resolution of conflicts. For instance, in England, where the state is weak, the parliament is above all other institutions, whereas, in France where the state is strong other institutions are influential. For example the president has a critical position in French political system. In Germany, which has a similar state tradition Constitutional Court is an influential institution via-a-vis the parliament. The state norms from which the notion of the public interest is derived come from some critical and general policy issues, for example from foreign policy, development and modernization projects, and if these factors are effective in a polity we can talk about "stateness". The stateness is not fixed and varies from polity to polity and in a given polity regarding different periods.³

The capacity of a society to create consensus in the resolution of fundamental conflicts and major claims, and its ability to reconcile sectional interests was the most significant determinant of variations of Western European states. If there is no such consensus there exists an autonomous state.

Concerning the capacity of a society to create consensus in the resolution of fundamental conflicts brings us to different points of departure. Within this context, Heper distin-

guishes among centralized feudalism, decentralized feudalism and patrimonialism or personal rule.⁴ In centralized and decentralized feudalisms there exist some countervailing powers which challenges the power of the center but in patrimonialism, center penetrates to every sphere of the society, thus, the periphery is totally dominated by the center. Centralized feudalism is characterized by the successful resolution of conflicts between central and local authority structures. Medieval England provides a good example of centralized feudalism. English kings and barons which were local forces upheld each other's rights. In the fourteenth, century the conflict of the central and local authority structures was resolved, and no war had taken place between them. As a result, consensus emerged as a legitimate way of resolution of conflicts and the state turned out a weak one.⁵

France, on the other hand, is the best example of a decentralized feudalism where there was continuous wars between the king and the local grandees in the ninth and tenth centuries. Even in the late eighteenth century, the conflict was not resolved with consensus and this continuous conflict prevented the development of consensus as a method for progressive resolution of fundamental claims. Therefore, there emerged a strong state which has been an influential actor in politics.⁶

For patrimonialism, Ottoman Empire is an ideal example. Here patrimonialism or personal rule briefly refers to a polity in which there exists a ruler and all spheres of life

are dominated by the center, made up of those who act on behalf of the ruler, without intermediaries. People are mere subjects of the ruler without having a place in government. Unlike in centralized and decentralized feudalisms where there were some countervailing powers who checked the central authority, in Ottoman patrimonialism periphery was totally penetrated by the center.⁷ All lands belonged to the sultan and landed aristocracy could not develop. Unlike the European middle classes who transformed their economic power into political one, in Ottoman society, the local notables who emerged due to weakness of the center never transformed their economic power into political power. Hence, no share of power had taken place between the local notables and the sultan which meant, in turn, the total absence of the civil society. Republican state elites inherited this kind of tradition which emphasizes a barrier to the legitimation of an autonomous civil society.

II. State Traditions and Decentralization in France and Turkey

Both France and Turkey have a strong state tradition whereas the state in the Ottoman-Turkish context is stronger than France in the sense that there were no intermediary groups or institutions in the Ottoman-Turkish context. The Ottoman state, established by ghasis (The Ottoman warriors), was a militant entity which in turn shaped the political culture. In this process state was based on the idea of conquest. Hence the

military was an important factor in establishing the state.⁸ Consequently, law and order as a norm of state was emphasized. The Ottoman statesman strived to save the state from internal and external enemies. This led to constant, and often exaggerated, fear of anarchy, rebellion, and treason.⁹ Therefore, in the Ottoman tradition the development of the local forces as autonomous agents vis-a-vis the state became impossible. Due to the lack of the peripheral forces the idea of civil society was alien to Ottoman polity. There was an idea of supreme law (yasa/yasak) which meant that ruler had to act with the criteria of "equity" and "justice" without personal wishes. Government was not based on personal wishes of the sultan but on the "necessity" and "reason" which led to a state oriented tradition. The norms which developed as a consequence of this tradition were called adab and they were newly adopted norms formulated independently of civil societal elements.¹⁰ The state elites used these norms and values for their personal aims.

The basic cleavage in the Ottoman society was the center-periphery cleavage.¹¹ The center was made up of all the bureaucratic state elites with their distinct culture, a different type of language, style of wear, whereas the periphery was made up of the rest of the people who did not belong to the bureaucratic elite.¹² Periphery was subordinated by the center and they had no influence over it. Local notables who were a politically influential group constituted neither the influential aristocracy nor the nobility before the nineteenth century.

Their participation in administration was not permanent and when their influence was increased, center replaced them with central agents.

During the nineteenth century, the center's attitude towards the periphery did not change and all the modernization practices during this period aimed to strengthen the center itself.¹³ They were against the devolution of power and authority to local notables. With the Senedi Ittifak (Deed of Alliance) of 1808 local notables gained some authority but Tanzimat period marked the beginning of a center-periphery conflict once again. Tanzimat was an attempt of the center to penetrate into the periphery more systematically. It brought a new, potentially conflicting situation, because during the earlier period some functions had been delegated to local notables and now center aimed to get rid of the intermediaries between the center and its subjects.¹⁴ The motive behind this was to mobilize the masses against the local notables. Before Tanzimat civil bureaucrats were mere servants of the sultan acting on behalf of him. But with Tanzimat, civil bureaucrats aspired for the status of the state elites. They cut their ties with the sultan and their primary aim became the preservation of their autonomy. One point that should be made here is that the bureaucratic elites during this time viewed themselves as the servant of the state and not of the Sultan.¹⁵ They developed a kind of rationality which gave the state a mystic conception, being above all the interest of the people.

The same tradition continued during the Republican period. The founder of the Republic, Ataturk, was particularly interested in the adab tradition and his policy was directed to establish a nation- state which belonged to the people.¹⁶ However, the Republican elites did not make any significant change in the basic cleavage structure. Periphery was totally dominated by the center and could not have a place in the government. Moreover, after Ataturk, bureaucratic elites stayed in power and they turned Ataturkism into an official ideology to be preserved by them. Political parties were established due to the conflicts among elites. For instance the founders of the Democrat Party were previously the members of the Republican Peoples' Party. When periphery identified itself with a party and came to power in 1960, military intervened.¹⁷ The center was dominant and almost in all military interventions we can see the influence of the conflict between the center and the periphery, namely, the conflict between the military bureaucratic elites representing the public interest and the political elites representing the interest of the people.

France too has a strong and autonomous state tradition. Throughout the centuries, the conflict between the center and the local authority structures were not resolved by the use of consensus, and the state emerged as an agent that set ideological parameters which constituted a normative base for the legitimation of the actions of the state in shaping the polity of the society. For instance, until the last few decades na-

tionalism had been more important than democracy. In France, where a decentralized feudalism existed in the ninth and tenth centuries there was a tug of war between the king and the local grandees, which culminated in the absolute rule of Louis XIV (1643-1715). As Dyson wrote;

"French represents a case of institutional concentration. The bureaucracy is the repository of the state tradition. Consequently France's constitutional and political development after 1789 has been one of persistent antagonism between representative institutions (emphasizing the role of the deputy and distrust of public authority) and the idea of the State, with periods when the representative system has been limited or even suspended. Political parties have traditionally been seen in negative terms as spokesman of interests and ideologies rather than as providing leadership for the executive power. The state tradition has been associated with the idea of a zone authority independent of the Assembly and parties and interest groups (the so-called "intermediaries"). De Gaulle's intention to turn the French State into a "decisive, ambitious and an active institution serving only national interest" found its expression in bureaucratic reforms.... and in controlled parliamentary system of the Fifth Republic".¹⁸

With the reforms, civil service became a major representative of the idea of the state and their position was strengthened. They were protecting the autonomy of the administrative system. The result was the emergence of a strong and centralized state.

In the nineteenth century, French society witnessed serious social and political upheavals due to violent political and social transformations. When these transformations were taking place, the state appeared as a medium of practically unsolvable contradictions, thus, the state struggled to be stable during these upheavals. Under such conditions, consensus did not become a way of the resolution of conflicts. Consequently, the state tried to protect itself from social and political conflicts by creating autonomous institutions to which only those who passed through a selection process (competitive examinations) based on merit were admitted.¹⁹ These institutions posed professional norms and values which were particularly expressed in terms of the ideology of general interest. Hence, the state became an autonomous above-classes' type of an institution. The aim was to divorce the civil servants from their class origins. They became royal spokesmen for the state. They identified themselves with the state on the basis of the idea of public service which was considered as the unique instrument of public power.²⁰ The civil servants tended to see the state and government as distinct domains. They acted as the guardians of the state and state interest. During the

1950s, the situation was not different from the end of the nineteenth century. All of the initiatives of De Gaulle and the Gaullist administrators aimed at reinforcement of the central administration and the executive by eliminating the parliament and intermediaries between the state and the people.

Although during the Gaullist period the state was overinstitutionalized, the mobilization of the people became a necessity in order to make the required changes to ensure social and economic modernization. It was due to this need that at the end of the 1960s, the state wanted the reinforcement of the private groups signifying a decrease of state power. It is in this context, as Ezra N. Suleiman claims, that it is not possible to understand the French society without paying attention to the developments in the state- society relations.²¹ After the Second World War, French society became a modern industrial society. During this process it had become clear that an interaction was occurring between the state and civil society which was so complex that could not be understood with reference to the centralized state. In fact, private groups in French politics had become a normal phenomenon. One indicator of the changes in state-society relations was the development of the interest groups in French politics which showed that a dialogue between the state elites and private groups was occurring. Although the rhetoric of the civil servants was not to engage in a genuine dialogue with these groups, growing interaction meant a reciprocal power relationship between the civil servants and interest groups that at the end diminished the

power of the state by tolerating sectional interests.²² Parallel developments that at the end diminish the power of the state has taken place in the relations between the local authorities and civil servants or central authorities. Many local authorities found legal or illegal ways of bypassing the formal procedures and rules which resulted in an informal decentralization. This was one of the significant factors that made decentralization easy and successful. In brief, due to economic modernization and social mobilization there emerged a need for decentralization during the Gaullist period -or more general in the postwar period.

In comparison to the French state, the Ottoman-Turkish state had been stronger. As Heper pointed out, the interest groups had played a more significant role in French polity than they had in Turkey. During the 1980s the state-interest groups relations display signs of monism signifying the absence of pluralism in the state- society relations.²³ French state had less autonomy vis-a-vis the civil society than state in the Ottoman-Turkish context. Unlike in Turkey, the state in France intended to narrow the gap between itself and the civil society. In France, democracy was taken as a means whereas in Turkey it was taken as an end in itself. Decentralization was nothing more than an attempt to narrow the gap in question in France.

NOTES

- (1). Metin Heper, ed., The State and Public Bureaucracies: A Comparative Perspective (New York, etc.: Greenwood, 1987), p. 3.
- (2). Ibid., p. 4.
- (3). Ibid., P. p. 4.
- (4). Ibid., p. 13.
- (5). Ibid., p.13; For patrimonialism in the Ottoman Empire see, Serif Mardin, "Power, Civil Society, and Culture in The Ottoman Empire," Comparative studies in Society and History, 11 (1969): 258-81.
- (6). Metin Heper, ed. The State and Public Bureaucracies, pp. 13-14.
- (7). Ibid., p. 14.
- (8). Metin Heper, The State Tradition in Turkey (Walkington, England: The Eothen Press, 1985), p. 21.
- (9). Metin Heper, ed., Strong State and Economic Interest Groups: The Post-1980 Turkish Experience (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), p. 13.
- (10). Metin Heper, "Strong State as a Problem for the Consolidation of Democracy: Turkey and Germany Compared," Comparative Political Studies, 25 (1992): 169-94, p. 174.
- (11). For the center periphery cleavage in Europe see, S. M. Lipset, Consensus and Conflict: Essays in Political Sociology (New Brunswick and New York: Transaction Books, 1985).

- (12). Serif Mardin, "Center Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?" Daedalus, 102 (1973):169-90, p. 173.
- (13). Heper, The State Tradition in Turkey, p. 37.
- (14). Ibid., p. 39.
- (15). Ibid., pp. 45-46.
- (16). Heper, "Strong State as a Problem for the Consolidation of Democracy: Turkey and Germany Compared," pp. 175.
- (17). For example, after the 1950 elections periphery identified itself with Democrat Party representing a challenge to the center whose interest was represented by the Republican People's Party. In 1960 military intervened and this action was supported by the bureaucratic elites, and military banned the Democrat Party. For the cleavage beses of the 1960 military intervention see, Serif Mardin, "Center Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?" Daedalus, 102 (1973):169-90, p. 186.
- (18). Kenneth H. F. Dyson, The State Tradition in Western Europe: A Study of an Institution and Idea (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1980), p. 224.
- (19). Pierre Birnbaum, "Polity with a Strong State," in The State and Public Bureaucracies: A Comparative Perspective, Metin Heper, ed. (New York, etc.: Greenwood Press, 1987), pp. 73-74.
- (20). Ibid., p. 75.
- (21). Ezra N. Suleiman, Private Power and Centralization in France: The Notaries and the State (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 6.

(22). Frank L. Wilson, Interest Group Politics in France
(Cambridge, etc.: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.213.

(23). Heper, ed., Strong State and Economic Interest Groups,
p. 21.

CHAPTER II

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRADITION AND DECENTRALIZATION IN FRANCE

I. The Local Government in France

France as a unitary and centralized society is considered a prototype of centralization. In fact Paris is not only a political but also an economic, cultural, and intellectual center. French state was established by the 'Jacobins who have been the supporters of centralization since the French Revolution. Louis Napoleon further centralized the French political and administrative system. The rationale behind centralization was to maintain the "national unity" and "uniformity" which were the norms and values of the Revolution. In fact, since the French Revolution of 1789, 'national unity' has been the primary issue of conflict between the supporters of centralization and decentralization. The supporters of centralization saw any attempt toward decentralization as a threat to national unity in the sense that decentralization could destroy the unity of the nation.¹ Therefore, they insisted that the centralized system must be maintained. The supporters of decentralization, on the other hand, claimed that a centralized system was an

obstacle to local autonomy and democracy, thus, introducing decentralization was necessary to have a local democracy and a genuine local government.

Although France is a centralized country and only in the 1980s a genuine and radical decentralization program was introduced, the debate about decentralization goes to the early period of the Republic which begins with the French Revolution. Therefore it is necessary to trace the history of local government through certain historical periods. Before undertaking this task, I will introduce the structure and organization of local government in France. The following part focuses on the structure of local government which was at work before the socialist reform in 1981.

Local government in France, today, is organized at three levels: regional, departmental, and communal. At the base there are communes and their number is about thirty six thousand, with the population ranging from one million to fewer numbers. These are governed by elected mayors and they have communal councils. Above these communes there are general councils for ninety five departments. They are directly elected but until recent reforms they had no executive of their own. The regional councils are made up of indirectly elected members from the communes and departments including local deputies (members of parliament) and senators.² The regions are the creation of the Fifth Republic and the present form was shaped subsequently in 1964, 1972 and 1982. The departments were created in 1789. The communes also date from 1789 but they are based on the struc-

ture of the ancien regime. The relationship between these levels is considered, in principle, as not hierarchical. But in reality there is some duplication, competition, and even rivalry. The most powerful local authority in relation to decision making is the commune and the weakest is the region.³

The crucial actor between central government and local government is the prefect who gives its distinguishing characteristics to the French local government system. A prefect is a centrally appointed member who exercises tutelage power over the local authorities. The prefectural system was created in 1800 by Napoleon. Due to unstable political history of France, centralization became the apparatus of the elites to maintain national unity. The solution was the establishment of the Napoleonic prefectural system which, as Ridley noted, reflected the belief that all political issues were national and to be decided by national government which was located in Paris and therefore, there should be no local government in France but only local administration.⁴ Hayward noted the following:

" Napoleon used Roman title of prefect to describe the "mini-emperors" who were to rule the departments as his agents, mobilize the local resources for the central government purposes, and ensure universal obedience to his will. The prefect was to be a local leader, restoring consensus after successive revolutionary crisis, imposing the changes dictated by his Paris masters, acting as an electoral agent for the parties in power, exer-

cising a paternalistic despotism over the department allocated to him".⁵

Prefect is also the representative of the government in the department and he supervises and co-ordinates the work of the field services of the Paris ministries. He ensures that laws and governmental directives are implemented. He is also the main agent of the Ministry of Interior in the department and he supervises all field services of the ministry responsible for the maintenance of law and order. He can ban a film, a demonstration, and organize local elections.⁶ The prefect is an appointed member representing central authority at the local level. Hence, the prefectural system implies delegation and centralization in the sense that some central functions are transferred without autonomy. In the post-war period and before the socialist reforms in 1981, there were three kinds of tutelage over local authorities exercised by the prefect. The first one was administrative tutelage which was exercised by the prefect over the decisions of local authorities. The second type of tutelage was financial tutelage exercised in principle by the prefect but in reality by the Finance Ministry, and the third one was technical tutelage in various forms imposing model norms or actions prepared within central ministries.⁷ The radical dimension of the socialist reform is due to the abolishment of the prefects and all a priori tutelages, a critical heritage of the French political culture.

Despite the successive waves of decentralization throughout the history that will be explained below, the position of

the center remained very powerful in France. One source of the central power is the statutory weakness of the local authorities vis-a-vis the centrally appointed members. For instance, if a local authority wants to borrow money, add a new tax or change the base of an existing one, central authorities can intervene. In the past, interventions in such cases were common and they in turn weakened local government.⁸

II. The Historical Development of Local Government in France

Administration during the Roman Empire supported municipal autonomy to a considerable extent. Bureaucratic centralization developed later. Under the feudal system there was again a decline in centralization but when the king regained power over the lords, the tendency toward centralization increased and from the fourteenth century onwards the autonomy of localities was gradually destroyed and this trend continued with Louis the XIV.⁹ The French Revolution had a major impact on the development of local government in France.

Focusing on the Revolution paves the way to explain the successive developments, especially the issue of why only twice in the political and administrative history of France decentralization reform was successful and various attempts resulted in failure. French Revolution set the parameters of the legislative debate on decentralization conceptually and institutionally. First of all, the French Revolution fixed the terms of

the debate because it formulated the primary question regarding decentralization as "to what extent are the requirements of national unity and the dictates of principles of equality before the law compatible with local liberty". Since the Revolution of 1748, all issues of decentralization has been related to the disintegration of national unity. The articulation of the national unity and decentralization in such a manner had produced destructive results for local autonomy. For example, when for the first time the universal suffrage was introduced in the second half of the nineteenth century, it did not extend to the local leaders because it was considered as a threat to the unity of the nation. When it was extended towards local authorities (in 1884 for communes) the tutelage power became a means of control of the center over the local governments to ensure such unity. The election of mayors of the regions was considered a threat for national democracy. In short, the center assumed that there was an opposition between unity and equality on the one hand and local liberty on the other. Therefore the French Revolution ensured that national democracy comes first and local democracy second.¹⁰ Secondly, the Revolution determined the institutional context within which all future reforms were confined in. The Revolution created a new institutional structure in which the "republican" communes and departments became royal provinces. Although the national government's structure has been changed, the local government's structure remained the same. New institutions were created but this did not change the basic structure.¹¹ Thirdly, after the French Revolution political interests operated stronger than

the political principles in relation to decentralization. Although principally local liberty was supported, due to the pragmatic opposition to decentralization and being in time of crisis, it could not be realized. Opposition groups or parties were supporting decentralization but when they came to power they saw that centralization could increase their power, thus they did not implement their policies.¹² For instance, Ezra N. Suleiman noted that although there has been a need for decentralization in all periods it could not be realized. The reason was that the system worked to the advantage of a small group of civil servants who aimed to enter into political arena. According to the existing law someone can be a member of the parliament and occupy a high position in the bureaucracy at the same time.¹³ At the beginning of the French Revolution there was a trend of decentralization. But later the political principle gave way to pragmatism of those who, once in power, saw their political interests furthered by continuing or even, increasing governmental centralization. Recentralization came with the Jacobins, and then with the Directory, and then with Napoleon and their centralized system continued until the 1815 restoration. With the 1848 revolution, decentralization was introduced for a short time but it was replaced by a highly centralized system of the Second Empire. This ended in another crisis in 1870 with the National Defense government.¹⁴ A successful decentralization reform was introduced only during the Third Republic.

Girondins, as a counter front, supported decentralization by claiming the election of local authorities by universal suffrage because their support was in the countryside and with decentralization they could control the periphery and limit the power of the Jacobins. But the Jacobins highly centralized the system and for them it was only a way to control the country and maintain themselves in power. They claimed that centralization became a way to cope with the enemies outside and inside the country. It was an expression of the general will because it represented the will of the people through universal suffrage but decentralization would fragment it in its constituent parts. It is also understandable why the Jacobins were so much against decentralization; since they were stronger in the center rather than the periphery, decentralization meant a loss of power. In 1793, the Jacobins took away the power of the departments. Hence, the elected authorities were replaced with government appointed agents. All efforts of the Jacobins aimed to make local governmental agents subordinate to the central government.

After the decline of the Jacobins, with the Constitution of Five Fructidor in 1795 a two-tier system of voting was established. Municipal elections were done by universal suffrage restricted to men but departmental elections were subject to second level elections in which the candidates were chosen on the criteria of property. This was an attempt to avoid the problems created by mayors' dual role as a representative of the state and as an executive organ of the commune. With this

arrangement the mayors lost the status of the representative of the state and also the power that came with it. The power of the commisaires who were appointed by the government to supervise the mayor or local government in general was strengthened.

During the Napoleonic era we come across a high level of centralization. According to Vivien Schmidt, Napoleon successfully achieved what Jacobins could not. During the period between 1799 and 1800, a law was instituted which presupposed that all communes were to have a mayor and a municipal council. By this law the prefectural system was created and the prefect began to choose the mayors, and deputy mayors in communes with 5000 inhabitants. He also had the power to suspend the mayor, deputy mayors and municipal councils, and tutelage power over the decisions of communes.¹⁵ During this period, universal suffrage remained symbolic without any true effect and prefect was a key level of government in the periphery.

Between 1825 and 1830 the same system was at work but it should be noted that there was a debate in favor of decentralization. Under the July Monarchy between 1830 and 1848 there were some changes in the system although not structural. The mayor continued to be appointed by the central government and the prefect was a key actor in the periphery.¹⁶ The 1848 Revolution and the Second Republic which was short lived introduced a limited amount of decentralization. Universal suffrage became effective for local elections. Prefectural corps were abolished and replaced with commissaires de la republique.

However this did not mean the total abolishment of tutelage but its weakening for a short time until the intervention of Louis Napoleon.¹⁷

Under the Second Empire, prefects extended their role as executives of departments. 1852 constitution gave prefects the right to appoint the mayor even from the outside municipal council. The central government could also dissolve the municipal council until the next elections. During this period the power of the prefect increased and tutelage was reinforced. Still, in this period, a set of debates on decentralization took place. There were some proposals which aimed at decentralization or centralization from different fronts. But in practice there were no important changes.

It must be noted that before the Third Republic, especially during the Paris commune in 1871, the extreme left was completely behind decentralization. Since they were against imperial and monarchical centralization, decentralization meant local democracy, autonomy and protest against such centralization.¹⁸ The Paris Commune was defeated and the Third Republic was established in 1871. A successful decentralization reform before the period of the Socialist Fifth Republic was only introduced during the Third Republic. Therefore it is necessary to look at this period in more detail. The beginning of the Third Republic ended the pattern which was at work for nearly a century: all reforms of decentralization was followed by a successive process of recentralization. At the beginning

of the Third Republic there was a policy shift regarding decentralization. It started with the 1871 regulation which was followed by another one in 1877. In 1884 the Organic Law on municipal decentralization was instituted which increased the role of the mayor vis-a-vis the prefect. The reforms of 1871 and 1884 theoretically gave wide powers to the elected councils and communal councils who gained the right to choose their mayors. Although there was some delegation of certain functions to local government agencies, only few larger urban centers developed local government functions and services as others were small and resources were not enough.¹⁹ With the 1884 Organic Law it was supposed that by the authority of the prefect, mayor could be suspended only for one month and the suspension more than this time necessitated the intervention of Interior Ministry.²⁰ This meant, to a certain extent, the reduction of tutelage. Although there was still a prefect with the tutelage power over mayor's administrative and financial decisions, now mayor as a representative of the state due to his dual role could have direct control of the state. Despite the tutelage, mayor was responsible for the publication and execution of law and regulations. This law set the parameters for the local governments especially at the communal level for the successive periods because it remained in effect with some minor modifications until the socialist decentralization in 1981.

In the parliament, during the Third Republic, center-left was supporting decentralization because it was the only way to

limit the power of conservative majority in the parliament. Therefore, as Schmidt said, this support was a result of pragmatic political calculation.²¹ At this time, the answer to the fundamental question of "how much local liberty was compatible with national unity and equality before the law" was more in favor of local liberty. Especially the left thought that a reasonable measure of local liberty was compatible with local democracy. Most of the parties of the right also supported decentralization for similar pragmatic considerations. But they based their arguments more on political principles. In reality the right was the majority in the Assembly and at that time there were new actors in the scene. Proletariat was a revolutionary force. There were also shopkeepers as a significant force if they were to ally with other classes. Peasantry was also an effective section in the society. The alliance between peasantry and aristocracy was a threat to the Republic. Therefore, given this composition it was a reasonable solution for the right to gain the support of the peasantry. Decentralization would guarantee this support. The only group that was against decentralization was the Bonapartist extreme right, - those who thought that decentralization would be a great threat to national unity because it would create many small republics in a national republic .²²

Although, after these reforms, there was not a significant practical attempt for decentralization, administrative debate on decentralization was a common concern in the parliament.

Almost all groups supported decentralization but the content of decentralization was limited and defined with efficiency rather than local autonomy and democracy. Decentralization was taken as a way to simplify administration, and financial aspects came into perspective. Since the parliament was in trouble in the 1890s, the prefectural system appeared as a way to balance the budget and to decrease the financial burden of the periphery.

As an informal aspect, with the increase of professionalization of the civil service, the expansion of the field services of the state and the modernization of the economy increased centralization but this was accompanied with the growing of local government and the development of mutual relationships between the prefect and the local notables which gave more autonomy to the local elected officials informally.²³

During the Vichy regime there were some radical breaks from the tradition of the Third Republic. With the laws of 1940 and 1942 mayors were appointed. One of the most important contribution of the Vichy Regime was that it established regions and created a regional prefect. This meant regional decentralization but after the war the situation changed.

The Fourth Republic also witnessed important debates on administrative reform. Parallel to these debates, the content of decentralization was also changing. It gained wider meaning including more financial and administrative autonomy, increasing the mayor's executive power and transferring it from the

prefect to the mayor. Although the definition of decentralization gained a new and broader meaning, the reforms remained quite narrow. But there was a need for decentralization because French society underwent radical changes and the role of the state increased in society. This necessitated some decentralization reforms to make changes easily and to modernize the country. But local administrators, elected officials and prefects resisted decentralization as it was against their interests. Elected officials did not support decentralization because they enjoyed informal power and authority. Decentralization meant loss of this authority for the prefects and an uncertain future. Also in the parliament, the Jacobins and some minor groups opposed decentralization because they did not accept it as a way to solve problems.²⁴

The communists were behind the decentralization efforts and were radically opposed to centralization. For communists the prefect must be abolished because it was the exploitative agent of the state which was in turn an instrument of the capitalist class. The Radicals who opposed the communists in the parliament were supporters of centralization because they were concerned with the maintenance of the public order. The right proposed the structure of local government which was established before the Vichy Regime. The right and the Radicals saw the elimination of the prefects as a dangerous enterprise because it could lead to anarchy, even federalism which meant disintegration of national unity, briefly as a threat to "unity

and indivisibility of the French Republic". At the end of the debates in the Parliament in 1946, the Constituent Assembly abolished Vichy Regime's left overs and turned to Third Republic's local government tradition. The executive head of the department became the president of the council but the tutelage of the prefect was substituted with administrative control which meant that there was not a significant reduction in central control.²⁵

III. De Gaullist Technocracy

The political and social conjuncture that made De Gaulle a charismatic leader was characterized by the successive crisis which had led France to chaos. It was vital for France to implement radical policies to modernize the country by state-led strategies. But due to a lack of consensus among French political elites it was not possible to implement radical policies. Within this context Algeria emerged as an urgent problem.

Historically speaking the primary problem of the French state was that there was nothing like consensus on the nature of the regime that had characterized the British or American polities. One more problem was related to the structure of political parties in regards to polarization. Before De Gaulle there existed many antagonist parties and they were so divided that the Third and the Fourth Republics never had any approximation to a firm majority. The cabinets were made up of more parties than one. It was a great possibility that even on

a simple issue the cabinet could be split and could have a crisis.²⁶

Divergent views on basic social and economic policies contributed to this polarization. There were different views on the issue of what kind of economic and social policies should be adopted. Although all fronts saw this issue as significant they disagreed on their evaluations. For example, the dominant centrist politicians based their policies on the most traditional elements such as the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie of the small towns. But France was undergoing radical changes, even transformations which changed the class structures and brought new classes into the scene which also meant that old classes lost their importance. The centrist politicians rejected to use the government to foster modernization but in fact France fell farther behind its main European competitors. Therefore, the state-led strategies were necessary to accelerate social and political modernization. Despite this need, the attitude of centrist politicians demonstrated a kind of irresponsibility in the sense that they were dealing with old issues related to the peasantry, colonial rule and military policy, but not with modernization.

Since there was not an effective parliament, all power was concentrated in the hands of a highly centralized bureaucracy. The bureaucratic elites were recruited from the upper class of Paris. They resisted this change because it would have threat-

ened their power and that of their friends and relatives who owned the country's firms. According to Charles Hauss, the bureaucracy posed three problems. First, it blocked innovation in both policy making and implementation. Second, because of its rigidity and size, people saw it as a potential obstacle for their jobs and finally, it lead to a cyclical kind of irresponsibility among civil servants (bureaucratic elites) and people often found illegal and/or immoral ways of avoiding the bureaucracy and its rules.²⁷

The belief that emerged within this social and political context was important in terms of the political culture, because loss of belief in political leaders has led to the loss of faith in the parliamentary system. There was a kind of alienation of the people in the sense that they became "defensive" individuals and were convinced that they had to protect themselves from the bureaucracy and government.

De Gaulle came out as a strong leader with extraordinary rights, strengthened executive over the parliament, made administration more influential than the parliament, and made some administrative reforms to change the bureaucracy, especially to increase centralization and efficiency. Most of his efforts were technocratic rather than democratic.²⁸

The elites who founded the Fifth Republic with De Gaulle believed that for a state to be respected and be strong, it was necessary to complement the political and constitutional re-

forms by administrative reforms. The constitutional reform and political reinforcement of the executive have led to a corresponding reduction in the powers of the parliament. In addition to the need to increase power, the founders were also motivated by other related objectives. They wanted to increase the efficiency. Michel Debrè declared that underlying reason to strengthen the administration was to rationalize decisions in order to depoliticize them, and to reject incrementalism underlying reason to strengthen the administration was to rationalize decisions in order to depoliticize them, and to reject incrementalism practiced by the politicians of the previous regimes.²⁹ In fact De Gaulle was a Jacobin as Hauss noted;

"De Gaulle was a confirmed Jacobin who believed a strong France was a centralized France in which one person or institution personified the national interest. Neither he nor his even more Jacobin advisor Michel Debrè ever envisaged anything but marginal changes in that system...

..... one of his first acts upon returning to France was to restore the prefectural system that left local administration in central hands".³⁰ De Gaulle recruited high ruling civil servants who were trained at ENA (National School of Administration) as cabinet ministers. The aim of the elite civil servants trained at special schools was to implement state-led industrial development.

An extremely tight iron triangle was formed among the new Gaullist politicians, businessmen coming from the ranks of the

bureaucracy, and civil servants of the bureaucracy. They dominated policy making on central, domestic and economic issues from 1962 onward.³¹ De Gaulle aimed at setting up a direct link between the central state and the periphery. He added for this purpose a new level of local administration, the region. Communes were too large in number and they could not serve for the purpose of De Gaulle. He thought that region would be an instrument for economic revival, administrative reform and political rebalancing.³² For him, the region was an instrument of balance between the center and periphery which was in the hands of conservative prefects and notables with complicity relationships. The reform was essentially corporatist, aimed at deconcentration rather than decentralization. He also established a consultative assembly, the CODER (Regional Development Assembly), to produce and implement the corporatist policies efficiently.

Another reform of De Gaulle was the establishment of districts including the reorganization of Paris. Mayors opposed to the establishment of districts because they saw them as taking powers away from the communes and because they could be established without the full agreement of the communes involved.

All attempts of De Gaulle at reform were met with the resistance of different agents. This resistance of local administrators, local elected officials, and national politicians from both fronts made the reforms impossible to be applied.

Civil servants as the administrators in the periphery opposed them because they represent the old system and transformation meant loss of this status. Prefects also opposed the reforms because they saw them as a threat to their old traditional career and their traditional relationship with local notables. Local notables opposed because they were from the opposition parties. In fact, until 1967 opposition was dominant in the periphery.³³ Regionalization meant loss of power for the opposition. Therefore, these notables resisted the reforms. Decentralization was again considered as a threat to the unity of the nation at this time too. For example even Gaullist Michel Debre thought that strong regions would be a danger to the unity of the nation state. They favored department regions which can avoid the problems of centralization without destroying the Jacobin principle of 'uniformity' which was one of the imperatives of the French Revolution. Related to this issue, the question was almost the same: "How to decentralize or make administrative reform within a given structure without destroying its essential structure?"

There were some groups who wanted changes in the nation-state because of different reasons. One group were the ethnic regionalists, those who demanded local autonomy for Corsica, Bretagne, and Occitan. They wanted to destroy the unity of France and establish a new federative structure. Another group were the Europeanists who thought that particular states in Europe were artificial things and Europe was a primary unit of

administration. But these groups were marginal and had no practical effects in practice.³⁴

In 1969 there was a failed regional referendum which defeated De Gaulle. Although it was related to regional reform, population at large saw referendum more as an issue of the regime. This is one reason of the defeat of De Gaulle. De Gaullist reforms failed but the need for local government reform became more urgent as a result of the inefficiencies of local government and the migration in 1960's and 1970s which destroyed the representative capability of local governments. Many people migrated to the cities and most of the population of the communes decreased and went under two thousand. This depopulation of the countryside also decreased the role of peasantry. But still successor conservative governments continued to support peasantry with protectionist measures for farm produce. But the socialist-communist front called the reform because they allied with the new electorate in the periphery, middle class including earners, workers, and middle managers. They recommended a program which aimed at self management in the periphery. Again this debate did not produce significant changes in practice.

After De Gaulle, the most important innovation toward decentralization was the region. The primary concern was to rationalize local government in order to increase efficiency by reducing the number of communes. But as always was the case, the debate on decentralization was alive. It must be noticed

that there emerged a consensus on the need of decentralization, particularly on administrative reform even with the radical outlooks in 1970s. De Gaullist party was split and some Gaullists saw regionalization as a way of promoting economic modernization.

As it will be explained in the last chapter, France by the end of the 1950s had been going through radical changes and transformations. Parallel to such developments, the nature of the state, especially the attitude of the state elites toward the periphery changed. Clientalistic relationships has become a significant phenomenon in French politics. Another phenomenon was the development of interest groups which became influential political actors in French politics. The local elected officials found legal and/or illegal ways of by-passing the prefects and they developed an informal network with the center which means that a considerable amount of informal decentralization emerged.

Interestingly, the right, except for a small minority, did not consider decentralization as a threat to national unity. Some began to think that decentralization would complete democracy of the nation as a whole, not contradict it. They supported the reform of Paris which made Paris a special case. They thought that tutelage was not necessary because the danger that makes it necessary no longer existed.³⁵

The Radical Party was also supportive of decentralization

too. Local democracy as a concept became a major subject of concern in all fronts. The left was strong in the periphery and they were supportive because in 1977 elections they were increasingly winning in the municipal and departmental elections. Socialists became more interested in local democracy and self management. Socialists, especially, were responding to the demands for decentralization coming from outside of established parties.³⁶ When they came to power in 1891, they put an end to a long lived tradition and decentralized "the one and indivisible republic" by radical reforms.

IV. The Socialist reforms of Decentralization

The Socialist Fifth Republic put an end to the Republic in question not only by radically changing central and local relations, but also redefining the role of the state in the periphery. The socialist reform which was called *la grande affaire du septennat*, the most important event of the last century or of Mitterrand's seven year presidency also marked the end of the various attempts of failed reforms.

As it has already been noted the debate on decentralization was a major political and administrative concern of the French political and state elites. In fact, there was always a desire for decentralization due to different reasons, but the response was negative and only under the Third Republic a limited reform was successfully made. Although it will be elaborated further in the last chapter, as a result of the instability of the French society due to lack of consensus

among the elites and various groups, the French state emerged as an autonomous agent that puts parameters without taking sectional interests of the private groups into consideration. Therefore, centralization became an issue directly related to the unity of the state and decentralization as a challenge to it. The French Revolution determined the fate of the successive reforms in such a way that the primary question was how to decentralize within the given administrative structure. But the French society in which the socialists came to power was different from the previous decades. It has changed throughout the centuries, and through the Gaullist modernization period. These changes plus the political conjuncture of the Socialist Fifth Republic made it easier to decentralize.

Socialist decentralization reforms transferred the executive powers, administrative functions and financial resources from the central government to the various levels of local government. In June 1981, Michel Deferre was appointed Minister of Interior and Decentralization. He was previously the mayor of Marseille and socialist deputy for 45 years. He was a defender of decentralization. Deferre was against the existing system which gave the unelected officials more rights to decide and competence on the local issues than elected mayors.³⁷ In fact, most radical part of the reform was the abolishment of the prefects. The name of the law that presented to The National Assembly at the opening session of the new parliament in July 1981 was the Law on the Rights and Liberties for Communes.

Departments and Regions. The debate on the law took an eight month period.³⁸ The decentralization law makes virtually no changes in the structure of local government in France, the only change in local government structure was the creation of decentralized district councils to take over some functions of the city councils to deal with housing, local amenities and welfare in three big cities (Paris, Marseille, and Lyons).³⁹

The most crucial change was concerned with the role of the prefect and the tutelage. With the weeks of the initial legislation period, the executive power at the departmental and regional levels was transferred from the prefects to the elected presidents. The prefects were abolished and were replaced by commissaires de la r epublique They are official representative of the Prime Minister and have no executive power. In addition to this, all priori tutelage over local authorities disappeared.⁴⁰ The abolishment of prefects and disappearance of prioricontrol signaled an end to the state's penetration of periphery. The regions and departments became genuine local governments with their executive powers.⁴¹ They gained more flexibility in their decision making and rules, they also gained further freedom in their internal organization and to recruit their own personnel for their jobs.

On the abolishment of the prefects and central control, the right made a strong opposition. For them it was a threat to the national unity and direct election of regional council was an expression of regional "sovereignty" in contradiction to

the sovereignty of the nation. But proposal found major support in the parliament and this minor opposition did not create big problems in legislation.⁴²

In regards to the functions of local government, regions gained new roles in the formulation and implementation of national economic plan. Each regional council prepared a five year regional plan in which the priorities were defined. The general principle was formulated in such a way that any transfer of function would be accompanied by a corresponding amount of financial transfer from the state. Departments had some specific responsibilities such as provision of socio-medical care, organization of social security schemes, provision of school transport, and maintenance of secondary school buildings.⁴³ The role of communes is defined as town planning and urban development.

One more reform was related to the electoral system of the local government authorities. Up to the socialist period, the departmental councils were elected with single-member wards (cantons) voting in two ballots. If there is no candidate that gets the majority in the first ballot there would be a second ballot in which the candidate who gets more than the others is declared the winner (i.e; plurality) Due to this electoral system there had been some coalitions among right and left fronts. The changes concern the areas with more than 35000 inhabitants. The members in councils will vary according to their inhabitants. In reforms, majority system was preserved.

In the first ballot if a list received absolute majority it automatically gets half of the seats in the council. The rest is distributed to each list which includes the winner list according to the proportion of their votes. Lists which get under 5 percent of the votes get no seats. There is a second ballot if none of the lists can get majority in the first ballot. The competitors in the second ballot are the lists which received at least 10 percent of the votes in the first ballot.⁴⁴ Paris, Marseille, and Lyons have a different system.

All of these reforms have changed the French local government structure. The commentators have different views on the reform. Some claim that the socialist decentralization program depends on its previous reforms in which many of its elements were proposed. This is not a wrong idea. In fact the decentralization was not an event that suddenly came out, rather it was a result of the long process that started earlier. Although comments are different, there is a certain point that Michael Keating noted;

"What is certain is that the varied patterns of relationships emerging in the cities, small towns and the countryside, and in different parts of the country, represent a further breakdown of the jacobin principle of uniformity."⁴⁵

NOTES

- (1). In order to see the significance of "national unity" in French society see Jack Hayward, The One and Indivisible Republic (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1973), p. 18.
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CHAPTER III
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRADITION
AND
DECENTRALIZATION IN TURKEY

I. The Historical Development of Local Government in Turkey

The principle cleavage in the Ottoman polity was between the center and periphery. There were no countervailing powers that check the power of the center as in feudalism, thus periphery was totally dominated by the center which was made up of the military- bureaucratic elites. Within such state of affairs there was neither a local government institution having a distinct status nor a local government tradition.

In Turkey, unlike in Western Europe, local government does not have a long tradition. It started with the Tanzimat Reformation which aimed at top down modernization of society and the reinforcement of the central power. Before the Tanzimat Reformation, the functions which now belong to local government were done by kadi who had also judicial and administrative functions. The Kadi was not an elected member, but he was a centrally appointed member.¹ His municipal functions were the supervision of local markets and the organization of local

affairs.² In fact, before the Tanzimat Reformation, the Ottoman statesmen did not have a conceptual distinction between central administration and local administration and all functions were carried out by the civil servants of the sultan acting on behalf of him.³

The establishment of local government institutions had begun as part of the modernization efforts. Since the modernization was a project that was implemented officially from top to down, local government reforms could not be separated from the same approach. Like all other policies aimed at modernization, local government reforms were implemented from top to down. These reforms began to take place along with modernization.

November 3, 1839 marked the beginning of a new period in the Ottoman political and social life. Gulhane-i Hatt-i Humayunu (Imperial Rescript of Gulhane) was declared in front of the people, state elites, religious leaders from different religions and the diplomats of the foreign states. Primary motive behind this declaration was to reinforce the central power by making unfunctioned institutions work through various reforms, and to respond positively to the pressures of the Great Powers, in particular, France, England and Russia. The political conception underlying the Tanzimat was a direct relationship between the state and its subjects. It was also a practical solution to mobilize masses behind the state against the local notables who previously gained some power.⁴

As a part of the implementation of the Tanzimat policy after 1840 the Muhasillik councils were created and they gained legal status. Although the electoral system to select some of the council members had significant restrictions, some elected members existed as the representatives of the people. According to Ilber Ortayli the existence of elected members was an important step for further developments because 1871 General Provincial Law (Idare-i Umumiyyeyi Vilayet) presumed that half of the representatives should be from Muslim groups and half of the representatives should be from non-Muslim groups. This has led to the beginning of a secular tradition.⁵ Since the Ottoman state was a religiously oriented one, the establishment of the representative institutions including the representatives coming from different ethnic and religious groups constituted a base for subsequent secular and constitutionalist movements.

Another step towards a local government tradition during this period was the creation of the Sehremaneti in 1854. It was run by a centrally appointed member called the Sehremini and had a council made up of 12 appointed persons. To be appointed as a member of the council someone should be a well known and respected person which reflects the elitist understanding of the center.⁶ The Sehremaneti was responsible to provide basic goods and services, to oversee markets, to make roads and building sidewalks. Still, the authority did not have its own financial resources and was totally dependent upon the center.

Not surprisingly these councils were under the strict control of the center and were far from being autonomous and civil societal elements.⁷ Although the provincial local councils were established as a part of the decentralization policy of the Tanzimat, the primary motive was to improve the tax collection. The administrative councils had only advisory powers and they did not know clearly the weight of their recommendations. During this period what center understood from local government was a new administrative unit of the central government to function in urban centers.⁸

The fact that the state elites were against the devolution of power in the true sense of the word did not mean that they were not interested in better organization of the public services and conducting urban affairs. In the nineteenth century, insufficient infrastructure of the cities was a barrier to the economic and social developments. Public services were unorganized and contributed to this phenomenon. In addition to the desire of the state elites to have a good infrastructure, Great Powers also forced the Ottoman State to have better port cities as center of economic activities which in turn necessitated better infrastructure. Because of these reasons the first municipal administration was established in Pera (Beyoglu) which was also a port center and a center of foreign embassy and business.⁹ The official language was French and it was run according to the recommendations of an appointed committee of seven called the Committee of Order (Intizam Komisyonu). The fact that this committee comprised six foreigners and only one

Turk is a significant illustration of the lack of interest on the part of the local population.¹⁰

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During the Tanzimat period municipality could be developed as a powerful civil societal institution, but the emerging non-muslim merchant bourgeoisie of the Ottoman Empire supported separatist nationalistic movements and this reinforced the prejudices of the center against the municipality.¹¹ Nationalist movements had become a worldwide phenomenon during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Ottoman state was sensitive to the nationalist movements because it could dissolve the Ottoman mosaic made up of different ethnic and religious groups. Since the first municipality was established by non-Muslims, it represented a challenge to the central control. Therefore, the attitude of the center towards municipality remained critical. Under these conditions, the municipal institutions during this time could not go beyond being an agent of the central government. In this century it was not possible to separate municipal bodies and provincial administration in the Ottoman periphery. Despite the rules that gave the municipalities their legal status most of the Ottoman cities did not have municipal organizations.¹² In fact, during this period the creation of municipal administration did not become a trend throughout the country. The masses kept themselves attached to the traditional institutions. These groups actively resisted the reforms imposed from above in the period between 1800 and 1850.¹³

The tradition of local government in its rudimentary sense was only in the villages of the Ottoman society. It was not a result of the development of the civic culture or the existence of civil societal elements in the village but was due to the fact that for centuries the central government was not in a position to intervene effectively to the village life and fulfill the necessary social functions.¹⁴ Their organization was similar to the administrative organization of small communities. Persons who were effective and known met in some common places such as a mosque and tried to find solutions to their problems. They also had some common properties such as pastures and woods which were financial resources for necessary expenditures. But they were not corporate entities.

Although the village had such a long history, as a sociological unit in the Ottoman context, the creation of the village as a local government unit had begun after the Tanzimat.¹⁵ A decree proclaimed in 1864 which was about the administration of the provinces assigned for the villages a popularly elected village headman (Muhtar), and the councils of elders. Muhtar was the chief administrator of the village affairs and the local agent of the central government. Although there are some substantial differences, many provisions of this decree describe a traditional situation that has been perpetuated until today.¹⁶ Speaking in a broad sense it can be said that the Tanzimat reforms -aiming at modernization imposed from above to make the necessary changes to restore and reinforce the

central power- could not create a strong local government tradition in the true sense of the word. The councils established as part of the reforms were far from being local government bodies and civil societal institutions limiting the power of the state vis-a- vis the social groups. They were considered as the arms of the central government in the localities and the primary concern was to increase centralization and to collect taxes more efficiently.

All in all, the last decades of the nineteenth century was important in Ottoman history. In regards to the local government tradition of the Ottoman society, its importance comes from the fact that these councils constituted the rudiments of the local government system.¹⁷ In fact, by the end of the nineteenth century, the Turkish local government system at the village, municipal and provincial level had reached a pattern which remained as such for decades. This pattern began taking place in the nineteenth century, and continued with the reforms of the Second Constitutional period at the beginning of this century. The Ordinance of 1913 explicitly mentioned the provincial local administration with a corporate status, a locally elected council which chooses an executive committee and centrally appointed members.¹⁸

Within these reforms and especially with the onset of the Tanzimat period, there emerged an important phenomenon regarding the state that is crucial to understand the Ottoman

legacy of the Turkish Republic. The relationship between the civil bureaucrats and the Sultan changed in such a way that the bureaucrats gained the status of state elites. In the classical sense bureaucrats belonged to the sultan but when they acquired political influence they adopted the secularizing orientation started by Mahmut II. The state and the sultan were differentiated and the bureaucratic elite of this period viewed themselves as the servants of the state and not of the sultan. They freed themselves from the Islamic tradition, and claimed that it was best to leave this tradition. They became the faithful instruments of radical administrative reforms, and did not represent group or class interests and not even their own.¹⁹ The new state was structured within the civil bureaucracy and in the Young Turks era within the military. Gradually, within this state of affairs, a strong state emerged.²⁰

The Turkish Republic was established on this heritage and centralization was one of the defining characteristics of the new era. Again the same elites were in power and operated with the same rationality similar to their Ottoman version. Despite the various reforms aiming at democratization and modernization of the country, center remained sensitive to any kind of challenge to its power. Within this state of affairs the local government bodies could not go beyond being the agents of the central government in localities, highly dependent upon the central government financially, politically, and administratively through various kinds of tutelage.

Before going into the Republican period, it must be noted that in the last period of the Ottoman Empire there were ideas favoring more decentralization policies. A pro-liberal Prens Sabahattin maintained that it was best to have a decentralized administration. He was more liberal in his attitude towards the periphery. According to Sabahattin in order to have a decentralized model the vali, a centrally appointed member, should have more competence, and there should be a provincial board elected by the people. Financial and administrative controls should be left to the people. Tanzimat reforms, for him, were far from this aim.²¹ Needless to say, despite the fact that Sabahattin aimed to maintain a better decentralized model, his model was highly centralized too. Yet, it still seemed ahead of its time.

II. The Local Government in the Republican Period

The Republican state was established in a critical period during which the state had to fight against internal and external enemies. There was the war of independence (1919-1922), and the problem of Kurdish nationalism. Under these state of affairs it was the fear of the founders of the new Republic (Mustafa Kemal and his friends) that Anatolia could be split.²² Therefore the stress on centralization and general will became the characteristic feature of the new state in question. In fact, the Republic did not inherit a strong local government tradition. The Republic itself had its own rationale that stressed the reinforcement of the powers of central

government.²³

The municipal law proclaimed in 1930 was designed to make local government bodies the agents of central government in the periphery. Although some changes were made related to local government, basic rationale remained the same. The law takes the local government bodies as corporate entities, and gives legal status to the local government in Turkey. It has been at work until 1980s except for some minor changes. Designed by the central elite or by their agents this law aimed not to create a kind of local government based on the principle of local democracy, but a kind of local government which functions as the arms of a central government in the periphery under strict administrative, financial and political control.

Similar to France, decentralization of local government was an issue related to the fear of the national unity in the minds of the central bureaucratic or administrative elite. As it was noted:

"The new Turkish Republic established in 1923 did not really attempt to change this (Ottoman. M.Y.) centralized system, although it passed legislation in 1930 to enable local communities to create semiautonomous local authorities in the Western pattern. Despite the establishment of modern municipal institutions in major cities, the nature of administration remained highly centralized mainly because of the domestic and external

security needs of a newly established state. In other words, efforts to integrate the nation both geographically and ethnically did not allow the central government to delegate much of its powers to local authorities".²⁴

The law proclaimed that;

"(1) The acquisition by local government units of legal status as corporate persons and their maintaining such a status are subject to legal supervision;

(2) The duties of the local governmental units are delineated in detail by laws enacted by the Parliament; and

(3) The central administration has close control on financial resources of the local governmental units".²⁵

Although the Republican elite made a conceptual distinction between the local government and local administration this kind of tutelage have not allowed the local government to develop as an autonomous entity which would be more than local administration.

After the Second World War, urbanization emerged as a structural factor which strongly effected the local government in Turkey. It must be noted that this high level of urbanization was not accompanied by the same level of industrialization as it was the case in the developed European countries. This brought new problems to the local governments in general and

municipalities in particular. İhan Tekeli mentions three kinds of important changes and/or effects on the local government, especially the municipalities. The first important change led by rapid urbanization was related to the contradiction between great municipalities and small ones. The law allows the establishment of a municipality in residence with a population of two thousand and above. This led to the creation of weak municipalities in large numbers. Their abilities and financial resources were radically different from the great municipalities. Great municipalities had their resources but small municipalities were totally dependent upon central government.²⁶

The second change caused by rapid urbanization was the accelerated establishment of the peripheral local governments around the metropolitan ones. For example, attached to Istanbul municipality there were 34 municipalities in 1976. Metropolitan municipalities had greater per capita income than district municipalities, and district municipalities were the areas in which gecekondu housing was a wider problem. This means that they did not have sufficient infrastructure and were dependent upon the infrastructural capacity of the metropolitan municipalities. Today the situation does not seem much different. This contradiction has also been a legitimate reason used by the central government to maintain a highly centralized local government system.²⁷

The third and most important change was associated with the investments for necessary urban services as well as an

increase in urban population. Necessary investments for urban services had increased more rapidly than the urban population.²⁸ In fact, with the effects of the mass media, the expectations of the urban population increased. So did the demands of the private sector for better infrastructure and the demands of the people for education. But local governments could not keep pace with these developments because they were not designed as entities that could easily cope with these demands.²⁹

There existed no harmonious balance between the functions divided between central government and local government. In Turkey division of functions between central and local government was not done by rational criteria, and the balance had changed in favor of central government.³⁰ In the distribution of resources, one could see that there was great inequality between central government and local government. Productive resources were left to the central government and less productive resources to the local government.³¹ The resources that were left to the local government were sensitive to inflation and inflation swept out their resources.

In addition to the unequal division of responsibility, central government could easily influence the resources of local governments. In fact, under a highly centralized system less than ten percent of all revenues were allocated by the local governments. The main revenue source of municipalities

were direct municipal taxes and local shares of certain national taxes. But central government could easily increase the burden of local governments. For instance, the central government by passing a personnel law in the 1960s increased the salaries of the public personnel and it became impossible to balance the budgets of the local governments.³²

The local financial problems were also intensified by the central government because it failed to meet its legal obligations to the cities. This means that they received less than what was allowed by the law. And the strong centralization denied the cities the necessary means to deal adequately with the urban problems. They had no flexibility in determining the local taxes and expenditures.³³

Although the law assumed that local authorities were provided with the sources of revenue in proportion to their functions, this did not work due to the attitude of the central government toward local governments. Bank of Provinces (İller Bankası), the only source which provides credits to local government, particularly to the municipalities could no longer meet the needs of the municipalities. Moreover in the distribution of the resources partisan considerations were very common. Within this state of affairs the provincial local administration as a level of the local administration lost its power. Most of the functions done previously by provincial local administration were taken by other institutions of central government which resulted in a loss of power.³⁴ Municipalities

witnessed serious fiscal crisis.

During the 1960s the local government began to become a new concern of the central government for the aim was not to increase their autonomy but to direct their potentials to the national development. The new pace started with the First Five-Year Development Plan(1963). In this plan priority was given to the underdeveloped regions in regards with the distribution of the public investments. It was spelled out that further growth of the big cities in the country should be allowed if employment opportunities were made available.³⁵

In the Second-Five Year Development Plan (1968-1972) emphasis was laid on regional development and urbanization. It was declared that growing centers in Anatolia should be supported to save the metropolis of the Western Turkey, and large urban centers should contribute to the process of economic and social development in proportion with their size.³⁶

In the planned period, the most important project was MEHTAP (Central Government Organization Research Project) which aimed to create a necessary change in administration in order to accelerate economic growth. It was declared that the division of responsibility and functions between the central government, its organs in localities and the local government was subject to further investigation.³⁷ The central and local government relations were also an issue of investigation.

Although some investigations were made under this approach clear cut policies for the regional development and urban growth were not adopted and maintained over time. Objectives and priorities shifted from plan to plan which made it difficult for central government to direct resources effectively. Additional reasons such as inadequate resources in financing projects contributed negatively to the realization of projects.³⁸

It can be concluded that during the 1960s the central government did not make any serious effort in solving the problems of the local governments with the exceptions that have already been explained. The problems were accumulated for decades and reached to the crisis in 1973 when municipal elections in major urban centers like Istanbul, Ankara, and İzmir were won by the center-left members when a center right coalition was in power.³⁹

In the 1973 election, there was a change in the general pattern of the local government elections. Until 1950, RPP (Republican People's Party) as one party in the Turkish politics was in power. Beginning from 1950 onwards, governments and mayors were generally the members of the same party. This continued until 1970 as a general pattern. This made it easy to establish a harmonious relationship between the central and local governments.⁴⁰ But after the 1973 elections, as has already been noted, this pattern has changed, and there emerged a serious crisis when the central government took partisan

considerations, and began to exercise strict tutelage over the center-left mayors. This crisis had reached its peak when the Ministry of Interior attempted to fire the Mayor of Ankara without basing his action on legally tenable grounds.⁴¹

At the beginning, these center-left mayors did not have definite programs to implement. But later with the contribution of some left-wing intellectuals they developed a program called "democratic or participatory municipality". In general they were behind local autonomy and even devolution rather than delegation.

When RPP came to power in 1978, this project found a chance to be implemented. Democratic municipality model was based, first of all, on local autonomy. In addition to this autonomy there were other principles that guided this movement. Democratic municipality, according to these principles, should be; (1) democratic participatory; (2) productive; (3) resource creator; (4) director; (5) coordinator; (6) unitist. The whole project had mainly two dimensions. The first one was related to the function of local government in the urban life, and the second one was related to the interaction between people and the members of local government.⁴² The second principle was based on the belief that the interaction could increase the local democracy. As part of this movement an attempt was made in the economic sphere (known by the acronym TANSA) to provide commodities from producers to consumers without any intermedi-

ary agent. But this project turned out to be unsuccessful. Due to financial and provisional problems, and problems of organization, it could not realize its goals.⁴³

Another attempt was the creation of the Ministry of Local Government based on the following principles;

"(1) Municipalities should be instrumental in promoting local democracy and in integrating people around the idea of city.

(2) The fiscal confusion at the center should be eliminated.

(3) The municipalities should play a major role against unhealthy urbanization and unearned rent income thereof.

(4) The municipalities should join forces through municipal unions.

(5) Municipalities should engage in economic activities.

(6) The municipalities should develop their own technical know-how and should no longer be dependent on the Bank of Provinces".⁴⁴

But the Municipality was stopped before the realization of its projects, thus it is hard to evaluate the attempts. It is evident that this attempt had aimed to find a solution for the problems of the periphery coming from the center. Although aimed at more decentralization and democratization, it could not go beyond the attempt already explained. In short, the

status of local government did not change drastically until 1980. It was the military intervention that marked a new beginning in the history of local government in Turkey.

III. The Local Government Decentralization in Post-1980 Turkey

It has already been noted that the problems of local government in general, and municipalities in particular, increased and reached to the level of a crisis in the 1970s and a trend has begun from the center towards dealing with the problems of municipalities with a more democratic perspective.

With the establishment of the military government after the military intervention in 1980, a new period has started in the municipal life or in general in the local government tradition in Turkey. The military authorities, as a source for their own legitimacy, claimed that the regime was in danger and intervention was inevitable to stop the anarchy since political parties were not in a position to overcome the troubles. By using this rhetoric they intervened almost to every institution. Local governments were not saved from this overhaul.

The government formed by the military in 1980 aimed at having a strong state, namely a central government, therefore they increased the central control due to their philosophy to reinforce the concept of the state. According to the military authorities, the municipalities were involved in the pre-1980

proposition about the local government in Turkey in the party program. Act of 34 in the party program declared that in public administration it was necessary to reduce centralization and to increase efficiency in public services.⁴⁸ In the program, the rationale behind the decentralization reform is explained as efficiency, and it is not stressed that their goal was to increase local autonomy and democracy.

In fact, MP established a two-tier metropolitan municipality system which was a product of short-term electoral strategy at least to the extent that they aimed at long-term need for reform in local government.⁴⁹ In the first local election, MP government was optimistic about the winning of mayoralty in some large urban centers. Thus they created a two-tier metropolitan system which is made up of metropolitan municipality and district municipalities. The results of the election was a surprise for the MP because they won at both levels.⁵⁰

In the 1984 local election, a law was proclaimed to institute the reforms in question, which made it mandatory to elect both a metropolitan council and a municipal council in the metropolitan areas where there were more than one administrative districts. The law also claimed the election of separate mayors for both metropolitan city and for the district municipalities.⁵¹

At the metropolitan level there are three different au-

thorities that run it, a metropolitan municipality mayor, a metropolitan municipal council and a metropolitan municipal executive board. The district mayors and one fifth of the members of the district municipal councils constitute the metropolitan municipal council. The mayor of the metropolitan municipality is the head of the council.⁵² In order to have a strong executive control at the metropolitan level the assistant mayoralty was abolished and a new agency, an appointed secretary general and an executive board made up of appointed and non-elected members was created.⁵³ The second tier is responsible for the activities such as programming of detailed activities and actual day to day operation of the services.

In addition to the institutional arrangements, these reforms include also a financial aspect. The new municipal law, although decreased the local revenue sources, transferred more productive taxes from central government to local governments. The interesting and, to the same extent, important feature was that for the first time in Turkey it was proclaimed that those inhabitants who live in surrounding areas using municipal services were required to pay municipal taxes. The share of municipalities increased from 5 percent to 10.3 percent. This is a significant increase in comparison to the past.⁵⁴

Despite the fact that municipalities have more resources at their disposal their resources are still inadequate and can not solve the problems of municipalities. This becomes more problematic at the district level because metropolitan municipi-

pality has the right to exercise tutelage power over district municipalities. Under such a condition they face a critical imbalance between their resources and their aspirations.⁵⁵ They have less productive resources than the metropolitan municipalities. Within this aspect another development was the establishment of some authorities such as ISKI (Istanbul Water and Sewerage Authority) which is becoming gradually more independent and works financially with the rationality of modern municipal finance.⁵⁶

From the functional point of view metropolitan municipalities gained some new functions. Some of them are related to strategic investment plannings, dealing with large infrastructures. Others are making Master plans for the metropolitan areas, transportation, sewerage, water supply, establishment of parks, green areas, gardens, and disposal of solid waste.

Most significant development was the transferring of the tutelage power from central government to the metropolitan municipality, in particular metropolitan mayor. Heper indicates that:

"The tutelage powers that had previously been exercised by central government were transferred to the metropolitan municipality, more specifically to the metropolitan mayor. In the last analysis the tutelage of the Ministry of Interior over the metropolitan

municipality now amounted to the approval of the appointment of the secretary general of the metropolitan municipality as well as the creation of the new posts in the municipality. The ministry of Public Work and Resettlement, too, no longer exercised any hierarchical supervision over the metropolitan municipality; the Ministry only provided "information" and extended some funds on a project basis".⁵⁷

Local government bodies historically were under strict tutelage control of central agencies. It must be noted that in Turkey political control has been more important than administrative control. This can clearly be seen, for example, during the interregnum 1980-83 in such a way that local governments became very close to local administration as executive agents of central government.⁵⁸ With the new regulation, metropolitan municipalities gained new tutelage powers which put them in a strong position not only vis-a-vis district municipalities but in regards to the relevant ministries in Ankara.⁵⁹ Over the district municipalities both the metropolitan municipality council and mayor had extensive powers that they could modify the budgets of district municipalities before the final approval and could settle disputes among the district municipalities, or between the district municipalities and metropolitan municipality.⁶⁰ This relationship is based on the assumption that metropolitan and district municipalities are 'unified entities'

but in reality it is a potential for conflicts. In fact there are some conflicts due to the relationship in question.

Concerning the relationship between the metropolitan municipality and district municipalities, it is clear that it is not compatible with local democracy and local autonomy. For example, in Istanbul some of the district mayors argued that metropolitan municipality took upon itself the responsibility of carrying out what can be considered as vote-catching functions and left to the district municipalities other insignificant functions. They are acting more arbitrarily and in a discriminatory manner when they use the tutelage control over district mayors.⁶¹ In situations when a mayor of a district is from different parties the problems can become more urgent.

The division of responsibility is another source of problem in both theory and practice because it is not clearly defined. Ersin Kalaycioglu gives examples pertaining to district municipalities' control over the market places when it is assumed that this task is to be coordinated by the office of the metropolitan mayor. There can be some situations when the metropolitan municipality may take some functions previously performed by the district municipality but financed by the metropolitan municipality.⁶²

Bureaucracy also poses some problems. The bureaucracy and the bureaucrats are still in a critical position in the new

system.⁶³ Most of the mayors think that bureaucracy is a barrier to function effectively and the relationship between municipality and people should be direct and mayoralty should belong to the people.

Although there are crucial developments toward decentralization and local autonomy, it is the fact that neither metropolitan governments nor other units of government in Turkey can be considered as autonomous in the real sense of the word. They are still administratively, financially, and politically dependent upon the central government. The new system transferred the tutelage power to the metropolitan municipality but decentralization stopped at the metropolitan level and did not extend to the district level. In this case the role of the state was taken by the metropolitan municipalities, and their approach to the district municipalities is similar to the earlier attitude of the central government.⁶⁴

The reasons of the success (maybe not failure) of a limited degree of decentralization reforms lies at the crux of the political culture and political development in Turkey. Although it will be further elaborated in the concluding chapter it must be noted that since 1950 Turkey has been making progress toward a more democratic way of life. After 1980 this process reached to the level that the central elite, i.e. military bureaucratic elite have begun to interpret Ataturkism, the official ideology of these elites, in more flexible way. They do not take the principles of Ataturkism as totally guiding norms such as

etatism, to a certain extent secularism, and they welcomed economic liberalism despite the fact that etatism was one of the main principles of Ataturkism.⁶⁵ On the one hand, it became clear that the problems of the local government in Turkey could not be resolved by the policies that are imposed from the center. On the other hand, in the course of time the bureaucracy and the military has lost its power vis-a-vis the political elites. This process started during the 1950s with the multi-party politics by which political elites as the representatives of the people gained increasing importance in society. After the 1980 military intervention a consensus emerged among the different sections of society which meant that military intervention was not a solution to the problems of Turkey. In contrast to this period, at the background of the 1960 military intervention one can see that the bureaucracy, military, university and intelligensia made a coalition against the civil government which made the intervention possible. In this social and political conjuncture, the Motherland Party found a good chance to implement the decentralization policies.

On the other side of the coin, the approach to local government in Turkey was lopsided, and the problems were reduced to the fiscal gap. Even the reduction in function was not taken as an effective way to solve the problems of the local governments.⁶⁶ The approach which ignored the development of local autonomy was reinforced by the fact that in the Ottoman-Turkish context there existed no local government tradition

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CHAPTER IV

IV. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRADITION AND DECENTRALIZATION IN FRANCE AND TURKEY: A COMPARISON

I. The Local Government in France and Turkey

Local government in Turkey, like in France, is organized at three levels: The provincial, municipality, and the village. The local governmental structure in Turkey resembles the system in France. Like France, Turkey is divided into provinces, and each province is run by a centrally appointed member, governor (vali).¹ A province is an administrative unit of the central government and territorial unit of the local government. In every province there is a "provincial local administration" which is made up of a general assembly, a permanent board and a governor. The general assembly is a collection of members who are elected according to a system of proportional representation. The general assembly and the permanent board are consultative bodies and the governor is the executive.

Provincial local administration has traditionally been responsible for many functions (such as the construction of city and village roads, village water system, village schools etc.) but in the course of time they have lost their functions

and these functions have been taken by other agencies of central government.

The smallest unit of local government is the village. It was established by the Village Law of 1924. At the top level of village administration is the headman (muhtar). There is also a council of elders which is made up of eight to twelve members. Most of the jobs are done by joint efforts of villagers (imece). Village administration organizes the business and has a revenue called salma which is a locally collected tax.²

In Turkey, the most important unit of local government is the municipality. Although municipal government dates back to the 1850s, it took its recent form by the Law numbered 1580 proclaimed in 1930 and with the exception of new metropolitan municipalities it is still at work. Municipality is made up of an elected mayor who is the chief executive of municipal government, a municipal council, and a municipal executive board. Mayor oversees municipal budgets and authorizes expenditures.³ Until 1963, mayors were elected by the municipal councils from amongst the council members. Since 1963 mayors have been elected by popular vote.

The local government in France is organized, like in Turkey, at three levels: regional, departmental and communal. Most important similarity between France and Turkey on this matter is related to the central-local government relations.

Like Turkey, until recent reforms, French local government authorities were under the tutelage of central government.⁴ The prefect who corresponds to the vali in Turkey exercises tutelage power on behalf of the central government. All actions and decisions, until the 1982 decentralization program, were subjected to the a priori tutelage control of the prefect.

In Turkey, central government exercises various types of control over local government authorities. But in comparison to France, control over local government bodies has produced a more centralized system of local government in Turkey.⁵ For example, the law which regulates the exercise of tutelage gives to a centrally appointed authority (vali in provinces and kaymakam in districts), under some conditions, the right to fire a mayor. This kind of tutelage which is exercised very extensively turns a local government unit to a part of central government located in its hierarchical structure.⁶ In France on the other hand, in the course of time, the formal tutelage of the prefect has become progressively less important over the years and a kind of complicity has developed between mayors and the prefects.⁷ This relationship has strengthened the local government and the position of the mayors vis-a-vis the central government. Mayors in France enjoyed more freedom in comparison to the mayors in Turkey.

From the financial and functional point of view, it has previously been noted that, the most critical problem that the Turkish municipalities faced was financial. Financially they

have been strongly dependent upon the central government and the distribution of resources have been done by partisan considerations. In fact there was a sharp inequality between the functions of the local governments and their resources. The different shares from the total public expenditure to local government in France and Turkey is enough to indicate the differences between the two. In 1979, it was 54.6 in France whereas it was 9.8 per cent in Turkey.⁸ Under these conditions, the local finances acquires a political character and become a tool for political control. In Turkey this control is usually exercised by the central government against the mayors especially if they belong to an opposition party.

II. The Local Government Tradition in France and Turkey

In order to understand the similarities and differences between France and Turkey in terms of the local government tradition, it is necessary to look at the fundamental differences between a feudal and a patrimonial society. In contrast to France, the Ottoman Turkish society does not have a feudal tradition.⁹ The Ottoman Empire traditionally had neither a hereditary aristocracy or independent church hierarchy nor self-governing cities. The Ottoman- Turkish society had no intermediary institutions between the state and society which was a basic characteristics of the feudal societies.

As Halil Inalcik aptly noted the Ottoman society was made up of two main classes: Military which belonged to the sultan and reaya which was made up of all muslim and non-muslim subjects who had no place in the government.¹⁰ The intermediary agents were alien to the Ottoman state; whereas, in France, the situation was radically in reverse in the sense that cities and municipalities have developed as autonomous and self-governing entities.

The existence of the self-governing cities were common to all feudal societies. In feudal Europe, cities developed as self-governing entities through the process of feudal dissolution. Henri Pirenne in his influential book The Medieval Cities pointed out that the cities in Medieval Europe were established against feudal authorities as a result of revival of commerce. Cities had their own law, and judicial institutions were autonomous entities vis-a-vis the feudal authorities. According to Pirenne, municipal institutions and municipal democracy was developed by the spread of city councils in the twelfth century¹¹ These councils were rudiments of the municipal institutions which informed the beginning of a new civilization. In France, these councils were established during the same period, beginning from the end of the eleventh century onwards. By the twelfth century most villages were both democratic and self-governing, run by a local assembly. These assemblies were composed either of all the local population or only a privileged portion of this population which elected their own municipal officials.¹²

When king regained power, the autonomy of the localities was destroyed and after the fourteenth century there was again gradual increase in centralization. By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the communal liberty decreased and under an absolute monarchy, society was administratively united to complete the political unity. Central government imposed a financial system to local municipalities which resulted in a central supervision of local finance and end of municipal independence. This can be considered to a certain extent as the beginning of the tutelage. In 1692 monarchy abolished free municipal elections because monarchy saw it as a threat to the unity of the state. This monarchical structure was maintained until the French Revolution.¹³

The Ottoman society, on the other hand, had no such tradition. Autonomous cities were alien to the Ottoman society. There were also no classes that could challenge the power of the center. It has already been noted that all services were done by the servants of the sultan acting on his behalf. There was not a local government but a local administration totally under the control of the center. Therefore, in the Ottoman-Turkish context neither cities nor municipalities have developed as the institutions of civil society vis-a-vis the state.¹⁴ The establishment of municipalities was part of a modernization program imposed from above. The rationale behind the Municipal Law proclaimed in 1930 had some implications for

the functions and the status of local government in the Turkish society. The Law declared that the existing municipalities could not conform and serve the intended modernization of Turkish society. The social engineers of the Tanzimat failed to recognize the political functions of local government in Western Europe where local democracy was institutionalized at the level of local government. Although it was only at the end of the nineteenth century that some councils were established in Turkey, local government and decentralization acquired an increasing importance in France, beginning from the eighteenth century onwards. The history of decentralization began with the French Revolution of 1789 which has the greatest effects upon the later developments. It was Tocqueville who first recognized that at the beginning there was a push towards decentralization, and at the end, an extension of centralization.¹⁵

After the Revolution the French society witnessed countless debates on decentralization. Revolution gave power to the Jacobins and they formulated "equality" and "uniformity" before the law as primary concerns with regard to centralization indicating that "equality" and "uniformity" were possible only under centralization. On the basis of this rule they made a radical break from the ancien regime in the organization of royal provinces and parishes of ancien regime. The Jacobins created the departments and communes assumed that they were equal in size and importance.¹⁶ This was a rejection of the inequalities inherent in the previous structures and an attempt to institute local liberty.

After the Revolution the social and political arena was unstable which reinforced the Jacobin elites to insist on centralization. Although in principle the Jacobins aimed to institute a democracy they continued to see local democracy as a threat to national unity. For example when the election of the president by popular vote was introduced and taken as a means to promote national unity, as of 1848, the popular election of mayors continued to be seen as a threat to such unity.

The rhetoric of national unity became a tool for the state elites to legitimize the subordination of local government in France. When the local government decentralization was introduced, this was followed by a recentralization process due to the crisis which reinforced the prejudices of the central elites. But it must be noted that in the parliament there was always a group supporting decentralization and local democracy due to different reasons. In order to see what differs France from Turkey, it is meaningful to point out that the word "decentralization" entered the French political vocabulary in the 1820s whereas "centralization" in 1794.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman state was reinforcing its centralization, whereas in France, with the Revolution of 1848 and a short lived Second Republic, decentralization was introduced for a short time, and the prefects were abolished at least in theory.¹⁷ A new institution was

created but this decentralization had a short life. Louis Napoleon intervened, and put an end to the efforts of decentralization.¹⁸ In the Third Republic, a new decentralization program was introduced by the Organic Municipal Law of 1884 which gave the French local government system a form that has been at work-with the exception of some modifications- until the recent reforms of socialist decentralization. In this period, in the Ottoman society, local government institutions were novel and weak. The whole effort including the establishments of local government institutions were directed to increase centralization. The number of established councils remained limited to some centers, and many cities did not have councils.

When the Republic was established, it operated in a centralized fashion too. Although the institutions of local governments gained legal status, they remained under the extensive tutelage control of the central government. In addition to this administrative control their financial resources have been limited, and this reinforced further their dependence upon central governments. The central government has been in a position that could easily intervene into the affairs of the local governments. Under this state of affairs financial dependence gained a political character and central government used it to maintain local government bodies as the agents of central government in the periphery. Transition to multi-party politics in the 1950s did not change the nature of the relationship in question. The central approach limited its scope by

the cost- effectiveness and efficiency without a real concern in local autonomy.

After the Second World War, the local governments in Turkey faced serious problems due to high level of urbanization. Since their resources were limited they could not overcome these problems, and experienced many crisis. Needless to say, the most important one was of a financial crisis. Allocation to local governments was done by partisan considerations. During the 1970s central government took over some of the local government revenue sources. In addition to this intervention, administrative tutelage became a serious problem when it was exercised over the mayors from the opposition parties. In France, on the other hand, local government during the same period reinforced its position. The share of local government expenditure within the national expenditure in particular has increased. Local government organizations successfully adapted welfare state policies which increased their share within the national public expenditure.¹⁹

Another positive development in French local government system was related to the nature of the relationship between the prefects and mayors. After the Second World War, a kind of mutual relationship developed from which both the prefects and mayors benefited. Mayors and prefects have begun to work as a team for the benefits of their units. This mutual relationship gave mayors a greater freedom in their activities than the one

that they were allowed by law of that time. In addition to this mutual relationship, local officials (i.e. members of the local governments) found some legal or illegal ways of bypassing the existing legal constraints. As Viven Schmidt claimed during the Fifth Republic, an examination of administrative processes in contrast to legal form indicates a quite different pattern of development in the center-periphery relations.²⁰ The growth of informal channels of local power ensured that an informal decentralization existed alongside the formal centralization of the institutions. During the postwar period, France has undergone a process of economic and political modernization which has weakened the power of the state vis-a-vis private groups by tolerating them better than the previous periods. By these developments the attitude of the central elites has changed in favor of the periphery. This was one of the significant reasons that made decentralization possible.

At the beginning of the postwar period, there was a strong consensus that French society would be modernized. In order to accelerate socioeconomic modernization, the French statesman recognized that it was necessary to make an administrative reform. De Gaulle, in particular, aimed at direct relationship between center and periphery which would increase the speed and efficiency of the implemented state policies. Communes were too small for his aim, so that a new unity should be created. De Gaulle's aim was to create the regions as new administrative units, but the regional decentralization program failed because all local officials including the prefects and mayors resisted

it, viewing it as a threat to their traditional career. Another reason for the failure was the opposition which was dominant in the periphery and resisted to maintain power. What is important for us is that, unlike in Turkey, the debates on local government in France concentrated on the change of existing structure and central-local government relations. Decentralization was a major political and administrative concern in the parliamentary debates in the postwar period. In Turkey, on the other hand, all problems of local government were reduced to fiscal and financial issues which meant that they were not political problems, in fact they were. For instance, the structure of central and local government relations which was the major source of problems could not be conceived as a reason of problems of the local governments in Turkey.

In Turkey, however, when central government was convinced that local government could play a role in the development of the country, neither decentralization nor central local relations became an issue of debate. Even in the short period of democratic municipality movement in the 1970s which has been explained in the third chapter, general outlook was to find a solution for the problems of the municipalities from the center. Except for the democratic municipality movement, decentralization and local democracy have not become a genuine concern of the central elites until the decentralization movements of the 1980s.

III. Local Government Decentralization in France and Turkey

The socialist decentralization reforms in France put an end to the last imperative of the French Revolution which was explained in the Jacobin principle of "uniformity". "The one and the indivisible Republic" was decentralized by the Law of 1982. In fact, the socialist reform of decentralization was a radical break from the past and the republican tradition which takes national unity as a primary parameter in relation to the French state. It was a radical reform because it abolished prefects who has been the guarantor of "national unity". Since the French Revolution national democracy rather than local democracy has gained a priority as an end and has been seen as a guarantee for the unity of the nation which was a heritage of the republican tradition. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate on the critical actors and institutions that have been barriers to the local autonomy and the development of local democracy. This is necessary not only to understand the nature of decentralization but also its differences from the local government decentralization in Turkey.

It has previously been noted that the critical actor between the central government and local government was the prefect who had a priory tutelage power over the local government authorities. Since the Napoleonic era, the prefectural system has been at work as a way to ensure centralization. Despite the informal changes in the relationship between the prefects and mayors, the prefectural system has been a big

obstacle in front of local autonomy. The radical part of the socialist decentralization program was the abolishment of the prefects.²¹ With the abolishment of prefects, all a priori tutelage disappeared. The departments and the regions gained their executive and the elected presidents of the departmental and regional councils became their councils' chief executive. This promoted local autonomy because the power of an elected member had increased vis-a-vis the centrally appointed members.

In Turkey, the local government decentralization started in a period when military government aimed to increase centralization and control over local governments by appointing official members from the center as mayors.²² Although military authorities were motivated to reinforce the concept of the state, it marked the beginning of a new period for local government. The reforms of military government, however, were limited by the financial problems, particularly to solve the problems of the metropolitan areas which were mainly financial. They increased the revenues to a considerable amount and some productive resources were transferred to the municipalities.

More radical reforms came from the Motherland Party government which created a two-tier metropolitan municipality system and district municipalities in some metropolitan urban centers (Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir). The tutelage control that was previously exercised by the central government was transferred to the metropolitan municipality mayors. District municipalities are now under the tutelage control of the

metropolitan municipality mayors. In comparison to France, decentralization in Turkey stopped at the metropolitan municipality level and did not extend to district municipalities. While in France decentralization was a nation-wide program, in Turkey, metropolitan municipality mayor has the right to exercise the tutelage over the district municipality mayors. Unlike in France, no one of the authorities, elected or appointed, has the right to exercise tutelage over other local authorities.

In Turkey, the primary motive behind decentralization was the short-run political calculations of the Motherland Party which directly did not aim to improve local democracy and municipal autonomy.²³ In France, in contrast, some pragmatic considerations were at work such as limiting the power of the Right in the periphery by gaining support and response for pressure groups.²⁴ However, the primary motive, unlike in Turkey, was as J. Frears pointed out, "to produce what was so obviously lacking in the French of President Giscard's Etablissement: some check and balance on the executive power of central government".²⁵ French central government intended to increase local democracy by giving local elected officials more autonomy.

The fact that decentralization in Turkey stopped at the metropolitan level does not mean that it was a failed reform. In general, the post-1984 metropolitan municipal system is a success story. New mayors conducted successful projects. Personnel expenditures decreased, whereas investment expendi-

tures increased. But the problem lies in the relationship between the metropolitan municipality and district municipalities. The rhetoric that district municipalities and metropolitan municipality formed a "unified entity" does not guarantee a harmonious relationship between them. Moreover, the tutelage relationships between metropolitan municipality mayors and district mayors are not compatible with local democracy. Since they both are popularly elected, district municipalities should be given the same rights. They have better opportunities to establish relationships with people.²⁶ This, in turn, increases local participation hence local democracy. Still, in Turkey, "requisites" for a viable political decentralization is lacking because the attitudes of the metropolitan mayors and the bureaucrats constitute a major bottleneck. Although people have easy access to the district municipalities through formal and informal means, the district municipalities face the heavy hand of the metropolitan municipal bureaucracy.²⁷

To conclude, the decentralization reform in France created a genuine local government system politically and financially independent from the central government, whereas in Turkey it remained at a much more partial level.

NOTES

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- (14). İlhan Tekeli, "Yerel Yönetimlerde Demokrasi ve Türkiye'de Belediyelerin Gelişimi," Amme İdaresi Dergisi, 16 (1983):3-22, p. 16.
- (15). Schmidt, Democratizing France, p. 6.
- (16). The Jacobin principle of "uniformity" assumes that departments and communes should be equal before the law and in their size. Since they are equal in these aspects they must constitute a uniform and integrated entity at the national level. This can only be achieved under a centralized administration.
- (17). Metin Heper, The State Tradition in Turkey (Washington, England: The Eothen Press. 1985), p. 39.
- (18). Schmidt Democratizing France, p. 33.
- (19). Keating, "Decentralization," p. 238.
- (20). Vivien A. Schmidt, "Unblocking Society by a Decree: The Impact of Governmental Decentralization in France," Comparative Politics, 22 (1990): 459-81, p. 401.
- (21). J. R. Frears, "The Decentralization Reforms in France," Parliamentary Affairs, 36 (1983):56-66, p. 59.

- (22). Ustun Erguder, "Decentralization of Local Government and Turkish Political Culture," in Democracy and Local Government: Istanbul in the 1980s, Metin Heper, ed. (Walkington, England: The Eothen Press, 1987), p. 10.
- (23). For further discussion, see chapter III of the present study.
- (24). Schmidt, Democratizing France, p. 6.
- (25). Frears, "The Decentralization Reforms in France," p. 66.
- (26). Ersin Kalaycioglu, "Division of Responsibility," in Local Government in Turkey: Governing Greater Istanbul, Metin Heper, ed. (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 27.
- (27). Metin Heper, ed., Local Government in Turkey: Governing Greater Istanbul (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 75.

CONCLUSION

In this study I have analyzed local government traditions and the post-1980 decentralization reforms in France and Turkey.

Local government decentralization reforms in France created a genuine local government system by which locally elected members gained the right and competence to decide on local issues. Before the reforms of the 1980s the greatest barrier to local democracy and local autonomy had been the prefect exercising a priory tutelage power over mayors since the French Revolution. The Socialists abolished the prefectural system, and after the abolishment of the prefects all a priory tutelages disappeared. Since the prefect was an elected member having a critical and influential role in the system, the abolishment of the prefects was a radical break from the tradition. Moreover, the reforms of the socialist government increased the freedom and financial resources of the local government in France.

In Turkey, local government decentralization reforms of the 1980s created a two-tier metropolitan municipality system in three major urban centers, particularly in Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara. The notable feature of the reforms is that after the reforms, local governments in general and municipalities in

particular gained new financial resources which in turn increased their financial independence. By these reforms tutelage power which had previously been exercised by the central government was transferred to metropolitan municipality mayors. District mayors in the metropolitan municipality areas were placed under the tutelage of the metropolitan municipality mayors.

A crucial difference between Turkey and France regarding decentralization reforms is that the reforms in France created a genuine local government system and instituted local democracy. Local councils have become local parliaments. In Turkey, on the other hand, decentralization reforms stopped at the metropolitan municipality level and did not extend toward district municipality level. Still, local governments in Turkey are financially dependent upon the central government. Central government in Turkey has the tutelage power over municipalities.

The above analysis lends credence to the hypothesis formulated that the extent and the success of decentralization in a country is closely related to its political culture especially to the extent that there has been a strong state. In fact, it is hard to understand the evolution of local government in a society without reference to the state. In the politics where the state successfully penetrates the society by eliminating the elements of civil society, the local government occupies a critical position for having the potential

to challenge the power of the central government. The strong state places too great emphasis on the long term interests of the society by revoking a discourse on national and public interests. The local autonomy means, on the other hand, being out of the reign of central control and expression of the sectional interests vis-a-vis the general. Therefore, the strong state tends to be highly centralized in order to prevent the development of a polity in which sectional interests can be localized within a national context. Centralization is ensured by various administrative and political controls exercised as tutelage.

Both Turkey and France have a strong state tradition. Still, the state in Turkey has been stronger than in France. Two important factors weakened the French state, hence, led to a different pattern of decentralization. The first one is the existence of feudal tradition and the second one is the socio-economic and political modernization after the Second World War in France. In Turkey, on the other hand, the existence of a strong state and the absence of civil society have important implications. In France, a case of decentralized feudalism, there were peripheral forces challenging the power of the center, that is, continuous wars between the king and the local grandees in the ninth and the tenth centuries. In Turkey, however, center totally dominated the periphery which resulted in the total absence of the civil society. Within this context, cities in France began to take place representing the freedom and interest of a new class vis- a-vis the central authority,

whereas in Turkey neither such a new class nor the self-governing cities could be developed.

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In France, the continuous conflicts on the nature of the regime, the foreign and colonial policy and the economic policies that need to be adopted could not be resolved with consensus even in the late nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century, thus, the state emerged as an autonomous agent setting ideological parameters. This explains why, since the Revolution, "national unity" has become an issue so crucial that any attempt at decentralization has been considered a challenge to such unity until the 1980 reforms of decentralization.

The evolution of local government in Turkey, on the other hand, followed a different path. It started as part of a general modernization process which aimed, in general, at the systematic penetration of the periphery. At the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, local government institutions remained artificial constructs in the Turkish society and the central elites treated them as such. The Republican version of central-local relations, despite the fact that a conceptual distinction between the central and local government was made, did not change the status of the local government in Turkey. The Turkish Republic was established at a critical time in which there were internal and external challenges to the new Republic. This further reinforced the nega-

tive prejudices of the elites towards the periphery. Therefore, the new Republic opted to operate in a centralized fashion. The basic central-periphery cleavage could not be resolved until the 1960s. Despite the fact that multi-party politics was introduced in the 1980s, the governments remained under the tutelage of the military and the bureaucracy. Until the Second World War, the local governments in Turkey did not become an issue of interest. But during the postwar period, the status of the local governments changed from being artificial constructs to being a natural part of the society thanks to high level of urbanization. But parallel developments could not take place in the minds of the central elites. In France, however, political decentralization, as a vivid notion in the political discourse, has a long tradition. It started with the French Revolution which embodied various attempts at decentralization. But as a result of the unresolved conflicts that has already been mentioned, the French state opted to act autonomously without giving the social groups an opportunity to articulate their interests. During the postwar period in France, the social and political modernization fostered the developments of the civil societal elements. They have become a common phenomenon in French politics. The development of the interest groups in French politics fostered a change in the strength of the state. The state supported the development of such groups to accelerate political modernization. Moreover, the state in France aimed to narrow the gap between itself and the society. At the beginning of the 1970s the Jacobins who were the principal supporters of centralization became flexible in their

interpretations of " The One and the Indivisible Republic". The principle which assumed that local autonomy was a threat to national unity lost its rigid content. Even many Jacobins began to think that decentralization was not a threat to national unity because the conditions that made it necessary in the past no longer existed. It was in this conjuncture in the 1980s that the Socialists found it easy to decentralize.

In Turkey, the local government remained under the strict control of the central government. Unlike in France, financially local governments have been weak and dependent on central government. Decentralization has not been an issue aiming at the creation of a genuine local government. Rather it has started as a result of short-run political calculation. All in all, it can be said that the political arena of the 1980s constituted a ground on which further decentralization could be introduced. Especially the balance between the state elites and political elites was in favor of political elites. Moreover, the state elites did not take the principles of "Ataturkism" in the rigid sense as it was before the 1980s. For example, despite the principle of etatism which was an important component of "Ataturkism" they welcomed liberal economic policies after 1980. Although the political conjuncture was suitable for further decentralization, it stopped at the metropolitan level and did not extend to the district levels because the primary motive was not to develop a genuine local government system. The state in Turkey is still a strong agent in eliminating

civil elements. In regards to the interest groups, the Turkish polity represents a monist character. Therefore, it is not surprising that the extent of the decentralization reform stopped at a certain level.

A successful decentralization reform means that locally elected members should have the right to decide on local issues without prior permission of central government which means the abolishment of the tutelage. In Turkey, all tutelage power of the central government should be abolished to establish local democracy and local autonomy. Municipal councils and provincial local assemblies should be given the status of local parliament. Supervision should be left to the people and the channels and mechanisms to ensure this supervision must be established. Still, the resources of the local governments in Turkey are not enough to fulfill their functions. Moreover, they are dependent on central government. Their dependency on central government is an obstacle to local autonomy and democracy because it limits their actions and flexibility. Local governments should be given the right to decide on local taxes which makes the people see the inevitable link between services and costs. This is the guarantee of the participation, involvement and supervision of the people. Throughout this thesis, it has been pointed out that strong state poses difficulties to democracy. In this context decentralization is not only a way to improve local democracy, but is also a way to improve national democracy as well.

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